

The Oban Times

& WEST HIGHLAND TIMES

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OBAN AND MULL FACING DRAMATIC RISE IN TRAFFIC

Cheap fares could bring roads chaos

LOUISE LEE
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URGENT action is required to prevent Oban grinding to a halt as an estimated 65,000 extra vehicles a year make their way through the town heading for Mull.

That's the view of community groups and politicians ahead of the introduction of the Scottish government's Road Equivalent Tariff (RET) next October which will slash the cost of travel to Mull to as little as £27 for return tickets. The current average return car journey costs £67.

Experts calculate that traffic to Oban's ferry terminal will rise between 35 to 55 per cent.

Community groups, on both sides of the water, are urging government planners to consider the implications of increasing the traffic and the proposed introduction of hourly ferry sailings without improving the roads infrastructure in Oban and Mull.

Steve Willis, of Mull community council, said: 'We need to think seriously about the implications of increased sailings and reduced costs on the ferry network. It will mean there is a huge increase in traffic, and in turn Mull and Oban will become the biggest car park in Scotland as no one can move anywhere.'

When RET was introduced to Tiree five years ago, the increase in traffic of more than 100 per cent saw the roads go into meltdown. There was also a lack of infrastructure such as roads, toilets and accommodation.

Lack of consideration to the long term effects in Oban are worrying,

say residents. John Miller, a van driver, from Soroba said: 'When the traffic lights at the school were broken last year, it took me an extra 20 minutes to an hour to get through the town. One problem in Oban can cause chaos because there is nowhere else to go.'

'With an extra 65,000 cars a year and the unrelenting nature of the ferry every hour - we need to think about a new road.'

George Berry, community councillor and van driver, said: 'There should be no work undertaken in the town until a full traffic management appraisal has been completed. The town is a nightmare already.'

Alan Reid, Argyll and Bute MP, said: 'RET alone is not a solution - infrastructure has to go along with it.'

'On Mull, the roads are badly in need of improvement. Something must be done. A study for both Oban and Mull has to be completed

to find out what work needs to be undertaken, as soon as possible.'

A spokesman for Transport Scotland, the government agency behind RET, said: 'We would expect a reduction in fares to lead to an increase in demand on these services, particularly during the summer timetable. We will therefore work with members of the affected communities to find ways of managing this demand.'

'The introduction of RET on ferry services to Arran in October 2014 will also provide valuable information that will help us with demand management around the roll out to the rest of the Clyde and Hebridean Ferry Services.'

In a response to a question on its plans to improve infrastructure on either side of the crossing, a spokesman for Argyll and Bute council said: 'We are aware of this issue and will be discussing it with the Scottish government.'

Gas testing to be carried out in town

GAS HEATING customers in Oban have been selected to trial a new, more efficient type of gas that could be pumped into homes across the UK.

Scottish Gas Networks said it selected Oban as the ideal location for the testing, as it has a mix of business and residential property and its own dedicated gas network, which is not attached to the national network.

The town also has its own liquefied natural gas plant and

this closed system makes it easier for the company to check performance.

Testing will begin on November 3 in Glencruitten and Scottish Gas Networks expects to test a total of 235 properties in phase one, which will last four to five weeks.

Scottish Gas Networks said it had written to the first 100 customers and that they could contact the company to alter appointment times or ask any more about the project.



STORM-TOSSED: tour vessel 'Elizabeth G' lies beached on the Oban Esplanade foreshore. Photo: Stephen Lawson

Gonzalo visits west Highlands but doesn't leave a lasting impression

THE REMNANTS of Hurricane Gonzalo hit Scotland on Tuesday, with areas in the west Highlands and islands experiencing some of the strongest winds in the UK.

Ferry operator Calmac cancelled 14 routes and suspended many others, with the Skye Bridge also closed to traffic.

The highest recorded winds in Scotland were gusts of 66mph in Port Ellen, Islay, along with 62mph in Machrihanish and 61mph on Tiree.

Chief inspector Marlene Baillie, who is based in Lochgilphead, said: 'We have had a few weather-related calls, such as traffic disruption, debris, trees that have come down and alarms going off, but that is all routine stuff really. Thankfully there doesn't seem to have been any serious issues.'

Ian Laurie, who runs a shop in Port Ellen on Islay, said: 'There has obviously been disruption

because there are no ferries, but structurally there is no damage to the village that we're aware of.'

'It's not too bad from our point of view, we're used to the weather here.'

An Oban tour vessel washed up on the edge of the Corran Esplanade on Tuesday morning, in what the owner called 'a lucky escape'.

The boat, named *Elizabeth G*, drifted for 150 metres after the riser, which anchors the boat, snapped during high winds.

The ship's owner Rob Parlow said: 'When the coastguard got in touch, I feared the worst but as bad as it looks, we've been very lucky.'

'If the mooring had broken at high tide she would have smashed against the Esplanade, and that would have caused significant damage, so it's a lucky escape as the damage is only superficial.'

'The vessel is an ex-Norwegian rescue boat and heavily built,

so it's actually built to take the impact, to a degree.'

The boat will be towed back out into the open water on the first high tide.

Meanwhile, a North Connel man has described the terrifying moment he saw a tornado blow past his house, uprooting trees in its path.

Robert Miller was working inside his home on Sunday, October 19, when he saw the twister pass by his house on the banks of Loch Etive.

Robert said: 'When I saw the tornado it was like time stood still. "You don't really know what to do because you feel helpless - I was worried it would blow into the house and take it down with it."

The wind left a trail of destruction, uprooting four trees, one of which landed on his trailer and boat. Robert added: 'It's a miracle no-one was hurt.'

Fellow motorists help crash victim

A 22-YEAR-old man survived his car rolling over twice in the road before it came to a standstill close to the edge of Loch Etive on Tuesday evening.

Shortly after 6.15pm the vehicle crashed on the A85 near to the Achnaclloch Bridge. Passers-by helped the man out of his car but could not raise the alarm because there was no mobile phone reception. Police arrived at the scene by chance, and called for an ambulance.

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Congregation of Gaelic choirs ends Inverness 2014

A 'MOVING' and 'awesome' massed choir event brought the 2014 Inverness Royal National Mod to a close on a bright and sunny morning by the River Ness on Saturday.

Conductors guided 'Scotland's national Gaelic choir' in some of the most joyful and heartfelt singing of the whole festival.

Ardgour's Mary Ann Kennedy (pictured), the conductor of Inverness Gaelic Choir, and Riabhart MacCallum, of Campeltown, were two of those leading the crowd. See inside for more.



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Mull landmark hotel up for sale

TOBERMORY landmark the Western Isles Hotel has been placed on the market for sale, with selling agent Colliers International inviting offers over £700,000 for the 26-bedroom property.

Perched high on its private 'cliff' above Tobermory, the former World War II officers' mess to HMS Western Isles, provides guests with stunning southerly views over the bay and the Sound of Mull.

Alistair Letham, a director with Colliers International, commented: 'The Western Isles Hotel is a well-established business with a good level of turnover from commercial trade and leisure destination custom during a long summer and holiday season.'

'The iconic landmark property, familiar to many, is a quintessential commercial lifestyle property.'

'It offers new proprietors the opportunity to take over a well-known and existing business in a beautiful part of Scotland served by three ferry routes from the mainland.'

Invitation to view life on the farms

AN OPEN afternoon is being held for members of the public to find out what goes on at the Scottish Rural College's farms at Crianlarich.

From 12 noon to 4pm on Sunday October 26, Kirkton and Auchtertyre farms are opening their doors for people to find out more about the research that goes on at the hill farms.

The history of farming, demonstrations of unmanned vehicles, tours of the wooden wigwam enterprise, the monitoring of greenhouse gasses such as methane and the challenges of hill farming, are just some of the events available on the day.

There will also be an opportunity to take part in a treasure hunt to discover more about the range of agricultural and environmental work across the farms.

Swinney to set the tone for Argyll's economic summit

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FORMER SNP leader John Swinney will be the keynote speaker at Argyll and Bute's economic summit in Dunoon next week.

The summit will bring together key representatives from local and national government as well as the business, public and voluntary sectors to debate what action is needed to build a prosperous economic future for Argyll and Bute and how to reverse the decline in the region's population.

Mr Swinney is currently cabinet secretary for finance, employment and sustainable growth in the Scottish government, as well as MSP for Perthshire North.

Secretary of state for Scotland Alistair Carmichael, MP, will take part in the summit. Journalist and broadcaster Mark Stephen will chair the event at the Queen's Hall on Wednesday October 29, between 9.30am and 4.30pm.

One of Radio Scotland's most prolific feature presenters, he chaired the Scottish government



John Swinney



Alistair Carmichael

resilience conference last year.

Argyll and Bute MP Alan Reid asked a question about the summit during Scottish Questions at Westminster last week when he urged Alistair Carmichael to consider a reversal of the SNP's centralisation policies.

Mr Reid asked: 'When the secretary of state goes to the population

summit in Dunoon, will he remind the Scottish government that devolution should be not just from Westminster to Holyrood, but from Holyrood to local communities in Scotland?'

'Will he tell the SNP government that they should reverse policies such as centralising the police and fire services and closing local

courts, which are taking people and jobs away from rural Scotland and into the central belt?'

In response, Mr Carmichael said: 'I am very much looking forward to joining my honourable friend, leaders of his local council and ministers from the Scottish government in Dunoon. What he says is very much the message that ministers from the Scottish government will hear.'

'It is a message that they get throughout the Highlands and islands: seven years of SNP government in Edinburgh has given Scotland the most centralised system of government in western Europe. That has got to change.'

Mr Reid said: 'I'm pleased the secretary of state agrees with me that Argyll and Bute council's summit will provide an opportunity to explain to SNP ministers that the population decline in Argyll and Bute can only be stopped if they reverse their policies of centralising services in the central belt and instead give more jobs to Argyll and Bute.'

MULL lines



COUNTRY MUSIC: Dave Sexton, Marc Riley, Damon Albarn and Ceri Levy
Photograph: John Clare

Eagles are the real stars

MUSIC luminaries such as Damon Albarn, the lead singer of Blur and BBC DJ Marc Riley aren't necessarily the names that come to mind when discussing eagle watching on Mull.

But listen out for a radio show with a difference from Mull on BBC Radio 4, 11am, October 25.

A celebrity, travel and wildlife programme called 'In Search of the Holy Tail' reveals the outcome of an unusual quest to see white-tailed eagles, otters, basking sharks and more by an eclectic team of contributors: Damon Albarn, lead singer of Britpop rock group Blur, Ceri Levy, filmmaker and writer and DJ Marc Riley from BBC Radio 6 Music. The quartet arrived on Mull in a bid to see some of the special, most sought-after wildlife.

Dave Sexton, RSPB Mull officer, said: 'I think Damon is probably the coolest guest we've had here to see the eagles - at least as far as my daughters are concerned.'

'He may have had a wild life as a rock star, but Mull's wildlife seemed to win him round. He loved the eider ducks on Loch na Keal which reminded him of watching them near his house in Iceland. It should be an interesting programme.'



ON A HIGH: Oban mountain rescue team receive the cheque for £5,000, which was raised during the Craggy Island Triathlon

Athletes to the Rescue

OBAN mountain rescue team's support of the Craggy Island Triathlon has paid dividends after the rescue charity received £5,000 from the event.

Team members make up the first aid and rescue team and take on much of the stewarding of the Kerrera-based triathlon, which attracts hundreds of competitors over one weekend in August.

Event organiser Duncan MacEachen, who is also a

member of the mountain rescue team, said: 'We rely on the mountain rescue team to provide first aid and marshals for the event but the triathlon is the main fundraiser of the year for the team.'

'The team uses the event as a training exercise and all the members enjoy being part of it. I am very pleased at how the whole thing worked, with the support of local businesses.'

'I would like to thank everyone who made the event such

a success.' Of the total amount raised for the mountain rescue team, £2,200 was taken in at the catering tent, run by Susan Marshall from Kerrera.

There was also a £500 donation to Taynuilt's Neil McGougan, another member of Oban mountain rescue team, on behalf of the Open Hands charity in Bolivia.

Neil helps the charity with building work during his visits to the South American country.



TIME TRAVELLER: Isabella Bird's photography that now features in a new book

Every picture tells a story

A PHOTOGRAPHY exhibition shown at An Tobar in 2009 has now made its way into a book.

The book, *Isabella Bird and Twin Time Travel*, was compiled by Professor Kanasaka of Kyoto, Japan.

Professor Kanasaka presented copies to An Tobar, now Comar, and Mull Museum last Monday.



MULL MUSEUM: the archives are now open to the public every Wednesday night

Browse museum archive

ARCHIVE open evenings are starting up again in Tobermory. The popular evenings will take place on Wednesdays between 7.30pm and 9.30pm. Museum organisers extended an invitation: 'Anyone who is interested in the history of Mull, their family or where they live is welcome to come to the museum.'

'Trawl through our pile of archive boxes or open the drawers full of photographs. Browse at random or do a focused search using the catalogue.'

'There are maps too, and shelves and shelves of interesting books. And there will always be someone there to help if required. We look forward to seeing visitors soon.'

Gentle pace to island life

A MAN from Cambridge is pleading with islanders not to have a two-lane road on Mull. In a letter to *The Oban Times*, Andy Bayes, who has been visiting the island for 30 years, said a plan to develop the road caused him 'great sadness'.

He said: 'It is the remoteness and the slower pace of life that brings people to all of the islands. In my view the only people that this road would benefit are the day-trippers who just pass through Mull on their way to Iona. The beauty of Mull passes them by; it still will, but just faster. Why would anyone want to drive through the stunning beauty of Glen More at 60 mph?'

The community council is in talks with Argyll and Bute council about the upgrade of the road.

Empty houses turned into homes, thanks to innovative teamwork

A TOTAL of 539 empty homes have been brought back into use in Argyll and Bute since August 2013, writes *Marian Miller*.

Teamwork between Argyll and Bute council's housing and council tax teams - for which they have been given a national award - is being applauded for a number of initiatives making use of empty homes.

This has included working with property owners to rent homes out at affordable rates and doubling the council tax on houses which have been left empty for a long time.

A dedicated empty homes

officer has been working alongside owners helping to find ways of releasing their property back into the market for much-needed affordable housing.

The council's director for customer services Douglas Hendry said: 'The success of this policy is due in no small part to the close joint working of the two council teams, sharing information and making sure that everyone - owners and the local community - know about the benefits this can bring.'

'What is most important, of course, is that this brings real results, that local people have

more options when it comes to finding affordable homes.

'Five hundred and thirty homes brought back into use is an excellent achievement and this national award reflects the teams' hard work.'

The council's teamwork has led to it being given a silver award at the national Institute of Revenues, Ratings and Valuations performance awards 2014 for its entry to the excellence in innovation category.

'The approach is validated by this national recognition as an example of innovative practice,' said a delighted Mr Hendry.

Supper effort from Tyndrum cafe

THE REAL Food Cafe in Tyndrum has been shortlisted as one of the UK's top 12 independent fish and chip restaurants of the year.

The restaurant will now compete in the final stage of the 2015 National Fish and Chip Awards, organised by Seafish, the authority on seafood in the UK.

To secure a place as a top-12 finalist, the restaurants were appraised on criteria ranging from the quality of their cooked products through to restaurant facilities, marketing activity and customer service.

Award sponsor David Lovell, business director of Goldensheaf, said: 'This

award category rewards those businesses that strive to both provide the best fish and chip dining experience for their customers and to improve the standards in their business as a whole.'

For further information on the National Fish and Chip Awards, visit www.fishandchipawards.com.

Report highlights rise in poaching

LEVELS of wildlife crime have risen slightly in the last five years, according to a report published this week.

Badger baiting, raptor persecutions and damage to precious freshwater pearl mussels are included in the

second Scottish government wildlife crime annual report, which has seen a five per cent increase in recorded crime.

The report reveals there has been a 30 per cent increase in the poaching of fish, deer and a rise in coursing offences.

The Scottish government's environment and climate change minister Paul Wheelhouse said: 'I remain unsympathetic to those who believe that crimes against wildlife are of little consequence and can somehow be justified.'

SRUC Kirkton & Auchtertyre Farms: Public Open Day

All Welcome from 12.00 to 16.00 on Sunday 26 October 2014

Kirkton & Auchtertyre Farms, Crianlarich, FK20 8RU

2 miles north of Crianlarich on A82/A85, using Auchtertyre/Wigwams' entrance.

Would you like to find out more about the variety of work happening at Scotland's Rural College's hill farming research farms? Then come along on the afternoon of Sunday 26 October to:

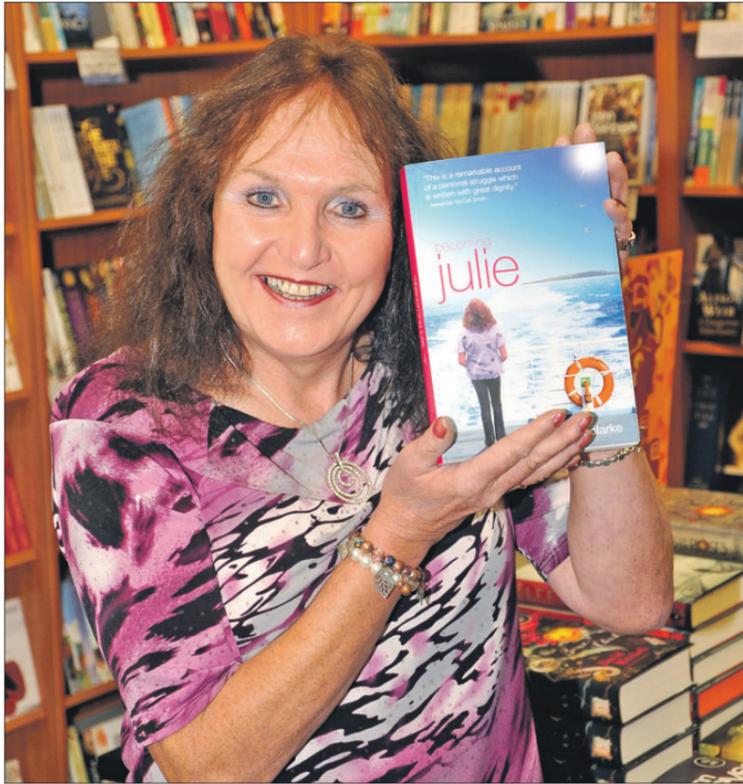
- Step back in time and **learn about the history of farming** in the local area.
- See a demonstration of **Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs)**.
- Take a **tour of the wooden wigwams** in our wigwam enterprise. Find out how we **monitor methane and other greenhouse gases** produced by sheep, cattle and soil on the farms.
- See **working sheepdogs in action** as they round up the sheep.
- Hear about the range of **challenges facing hill farmers and other land managers** in the Scottish uplands.
- Find out more about the **hidden wildlife** living on our farms.
- See how **electronic tagging and other types of technology** can help make the farmers life easier.
- Take **part in a 'treasure hunt'** to discover even more about the range of agricultural and environmental work across the farms.
- Find out more about the **skills development opportunities** available from SRUC and the Loch Lomond & Trossach National Park Skills Partnership.

www.sruc.ac.uk

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Coll gave Julie the zest for living and a new chapter in her story



ODYSSEY: Julie Clarke will launch her book, *Becoming Julie*, in Waterstones Oban next month

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THE MOVE to the 'sanctuary' of Coll became a lifesaving one for Julie Clarke, as she reveals the story behind her journey from fire-fighting male to female pier attendant.

Only now, at the age of 58, does she feel comfortable in talking about her transgender change in her first book, *Becoming Julie*, which is launched on November 6 in Oban's Waterstones.

As a child in Callander, Julie knew she was 'different' and admits the subsequent battle to suppress her inner woman almost 'destroyed' her.

Speaking to *The Oban Times* ahead of the book launch, Julie is keen to share her experience in order to help others who may be in a similar situation.

But she remains tight-lipped about some of the content and one thing readers will not find in the book is her old male name. 'My name before is dead,' she says. 'Some people know it but it is not in the book. Why should I go there, it's not who I am.'

Her story begins at the age of seven.

'That's when I started to realise something was different,' she said. 'I tried to run away from it but as I got older the female side of me was winning this push-and-pull battle. I decided I had to follow a stereotypical male life because that was what was expected of me.'

'I got married to a woman and I put on a face because you couldn't

tell people what you were, not in the 1970s and 1980s. The prejudice was huge.

'I went to great lengths to escape Julie's clutches: I became a fire-fighter and a chartered boat skipper because those were stereotypically male jobs but this struggle pushed me close to destruction many times.'

'What people didn't know about me, they made up and would speculate wildly, especially in the 1980s. Those were particularly dark times because people thought I was 'up to something'. I wasn't accepted anywhere because I was seen as this dark character not to be trusted.'

A turning point came in 1995 when Julie and her then wife moved to Arinagour, Coll. The island had always been a happy holiday destination for Julie, a place of 'contentment' as she struggled to maintain her heterosexual male lifestyle. Julie said of her move: 'I was still a million miles away from becoming what I am; I was still married and trying to escape the female side.'

'But it was inevitable what would happen and I ran out of excuses. There is a chapter in the book, *Point of no return*, documenting when I separated from my wife and was free to get on with it. It was around 2000 that I lost the battle, or, as I look back, I won the battle.'

Julie's journey will be a familiar one to the residents of Coll, who know her as a pier worker for Cal-Mac on the island. However, she admits her new book, published by Fledgling Press, will have a few

surprises, even for those on the island.

'Rather than be anonymous in the city, I moved to Coll and was able to make friends,' she said. 'It was really important having that support.'

'Like anywhere, there are people for you and people against you but that is normal. I fit in there and there are a lot of people who respect me.'

'By the time I came to write the book I had been living as Julie Clarke for nearly 10 years and I was happy in myself, I had nothing to hide. I am Julie Clarke, I travel to lots of places, I get chatted up by men and I am not afraid of my past.'

The book, which Julie began to write two years ago after the idea was mooted at a Hogmanay party, will be the first in a series of three: book two will be a 'more controversial and darker' side to her own personal story, while book three will be a fictional piece based on her experiences.

Her first step into the literary world has been a joy for Julie, who described getting the first copies of her book as 'the best day of my life'.

Indeed, Alexander McCall Smith reviews her book as "a remarkable account of a personal struggle which is written with great dignity, or, as I look back, I won the battle."

Further launch signings will take place at the Island Café on Coll on November 8, Waterstones Edinburgh on November 13 and Waterstones Islington, London on November 20.

Alcohol problem for ten-year-olds

CHILDREN as young as 10 are regularly being admitted to NHS Highland hospitals with the signs of alcohol abuse.

In the last two years, 233 children aged 10 to 18 were admitted to hospital, a new survey has revealed.

The Scottish government suggests a delay in the minimum unit pricing for alcohol, because of a legal challenge, is a hurdle in mending 'Scotland's difficult relationship with alcohol'.

The government said: 'We are currently taking forward substance misuse education work in schools where children and young people will learn about a variety of substances including alcohol, medicines, drugs, tobacco and solvents.'

A smart move for high school pupils

ELECTRONIC ticketing is being trialled on schoolbuses to Oban high, with a view to introducing the scheme throughout Argyll and Bute by the end of the financial year.

Known as 'smart ticketing', it will see pupils continue to use their Kidz and Young Scot cards to board buses, but by swiping them through a ticket machine.

The current system involves students showing their card to the driver, which gives written details of the buses they are entitled to travel on.

Malcolm MacFadyen, head of facility services at Argyll and Bute council said: 'The council is delighted to be part of this initiative.'

'Anything which makes travelling easier and more convenient for the people who use our transport services is to be welcomed.'

Decision on island slate is at hand

A FINAL decision on whether local slate is to be chosen over a Spanish variety was being made as *The Oban Times* went to press. Islanders argued that Luing slate should be used on the Atlantic Islands Centre, while builders argued that the slate was too fragile and opted for Spanish tiles.

An inch is as long as a mile when it comes to a ticket

A WOMAN who claimed she was 'one inch' over a council car parking line will be disputing her parking contravention notice (PCN).

Rachel Anne McKenzie, from Howwood in Renfrewshire, said:

'I was recently in Oban visiting my family when I received a parking ticket. I parked my car in a space and displayed my ticket. While I did this, I saw the parking warden watch me.'

'When I went online to the coun-

cil to dispute the PCN with my pay and display ticket in hand, I was told I was an inch over the parking space.'

'I find this outrageous and I am disgusted by this. I am disputing this as I was in a parking space

and not obstructing anyone or anything.'

'There are not enough parking spaces in Oban as it is and when you park legally and pay for parking you still receive a ticket.'

'Oban is supposed to be a small,

friendly, welcoming town. This is definitely not what I was expecting.'

A spokesman for Argyll and Bute council said: 'There is an established process for people to appeal a PCN. Information about this is

available on the back of the PCN and also on our website at www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/parking. If we receive an appeal within 14 days of the date of issue of the fine, the charge will be put on hold pending the outcome of the appeal.'

Action call for community-spirited people

PEOPLE across Argyll and Bute are being encouraged to get involved in their local communities when elections for the area's community councils take place on November 27.

In Mid Argyll, Kintyre and the Islands, the following community councils will be holding elections:

Southend, West Kintyre, Tarbert and Skipness, Islay, Jura, Colonsay, North Knapdale, Lochgilphead, Ardrishaig, West Lochfyne, Inveraray and Dunadd. This includes a new community council in North Knapdale.

In Oban, Lorn and the Isles the following community councils will

be holding elections: Mull, Oban, Luing, Kilniver and Kilmelford, Kilmore, Lismore, Appin, Connel and Ardchattan.

In Bute and Cowal, the following community councils will be holding elections: Strachur, Kilfinan, Hunter's Quay, Kilmun, Dunoon, South Cowal and Bute.

No decision on poll tax debt write-off

REPORTS of a potential £7 million poll tax debt write-off in Argyll and Bute have been dismissed by the local authority.

It said a decision to stop pursuing the multi-million pound historic debt, from up to 25 years ago, has not yet been made.

Other local authorities have

already made a decision not to pursue those people who enrolled on the electoral register to vote in last month's referendum for outstanding community charge debt.

A spokeswoman for the council said: 'No decision has been made yet about writing off poll tax debt.'

'There would be no financial

implication if this did go ahead, as there is full provision and income from poll tax is very small in any case.'

It is likely that a report will be presented to Argyll and Bute councillors to consider the situation in light of the stance taken by other local authorities.



Halloween Party

Sat 25 Oct, 2-3.30pm

Glencoe Visitor Centre, Glencoe PH49 4HX

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EUAN PATERSON MEETS ALEX SALMOND AS THE FIRST MINISTER TALKS ABOUT HYDRO POWER AND THE 'NEXT' REFERENDUM

More information from ballot box will be useful for 'next referendum'

IN THE wake of the 'Yes' campaign's referendum defeat, First Minister Alex Salmond said the 'losers feel like winners'.
Speaking on a visit to Cruachan power station, he told *The Oban Times* the explosion of new SNP members meant the independence campaign was a success and he called on the breakdown of votes by ballot box to be made available 'for the next referendum'.
The Western Isles, Highland and Argyll and Bute all returned convincing 'No' votes in the referendum on September 18, with some 'No' voters saying Holyrood was just as removed from the Highlands and islands as Westminster was.

Mr Salmond replied: 'We wanted to make sure more power came to local communities. Take the Crown Estate for example. We published plans to have the foreshore controlled by local communities with revenue coming to local communities.'

He added that as MSP for a fishing constituency he was aware how influential the Crown Estate had been in preventing development.

Unperturbed by the referendum result, he explained: 'The process of empowerment we have seen in Scotland is not something that is going to stop. The electorate, once energised, will stay energised.'

The vote's chief counting officer, Mary Pitcaithly, had said there would be only constituency-by-constituency results to avoid further divisions within communities.

But Mr Salmond said: 'The more information [about the breakdown of results] the better, in particular for the Highlands. Because the geography is so diverse that there is a strong argument for having more information.'

'For the next referendum, that would be a good idea.'



POWER POLITICS: First Minister Alex Salmond (left) with Scottish Power's Hugh Finlay and Ross Galbraith

Cruachan is the battery that drives Scotland's energy

FIRST Minister Alex Salmond described Cruachan power station as one of Scotland's 'great batteries', insisting it should be the blueprint for further hydro pump storage expansion across Scotland.

Mr Salmond also used the visit to the station last Thursday to argue the case for transferring energy policy powers to Holyrood.

Asked by *The Oban Times* where the Cruachan station stood in terms of national importance, he replied: 'It is right up there, one of the great batteries used to balance the energy system of Scotland.'

'In a 'dark start', when the power goes off and needs to restart again this place can do it in 30 seconds.'

The Scottish government previously announced plans to double the size of Cruachan, creating a 'Cruachan 2' at the site near Lochawe as it promotes hydro

pumped storage as a leading form of renewable energy.

But the First Minister added that Scotland needed to get control of incentives to produce more renewable power, directing his call to the Smith Commission, set up to look at more devolved powers, and the leaders of the three main political parties in Westminster, David Cameron, Ed Miliband and Nick Clegg - or the 'Three Amigos', as he refers to them.

He said: 'There is oodles of money available within the energy sector but nothing to incentivise new hydro schemes in Scotland, which is ridiculous because it is one of the cheapest, most affordable sources of power.'

'My message to the Smith Commission, Westminster and the Three Amigos is: Give the power to the Scottish parliament so places

like Cruachan can generate power for Scotland.'

His visit also coincided with the publication of a new report on securing Scotland's power supplies by the UK's former chief energy regulator Alistair Buchanan.

The report, published last week, highlights the UK's emerging energy gap and the shift in UK energy policy needed to secure the construction of new clean thermal plant and flexible hydro power in Scotland.

Mr Salmond said: 'Scotland was one of the first countries to harness power from its waters and the world's first to develop high head reversible pumped storage. We have the capacity to do much more with our wonderful hydro resource, to generate clean power and store the vast power of renewables.'

That is certainly the case here at Cruachan power station, a remarkable monument to the vision of Tom Johnston and to the courage and skill of the 'Tunnel Tigers' who built it.

A spokesman for the Department of Energy and Climate Change said: 'Scotland's place in the UK has been fundamental to the success in deploying low carbon technologies and developing its thriving low carbon sector with Scotland receiving £560 million - 28 per cent of the total - of GB's support for the renewables sector in FY12/13.'

'Energy transmission is something the UK government takes very seriously and Scotland is set to benefit from critical investment of up to £6 billion between 2013-21, nearly 30 per cent of total earmarked for upgrades across Britain.'

Vodafone makes the right signals

RURAL communities in the Highlands and Islands have been given longer to sign up for mobile internet coverage in their area.

Mobile phone giant Vodafone has asked residents to sign up for a new 'sure signal' programme for 3G service in villages and has extended the deadline for applications until November 7.

Angus MacNeil, MP for Na h-Eileanan an Iar, said: 'This is a good initiative from Vodafone and it comes at a time when the majority of people in our local communities are more reliant than ever on reliable technology to go about their daily lives.'

'A number of rural areas have signed up to this scheme and I would encourage as many villages as possible to do the same.'

Child poverty hits one in every five

ALMOST a fifth of children in the Highlands and Western Isles are living in poverty, a new study has revealed.

The report by Campaign to End Child Poverty, showed that after housing costs, 19 per cent of children in both the Highland and Eilean Siar council areas are living below the breadline.

Highland MSP Rhoda Grant called for action to reduce the figure.

She said: 'Child poverty is always unacceptable and it is truly shocking that 19 per cent of children are living in poverty.'

'This figure highlights the work that needs to be done to end child poverty here in the Highlands and across the UK.'

Cut a tartan dash in a worthy cause

A FLASH of tartan will be seen through the streets of Oban on November 29 as organisers of the town's winter festival run the Tartan Dash.

Local charities and fundraisers will be able to join in the event, a five-kilometre sponsored run, with the wearing of tartan the only requirement for willing participants.

Sponsor forms for the event will be available from Atlantis Leisure in Oban.

Ryder Cup gift from Alex comes as shock after 28 years' service

AN ELECTRICIAN at Cruachan power station had a send-off to remember as the First Minister presented him with a retirement gift.

Oban man Duncan MacLennan retired last week as the station's health and safety adviser, having begun his career there 28 years ago as an electrical craftsman.

But the day before he finished, he had a chance meeting with Alex Salmond, who was on a visit to the station.

Duncan, who is originally from Aulthea, Wester Ross, said he was shocked when the First Minister gave him a scarf, made from Ryder Cup tartan in Lochcarron.

He added: 'Working at Cruachan was a great experience - the people make the place. It is a time I will always remember, particularly my last week when the company kindly introduced me to the First Minister.'

Duncan, who turns 60 next month, came to Tainuill from Wester Ross in 1971 to take up an apprenticeship with electrician Alex Sim, whose son Murray still lives in the village.

He now plans to spend his retirement tending to his garden and following his passion for Formula 1.

He said: 'We are just back from the race in Monza and I have tried to get to one race every year. Now I'm retired I would like to get to a few more.'



BRIGHT SPARK: Alex Salmond with Duncan MacLennan

Don't blame tourists for roads carnage, says safety campaigner

STEVEN RAE
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A ROAD safety campaigner from Oban said he's not surprised by recent government statistics which show that rural roads are 11 times more dangerous than Britain's congested motorways.

A total of 68 people were killed or seriously injured in road accidents in Argyll and Bute in 2013/14, but Andy Elkerton says the dismal

statistics have become all too familiar. He became a passionate campaigner following the death of close friend Catherine St Jean in a crash on the A85 near Pennyfuir in May this year.

He said: 'Sadly the figure doesn't surprise me at all and I doubt it surprises anyone else living in the area.'

'In light of the figures, I've written to Transport Scotland to press home my opinion that something

needs to be done about rural roads.'

Andy also said that in the aftermath of Catherine's death he discovered many local people think that accidents on rural roads are the fault of tourists, an assertion he feels is false.

He said: 'I wrote a couple of posts on *The Oban Times* website after Catherine was killed and noticed that there was the overall impression from other people posting that it was tourists who were to blame

and who were involved in these accidents.'

'Unfortunately this is a misconception held by some people from Oban. They think that it's visitors with no knowledge of the roads who are being involved in accidents.'

'It's the people who live in the area that are being injured, or worse, which is why I hope the whole town will push for some sort of positive action.'

In July, a dedicated road policing team was launched to serve Argyll and Bute, to improve road safety in the region, with bases in Oban and Lochgilphead.

The unit has two sergeants and 12 constables. Inspector Julie McLeish of Oban police station said: 'The rural and sometimes

single-track roads and other associated factors such as poor weather and lack of lighting can make driving conditions challenging at

times and drivers can often misjudge their speed and actions with serious consequences.'

'Recent community consultation reflects that road policing issues such as driver behaviour and speeding are priority concerns for the community.'

'Police Scotland consistently work with partner agencies such as BEAR, Argyll and Bute council roads department, Scottish Fire and Rescue and Transport Scotland

to ensure there is an over-arching drive towards making travel safer on Argyll roads.'

'Roads enforcement initiatives such as speeding and routine driver checks are regularly undertaken to influence and educate drivers.'

'We also have more seasonal action such as the keep left campaign aimed at foreign drivers and the festive safety campaign which concentrates on the prevention and detection of drink driving.'



SAME, SAD STORY: Oban roads safety campaigner Andy Elkerton

Water bosses relent and turn the tap back on for islanders

A COLL community councillor has hit out at the way Scottish Water has handled the decision to reconnect a drinking water tap on the island, writes Steven Rae.

The tap at the middle pier toilets in Aringour is widely used by people on the island for clean drinking water but was capped off three weeks ago by Argyll and Bute council on behalf of Scottish Water.

Scottish Water has now said it will switch the tap back on and will continue to speak to the council and the community about the matter in the future. Former Scotland rugby captain Rob Wainwright, treasurer of Coll community

council, said: 'The sadness is, this could have been done in a one-on-one conversation. 'Why does it only get done when there is pressure from the press?'

'We tried talking to Scottish Water on behalf of the residents, we got no answer, *The Oban Times* publishes a story and 24 hours later, it seems to be sorted out. These things should get sorted out because it's the right thing to do, not just because it's bad publicity for the organisations involved.'

It is understood the tap was switched off as it was connected into the main supply in the village but not metered, whereas others connected to the

supply are charged for their use. A spokesman for Scottish Water said: 'Scottish Water's priority is to supply high-quality drinking water to customers who pay for our services.'

'Due to a period of very high demand during the summer, we asked the council to switch the tap off - enabling us to maintain supplies to our customers on the island. We have been speaking to the council about this and have indicated that we are happy for them to switch it back on and will continue to speak to the council and the community about this matter.'

The exact date for turning the tap back on is unknown.

DAB VJB

Dunbartonshire and Argyll & Bute
Valuation Joint Board

The way we all register to vote has changed

The electoral registration system changed in September. The new system is called 'Individual Electoral Registration'

Every person is now responsible for registering themselves individually and you may have to provide more details to register - including your national insurance number and date of birth.

Most people who are already registered to vote will be registered automatically under the new system. They do not need to do anything. However, some people will need to take action to join the new register. We are writing to people to tell them whether they need to take action.

Look out for a letter between 23rd October and 11th November

The letter will tell you whether you are on the new register or whether you need to take action. It will tell you what to do. You may need to respond to the letter or go online to register.

If you are currently not registered or your circumstances have recently changed you can register online at www.gov.uk/register-to-vote.

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Driven mad by abandoned car

DUNBEG RESIDENT IS SO FED UP WITH LACK OF ACTION, HE EVEN THOUGHT ABOUT TAKING THE LAW INTO HIS OWN HANDS

STEVEN RAE
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A DUNBEG father is being driven to despair by a car which has been abandoned outside his Meadow Road home for the past eight months.

James Ditchfield has become so frustrated in his attempt to get the authorities to remove the car that he has even considered breaking the law, but has managed to restrain himself.

The Caledonian MacBrayne engineer says the car is causing problems for him, his pregnant wife and two-year-old son, as it often means they need to park halfway up their street.

James, 37, who has lived in Dunbeg for five years, explained: 'Apparently, because the car isn't smashed up, falling to pieces or about to burst into flames, it's termed as 'road legal'.

'I could go out there, let the tyres down and then it would probably get moved because it's not road worthy. If I'd done that three months ago, it probably would be gone by now.

'It's a fundamentally wrong thing to do and I don't want to break the law, but I feel like I'm getting no help. It's almost like I'm being punished for doing the right thing.

'I've tried contacting the council, the police and the Driver Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) because it hasn't moved since February, but I feel like I'm getting



BREAKING POINT: James beside the vehicle which hasn't moved since it was left outside his Dunbeg house in February

nowhere.

'I've been told it's not classed as abandoned but it isn't taxed and hasn't been since it was dumped here.'

A search of the registration number on the DVLA website revealed

that the vehicle's MOT expired on February 6 and the road tax expired on March 1. The DVLA told James that Argyll and Bute council should tow the car away if it is abandoned, but James said the council has so far refused to do so.

He explained: 'The council has sent people round but because, in their eyes, the car is road worthy, it's not technically abandoned.'

'I spoke to a woman from the council on Wednesday October 14, and she said she didn't know what

to tell me because the people have been out to see it and have declared it not abandoned.'

'I feel like phoning the council and saying I want to report fly-tipping because there's a big green lump of rubbish outside that's been

dumped on the road. It's causing my wife problems too because she's pregnant and has to park up the street.'

The DVLA advised James he could pay to take ownership of the car for £25 and then scrap it, but the maximum he would get for the car was £150. He said: 'I can't get access to the chassis number so I can't do it just now, plus I don't really want the hassle of owning the car just to get it removed anyway. It shouldn't have to come to that.'

An Argyll and Bute council spokesman said: 'A vehicle is considered to be abandoned if the structure has been damaged by vandalism, it has unsecured doors or it has been partially or fully burnt. As such, the vehicle in question is not considered to be abandoned. In terms of tax, vehicles no longer have to display tax discs and the council does not have access to the DVLA database, so this is an issue for Police Scotland.'

Sergeant Cammy Lowe at Oban police station said: 'This vehicle was initially reported to police in April this year and, as the vehicle was untaxed, the matter was referred to the DVLA for action.'

'Police Scotland received another report in June and enquiries were launched to establish ownership of the vehicle, the results of which are unknown at this time.'

'However, as a result of fresh enquiries, Police Scotland will carry out fresh investigation regarding the vehicle.'

More older people and fewer babies

ARGYLL and Bute is sitting on a demographic time bomb, according to statistics released this week.

Households in Argyll and Bute will dip below 40,000 with a 71 per cent increase in the head of the household being 75 or older, the survey has revealed.

According to figures from the National Records of Scotland, someone aged 75 or over will be at the head of a third of all households in Argyll.

The figures show that Argyll and Bute has fewer people of working age living in the area and a dramatic decrease in the birth rate.

The numbers of one-parent families and single households are expected to rise - while traditional two-parent family homes will decrease by 36 per cent.

Awaiting fate for headbutt attack

HUGH Vennard, aged 32, of Garage Flat, Glen Cottage, Longsdale Road, admitted headbutting a man when he appeared at Oban Sheriff court for trial last Wednesday.

Vennard assaulted the man at Queens Park Place, Oban, on June 18, while on bail from the court for another matter.

The court heard his victim suffered a bleeding nose but had no signs of injury following the incident.

Sheriff Douglas Small deferred sentence until November 11 for background reports.

Witness tells court about the 'worst case of overtaking'

A DRIVER with 60 years' experience told Oban sheriff court during the trial of a dangerous driver how she witnessed 'the worst case of overtaking' she had ever seen.

The 78-year-old witness was giving evidence at the trial of self-employed communications director Christopher Kennedy, who last Wednesday was found guilty of dangerous driving on the A819 near Cladich on August 14 last year when he overtook a line of three cars on an approach to a bend.

The pensioner was driving one of the three cars overtaken by Kennedy, of Airds House, Connel, and she said his manoeuvre in his Audi A7 was 'extremely stupid'.

Asked to describe what happened, she told procurator fiscal John Service she initially heard a noise 'like an aeroplane taking off'.

She continued: 'It shot past me and the car in front of me and the car in front of that, coming to a left hand bend where vision of any oncoming traffic would have been utterly impossible.'

'I have been driving for many years and it is the worst case of overtaking I have ever been witness to.'

Around the corner the cars came to halt at traffic lights, between the two Portsonachan junctions, and the pensioner said she left her car to go and speak to Kennedy, who refused to wind down his window when she approached. 'He indicated with the back of his hand for me to go away,' she said. 'I indicated to him I was going to phone the police.'

Under cross-examination from Kennedy's advocate Neil Beardmore she was asked if she had gone to give Kennedy a piece of her mind.

She replied: 'Did I say that? I said I was going to point out it was inappropriate to overtake on such a short stretch of road.'

'There are many accidents in this part of the world, through mainly overtaking, which if you lived here you would be very well aware of.'

Another witness, a 56-year-old nurse, who was also driving in the line of cars, said Kennedy came back onto the correct side of the road as he was on the corner, following the overtake.

Giving evidence, Kennedy, 28, said his manoeuvre was safe and that he had come back onto the correct side of the road around 100 yards before the corner.

Asked by Mr Service if he had been frustrated by the traffic in front of him, which was travelling between 35mph - 45mph, he replied: 'I have been travelling that road regularly for some time and if you are behind someone driving slowly, frustration doesn't help.'

In summing up, Mr Beardmore highlighted that none of the witnesses were able to clearly identify the exact location of the overtaking manoeuvre in pictures he supplied to the court, although the first witness had earlier explained that the high number of twists and turns on the A819 made that difficult.

Sheriff Douglas Small said he found the Crown's evidence credible and reliable, adding: 'I didn't believe the accused when he said he completed the manoeuvre before the bend.'

Kennedy, who is also a law student, was fined £650 and disqualified from driving for a year.

Broadband cabling to islands complete, says Sturgeon

WORK on connecting the islands with fibre optic cables between Tobermory and Kilchoan, and Duart Bay and Oban was completed last week.

Providing the latest broadband technology to Mull and Ardnarmurchan is part of the Digital Highlands and Islands project.

Nicola Sturgeon, deputy first minister, said: 'This marks another important milestone for the Digital Scotland superfast broadband partnership.'

'One major component - the huge sub-sea project to lay cables out to the islands - is now largely complete.'

The investment, led by Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE), the Scottish government, the UK government and BT, will see 85 per cent of premises in Scotland have access to fibre broadband by the end of 2015/2016.

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Ballachulish

BALLACHULISH community council met on Tuesday October 7 when matters discussed were:

The community council is still waiting on an update on the national scenic area and has concerns about the lack of communication so far. Councillor Andrew Baxter said he would look into the matter.

PC Paige MacDonald gave a police update but said it is difficult for her to attend meetings regularly as she is in a temporary position. Members of the community council said they are worried about speeding on the road from Abbeyfield care home to Croft Road via Park Road. PC Macdonald confirmed this is a safety issue for children walking to school and asked anyone who witnesses speeding drivers to contact local police.

Ballachulish Community Company has applied for grant funding to cover legal fees to transfer ownership of the boatsheds to the company.

A member of the community council asked PC MacDonald if the police can speak to the Co-operative store personnel about safety issues in the car park as the tourist board signs are directing traffic into the exit.

Councillor Baxter confirmed the car park is the responsibility of the shop. Both the community council and councillor Baxter have yet to receive a reply from the Co-operative head office.

Progress is being made with the proposed war memorial for the village. A consultant has submitted a drawing showing the memorial at preferred locations. The community council has applied for a Highland council ward budget grant to cover the consultant's fees and a public meeting will be arranged.

Seven new Christmas lights have been purchased and a generator has been donated by Claymore Limited.

Councillor Baxter confirmed the sale for a recycling point has gone through and the land has been marked off.

A Facebook page has been set up asking locals for a response to speeding in the village. It will also ask villagers what speed restrictions they would like to see in place.

The play park committee and Ballachulish Community Company are both looking for new members.

Tignabruach

THEY say money doesn't grow on trees, but a Tignabruach community forest group hopes it will grow from public donations as it seeks funds to re-plant an area of woodland destroyed by storms last year.

Kilfinan Community Forest is asking members of the public to donate £20 each to its 'Sponsor a Sapling' campaign to raise £5,500 to plant 500 new trees and deer-fence the area.

Each contributor will receive a certificate and be able to name and visit their tree.

Kilfinan community forest director Rob Borruso said: 'By giving the trees a head-start in our nursery we should avoid the need for more aggressive interventions such as deer culling or rhododendron burning.'

The project will also create a unique opportunity for local schoolchildren. Fiona Hamilton, head teacher at Tignabruach primary school, said: 'Having the pupils involved in establishing the tree nursery will give them a real sense of ownership and an opportunity to understand woodland management and the lifecycle of trees through first-hand experience.'

Arrochar

TWO GP practice nurses from the Arrochar surgery are in line for prizes at the prestigious Scottish Health Awards - after leading a team of local volunteers to work in Africa.

Described in their awards citation as 'quite simply inspirational', Angela McKell and Jean Cairns have been nominated in the 'Top Team' category, after a 17-day trip to Kenya where they helped build a community centre, taught at schools and visited an orphanage.

Angela, also practice manager at the surgery, said they had been leading this initiative for around four years: 'It gives rural children a bit of a heads-up for future employment and was an amazing experience.'

Linda Skrastin, clinical services manager with NHS Highland, said: 'Angela and Jean have shown that, by going above and beyond the call of duty, it is possible to make a positive and hopefully lasting impact on the lives of young people and the community as a whole.'

Muckairn

MUCKAIRN Church Guild held its first meeting of the session on Monday October 6 when they were joined by a number of visitors.

The theme this year is 'A World to Serve'. After the opening worship, Bill Leach gave an interesting talk on the Royal National Mission to Deep Sea Fishermen and Oban War and Peace museum, telling his audience about their history and service over the years. The vote of thanks was given by Jessie Servant and Stella Huntingford led the closing worship after which everyone enjoyed tea and biscuits.



Plockton high school disco fun for first years

Plockton high school held a disco to welcome its new first year pupils. The theme was 'All things American' and pupils dressed up as cowboys, American Indians and film stars with prizes for the best costumes.

Olympic gold medallist visits Morar

Morar children were delighted when an Olympic gold medallist came to visit them. Rower Heather Stanning, originally from Lossiemouth, stopped off at Lady Lovat primary school while on a trip home to the Highlands and showed the pupils her 2012 gold medal and other prizes.



First concert performance of soldier's music

A PIECE of music written by a Scotsman who died on active service during World War One will receive its first concert performance next month on Bute.

Composer and arranger Barry Ould discovered the march in storage at a college in Edinburgh in 1993 and has spent several years attempting to have Cole's original works published since.

Cole served in World War One due to his appointment as a bandmaster of the Queen Victoria's Rifles, and was killed by a German sniper in April 1918 while rescuing wounded soldiers at the Somme. Tickets for the concert are available from Breechin's on Bridgend Street and from members of the Bute community band, with proceeds to be donated to Erskine, the charity for former service personnel.

Glenurquhart

PUPILS from Glenurquhart primary school recently visited a timber 'troll' bridge which they helped design on the high route of the Great Glen way.

The children came down to inspect their handiwork, which is one of many bridges along the scenic trail specially built to create extra interest for visitors, complete with pictures and poetry by the children on an adjacent notice board.

Forestry Commission Scotland's Sandra Reid said: 'The students very enthusiastically participated in the bridge's creation by drawing pictures and writing poetry about trolls, leaves and the woodland faerie, Ghillie Dubh. It was a great day.'



Electric car tours Highlands

AN ELECTRIC vehicle tour of the Highlands and islands was launched in Inverness at the weekend, and is continuing to tour rural parts of Scotland.

The tour has passed through Bonar Bridge, Glenelg, Kyle and Applecross and is due to arrive in the Western Isles today (Thursday) before heading back to Inverness on Friday.

The aim is to promote awareness that electric vehicles have a place in both city and rural communities and if planned properly, electric is a reliable method of powering vehicles, demonstrated through the use of the Route Monkey vehicle scheduling software.

MP for Inverness, Nairn, Badenoch and Strathspey, Danny Alexander, who attended the launch of the tour in Inverness on Saturday October 18, said: 'I'm delighted to help launch the Route Monkey EV Tour of the Highlands.'

'Electric vehicles are not just for the city. Increasing ranges and availability of charging points mean electric cars can be used over longer distances and help keep our communities connected.'

'By improving knowledge of the advantages of electric cars and by investing in infrastructure to support them, the Highlands can lead the way in the use of electric vehicles.'

Route Monkey chief executive officer Colin Ferguson said: 'Using technology, we can show that plug in vehicles can work well regardless of topography or geography, and where better to showcase this than the Highlands and islands of Scotland.'



LOOKING TO THE FUTURE: Sandy Watson, chairman of Caol community council, explains building plans to residents

Caol

CAOL community council held its first coffee morning since being reinstated earlier this year.

The group met with residents at the community centre on October 4 to hear what they would like to see happen in the village.

Sandy Watson, chairman of the community council, said: 'Thank you to everyone who came and to everyone who helped and donated home baking. Everyone had a great day.'

MORVERN lines

THE HIND shooting season in Scotland has now opened - at least for those who continue to recognise the importance of adhering to traditional close seasons.

The dwindling number of stalkers who still have enough deer on their ground to warrant a cull are preparing to remove those animals that mother nature might take as winter strengthens its grip in the Highlands.

Although they have a busy and often difficult time ahead, their task pales into insignificance compared to that which their predecessors on Black Mount Estate on the edge of Rannoch Moor were tasked with nearly 400 years ago.

Their boss, Sir Duncan Campbell of Glenorchy, was a friend of King James VI of Scotland - and first of England - who lived at the royal palace of Theobalds in Hertfordshire, 12 miles north of London. Sir Duncan had sent a pair of live golden eagles to the King's son, Prince Henry of Wales, as a birthday present some time before 1612, receiving a valuable stallion in return. The King, impressed by Sir Duncan's ability to capture live eagles, wanted an ever greater prize and wrote to him in 1622 asking him to send a live white hind which he had been told lived in Coireach a Ba, on Black Mount.

Coireach a Ba, on the southwest corner of the moor, is a large amphitheatre containing a number of small corries often full of mist and strange winds making stalking in them a challenging prospect. The literal translation of the Gaelic place-name is 'the corries of the cattle' although in ancient local folklore the 'cows' of Coireach a Ba were, in fact, deer.

Why the King asked for a live white hind in the dead of winter when there was every likelihood of snow on the ground and why Sir Duncan, who should have known better, did not suggest waiting until the spring, we will never know, but one does not argue with monarchs.

On January 13 1622 the King wrote to Lord Mar, his senior courtier in Scotland, saying, 'We have sent this bearer our servant John Scandaver for apprehending and transporting hither that white hind whereof ye yourself gave us first notice; and therefore require you to cause provide, either at Edinburgh, or any other town next to the place where he is to employ his travails, such things as he shall think requisite for taking or transporting the said hind. And because the country whither our said servant is to go to is wild and waste it is requisite that ye write to Glenurchy [Sir Duncan Campbell] as we have done to cause our said servant to be furnished with company and all things necessary'.



AMPHITHEATRE: Coireach a Ba, Black Mount Estate

The King was not wrong when he described the white hind's haunt as being 'wild and waste'. Rannoch Moor is a large expanse of around 50 square miles of water, rock and bog and one of the bleakest places in Scotland, especially in winter.

In nearly every other Highland glen there are signs of habitation, but not here where the red deer, golden eagle, raven and peregrine have since time immemorial more or less had the place to themselves.

Robert Louis Stevenson, in his well-known novel *Kidnapped*, says of Rannoch Moor, 'a wearier looking desert a man never saw'. Years later another traveller wrote, 'pray imagine the Moor of Rannoch, for who can describe it?'

Accompanied by Robert Campbell, Sir Duncan's son and some of his men, John Scandaver, the King's forester and two assistants, made their way north across moors and over steep hill-passes to Achallader Castle which Sir Duncan had built 20 years earlier near Loch Tulla. By this time Scandaver carried a telescope, then called a 'transparent', which Lord Mar, keen to indulge the King's whim, had given him on loan.

As portable telescopes were invented only a few years earlier by Johann Lippershey, a German-Dutch spectacle-maker, this must surely be one of the first references to their use for stalking deer.



HARSH CONDITIONS: many deer will die in winter

On the morning of February 22, the three Englishmen with Robert Campbell in the lead followed by a number of his men, started off for Coireach a Ba in the knowledge that the white hind had been spotted there the day before. As there were no roads or pony paths, they had to walk.

Eventually, the treacherous terrain, the snow fields, the dismal surroundings and the likelihood that by now he realised it was mission impossible, 'auld' Mr Scandaver fell to his knees among the rocks saying he could go no further. There the expedition ended, although if nothing else he was able to confirm to his royal master that the white hind did exist.

Far from being displeased at the result, the King wrote to Sir Duncan Campbell thanking him warmly for his willing assistance and for looking after John Scandaver so well. He ordered that the hind should be left alone until the following spring when he would think of some other plan to catch her. He never did and Sir Duncan sent him a live capercaillie instead.

Iain Thornber
iain.thornber@btinternet.com

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Fort man facing jail following attack

A FORT William man could be facing jail following a violent attack in the town.

Christopher Standen of 68 Lochaber Road was warned he could end up in prison after he admitted repeatedly punching a man and striking his head on the ground, as well as putting him in a headlock and attempting to stamp on his head multiple times at MacRae's Lane, off High Street.

Fort William sheriff court saw video evidence last Thursday (October 16) showing the 28-year-old and the victim approach each other and begin fighting in the early hours of June 22 but Standen soon got the better of his opponent who, procurator fiscal Andrew Hanton said, was under the influence of alcohol. Defence solicitor Hamish Melrose said the two men had fallen out in the past and when they crossed paths Standen 'just snapped' when the man threatened his family.

He added: 'Mr Standen was walking away and was followed by the complainer. He was standing outside the entrance of a bar with his arms waving about making a nuisance of himself.

'Mr Standen was challenged to a fight and you can see he got the better of the complainer.'

Mr Hanton said it was 'surprising' the injured man was able to walk away from the scene and was treated at Belford Hospital for a bleeding head the following day.

Sheriff Richard Davidson called the victim a 'drunken nuisance' but warned Standen he had not ruled out jail for what he said had 'the potential for extremely serious injuries'.

He added: 'I must take into account you had your forearm round his throat and were squeezing, something that can cause death readily. Also you repeatedly struck his head off the wall and ground and that can easily cause potential brain damage. I want to give you no indication that you may not go to jail.'

Sheriff Davidson deferred sentencing until November 11 for a background report.



Fergus hits the right notes at Mòd

Fergus Munro, 16, from Corpach, had a successful Royal National Mòd, winning the gold badge for boys solo singing in the 16-18 years category and the Turriff trophy for the highest marks in Gaelic between both the girls and boys competitions. He also lifted the Highland Society of London trophy for the highest marks overall between both the girls and boys competitions. The Mòd in Inverness closed with one of the finest massed choirs in memory. The economic value of the Mòd to the local economy was believed to be in the region of £2.5 to £3.5 million. Full news on the final events of the Mòd see pages 10-14.

'Road to the Isles' repair work starts

THE BUSY 'Road to the Isles' is to benefit from £200,000 worth of improvement works.

Resurfacing is already underway on the Fort William to Mallaig A830, from west of Corpach, and is expected to be completed by October 31.

Temporary traffic lights and a 10mph convoy system are in place between the 7am-7pm working hours and a 30mph speed limit is in place outwith these hours.

Eddie Ross, of contractors BEAR Scotland, said: 'These resurfacing works have been designed to

improve the running surface of this stretch of road which will ensure it is smoother and safer for motorists.

'Because of the location and nature of the works, some disruption is to be expected and we thank road users for their patience in advance.'

Sheriff slams police officers during trial

LOCHABER CONSTABLES HAD NO WRITTEN RECORD OF WARNING

EMMA CRICHTON
ecrichton@obantimes.co.uk

POLICE in Lochaber have come under fire from a local sheriff who said he is 'concerned' about how crimes may be dealt with in the area.

Sheriff Richard Davidson reprimanded two officers during a court trial last week as neither of them had a written record of giving an alleged dangerous driver a warning he could be prosecuted.

Constables Hugo Martin and Martin Blair both told Fort William sheriff court on Thursday October 16 they believed a verbal warning for speeding had been given to Kenneth Ferguson when they dealt with him in May last year but when procurator fiscal Andrew Hanton asked if they had written down the

warning neither of the officers had it in their notebooks.

Constables are required by law to explain to an accused they could be charged and what they have done to warrant this. There is no legal obligation to write the warning down although it is normally done as it may be used as evidence in court.

The accused Mr Ferguson, of 7 Appin Road, Kinlochleven, said he hadn't received the said warning about speeding on the Glencoe to Kinlochleven Road on May 14 and was found not guilty.

But Sheriff Davidson said it caused him 'considerable concern' there was no evidence of the warning.

He added: 'I think there's a problem here that needs explaining. I'm concerned that two police

officers may have come in here and told me a pack of lies. Not having a proper record of warnings could be a real problem in Lochaber.'

Fort William and Ardnamurchan area inspector Donald Campbell said he had spoken to one of the officers involved and was treating it as an 'ongoing enquiry'.

He said: 'I'm having a meeting with the sheriff next week to discuss it. I wasn't in the courtroom myself and my officers had left by the closing statements. Until I know exactly what the situation is I'm treating it as an ongoing enquiry.'

'It is up to the officers to take notes on what they think is important but a section one warning is an important part of the process when it comes to this kind of offence or any other.'

Thieves target Fort and Ballachulish

POLICE in Lochaber are appealing for information about two thefts in the area.

Sometime between 8.20pm on Tuesday October 14 and 9am the following morning entry was forced to a vehicle in Park Road, Ballachulish, and a number of power tools were stolen.

Sometime between October 4 and October 16 entry was forced to Fort William Football Club premises at Claggan Park and confectionery was stolen.

Anyone with information about either of these incidents is asked to contact local police on 101 or the confidential line on 01397 702000.

Tenants' group wins award

A FORT William community group has won an award for making improvements to the area they live in.

Upper Achintore Regeneration Group won first place in Highland Council's 'making a difference to your community' award at the annual tenants participation conference in Nairn. The group received a trophy and a £50 voucher in recognition of its hard work, which includes creating a picnic area with swings, installing planting barrels, arranging litter picks and initiating path and step repairs.

Young member Connor MacDonald was also highly commended in the 'young person

of the year' category for his work on the group's newsletter.

Jackie Carswell, chairwoman of Upper Achintore Regeneration Group, said: 'We are delighted and encouraged to receive this prestigious award. We have many more projects planned and we feel we are making a difference to our community. The awards have boosted the confidence of our hard-working group of volunteers and we are very proud of young Connor.'

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Recycled paper made up 75.5% of the raw material for UK newspapers in 2014



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The Oban Times

& WEST HIGHLAND TIMES

They are more deadly than Islamic State, Al-Qaeda and the Taliban put together. In the blink of an eye, a momentary lapse in concentration or a fiendish rush of recklessness from drivers can cause such life-changing - not to mention life-ending - carnage on our roads.

The catalogue of serious injury and worse inflicted day and daily on Argyll's challenging highways beggars belief. Argyll police revealed the dismal yet damning statistic that 68 people suffered serious injury or were killed over the course of the past 12 months. A recent UK government report drew the chilling conclusion that rural roads are 11 times more deadly than Britain's gridlocked motorways.

Yet Oban road safety campaigner Andy Elkerton admits the forlorn figure didn't surprise him. He said local drivers blame everyone but themselves for this dreadful toll. While the state of many Argyll roads are a serious contributory factor, it's time, he argued, for a critical examination of our own conduct behind the wheel. We couldn't agree more.

GLASGOW LETTER

Celtic Connections 2015

STUDENTS from the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland recently played on the steps of the Royal Concert Hall, Glasgow, as the programme for Celtic Connections 2015 was launched.

More than 2,000 musicians from every corner of the globe will come to Glasgow between Thursday January 15 and Sunday February 1 2015. The festival will have many themes, one being 'Remembering the Late and Great', when homage will be paid to musicians who have left their mark on the current musical landscape.

This will be the theme of the opening concert which will be dedicated to Martin Bennett who passed away 10 years ago.

Also in this category, concerts will pay tribute to Ewan MacColl, who established the country's first folk club, the Irish born legend Rory Gallagher and Pipe Major Donald MacLeod MBE, renowned for his bagpipe playing and compositions.

Royal National Mod 2014

MANY congratulations to all the prizewinners at this year's Mod, in which there was particular success for Glasgow choirs.

Conducted by Kenneth Thomson, Glasgow Gaelic Musical Association won the Lovat and Tullibardine competition and the competition for male voices while Govan Gaelic choir, conducted by Donald Feist, continued its success of last year by winning the Puirt-a-beul competition.

Young musician of the year finalists

THE LINE-UP for the BBC Radio Scotland Young Musician of the Year award is: fiddlers, Ryan Young Cardross; Seamus O'Baoighill, Skye and Gemma Donald, Shetland. Scots song singer Claire Hastings, Dumfries; clarsach player Heather Downie, Dunblane; and Gaelic singer Ainsley Hamill.

Supporters of Clydebank and District Highlanders will be delighted Ryan and Ainsley, who have performed at their ceilidhs for years, have qualified for the final of this prestigious award, held as part of Celtic Connections.

Ceol's Craic

THE NEXT meeting of Ceol's Craic in the CCA, Sauchiehall Street, will be on Saturday November 1 from 7.30pm. Entitled 'The Circle is

Unbroken' it will bring together iconic figures from the folk scene of the 1960s and 1970s with a younger generation of musicians who have been influenced by their legacy.

The evening will start with an instrumental set by Neil McDermott and Alistair Cassidy and this will be followed by Margaret MacLeod, of Na h-Oganaich fame, who will be joined by Alasdair Whyte and his band. Then it will be the turn of Mike Heron, a folk pioneer and founding member of the Incredible String Band. He has been collaborating and touring with Glasgow-based band The Trembling Bells and will include commissioned pieces in Gaelic together with Alasdair Whyte.

Congratulations

CONGRATULATIONS to James Lindsay, bass player with award-winning Breabach, this year's winner of the Martin Bennett Prize for a new musical composition.

Diary dates

Friday October 24: Three Film Show, Crawford Hall, Partick, 7pm for 7.30pm. St Andrew's in the Square, 7.30pm, Rab Noakes.

Saturday October 25: Glasgow Skye Association Marag Supper, Crawford Hall, 7.30pm. An Comunn, Stirling branch ceilidh, Lesser Albert Hall, 7.30pm. Gaelic Day at Paisley Grammar school from 9.30am. Telephone 07805 918509.

Sunday October 26: Scot's Guards Piping Recital, Haymarket, Edinburgh, 4pm, Jack Lee. Cost £10. Curry served after recital.

Sunday October 27: Post Mod ceilidh, West of Scotland Cricket Club, Peel Street, Partick.

Tuesday October 28: Gaelic singing workshops, Cafe, 74 Elderslie Street, 7pm, with Margaret Macleod dealing with Murdo MacFarlane songs and then a singing session with Margaret at 8pm. Places must be booked, telephone 0141 341 1025 or email linda@anlochran.com. Live at the Star, Admiral Bar, 72a Waterloo Street, 8pm, James Keelaghan.

Friday October 31: Glasgow Uist and Barra Association ceilidh dance, Crawford Hall, 9pm to 1am. **Saturday November 1:** Ceol's Craic - see above.

Pub scene

MUSIC in the Islay Inn this weekend will be provided by O'Caunals on Friday and Parting Glass on Saturday while in the Park Bar it will be Eriskay Lilt on Friday, Andrew MacDonald on Saturday and Robert Robertson on Sunday. **Neil Murray. Tel: 0141 954 8105. Email: neilmurray@yahoo.co.uk.**

YOUR LETTERS

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

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

Anonymous letters or those supplied without a contact telephone number will not be printed.

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

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

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

The Oban Times adheres to the Press Complaints' Commission's Code of Conduct.

The views expressed in The Oban Times are not necessarily those of this newspaper.



Corpach choir at Dunoon Mod - 1968

As the curtain goes down on this year's Royal National Mod in Inverness, this week's flashback photo shows Corpach Gaelic choir at the Mod in Dunoon in 1968. Prints or emails of flashback photos should be accompanied by a caption, name, address and telephone number. Anyone who wishes a print returned must supply a stamped, addressed envelope.

Letters to the editor

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People must keep Gaelic language alive

Sir, Having met John Macleod at the Mod service on October 12, I read with interest your report on his opening speech to the Mod.

However, having studied examples of language maintenance in a number of other countries, I feel Mr Macleod's comments are misguided.

Experience in other Celtic communities in these islands indicates that government led language movements produce indifferent results whereas in territories such as Israel, the Faroe Islands and South Africa, private initiative and individual commitment have given rise to successful examples of language revival.

It is not within the power of the government to promote a minority language. It has to come from the people who speak it.

It is up to the membership of An Comunn to promote Gaelic in their own daily lives, not only one week a year but throughout the year.

It is to be hoped An Comunn Gàidhealach will broaden its aims beyond its traditional objectives of music and singing and, if possible, work for the benefit of the Highland community.

Some years ago a young Harris woman said to me 'S feum leinn e, ach dèim feum a thair?' (We like it, but what use is it?) It is to be hoped Gaelic will come to be recognised as a working language. Witness my own series of industrial histories, which I hope will illustrate the use of Gaelic in a working context and in this way lead to a rise in confidence.

Richard Deveria, Gaelic historian.

In favour of Mull road upgrade

Sir, The letter from David Woodhouse in last week's *Oban Times* did not speak for me.

I am in favour of a twin track road from Craignure to Tobermory.

I will not comment on the infrastructure improvements required from Craignure to the Ross of Mull as I am not a regular user.

Conversely our elected community council members have every right to comment and suggest infrastructure for debate.

In 1964 the island's main ferry link to Oban was relocated to Craignure. The new pier was built with significant help from a local bequest and in return the people of Mull were promised that the inadequate 19th century single track A848 road would be upgraded to twin track. The first sections of the new road from Craignure to Salen were completed in the 1980s.

Unfortunately, funding was diverted to central belt projects including emergency repairs to the Erskine bridge. The contractor and the valuable Tarmac plant left the island.

Our needs are greater now as the population of the north of Mull has doubled. Our island hospital has been relocated to Craignure and again we were promised, at a public meeting in Craignure, that the road to Tobermory would be completed before the hospital.

Soon, two ferries, crossing hourly, will replace the current single *Isle of Mull* ferry. The traffic flow will be nearly continuous with opposing vehicles meeting every few minutes on the remaining six-mile single track section from Aros to the Gualann Dhubb.

The island has and requires for future sustainability a balance of economic drivers. We have tourism, rural industries - light and heavy - public services, fishing and processing, farming and forestry and high quality food production. We also have retail for need, retail for tourism, hotels and catering and in support we have highly qualified service trades and deliveries. All these lifestyles and rural industries require a balance of infrastructure and considered development, plus affordable housing to create a great place where there are jobs and homes for our next generation. The 42 babies born on Mull last year mean 42 jobs will be required in 16 to 20 years time!

We need our promised twin track, the A848, to be completed now. I believe a completed east coast arterial road will help to preserve the beauty of our island.

Brian Swinbanks, Tobermory.

Sadness over island plan

Sir, I read, with extreme sadness, about the plan to build a two-lane road from Tobermory, Isle of Mull, to the ferry port for Iona.

I have been visiting Mull for more than 30 years and have seen its popularity and importance as a wildlife haven increase beyond my imagination from when I first visited in the early 1980s.

It is the remoteness and the slower pace of life that brings people to all of the islands. The only people this road would benefit are the day-trippers who just pass through Mull on their way to Iona. The beauty of Mull passes them by. It still will, but just faster.

Tourism, especially ecotourism, must be the biggest industry on Mull and there is no way this plan will encourage this type of person to visit. People visit Mull to enjoy an experience totally different from their normal lives. Driving on single-track roads and using passing places are an integral part of this experience.

Why would anyone want to drive through the stunning beauty of Glen More at

60mph? How would this affect the regularly nesting golden eagles, just off the road in the glen?

I have also seen an increase in the number of otters being killed on Mull roads. This new road would only increase these fatalities.

Please do not allow this plan to come to fruition and spoil the most beautiful place I have ever visited.

Andy Bayes, Cambridgeshire.

Dumbfounded over Kilbowie House decision

Sir, After reading last week's article on Bombadil Publishing's relocation to Dornie, I felt compelled to write and give you the opinion of someone who actually works in the children's book industry.

I am disappointed Bombadil Publishing won't be coming to Oban and am disappointed in the poor decision making of Argyll and Bute council.

In a town where commerce of all types has suffered over the last couple of years, the arrival of Bombadil would have provided a much-needed boost to our town.

Oban would have become internationally recognised as the home to a successful children's publishing house which encourages, mentors and rewards young people's participation in the arts.

More than a dozen new jobs would have been created with Bombadil's annual turnover in the first year projected to top £4m.

Also, Kilbowie House would have been renovated and restored to its former glory.

The council placed a hugely overinflated price on Kilbowie House and when it was told how far off the mark this figure was it dragged its heels for 12 months whilst it decided what to do next.

During this time, the staff of Bombadil Publishing in Sweden were kept in limbo awaiting to hear whether they and their families would be relocating to Argyll.

What was the council doing during this time? Did it seek advice from publishing professionals regarding the positive, long-term effect of having a publisher in the town, or did it fail to see the 'long view' and become blinded by the promise of offloading a problematic building?

What will happen to Kilbowie now? I suspect housing is out of the question, as Gallanach Road would surely become clogged and unable to deal with more traffic. Perhaps the council will turn its back on it and hope it crumbles away?

I'd love to hear from someone from the council ranks to give their point of view or perhaps from a pro-sale council member who is as dumbfounded and exasperated as I am. **Andy Elkerton, by email.**

Truths about crofting

Sir, Please allow me to outline a few truths about the pastime known as crofting.

Despite the positive media spin issued by the Crofting Commission and others, this system is hopelessly failing.

The Crofting Commission and others blame all the problems of crofting on a group called 'absentees', a derogatory label relating to anyone who is deemed to live more than 32kms from their croft. The image created by the commission of the hated 'absentee' is, of course, one which they equate to neglect. Any purposeful use the 'absentee' uses his land for is ignored by the commission bureaucrats to give the illusion that the land should be reclaimed for sustainable use. Their solution is to strip the 'absentee' of his tenancy in favour of a 'local crofter'. This 'local crofter' could very well be someone living in a completely separate district never mind village and already working several other crofts. This ruling is what creates decay, reducing remoter districts to wastelands while echoing the conclusions of Frank Fraser Darling's studies from 60 years ago about land deteriorating into wet deserts.

Then, like now, these warnings are completely ignored as unpalatable by bureaucrats not qualified to be making decisions on land-use. The issue of multiple tenancies often go hand-in-hand with the convenient 32km ruling, but there is a further question to be posed: who are the aspiring young crofters looking for land?

Do they even exist? If so, then why are there so many multiple tenancies? State subsidy and benefits create nothing but poverty and the hectares of deteriorating land, neglected drainage and broken fences are testament to the failure of this system.

What would those who had to make use of the land to survive think of the present situation? My forefathers in Uig, Lewis, had to literally create arable land from scratch.

They toiled relentlessly over their scraps of land merely to survive. If they could have hired the Brahan Seer to inform them of the deterioration and play-time that has become of that land they created they would be devastated.

You must excuse my interpretation of the facts as I am but a simple country boy who was brought up on a croft.

I therefore have no academic background in reading about crofting from books or debating the subject with gentlemen in tweed suits and clean brogues.

My only experience of crofting has been limited to the practical skills of land-use, animal husbandry and the communal township life of my youth. **Angus Macdonald, by email.**



Beachd Ailein

Ailean Caimbeul

BHA FÌOR dheagh Mhòd Nàiseanta againn ann an Inbhir Nis, agus tha sinn glè mhòiteil leis mar a chaidh cùisean dhuinn.

Tha mòran ag ràdh gur e seo am Mòd a b' fheàrr air am bheil cuimhne aca agus tuigidh sibh gum bheil sin na thoirleachas dhan fheadhainn againn a bha an sàs ga libhrigeadh. Aig an aon àm tha mise glè mhothachail mar Fhear-Gairm na Comataidh Ionadail airson Mòd 2014 gum faodadh an teisteanas seo air Mòd Inbhir Nis beagan tàmailt a chur air daoine eile a rinn diceall mhòr a' libhrigeadh Mhòdan Nàiseanta nan coimhearsnachdan fhèin thar nam bliadhnaichean. Chan iarrainn gun tachradh leithid sin idir, agus cha mhotha na sin a tha mi airson gun teid dimeas a dhèanamh air saothair mhòr nam mìltean a th' air cur ri Mòdan thar ginealachan.

'S e firinn na cùise gum bheil a h-uile Comataidh Ionadail ag amas air an tachartas a b' fheàrr a bh' ann riamh agus tha amas den t-seòrsa sin a dhith gus a' Chomataidh agus a' choimhearsnachd a bhrosnachadh nan cuid obair-deasachaidh. Agus tha obair mhòr ann! Feumaidh Mòdan atharrachadh fo bhuidhe na tha a' tachairt san t-saoghal mun cuairt mar a tha rudan eile de gach seòrsa. 'S e fìor thachartas mòr a th' anns a' Mhòd a-nise agus tha e coisgail a chur air adhart, ach aig an aon àm thathas a' dearbhadh bliadhna an dèidh bliadhna gum bheil toradh buannachdail às na tha de dh'airgead poblach ga thasgadh ann. Thathas den bheachd gum tàinig mu thri mìleann not a-staigh gu ruige Inbhir Nis ri linn Mòd 2014 agus mar a bhiodh dùil tha sin a' gluasad dhaoine gu bhith ga iarraidh air ais!

Bidh feadhainn ag ràdh gur e annas a th' ann gun do mhair Gàidhlig beò a dh'aindeoin na dìol a dh'fhuiling i fhèin 's a luchd-cleachdaidh agus theagamh gum bheil an aon seòrsa spàirn agus diorrasachd ri fhaicinn anns an taic shaoir-thoilich a tha a' cumail a' Mhòid Nàiseanta agus Mòdan Ionadail a' dol.

As aonais na h-obrach a tha na mìltean de dhaoine a' cur ris na Mòdan Ionadail cha bhiodh iad ann idir, agus gu cinnteach nam feumte pàigheadh airson na taice dhan Mhòd Nàiseanta bhiodh a' chosgais na b' fhaighe air tri chairteal a mhilleann seach a bhith beagan fo leth-mhilleann. Shoirbheil Mòd 2014 ann an Inbhir Nis air sgàth co-obrachadh èifeachdach eadar daoine agus buidheann aig an robh aonta agus tuigse air amas cultarail agus coimearsalta!

MANY factors contributed to the success of the Royal National Mod 2014 in Inverness but the most important element was the effective co-operation among the many individuals and organisations involved and committed to a common objective for this unique celebration of the Gaelic language and culture.

While organisers are all justifiably proud, public sector and private sponsors can also take considerable satisfaction in the significant economic benefit which the Mod delivered to the area. Everyone a winner I hope.

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

SCOTS

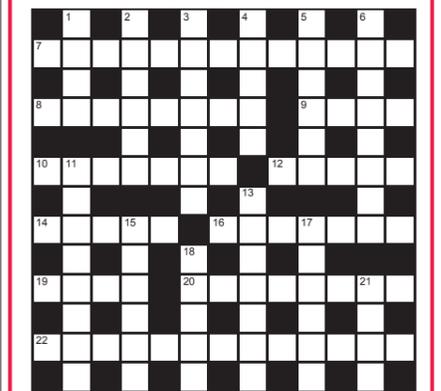
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| 7 Difficulties between upper and lower types (5,8) | 1 Family (4) |
| 8 Wending it's way towards you (8) | 2 Accompany to a party (6) |
| 9 Betting statistics (4) | 3 Clothes for warm weather (1-6) |
| 10 Perturb (7) | 4 Grounds (5) |
| 12 Milk dispenser (5) | 5 Ancient (3-3) |
| 14 Hiding place (5) | 6 Coerce (8) |
| 16 Wise (7) | 11 Throaty (8) |
| 19 Expert (4) | 13 Cube of toasted bread (7) |
| 20 Roof (8) | 15 Rubbed pen mark (6) |
| 22 Unconventional tribunal (8,5) | 17 Guardian spirit (6) |
| | 18 Predator of the ocean (5) |
| | 21 Creole vegetable (4) |

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Fuel surcharge sparks outrage

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FAMILIES in the Highlands and islands are paying hundreds of pounds more for electricity because of where they live in what one politician called a 'national disgrace'.

Public representatives have called on both the Scottish and UK governments to put an end to a surcharge which sees households in the north pay two pence more per unit than anywhere else in Scotland because of regional variations in prices.

In the western isles, 71 per cent of residents are living in fuel poverty - spending more than 10 per cent of their income on fuel - and could be paying hundreds of pounds more each year than other areas.

Charles Kennedy, MP for Ross, Skye and Lochaber, said: 'Too often, consumers are poorly treated by energy companies. Barely a day goes by without a negative story appearing in the media, the recent news from the Highlands and islands being pertinent indeed.'

'Consumers must be protected by building a fair, open and competitive energy market.'

'Big steps have been taken but we have yet to reach the end of the journey.'

Councillor Angus Campbell, leader of Comhairle nan Eilean Siar, has backed a campaign by charity Western Isles Poverty Action Group (WIPAG) for the charge to be scrapped.

He said: 'Not only are people in the Highlands and islands being charged two pence per unit more than the rest of Scotland, we also face higher charges for the transmission of energy out of our area.'

'So we are faced with a double whammy - particularly as much of

that electricity is produced in the Highlands and islands.'

'At the same time we have the highest fuel poverty figures in the UK.'

'To impose an additional burden on the people of the Highlands and islands is completely unacceptable and completely contradicts the principle of universality.'

And councillor Angus McCormack, chairman of WIPAG added: 'This is a national disgrace. A two pence reduction in unit costs would have a significant impact on fuel poverty. A consumer using 1,500 units per year would save £300.'

'We call on the Scottish government to resolve this iniquity as a matter of urgency.'

Highland Council has also backed the campaign. Council leader Drew Hendry called the charge 'extremely unfair' and said he is keen to support the work of Comhairle nan Eilean Siar.

Energy giants Scottish and Southern Energy insisted it had no control over the regional pricing system and would like to see it scrapped but the decision is with regulator Ofgem.

Charles Gallacher, Ofgem's Scotland director, said: 'We

recognise that the north of Scotland faces higher costs for the distribution of energy across the region.'

'This reflects the cost of running the network in that area and the same methodology applies across Britain, resulting in regional variations.'

'Ofgem is committed to ensuring that network companies deliver value for money for consumers.'

Na h-Eileanan an Iar MP Angus MacNeil said he is writing to the UK energy minister Matthew Hancock MP regarding the pricing structure and called fuel poverty in the UK 'a scandal'.

Drivers face diversion as A82 trunk road closes for five nights

LOCHABER'S trunk road is to be completely closed for five nights to allow maintenance work to be carried out.

The A82 resurfacing, just north of Fort Augustus, means the road has to be shut between 8pm and 6am from Sunday November 2 until Friday November 7.

A diversion will be in place via the A87 and the A887 leaving the A82 at Invergarry and rejoining at Invermoriston, and vice versa, but Stewart MacLean of campaign group the A82 Partnership said the road should not have to be fully closed to carry out the work.

He said: 'Once again the A82 demonstrates its inadequacy by requiring to be fully closed to carry out normal maintenance work.'

A spokesman from contractors BEAR Scotland said: 'Works have been programmed to be carried out during the night to avoid any conflict with potentially busy daytime traffic. We apologise for any inconvenience caused.'

'We apologise for any inconvenience caused.'

Missing 75-year-old found safe and well on Skye

A 75-YEAR-OLD man, missing on the Isle of Skye, has been found safe and well.

Jim Tough disappeared overnight after being reported missing having walked his dog in Portree last Thursday morning. He was found several miles away near Earlish the following afternoon with his pet, before being taken to Broadford Hospital for assessment.

He had been holidaying in the area when he disappeared and was found after an extensive search involving the coastguard and mountain rescue teams.

Residents on the island eventually managed to pinpoint Mr Tough's whereabouts to the rescue helicopter and the police thank everyone who helped to find him.

Glenfinnan powers ahead



SUCCESS: Donald Cameron, Lord Lieutenant of Lochail, cuts the ribbon at Slatach hydropower station, with Bob Middleton 20_143hydro02

A NEW renewable energy scheme near Glenfinnan is now open following five years of planning and work.

The hydropower station at Slatach was officially opened by Donald Cameron, Lord Lieutenant of Lochail, on October 9 along with Bob Middleton of operators TLS Hydro and LoCo2 Energy.

Mr Middleton said: 'This project has been five years in the making and has been a lot of hard work. We'd like to thank everyone who has been involved in the project and for everyone to benefit from Scotland's vast natural resources. We are committed to investing in new renewable hydropower projects and Slatach has already been a runaway success in terms of its output exceeding all our expectations.'

A west Highland charitable fund will also benefit from the scheme as LoCo2 has pledged £10 to the Moidart trust for every customer in Scotland who signs up to a renewable or low carbon tariff.

Anus MacDonald, founder of the trust, said: 'We award enterprise grants to help grow sustainable businesses. Part of our work is to attract investment from other charitable trusts, individuals and companies and we are delighted the Moidart trust will benefit.'



GENEROUS: Banavie primary school pupils with food they collected for the elderly

Pupils spread harvest cheer

FORT William youngsters celebrated the harvest festival by gathering food for the elderly.

Lochside RC primary school held a special assembly including songs and prayers before pupils handed out food to pensioners who live close to the school.

Banavie primary school also celebrated the festival by baking their own bread and delivering food collected by the pupils to elderly in the village.

ASSEMBLY: Lochside RC primary school pupils celebrate the harvest festival 20_143harvest01



Meeting will shed light on new group

FORT William is to get a 'men's shed' - an area set aside in the community for the male population to relax, talk and take part in practical activities.

The concept originates in Australia and has spawned thousands more 'sheds' across the world, including very recently in Scotland.

The new 'shed' in Fort William is holding an open meeting in the Alexandra Hotel next Wednesday, October 29, giving men the chance to meet group members.

Guest speaker Nick Pilbeam, from the Westhill men's shed near Aberdeen, will share his experiences of setting these groups up. The meeting runs from 7.30pm until 9pm.

Faster internet an 'economic boost'

FASTER broadband will deliver a 'real economic boost' to Lochaber, according to Charles Kennedy MP. Ballachulish, Onich and Spean Bridge will receive new fibre broadband through a Scotland-wide scheme.

Charles Kennedy, MP for Ross, Skye and Lochaber, said: 'People in Lochaber have been at the back of the queue when it comes to improvements in digital services. Broadband has unique potential to transform job opportunities and business in areas like the Highlands which have previously been poorly served by communications infrastructure. It's crucial we get this investment working for the communities and businesses it is intended to support as quickly as possible.'

Yes supporters dig deep for food bank

INDEPENDENCE supporters in Lochaber have turned their attention to helping those in need.

Yes Lochaber held its first post-referendum meeting in Caol community centre on October 6 and members brought food and money to be donated to the region's food bank.

Two car loads of provisions and £378 was delivered to the charity's Fort William storage depot and food bank manager Alec McConnachie said it will make a 'huge difference'.

He added: 'It was a massive amount, six kilograms of food and £378. It's really good of them and we've had a lot of donations from churches and other groups as well.'

Islanders angered as Holyrood backs MoD last-gasp turbine objections

GORDON WEBSTER
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THE SCOTTISH government has refused planning permission for the North Uist wind turbine scheme, with the chairman of the project calling it 'a kick in the teeth' for the island's residents.

The proposed development - which could have generated £200,000 a year for the community, rising to over £450,000 after 15 years - was rejected by Holyrood.

This followed a late objection lodged by the Ministry of Defence

(MoD), claiming the turbines would interfere with defence radar systems.

Robert Fraser, chairman of North Uist Development Company (NUDC), said: 'We do wonder if there is a pattern here and whether such flagrant disregard for the clearly expressed wishes of the community would be the norm.'

'What would have been the outcome, if we were 50 miles nearer Stornoway, where most of the councillors' votes are to be found.'

'We are now virtually the only community in the islands which

is not able to derive community benefit from the great wind resource we have.'

The project had been given the all-clear by the Ministry of Defence in 2010 when it began, only for a change of tack well into its development, which has dismayed and angered the local community.

An Ministry of Defence spokesperson outlined the reason for their eleventh-hour objection.

He said: 'We objected to the applications due to the unacceptable impact of the proposals on the Benbecula air defence

range control radar.'

'The Ministry of Defence continues to work with Comhairle nan Eilean Siar to consider the way forward.'

A Scottish government spokesperson said: 'Scottish Ministers were responsible for the determination of the North Uist Development Company's wind turbine development at Locheport.'

'As such, these determinations were made following a thorough consideration of all relevant material issues and related assessments.'



FILMING: Callum MacLeod with Eje Kim (centre right) and two members of the South Korean production team

Following in Isabella's footsteps

LOUISE LEE
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EXPLORING the traditions of Oban and Mull has led a modern day adventurer from the Royal National Mod in Inverness to the heartland of one of her all-time heroines.

Professor Dr Eje Kim, who is a cultural geographer and fieldwork designer from South Korea, has

been so inspired by the life of a Tobermory woman that she has been commissioned to make a film about her.

Isabella Bird, who moved from her home in England to the Mull village, was a hugely influential scientist and geographer.

Her work led her to be one of the first women to hold a senior position in South Korea and, as Eje explained, is regarded as a folk

hero in the Asian country. The geographer said: 'Isabella is almost forgotten - perhaps that is because she is not all that well known, or because she was a woman working in a time where women were not recognised.'

'For the people of South Korea, she is someone who is revered and respected. She was certainly one of the great influences on my career.' Callum MacLeod of Ee-usk res-

taurant, welcomed the production team to Oban and gave them a taste of local seafood.

The production team are planning to film in Mull at the site of Isabella Bird's home before returning to Oban. Today, Thursday, they hope to visit Skipinnish for a ceilidh with Angus MacPhail. Before leaving the area, they want to meet some of the women from Oban Lorne ladies rugby team.

The newt kid on the block

GORDON WEBSTER
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A YOUNGSTER from Kyle of Lochalsh is making his mark in the conservation world, conducting surveys about newts in the north of Scotland.

Callum Ullman-Smith, 12, has been contributing to reptile and amphibian studies since he was seven years old and made a presentation to the Amphibian and Reptile Conservation Symposium in Edinburgh on Sunday.

The Auchtertyre primary school pupil talked about the three years he had spent recording numbers of palmate newts on the seashore near Reraig, Loch Alsh at the event held in the Royal Botanic Gardens.

Callum initially discovered the small amphibians in a rock pool next to Loch Linnhe, Fort William, which is unusual, as they are normally only found in fresh water.

He said: 'I was about six when I first got interested in amphibians and reptiles going out on adventures with my mum and I really got fascinated by them.'

'I really enjoyed the presentation, there were 60-70 people there, it was brilliant.'

Callum has also presented talks in the past to the Highland Biological Recording Group and the Highland Seashore Survey Project, being the youngest member of both groups.



Callum Ullman-Smith at nine years old, in 2012, beginning his three-year survey of palmate newts Photo Janet Ullman

Mòd
Inbhir Nis
2014

Royal National Mòd



ATOMIC: The Piseagan won the Esme Smythe Trophy for the fifth time - making the Argyll Ladies Choir the most successful in women's singing competitions. 15_143mod46



WINNERS: The coveted prize of the Lovat and Tullibardine Shield was won by Glasgow Gaelic Musical Association with Kenny Thomson as the conductor. 15_143mod73



THOMSON: Kenny Thomson received the Donald Thomson memorial quich from Ishbel Banks on behalf of the Thomson family.

The prize is for the highest marks in Gaelic in the area choirs competitions. Donald 'Mr Gaelic' was a resident in Oban for 50 years. He was originally from Lewis but moved to the town to be the Gaelic teacher and deputy head teacher at the high school. He was the provost of Oban three times. When he died this quich was given in his memory. Ishbel was asked to present the trophy as the Thomson family have had a recent bereavement. Ishbel was delighted to present the cup. 15_143mod48



DOING FYNE: Tarbert Loch Fyne choir with conductor Hilary MacDonald. 17_143mod34



BACK WIN: Còisir Sgir a' Bhac (Back Choir) won the Grampian Television Trophy and the Angus MacTavish Memorial Trophy for the highest marks in Gaelic at the Choral Rural Open - Ladies competition. 15_143mod27



SILVER: Riona Whyte (left) joins her pupils Donna Dugdale, from Tobermory, and Hector MacKenchnie, Samharaidh, Lochaline, who won the silver pendant and silver medal respectively. 17_143mod14



WINNER: Karen MacRae of Strath Choir which won The Lorn Shield. It was presented by Peter Griffiths of Caledonian MacBrayne. 15_143mod64



GOLDEN TIMES: The Oban Times Gold Medal was won by Rachel Deans from Cumbernauld. She received the prize from The Oban Times senior reporter Louise Lee. 15_143mod09



HAND OVER: Duncan Macdonald, chairman of the local organising committee in Oban, receives the Mod flag. It will be raised again next year in the west coast town. 15_143mod62

John Morrison, chief executive of An Comunn Gàidhealach

Opinion

SATURDAY marked the end of The Royal National Mòd 2014. It's been a spectacular nine days as thousands of people (Gaelic and non-Gaelic) watched and participated in 200 competitions celebrating traditional Gaelic language and culture.

An Comunn Gàidhealach president, John Macleod, started the week with his opening address asking whether the Gaelic Language (S) Act of 2005 has given Gaelic 'equal respect' to the English language, as promised when it was published with the authority and unanimous support of all political parties almost 10 years ago. Many non-Gaelic may ask 'What's the point of this and how would it even be achieved?'

Their view is that as a minority language spoken by such a small percentage of the country, surely it's a waste of money to invest in it - and does Gaelic even have a place in a modern Scotland?

Gaelic has been under threat many times and we can trace its rise and subsequent fall throughout the centuries, yet it survives - and thrives. In the 1600s there were policies forcing Gaelic speaking families to send their children to be educated in English speaking schools in the lowlands and the 1616 act of the privy council included a requirement that the children of the Highland nobility must be capable of speaking, reading and writing English if they were to be recognised as an heir. Furthermore, the 'de-Gaelicisation' of the Highlands in the 18th century led to Scots languages and traditions being banned after the Battle of Culloden in 1746. Then the Education (Scotland) Act 1872, banned Gaelic-medium education and saw pupils punished for speaking the language.

Between the Act of 1872 and between local government re-organisation in the mid-70's the education system provided little support for the language. In these times when there was

little or no public agency support in existence, the National Mòd - with the help of its supportive and passionate volunteers - helped to keep the Gaelic flame alight and in the forefront of the thoughts of the wider Scottish population.

Most negative comments towards Gaelic come from people who have had no real contact with the language or the culture. Many people look at the population of Scottish towns and cities speaking English and don't realise many of the people are bilingual. In addition, there's an assumption that over the centuries, we ought to have accepted English as our first and only language. There's also an image problem with Gaelic speakers being portrayed as kilt-clad Northerners who have never heard of a computer. People with these views expect children to come out of Gaelic-education with a Brigadoon view of the world and little else. On the contrary, children in Gaelic-medium education are scoring highly across all subjects, including English and maths.

This is not a criticism of the English language, I have a great love of the language. I simply would like to see a level playing field that recognises Gaelic and its importance in Scottish culture and heritage.

I come from a Gaelic-speaking family and was born and brought up in Ness, Isle of Lewis, an area with the highest number of Gaelic speakers left in any community in Scotland (in excess of 75 per cent at the last census).

I can trace both our sides of the family back approximately 300 years within this community. As my family, friends and I grew older we began to understand that we had to embrace both our historic language and the English language. Our exciting visits to the island metropolis of Stornoway brought home the reality that Gaelic was still the first language of our island, but that English was

a necessity for our adult lives. We readily accepted this situation and became completely bilingual at an early age.

Many people simply think that traditional Gaelic culture is old-fashioned and un-cool, which couldn't be further from the truth. Events like The Mòd, which celebrate traditional Gaelic culture, are all modern in their organisation, communication and approach - but the competitions will continue to celebrate the heritage and tradition of the culture.

That doesn't mean Gaelic speakers are not modern and it doesn't mean that if you love Gaelic culture, you can't also love popular culture. In the 1980s The Jam were my favourite band and they're still the screensaver on my phone. My favourite track of all time is Teenage Kicks and John Peel was my favourite DJ, but I still loved The Mòd and Gaelic singers - it's not one or the other, you can embrace both.

I have heard comments that Gaelic is niche, it's not growing fast enough and it will never be part of everyday life in Scotland, but my argument would be - why not? It's part of mine and the other 90,000 Gaelic/English bilingual speakers in Scotland. I'm not suggesting that English is thrown out and you will be refused to be served your pint of milk unless you ask for it in Gaelic.

Rumours concerning minority language communities, such as Quebec, which almost became independent from the rest of Canada, also make English-speaking Scots nervous.

What I would like to see is the country striving for the normalisation of a bilingual Scotland.

There are lots of little changes that would mean a great deal to Gaelic and introduce the language naturally to non-Gaelic, without it being forced upon them. Change isn't something that will happen overnight or even over a couple of years, but it is possible. As construction takes place, signs



Royal National Mòd



are put up, websites are built, literature published and educational materials developed – at this point they could be printed in both languages at a minimal cost. By arguing against this, aren't people depriving Gaelic speakers of the equal respect promised to them?

The language is thriving - 30 years ago there were 10 children in Gaelic-medium education and now there are over 4,000. Interestingly over the last few decades, much of this increase comes from non-Gaels discovering the benefit of a Gaelic and bilingual education. This demand continues to grow particularly in the cities. Glasgow, Edinburgh and Inverness are setting the pace for the rise of dedicated Gaelic Schools providing excellent bilingual educations but currently this is being stunted by the lack of teachers available. This is something councils are aware of and are looking at solutions for.

Education is absolutely the key to bridging the gap between Gaels and non-Gaels and creating a place for the language in a modern and progressive Scotland. It will help build generations of bilingual and proud Scots competing on a world stage across a variety of professions from science, to music, to literature and even continuing our successful summer of sport.

Our Gaelic Ambassador of the Year 2014, Kirsteen MacDonal comes from a non-Gaelic speaking household, yet she went through Gaelic-medium education and is now a very successful bilingual BBC presenter and Gaelic singer. On the flip side we had Ariel Killick performing as part of the fringe. An Australian with Scottish heritage she decided to learn the language aged 19 having discovered her Scottish ancestry, she is now Scotland's only Gaelic street theatre artist, has worked as a government translator and is employed at most of Scotland's large street festivals and celebrations, including Glasgow 2014.

Kirsteen and Ariel are great examples of how non-Gaels can engage in Gaelic language and culture. Criticisms have been made that Gaelic culture feels exclusive and that's absolutely not the intention. I can understand how some non-Gaelic speakers may feel intimidated, as significant bridges between Gaels and non-Gaels (normalisation) have not been made. If you're not seeing or hearing Gaelic in your everyday life, of course you will feel excluded but it's quite sad that it has become this way and on the contrary we want the whole of Scotland to join in. Gaelic is inclusive but until changes are made, it will be difficult for Gaels to not feel like a minority and for

non-Gaels to feel included, and this is a problem.

One of the most regular criticisms aimed at the Gaelic culture is based upon economics, which I nodded to earlier. Why should we spend precious resources on a language that is spoken by so few? Well, in short, Gaelic is an indigenous Scottish language that shaped modern Scotland. It is spoken by 1.2 per cent of the Scottish population and I understand that it consumes only 0.8 per cent of the entire Scottish Government budget. The Gaelic community also pays taxes, is it not our right then to ask for our share of this contribution when we are happy to fund mainstream activity? If the misconception is that those holding Gaelic culture close to their hearts are simply suffering from nostalgia, then this can be easily remedied by looking at the thriving schools and communities.

The Mòd has been working for 122 years to bridge the gap between Gaels and non-Gaels and increased competitor and visitor numbers show there is a growing appetite for Gaelic and traditional culture. Other wonderful festivals and events including Piping Live!, The World Pipe Band Championships, Tìree Music Festival, Heb-Celt, Blas and Celtic Connections also raise the profile of fantastic traditional acts and singers and they often create unique collaborations appealing to music fans from across Scotland and beyond. Who would have thought that the Red Hot Chilli Pipers could enter the top 10 of the charts playing an Avicii track on the bagpipes? Radio 1 listeners, whose core audience is 18-25 loved and supported that tune.

Julie Fowles is one of Scotland's greatest Gaelic exports and is an internationally acclaimed singer – she's young, beautiful and successful - who happens to sing in Gaelic.

The reality is that Gaelic language and culture is something to be proud of and it's the heart of who we are as Scots.

Despite the best efforts over thousands of years there is still a thriving community that wants to share its passion with the rest of Scotland and not feel like a minority, unable to use their own language in their home country or exclude its fellow countrymen and women.

Bilingualism is an asset and absolutely has a place in modern Scotland – it's providing a better education; it opens employment doors; it opens minds and it provides understanding in areas such as geography and history where place-names and events are steeped in Gaelic Heritage – surely that is worth investing in. It can even be enjoyed in 140 characters or less.

WINNERS: Mull Gaelic Choir, under the baton of Elizabeth Jack, won the rural choirs' Sheriff MacMaster Campbell Memorial Quaich, The Selma Shield and The Grace Robertson Memorial Baton for the conductor of the choir gaining the highest marks in music. 15_143mod24.



THE DANCING CONDUCTOR: Kenny Thomson organised the massed choirs 'on the hoof' and made an impressive job of conducting. 15_143mod75



REDOUBTABLE: Undeniably the king of Sine Bhan is Raibeart MacCallum. 'Let it sing itself,' he said - and it most certainly did. 15_143mod74



Badenoch Ladies won the Harris Tweed Authority Trophy in the waulking song competition on Friday. 17_143mod39



MALE VOICE: The men sing their hearts out at the massed choir. 15_143mod78



Argyll's Coisir Ceann an Tuirc performed in the male voice choir competition. 17_143mod35



FLAG: The handover of the Mod Flag between Allan Campbell and Duncan Macdonald of Oban was met with a hearty cheer from the large crowd. Duncan told the choirs, during a very funny speech, that the Mod in Oban would be similar to the Mod in Inverness only there would be 'slower traffic' and maybe it would rain. 15_143mod76



GATHERING: More than an hour of singing was heard from thousands of choristers at Inverness Castle esplanade on the final Saturday. 15_143mod61

Best for Mòd news and results

The Oban Times
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Mòd
Inbhir Nis
2014

Royal National Mòd



OBAN: the town's choir with conductor Sileas Sinclair. 15_143mod60

2014 Mod hailed a cultural and financial success

FOLLOWING nine days of exciting competitions and phenomenal performances, Am Mòd Nàiseanta Rìoghail (The Royal National Mod), has been hailed a huge success. It is set to leave a legacy on the city as thousands of Gaels and non-Gaels have celebrated and embraced traditional Gaelic culture. A signature event of the Highland Homecoming celebrations, the festival returned to Inverness for the first time in 17 years and is expected to have brought between £2.5million and £3million to the local economy.

Convener of The Highland Council, councillor Jimmy Gray said: 'The Highland Council sees this year's Mod as an incredible success for the city as well as for competitors, their families, supporters, visitors to the Highlands, and not to mention the people of Inverness, who have joined in and embraced this vibrant celebration of Gaelic culture. Businesses have received a very welcome economic boost at what is traditionally a quieter time of the year and the atmosphere during the day and in the evening within the city centre has been really fantastic. I am sure the positive benefits will be felt for a long time to come and we look forward to the opportunity of welcoming the Mod back to Inverness in the near future.'

The Mòd officially closed today with a mass choir procession through the city, culminating in a ceremony handing the reigns over to representatives from the 2015 host town, Oban. Next year's festival is taking place from October 9 - 17 and will be the 123rd year of the event.

More than 3,000 competitors took part in 200 competitions during The Mòd, whilst almost 100 Fringe events added to the electric atmosphere in Inverness. Workshops, book readings, come and try sessions, concerts and gigs took place morning, noon and night across the Highland Capital. Visitor numbers are estimated as being over 8,500 from across Scotland, the UK, Canada and even the United Arab Emirates.

Organised by An Comunn Gàidhealach, one of the world's oldest and most respected Gaelic organ-

isations, the event is the most important festival of the Gaelic language in Scotland. There was a substantial rise in under-18s competing in traditional singing events and an increase in high school choirs taking part, showing a rising interest in the festival and traditional Gaelic culture.

Top prizes included the children's silver medal (boys and girls) which made history when it went to brother and sister Catriona and John Alasdair Bain from Lewis, it was the first time it has been awarded to siblings.

The silver medals were won by Donna Dugdale from Mull and Hector MacKechnie from Morvern and the Gold Medals were clinched by father-of-two Angus MacLeod from Inverness, who was the first man from the city to win the medal since 1992, and Eilidh Cormack from Portree who had entered for the first time, having turned 18 in July. Eilidh's brother Ruairidh won the men's Traditional Gold Medal, while the women's went to Ceitlin LR Smith from Ness, Isle of Lewis. Ceitlin came third in the competition in 2012 and also performed as part of The Mòd fringe this year with her band Gria. In the big choir competitions, the Lovat and Tullibardine Shield went to Glasgow Gaelic Musical Association while the Margrat Duncan Memorial Trophy went to Aberfeldy and District Gaelic Choir. Competitions in Highland dancing, literature, piping and clarsach also took place.

Says John Morrison, chief executive of An Comunn Gàidhealach: 'This year has been so much fun and we have seen incredible talent across all of the competitions. I've also been encouraged by the feedback from those who attended for the first time, commenting on how much they have enjoyed it.'

'I like to end 2014's Mòd by thanking everyone who entered competitions and by offering my congratulations to all our worthy winners. Most of all I want to thank our sponsors and supporters and every single person that contributed to the festival's organisation - from the local organising committee, to Highland Council, to our valued volunteers - we really couldn't do it without you. Here's to Oban in 2015.'

Family affair for the Cormacks of Skye

A BROTHER and sister have won the gold and traditional gold medal at Inverness Mod for the first time in the festival's history.

Eilidh Cormack, 18, won the gold medal at the Mod on Thursday morning, exactly 31 years after her father, Arthur, was awarded the medal at the same age. Just a few hours later, big brother Ruairidh, 20, won the traditional gold medal.

'I've been coming to the Mod since I was five or six and it's become an annual pilgrimage for my whole family, we all love it,' Eilidh said.

'I only turned 18 in July so it was my first try at the gold medal and I'm absolutely shocked to have won - I burst out crying when I realised. It's such a prestigious award and I thought it may take me a few years to get close.'

'My dad won the gold when he was 18 so he is really proud. I'm so grateful to the mod and can't wait for the festival in Oban next year.'

A student at Sabhal Mor Ostaig, Ruairidh said: 'Yesterday (Thursday) morning when Eilidh won I couldn't believe it myself.'

'I wasn't at the final, I was listening on the radio and then I thought, "oh boy the pressure is on now".'

'I'm very happy that she won as well, it's an amaz-

ing achievement. It's great to see so much success coming to Skye.'

Asked what it feels like to be the first siblings to hold the gold and traditional gold medals at the same time, Ruairidh added: 'It's a strange feeling, it hasn't sunk in.'

'The last 24 hours have been mad.'

'In a few days time, when we reflect, it will be a great feeling.'

Both Ruairidh and Eilidh owe much of their success to their parents - Arthur, a stalwart of the Mod, and Gaelic teacher, Shona.

Arthur, who won his gold medal in 1983, said: 'People think because you won it yourself you push them into it but they wanted to come and it's fantastic that Eilidh won on her first attempt.'

'My wife Shona is a Gaelic teacher at Portree High School and we brought the kids up in a Gaelic speaking home, they all went to Gaelic Medium Education and Eilidh is at Glasgow University studying Gaelic.'

'It's fantastic that people are learning it outwith the home but it's much better if you can do that at home. We thought if we are able to do it, we should do it.'



SALVER: Ainsley Hamill from Cardross won the Mary C MacNiven Memorial Salver while qualifying for the gold medal final at the Mod on Wednesday. The 22-year-old, who won the silver pendant last year, also played at the Mod Fringe Festival as part of her band Barluath. 17_143mod07



RURAL: Taynuilt Gaelic Choir performed in the rural choirs competition. 17_143mod22



SWEET 18: Eilidh Cormack of Portree, Skye, won the gold medal at the Mod on Thursday, 31 years after her father Arthur won the medal, also at the tender age of 18. 17_143mod17



FRIENDS: Carolyn MacDonald of Tarbert gets a few musical tips from singer Robert Robertson of Fort William. 15_143mod66



JOINT WINNERS: Kenny Thomson of Glasgow Gaelic Musical Association (left) and Mary Ann Kennedy of Inverness Gaelic Choir shared The Oban Times Silver Salver for the highest marks in music in the area choirs competition. The award was presented by Euan Paterson, news editor at The Oban Times. 15_143mod69



LOVAT AND TULLIBARDINE: Chief secretary to the treasury Danny Alexander hands over the most coveted prize in Gaeldom to Kenny Thomson of Glasgow Gaelic Musical Association. 15_143mod53



TIDY: Bruach Gaelic Choir from Lochaline, under the baton of Riona Whyte, performed in the competition for rural groups. 17_143mod19



GOLDEN GAELIC: Gold medal winner Angus MacLeod grew up in a Gaelic speaking household in Inverness, where his Lewis father and Skye mother ensured his Gaelic was 'golden'. 17_143mod15



SHIELD: Janet MacDonald hands over the Islanders Shield to Arlene MacKerral of Islay Gaelic Choir. 15_143mod44



Royal National Mòd



Nicolson Institute, Stornoway, won The Oban Times Challenge Trophy for high school choirs. The newspaper's senior reporter Louise Lee presented the prize to conductor Margaret McLellan. 15_142mod60

Echoes of War stirs the emotions in a powerful tribute to servicemen

A STUNNING commemoration to World War I, the Falklands war and the power of reconciliation moved many to tears in a packed town house in Inverness, last Wednesday. Mac-talla Cogaidh, Echoes of War, was a powerful work by Oban men Eric Spence and Dave Mason, who were joined by Dingwall Gaelic Choir, Locharhill primary school choir, accordionist Hamish Poulson and six Mod Gold Medal winners, including James Graham and Kirsteen Menzies. The extensive work is based on the writings of Rev John MacLeod a Lewis man, who became a minister in Oban. Eric knew him due to his own time in the west coast town. Eric was inspired by two of his greatest poems Bratrach Cogaidh (The War Widow) and Nam Aonar Le Mo Smuaintean (Alone With My Thoughts). Introduced with the pipe tune Lord Lovat's Lament, the event began like a military occasion, but quickly

became a story through the outstanding performances. MacLeod's father was one of more than 200 men, most of them sailors, returning to the island from service in World War I, lost when the HMV Iolaire sank on New Year's Day 1919. MacLeod's work tells the story of how his mother never recovered from the loss of her husband. Nam Aonar Le Mo Smuaintean, which won an award at the Pan Celtic Festival in Kilarney, refers to a later conflict, the 1982 Falklands War and the death of young Royal Marine Gordon MacPherson from Oban, who was killed in the Battle of Two Sisters, aged just 20. Among the pieces Spence has selected is a carol, sung by the children of Locharhill Primary School, representing the Christmas truce of 1914 in the first winter of World War I while a constant refrain will be the repeated words 'Cha bhi cogaidh — war no more'. Eric hopes next year's Mòd will hear a second performance of the outstanding piece.



ECHOES OF THE WAR: The performers at the start of a 40-minute commemoration to war and reconciliation. 15_142mod94



THE PRIDE OF CALMAC: Lochaline ferryman Hector MacKenzie started the Mod with only a few expectations but the medals just kept on coming. 15_143mod90



FOUR YEARS: Inveraray's Holly Renton and Cara Blyth, who have been signing together for four years, took the bronze badge in the duet for learners aged 13 to 15. 17_142mod39



MACPHEE MEDAL WINNERS: Hannah Calder, Àrd-sgoil Lochabair, won the girls' James C MacPhee Memorial Medal, The Alexander Hamilton Trophy for the highest mark in Gaelic in competitions C102 and C103 and The Jean Graham Trophy for the highest mark in Music in competitions C102 and C103. Lewis Davey, Còisir Òg Ghàidhlig Ile, won the boys' James C MacPhee Memorial Medal. 15_142mod49



FAMILY AFFAIR: Ann Marie, Chelsea and Krystal McLean from Campbeltown. The trio performed in the songs of the Hebrides competition. 142mod89



SILVER: Ceitidh Dhomhnallach of Barra won a second place in reading a piece of prose. 15_142mod91



PRIZE WINNERS: Isabelle Bain, 17, from Lewis won the former prize-winners title for under 19 competitors. 17_142mod45



WINNERS: Hamish Kennedy, 9, from Lochaline won the learners poetry competition (9-10 years) and Finlay Cameron, 11 also of Lochaline who won the solo singing (11-12 years) 15_142mod54



FLOURISHING: The Gaelic language is really taking off in Lochaline with Florianna Lawrence, 10, and Rachel Bolton, 12, both pupils of Riona Whyte. 15_142mod55



GLASGOW ISLAY: Adam and Reece MacDonald from Glasgow Islay Choir enjoyed competing at the Mod on Monday. 17_142mod35



Bethan Sexton, left, and Shannon MacLean, both of Mull, came third in the duet for 16-18 years (fluent). 15_142mod93

Best for Mòd news and results

The Oban Times & WEST HIGHLAND TIMES



Royal National Mòd

RESULTS

WEDNESDAY:

Gold Medal Heat Prescribed (Ladies): Mary C MacNiven Memorial Salver: 1 Ainsley V Hamill, Cáránros, The Mary C MacNiven Memorial Salver, 2, Isabel NicLeòid, Cáràbhaigh, 3 Ceitlin LR Smith, Eilean Leòdhais. Gold Medal Heat Prescribed (Men): The Caledonian MacBrayne Trophy: 1 Aonghas MacLeòid, Inbhir Nis, The Caledonian MacBrayne Trophy, 2 Dòmhnall-Iain MacIlleDhuinn, Glaschu, 3 John Howieson, An t-Eilean Sgitheanach. Gold Medal Oran Mòr (Ladies): Mr & Mrs Archibald MacDonald Trophy: 1 Eilidh NicCarmaig, Port Rìgh, The Mr & Mrs Archibald MacDonald Memorial Trophy, The Joyce Murray Trophy for the highest marks in Gaelic competition A222, £30 (Jessie M MacLachlan Memorial Prize), 2 Ceitlin LR Smith, Eilean Leòdhais, 3 Ainsley V Hamill, Cáránros. Gold Medal Oran Mòr (Men): F S Cameron-Head Memorial Trophy: 1 Dòmhnall-Iain MacIlleDhuinn, Glaschu, The F S Cameron-Head Memorial Trophy, £10 (John A MacRae, Glasgow), 2 John Howieson, An t-Eilean Sgitheanach, 3 =Iain Gordon, Inbhir Narann and Aonghas MacLeòid, Inbhir Nis. Puir-t-a-Beul Ladies and Men Open: Duncan Johnston Memorial Trophy: 1 Ceitlin LR Smith, Eilean Leòdhais, The Duncan Johnston Memorial Trophy, 2 Ainsley V Hamill, Cáránros, 3 Lisa Anne Fiona NicDhòmhnaill, Ulapul. Oban Times Gold Medal: Prescribed song composed by a Lorn bard: 1 Raonaid M J Deans, Comar nan Allt, 'Oban Times' Gold Medal, 2 Linn Phipps, Eilean Leòdhais, 3 Carol MacLean, Tobar Mhoire. Traditional Song Learners: The George Clavey Memorial Trophy: 1 Anne Bennett, Dùn Deagh, The George Clavey Memorial Trophy, 2 Sheena MacRitchie, Peairt, 3 =Fiona Ross, Glaschu and Hector MacKechnie, Samharaidh. Silver Pendant Heat - Ladies: The Margot Campbell Trophy: 1 Donna Dugdale, Tobar Mhoire, The Margot Campbell Trophy, 2 Kirsten Laurie, Ìle, 3 Rena Gertz, Prestonpans. Silver Pendant Heat - Men: The Katie Stewart Memorial Trophy: 1 Hector MacKechnie, Samharaidh, The Katie Stewart Memorial Trophy, 2 Fergus Muir, Ìle, 3 Campbell McKenzie, Steòrnabhagh. Silver Pendant Working Song - Ladies: Catherine M B Dunlop Quaiach: 1 Donna Dugdale, Tobar Mhoire, Catherine M B Dunlop Quaiach, 2 Sandie Kennedy, St. Andrews, 3 Sheena MacRitchie, Peairt. Silver Pendant Sea Song - Men: Bank of Scotland Cup: 1 Fergus Muir, Ìle, Bank of Scotland Cup, 2 Campbell McKenzie, Steòrnabhagh, 3 Iain Eachann Ros, Inbhir Nis. Kennedy-Fraser Cup: Songs of the Hebrides: 1 Anne Bennett, Dùn Deagh, The Kennedy-Fraser Cup, The Johanna Fortune Memorial Trophy, £30 (ACG), 2 Nicola Pearson, Eilean Leòdhais, £20 (ACG), 3 Chelsea McLean, Ceann Loch Chille Chiarain. Sarah Weir Trophy Ladies/Men: Song related to Mull or Iona: 1 Anne Bennett, Dùn Deagh, The Sarah Weir Memorial Trophy, £20 (Mull & Iona Association), 2 Gordon McKeeve, Glaschu, £15 (Mull & Iona Association), 3 Emma A C Deans, Comar nan Allt. Senior Presenting: Dr Alasdair Patrick Barden Memorial Salver: 1 Dòmhnall Macleòid, Cáràbhaigh, Dr Alasdair Patrick Barden Memorial Salver, £50 (Gaelic Society of the Episcopal Church). Skye or Sutherland Song: John D Gillies

Memorial Trophy: 1 Anne Bennett, Dùn Deagh, The John D Gillies Memorial Trophy, 2 Catherine Tinney, Eilean Leòdhais, 3 Morven MacLeòid, Inbhir Nis. Senior Duet Singing: Neil MacLean and Jenny M B Currie Trophy: 1 Karen MacRae & Heather Healy, Port Rìgh, The Neil MacLean & Jenny M B Currie Trophy, £20 (Mull Local Mòd), 2 Elizabeth Campbell & Alison Campbell, Arasgain, £15 (Mull Local Mòd), 3 Emma A C Deans & Rachael M J Deans, Comar nan Allt, £10 (Mull Local Mòd). Clarsach Self Accompaniment: The Glendale Quaiach: 1 Lili McShea, Bun-sgoil Taobh na Pàirce, The Glendale Quaiach, Gold Badge, 2 Bronwen Stahl, Bun-sgoil Taobh na Pàirce, Silver Badge, 3 Rachel Grigor, Àrd-sgoil Borroughmuir, Bronze Badge. Clarsach Introductory: The Helmsdale Trophy: 1 Isabelle Davidson, Peairt, The Helmsdale Trophy, Gold Badge, 2 Aoife-Rosa Gibb, Bun-sgoil Taobh na Pàirce, Silver Badge, 3 Mia Mutch, Bun-sgoil Chille Mhoire, Bronze Badge. Clarsach Elementary Juniors: The Florence Wilson Trophy: 1 Sandy MacGregor, Bun-sgoil Taobh na Pàirce, The Florence Wilson Trophy, Gold Badge, 2 Anna Halliday, Bun-sgoil Taobh na Pàirce, Silver Badge, 3 Mollaidh Nicholson, Bun-sgoil Taobh na Pàirce, Bronze Badge. Clarsach Intermediate 1 Juniors: K Barry Milner Trophy: 1 Anna NicNeacail, Àrd-sgoil Phort Rìgh, The K Barry Milner Trophy, Gold Badge, 2 Katrina Cameron, Bun-sgoil Taobh na Pàirce, Silver Badge, 3 Lili McShea, Bun-sgoil Taobh na Pàirce, Bronze Badge. Clarsach - Intermediate 2 (Open): One Prescribed - One own choice: 1 Meredith Kierner, Aberfoyle, The Lawrence MacDuff Cup, Gold Badge, 2 Sheena MacGregor, Àrd-sgoil Sheumais Ghilleasbuig, Silver Badge, 3 Somhairle MacLeòid, Àrd-sgoil Sheumais Ghilleasbuig, Bronze Badge. Clarsach Advanced Juniors: Duncan Chisholm Trophy: 1 Lola Gibb Flexen, Àrd-sgoil Broughton, The Duncan Chisholm Trophy, Gold Badge, 2 Ciorstaidh-Sarah Chaimbeul, An Caol, Silver Badge, 3 Catriona Clark, Àrd-sgoil Caisteal Dhùghlais, Bronze Badge. Clarsach Senior: Elementary: 1 Anne Stephen, Aberfoyle, Jean C Campbell Award, 2 Ninetta Santoro, Bearsden, 3 Susan MacKay, Dumbarton. Clarsach - Solo Playing (Intermediate/Advanced): 1 Rachel Rutherford, Milngavie, The Elspeth A Hylsted Trophy. Clarsach Open: Original Composition: 1 Anna Westwell, Leith Walk Primary, The Margaret Balfour Trophy, 2 Laura Penman, 3 Sonny Gibb Flexen, Bun-sgoil Taobh na Pàirce. Clarsach Duets U13: Own choice: 1 Lola Gibb Flexen & Laura Penman, Àrd-sgoil Broughton agus Bun-sgoil Taobh na Pàirce, The Lord Birsay Trophy, Gold Badges, 2 Eilidh Lamb & Katrina Cameron, Bun-sgoil Taobh na Pàirce, Silver Badges, 3 Bronwen Stahl & Lili McShea, Bun-sgoil Taobh na Pàirce, Bronze Badges. Clarsach Duets 13-19: Communn na Clarsaich Cup: 1 Ishana Graham & Charlotte Luke, Acadamaidh Chulodair agus Acadamaidh Rìoghail Inbhir Nis, Communn na Clarsaich Cup, Gold Badges, 2 Alice Guse & Meredith Kierner, Acadamaidh Dhùghlais, Silver Badges. Clarsach Open: Ensembles: 1 Bun-sgoil Taobh na Pàirce, Pilgrims Harp Trophy.

Clarsach Seniors: Duets: 1 Rachel Rutherford & Ruaidhri Irvine, Milngavie, Drumelzier Quaiach, 2 Ninetta Santoro & Chris Whitelaw, Bearsden, 3 Anne Stephen & Catriona Gorgas, Aberfoyle. Clarsach open: Communn na Clarsaich (Edinburgh Branch) Trophy: 1 Anna Westwell & Magnus Westwell, Àrd-sgoil Broughton agus Àrd-sgoil Coille nan Rìdhean, Communn na Clarsaich (Edinburgh Branch) Trophy, Gold Badges. Radio Project Primary: Prepare a radio programme: 1 Eòin Coinneach Cuimeanach, Bun-sgoil Gheàrrloch, Gold Badges, £125, 2 "Tagaid na h-Oidhche", Sgoil Ghàidhlig Ghlaschu, Silver Badges, £75, 3 "Rèidio Mòr" Sgoil Ghàidhlig Ghlaschu, Bronze Badges, £50. This year's Literature competitions were sponsored by: SQA, Comhairle nan Leabhraichean, Clan Currie, Ughdarras a' Chlò Hèaraich, Bòrd na Gàidhlig and An Comunn Gàidhealach. Video Project Primary: Prepare a video programme: 1 Eòin Coinneach Cuimeanach, Bun-sgoil Gheàrrloch, £125. This year's Literature competitions were sponsored by: SQA, Comhairle nan Leabhraichean, Clan Currie, Ughdarras a' Chlò Hèaraich, Bòrd na Gàidhlig and An Comunn Gàidhealach. Bible Reading Open 13-15: Mrs Stewart-Simla Prizes: 1 Alex John Morrison, Sgoil MhicNeacail, Gold Badge and Bible, 2 Catriona Bain, Sgoil MhicNeacail, Silver Badge and Bible, 3 Somhairle MhicLeòid, Àrd-sgoil Sheumais Ghilleasbuig, Bronze Badge and Bible. Prizes from the late Mrs Stewart-Simla. Art Poster Open 13-15: Prepare a Poster: 1 Logan Edgar, Àrd-sgoil Mhalaig, Gold Badge, £50, 2 Cian McVarish, Àrd-sgoil Mhalaig, Silver Badge, £40, 3 Alicia Poole Fuste, Àrd-sgoil Mhalaig, Bronze Badge, £30. This year's Literature competitions were sponsored by: SQA, Comhairle nan Leabhraichean, Clan Currie, Ughdarras a' Chlò Hèaraich, Bòrd na Gàidhlig and An Comunn Gàidhealach. Literary Fluent 16-18: Write story, poem or article: 1 Kathleen MacKinnon, Àrd-sgoil Thiriodh, Gold Badge, £125, 2 Iain Boyd, Isle of Lewis, Silver Badge, £75, 3 Deana Anne NicLeòid, Sgoil MhicNeacail, Bronze Badge, £50. This year's Literature competitions were sponsored by: SQA, Comhairle nan Leabhraichean, Clan Currie, Ughdarras a' Chlò Hèaraich, Bòrd na Gàidhlig and An Comunn Gàidhealach. Literary Fluent 16-18: Write story, poem or article: 1 Kathleen MacKinnon, Àrd-sgoil Thiriodh, Gold Badge, £125, 2 Iain Boyd, Isle of Lewis, Silver Badge, £75, 3 Deana Anne NicLeòid, Sgoil MhicNeacail, Bronze Badge, £50. This year's Literature competitions were sponsored by: SQA, Comhairle nan Leabhraichean, Clan Currie, Ughdarras a' Chlò Hèaraich, Bòrd na Gàidhlig and An Comunn Gàidhealach. Art Poster Open 7-8: Prepare a Poster: 1 Maria Monk, Sgoil Ghàidhlig Ghlaschu, Gold Badge, £50, 2 Ross MacLeòid, Bun-sgoil Stafainn, Silver Badge, £40, 3 Daniel MacLeòid, Sgoil a' Bhac, Bronze Badge, £30. This year's Literature competitions were sponsored by: SQA, Comhairle nan Leabhraichean, Clan Currie, Ughdarras a' Chlò Hèaraich, Bòrd na Gàidhlig and An Comunn Gàidhealach. Conversation Fluent 9-10: The Ewan Dingwall Memorial Trophy: 1 Màiri Niclain, Sgoil Phaibil, The Ewan Dingwall Memorial Trophy, Gold Badge, 2 Calum E MacMillan, Sgoil Dhalabroig, Silver Badge, 3 Finlay MacLennan, Bun-sgoil Ghàidhlig Inbhir Nis, Bronze Badges. Conversation Fluent 11-12: Conversation on any subject: 1 Marion MacCorquodale, Sgoil Lionacleit, Gold Badge, 2 Eòin Coinneach Cuimeanach, Bun-sgoil Gheàrrloch, Silver Badge, 3 Dòmhnall Lachlann Peutan, Bun-sgoil Cnoc na Creige, Bronze Badge. Bible Reading Fluent 9-10: Prizes from Mrs Stewart-Simla: 1 Isla NicLeòid, Bun-sgoil Stafainn, Gold Badge and Bible, 2 Seumas Caimbeul, Bun-sgoil Chille Mhoire, Silver Badge, and Bible, 3 Eòin Coinneach Cuimeanach, Bun-sgoil Gheàrrloch, Bronze Badge and Bible. Bibles from the late Mrs Stewart-Simla. Literary Fluent 11-12: Write story, poem or article: 1 Murdo Angus Kennedy, Sgoil na Paice, Gold Badge, £80, 2 Isla NicLeòid, Bun-sgoil Stafainn, Silver Badge, £40, 3 Anna Niclain, Sgoil Lionacleit, Bronze

Badge, £30. This year's Literature competitions were sponsored by: SQA, Comhairle nan Leabhraichean, Clan Currie, Ughdarras a' Chlò Hèaraich, Bòrd na Gàidhlig and An Comunn Gàidhealach. Art Poster Open 9-10: Prepare a Poster: 1 Erin NicIlliosa, Bun-sgoil Stafainn, Gold Medal, £50, 2 Ealasaid MacLean, Lismore Primary, Silver Medal, £40, 3 Anndra Monk, Sgoil Ghàidhlig Ghlaschu, Bronze Medal, £30. Art Poster Open 11-12: Prepare a Poster: 1 Elizabeth Alessialey Lunardini, Drochaid a' Bhanna, Gold Medal, £50, 2 Lois MacLeòid, Inverness, Silver Medal, £40, 3 Isla NicLeòid, Bun-sgoil Stafainn, Bronze Medal, £30. Reading Prose Fluent U13: Reading prose chosen by adjudicator: 1 Isla NicLeòid, Bun-sgoil Stafainn, Gold Badge, 2 Eòin Coinneach Cuimeanach, Bun-sgoil Gheàrrloch, Silver Badge, 3 Marion MacCorquodale, Sgoil Lionacleit, Bronze Badge. Conversation Fluent 13-15: The Sabhal Mòr Ostaig Silver Medal: 1 Catriona Bain, Sgoil MhicNeacail, Sabhal Mòr Ostaig Silver Medal, Gold Badge, 2 Claire Frances NicNill, Sgoil Bhàgh a' Chaisteal, Silver Badge, 3 Kirstyn Howarth, Acadamaidh Rìoghail Inbhir Nis, Bronze Badge. Reading Prose Fluent 13-15: Reading prose chosen by adjudicator: 1 Catriona Bain, Sgoil MhicNeacail, Gold Badge, 2 Ceitidh Dhòmhnaillach, Eilean Bharraigh, Silver Badge, 3 Claire Frances NicNill, Sgoil Bhàgh a' Chaisteal, Bronze Badge. Literary Fluent U13: Write story, poem or article: 1 Catriona Bain, Sgoil MhicNeacail, The Falkirk Tryst Trophy, Gold Badge, £125, 2 Eilidh Reid, Isle of Lewis, Silver Badge, £75, 3 Roddy Thomson, Sgoil Lionacleit, Bronze Badge, £50. New Gaelic Song, set to music: The Alan Forrester (Carloway) Trophy: 1 Cairistiona Stone, £200, Alan Forrester (Carloway) Trophy. New Play on any subject: Duais Gasaidh Steòrnabhagh: 1 F. Ann MacLean, Isle of Lismore, Duais Gasaidh Steòrnabhagh. Writing: Article less than 2000 words: 1 F. Ann MacLean, Isle of Lismore, £30. 3 pieces of Poetry: Ailsa Quaiach, Glasgow Lewis & Harris Gold Medal: 1 Ailean Dòmhnallach, Inbhir Narann, £30, Ailsa Quaiach and Lewis & Harris Gold Medal, 2 F. Ann MacLean, Isle of Lismore, £20, 3 Sandaidh NicDhòmhnaill Jones, Uibhist a Deas and Doreen Macdonald, Inbhir Nis. 4 part Musical Arrangement: The Anne MacDearmid Trophy: 2 Sandy NicDhòmhnaill Jones, Uibhist a Deas, £30. Non Fiction Prose (c 2000 words): John Angus Macleod Quaiach: 1 Cairistiona Stone, John Angus Macleod Quaiach, 2 F. Ann MacLean, Silver Pendant Final Men: Silver Pendant: 1 Hector MacKechnie, Samharaidh, Silver Pendant, £50 (Clì Gàidhlig), The Alasdair MacInnes Memorial Trophy, 2 Fergus Muir, Ìle, £30 (Clì Gàidhlig), 3 Iain Eachann Ros, Inbhir Nis, £20 (Clì Gàidhlig). Silver Pendant Final Ladies: Silver Pendant: 1 Donna Dugdale, Tobermory, Silver Pendant, £50 (Clì Gàidhlig), The Catherine Gemmell Memorial Trophy, (Highest marks in competition SS254F), The John A MacRae Quaiach, (Highest aggregate marks in Music for A250, A252, SS254F or A251, A253 & SS254M), The Morag Robb Memorial Salver, (Highest aggregate marks in Gaelic for A250, A252, SS254F or A251, A253 & SS254M), 2 Kirsten Laurie, Ìle, £30 (Clì Gàidhlig), 3 Ellen L Beard, Dùn Eideann, £20 (Clì Gàidhlig).

THURSDAY:

Quartet Competition Senior Open: Stornoway Gaelic Choir Cup: 1 Na Boireannaich Eile, The Stornoway Gaelic Choir Cup, £30 (An Comunn Gàidhealach), The Marshall Stormonth Memorial Trophy for the highest mark in Music, 2 Còrdadh, The Ian Crighton Memorial Trophy for the highest in Gaelic, 3 Dealrach. Solo Self Accompaniment: The Largs Trophy: 1 Iain Gordon, Inbhir Narann, The Largs Trophy, £30 (An Comunn Gàidhealach), 2 Iain Blair, Isle of Skye, £20 (An Comunn Gàidhealach). Choral Rural: The Lorn Shield: 1 Còisir Ghàidhlig an t-Sratha, The Lorn Shield, The Mrs Catherine C MacDonald Silver Baton to the Choir Conductor (Karen MacRae), £100 (An Comunn Gàidhealach), The Captain Angus Stewart Trophy for the highest marks in Music, 2 Còisir Ghàidhlig



LORN SHIELD: Strath Gaelic Choir, Skye, won the Lorn Shield in the rural choirs competition. They also lifted the Captain Angus Stewart Trophy for the highest mark in music, while conductor Karen MacRae was awarded The Mrs Catherine C MacDonald Silver Baton. 17_143mod30



JOY: Aberfeldy and District were winners of the Margrat Duncan Trophy. 17_143mod58



RUNNERS-UP: Islay Gaelic Choir, second in the rural choirs competition and third in the puirt. 17_143mod32

Mhealbhach, £60 (An Comunn Gàidhealach), 3 Còisir Sgìr a' Bhac, Hamish Graham (Strath) Trophy for the highest marks in Gaelic A300, A305 and A306, Sandy Herron Cup for the highest marks in Music A300, A305 and A306, £40 (An Comunn Gàidhealach). Choral Rural: The Sheriff MacMaster Campbell Memorial Quaiach: 1 Còisir Ghàidhlig an Eilein Mhuilich, The Sheriff MacMaster Campbell Memorial Quaiach, =The Selma Shield for the highest marks in Gaelic (Shared with Còisir Ghàidhlig Ìle), The Grace Robertson Memorial Baton for conductor of the choir gaining highest marks in Music (Elizabeth Jack), £60 (Royal Mail), 2 Còisir Ghàidhlig Ìle, £50 (Royal Mail), 3 =Bùrach and Còisir Ghàidhlig Thaigh an Uilidh, £40 (Royal Mail). The Grace Robertson Memorial Baton to the conductor (John Brozovsky) of the choir (Lairg Gaelic Choir) gaining the highest marks in Music. Choral Rural Open - Ladies: Grampian Television Trophy: 1 Còisir Sgìr a' Bhac, Grampian Television Trophy, £50 (Royal Mail), Angus MacTavish Memorial Trophy for the highest marks in Gaelic, 2 Còisir Ghàidhlig an Eilean Mhuilich, £30 (Royal Mail), Rotary Club of Blairgowrie Trophy for the highest marks in Music, 3 Lochs Gaelic Choir, £20 (Royal Mail). Choral Rural Puirt-a-Beul: Aline MacKenzie Memorial Trophy: 1 Lochs Gaelic Choir, Aline MacKenzie Memorial Trophy, John Young Memorial Baton to the conductor (Ronald Murray), £50 Royal Mail, Evelyn Huckbody Memorial Trophy for the highest marks in Music, Calum Robertson Memorial Trophy for the highest marks in Gaelic, 2 Còisir Sgìr a' Bhac, £30 Royal Mail, 3 Còisir Ghàidhlig Ìle, £20 Royal Mail. Gold Medal Final Ladies: An Comunn Gàidhealach Gold Medal - Ladies: 1 Eilidh NicCarmaig, Port Rìgh, An Comunn Gàidhealach Gold Medal, The Islander Shield, £75 (An Comunn Gàidhealach), The Donald Thomson Prize (£35), An Comunn Gàidhealach Prize for the highest aggregate marks in Music (£25), 2 =Ceitlin LR Smith, Eilean Leòdhais

Tweed Authority Trophy, £50 (An Comunn Gàidhealach), 2 Luaidh le Mire, £30 (An Comunn Gàidhealach). Choral Area: Lovat and Tullibardine Shield, Malcolm G MacCallum Silver Baton for conductor, £250 (ACG), Donald Thomson Memorial Quaiach for the Gaelic Tutor of the choir gaining the highest marks in Gaelic, The 'Weekly Scotsman' Quaiach for the highest marks in Gaelic, The Donald J MacAskill Memorial Trophy for the highest marks in Gaelic, The Rev William Macdonald Memorial Quaiach for the highest marks in Gaelic for competitions A301, A304, A307, A308, The J Norman McConachie Trophy for the highest marks in Music for competitions A301, A304, A307, A308, 2 Còisir Ghàidhlig Inbhir Nis, £200 (ACG), 3 Dingwall Gaelic Choir, £150 (ACG). The 'Oban Times' Silver Salver for the highest marks in Music shared by the Glasgow Gaelic Musical Association and Còisir Ghàidhlig Inbhir Nis. Choral Area Ladies: Esme Smythe Trophy: 1 Atomaig Piseag, The Esme Smythe Trophy, £100 (ACG), £25 (Alex MacArthur Memorial Prize). The Angus Johnston Trophy for the highest marks in Music, 2 Dingwall Gaelic Choir, £60 (ACG), 3 Còisir Ghàidhlig Inbhir Nis, £40 (ACG). The Donald U Johnston Trophy for the highest marks in Gaelic, Glasgow Gaelic Musical Association. Choral Open Men: Mull and Iona Shield: 1 Glasgow Gaelic Musical Association, The Mull & Iona Shield, The Hector Russell Dirk to the conductor of the winning choir, Iseabail Nic an t-Sagairt, The Cor Meibion Bro Glyndwr Trophy for the highest marks in Music, £100 (ACG), £30 (Martin MacKay Memorial Prize), 2 Coilich a Chinn a' Tuath, £60 (ACG), The Glen Ballachulish Trophy for the highest marks in Gaelic, 3 Dingwall Gaelic Choir, £40 (ACG). Choral Area: Puirt-a-Beul: 1 Govan Gaelic Choir, The Greenock Gaelic Choir Cup, £60 (ACG), 2 Glasgow Gaelic Musical Association, £50 (ACG), 3 Aberdeen Gaelic Choir, £40 (ACG).

FRIDAY:

Oran Luaidh: Walking Song: 1 Còmhlan Luadh Bhaideanach, Harris



PRIZES: Anne Barlow, conductor of Taynuilt Gaelic Choir, and Riona Whyte of Burach. 15_143mod42



Carlway Gaelic Choir, from Lewis, performed in the contest for rural choristers. 17_143mod33



CREATIVE: Catriona Bain, 15, from Lewis, won the creative writing competition for teenagers after submitting an original Gaelic story. 17_143mod44



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AUTUMN is a season of breathtaking displays as the old makes way for the new. This sentiment - and nature's palette of deep reds and oranges - makes for a gorgeous Flowers

What could be more romantic than saying 'I do' beneath a tree? Kate Middleton and Prince William had a tree lined Westminster Cathedral, likely costing thousands of pounds - but the same idea can be translated to the place you've chosen to get married. Most florists will be able to advise you on the best flowers that should be used.

Bring the garden fantasy indoors with urns filled with arching Bradford pear branches; gold leaves here and there add a fairy-tale sheen. A cluster of lily of the valley secured with gold double-faced satin ribbon speaks the same language: nature's beauty.

Create an enchanting ceremony path by adding untamed posies to a wooden flower frame. Echo the look with an equally abundant bouquet. At the reception, recycle your makeshift garden into an escort card display.

FOOD

Shake things up with a dish that's distinctive but doesn't abandon traditional flavours: autumn-foliage lasagne for example.

The secret? Pasta coloured with beet and carrot puree, and shaped with cookie cutters. Your caterer can incorporate these tricks into her recipe; we layered fresh ricotta cheese between beet and carrot pastas, which were cooked, then sautéed in - and drizzled with a brown-butter and sage sauce. The combination is hard to beet.

Sweet marzipan acorns capture the beauty of fall. The marzipan is tinted pale green with food colouring to mimic the appearance of nuts just picked from the tree; a thin coating of bittersweet chocolate, decorated with sprinkles, crowns each one and balances the marzipan's concentrated sweetness. Place the acorns on pressed leaves for a lovely autumn display, and serve them on a dessert buffet or on platters at guests' tables.

SEATING

Show your ingrained sense of style with seating cards crafted from paper-thin wood veneer. These inexpensive sheets are pliable enough to fold and cut easily into delicate shapes; the elegant graining makes a distinctive canvas for calligraphy. We used craft punches to create maple and birch leaves.

PRE-WEDDING BREAKFAST DRINKS

Warm up an autumn cocktail hour with a comforting, colourful shot of savoury vegetable soup in eye-catching colours.

The diminutive scale of lady apples transforms a fall favourite into a dainty nibble; offer to guests on passed trays as a sweet-tart surprise at the cocktail hour.

CLOTHING

Offer your fiance's groomsmen a range of tie colours so they don't look too matchy-matchy. Pick different shades in the same colour family - from vibrant red to soft peach, for instance. That way the group appears coordinated, but each guy looks unique.

Warm up your bridesmaids with a pashmina in a colour that matches groomsmen's ties.



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what's on

THE OBAN TIMES
FREE EVENT LISTING

| |
|---|
| THURSDAY 23 OCTOBER |
| Gaelic Conversation Group, Furan Gaelic Centre, Corran Halls, Oban, 7pm |
| SATURDAY 25TH OCTOBER |
| Scottish Wildlife Trust Coffee Morning, Glencruitten Church Centre, 10am-2pm |
| Simply Handmade Craft Fair, Corran Halls, Oban, 11am-3pm |
| Gaelic Conversation Group, Furan Gaelic Centre, Corran Halls, Oban, 11.30am |
| Mary's Meals Lunch, in aid of Liberian ebola area, Connel Church Hall, 12-2pm |
| SUNDAY 26TH OCTOBER |
| Crafters and Producers Market, Great Western Hotel, Oban, 11am-4pm |
| Craft Fayre, Creagan Inn, Appin, Every Sunday, 12-5pm |
| MONDAY 27TH OCTOBER |
| Oban Camera Club, Regent Hotel, Oban, Text Alex 07799 353140 for more info, Every Monday, 7.30pm |
| WEDNESDAY 29TH OCTOBER |
| Netherform Piping Society Local Night, Argyllshire Gathering Halls, Oban, 7.30pm |
| THURSDAY 30TH OCTOBER |
| Gaelic Conversation Group, Furan Gaelic Centre, Corran Halls, Oban, 7pm |
| Connel Sewing Club, Connel Village Hall, 7-9pm |
| Mull Theatre perform The Drawer Boy, Corran Halls, Oban, 7.30pm |
| FRIDAY 31ST OCTOBER |
| Children's Halloween Party, Atlantis Leisure, Oban, 5-6.30pm |
| SATURDAY 1ST NOVEMBER |
| Fasanta Festival of Textiles and Fashion, Various venues in Oban, All day |
| Holly Tea in aid of MS Therapy Centre, Oban Parish Church Centre, 2pm |
| Homebase Charity Quiz, Raffle and Auction in aid of Alzheimers, Argyllshire Gathering Halls, Oban, 7.30pm |
| SUNDAY 2ND NOVEMBER |
| Fasanta Festival of Textiles and Fashion, Various venues in Oban, All day |

Email details of your event to whatson@obantimes.co.uk.



Stargazers await Dark Skye

STARGAZERS: Lights in a dark night will be part of a stargazing festival in Skye this Saturday.

A DARK Sky party will be held on Skye this Saturday.

This unique stellar event is the first ever celebration of the stratosphere.

To be held at Clan Donald Skye, this event offers an amazing evening of hands-on stargazing in the company of experienced astronomers.

Light pollution

There are few things as awe inspiring as a starry sky, but, as any stargazer will tell you, the effect is magnified in areas where there is no light pollution.

Skye, with its dark autumn/winter nights

and remote location, offers a perfect setting for astronomical observation.

In 2011-2012 various sites in Skye and Lochalsh were designated Dark Sky observation points; three of which are located at Clan Donald Skye.

It is to encourage and promote this distinctive aspect of the Skye and Lochalsh area which organisers wish to celebrate in this Homecoming Event.

The evening will include four fascinating presentations from guest speakers, plus six celestial shows in the Cosmos Planetarium.

There will also be quizzes and activities, plus a question and answer session with the Astronomer Royal for Scotland. Buffet refreshments will also be available all evening in the Stables Restaurant.

Guest speakers

Experts addressing the event include: Astronomer Royal for Scotland Prof. John C. Brown; astro-photographer Sue Daly; and science writer and Dark Skye consultant Steve Owens.

In 1995 John C Brown was appointed by the Queen as the 10th Astronomer Royal for Scotland.

The title is an honorary one, which he mainly uses to promote astronomy in the public eye and in education.

John has been involved, as adviser and hosting shows, in several of the new planetaria recently opened in the UK, including Glasgow Science Centre's superb Zeiss Starmaster.

His main interests are high-energy radiation from the sun, mass loss from hot stars and mathematical inverse problems in astronomy.

He's also worked on comets and meteors and on astrodynamics, specifically of solar-sailed spacecraft.

Sue Daly is a wildlife film-maker, camera woman, photographer and writer based on the British Channel Island of Sark.

She originally specialised in underwater camera work and her first full-length film, 'Bouley Bay Watch', won two major international awards and was purchased by National Geographic Channel.

In summer 2011 Sue was awarded a Licentiate distinction from the Royal Photographic Society.

Sue has worked with the BBC Natural History Unit and other production companies on

programmes including: Natural World, Nature of Britain, Coast, Springwatch, Wild, An Island Parish, The One Show and Nature's Calendar.

Steve Owens is a freelance science writer, astronomer and the author of Stargazing for Dummies.

He ran the planetarium at Glasgow Science Centre for five years, and led the International Year of Astronomy 2009 helping establish the UK's first International Dark Sky Park in Galloway.

He's since led the successful bid for the Channel Island of Sark

to become the world's first Dark Sky Island, and is working with a number of other parks and communities in their efforts.

In 2010 Steve was presented with the award for Outstanding Achievement in Astronomy by the Federation of Astronomical Societies 2010.

The Dark Skye Star Party offers guests the opportunity to meet with experts, plus a host of amateur and semi-amateur astronomers on hand. There'll never be a better opportunity to get to know the glittering night Skye.

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Events across Scotland for storytelling festival

THE SCOTTISH International Storytelling Festival is spreading its wings with events taking place throughout Scotland during the 10-day festival.

Based at the Scottish Storytelling Centre in Edinburgh, the festival has 18 events taking place outwith the capital.

The theme of this year's festival is Once upon a Place and to celebrate organisers wanted to extend the festival's reach by working with regional storytelling teams to programme events in communities across Scotland.

The festival would like to highlight the close links that stories have with local tradition, landscape and history.

Fiddler Judy Turner

and guitarist Neil Adam travel all the way from Australia to recall the story of the life, loves, adventures and sorrows of Scotland's best loved author Robert Louis Stevenson, who was crowned 'Tusitala' (the Storyteller) by the Samoans.

Donald Smith, festival director said: 'I am delighted we are adding this new element to the festival during the year of Homecoming and we're really pleased to be able to work with regional storytelling teams to put on taster events during the festival.'

'I hope people enjoy this chance to hear more about the folklore and stories of their local area and I extend a warm welcome to everyone to visit Edinburgh too.'

The popular festival will be filled with stories, music, laughter and tall tales.

Over the 10 days, from October 24, it will host 70 events with guest storytellers from Europe, North America and the Pacific regions, who will perform alongside the cream of Scotland's renowned storytelling talent.

'Robert Louis Stevenson - The Life Journey' takes place at Oban Library, 77 Albany Street, on Friday October 31 at 7pm. The event is free, but pre-booking is required, contact the library on 01631 571 444.

A full programme of events is available online at www.tracescotland.org/festivals/scottish-international-storytelling-festival.



RENEWING TIES: Lewis MacKinnon (centre), executive director of Gaelic affairs for the Province of Nova Scotia, is welcomed to Inverness at the 2014 Mòd by Cllr Hamish Fraser (left), chairman of the Highland Council's Gaelic Implementation Group and Cllr Jimmy Gray (right), convener of the council.

Highland council renews ties with Nova Scotia

THE HIGHLAND Council has announced it will be renewing ties with Nova Scotia, recognising 'the unique connection' between Scottish Gaelic culture and the Canadian province.

Early next year the council will renew the 'Memorandum of Understanding' put together back in 2002, which outlines areas of joint interest and co-operation and paved the way for many activities between the two countries such as youth educational trips and literature activities.

Councillor Jimmy Gray, convener of the Highland Council, said: 'The Memorandum recognises the

unique connection that exists between our areas in terms of language, a common culture, family ties and emigration.

'I am therefore delighted this solid partnership will be renewed.'

Lewis MacKinnon, executive director of Gaelic affairs for the Province of Nova Scotia, said: 'The Memorandum has proved to be a very successful way to run joint campaigns, exchanges and projects and provides real support for people to learn about the Gaelic language and to explore the culture and history that ties our two nations closely together.'

Gaelic poetry launch on Skye

A NEW collection of Gaelic poetry by a writer from Skye will be launched this evening (Thursday).

The compilation is the sixth by Myles Campbell of Staffin and will be available at Gaelic college Sabhal Mòr Ostaig. The book 'Tro Chloich na Sùla' (Through the

Pupil of the Eye) is a series of poems inspired by the work of famous artists of the past.

Mr Campbell said: 'I'm very pleased to have the launch of Tro Chloich na Sùla at Sabhal Mòr Ostaig.'

'It seems to me by far the most appropriate place for the launch of

an all-Gaelic book of poems.

'By looking at well known paintings by artists through the centuries, the poems explore how the paintings reflect changes in how people perceive the world. Other poems in the book in more contemporary idiom

explore place, politics, religion and personal themes.'

Tro Chloich na Sùla will be launched at the college's Arainn Ostaig at 7.30pm. All are welcome and the event will include readings of the book as well as a performance from the college's music students.

Screen Machine
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Strontian Fri 24 October
Lochaline Sat 25 October
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Craignure Thurs 30 October

The Nut Job (U) 84 mins
24/10 at 5.30pm, 25/10 at 2pm, 27/10 at 5.30pm, 28/10 at 5.30pm, 30/10 at 5.30pm

Pride (15) 120mins
24/10 at 8.30pm, 25/10 at 8.30pm, 29/10 at 8.30pm

The Hundred-Foot Journey (PG) 122 mins
25/10 at 5.30pm, 27/10 at 8.30pm, 29/10 at 5.30pm

A Most Wanted Man (15) 122 mins
28/10 at 8.30pm, 30/10 at 8.30pm

Book at: www.screenmachine.co.uk or phone 0871 902 5750.
Tickets also at the cinema 30 mins before screenings: Cash only, no cards. £7.00 Adults. Concessions £5.50. 3D +£1.50

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ONCE UPON A PLACE

SCOTTISH INTERNATIONAL STORYTELLING FESTIVAL 2014

'Robert Louis Stevenson'
Fiddler Judy Turner and guitarist/singer Neil Adam travel all the way from Australia to recall the story of the life, loves, adventures and sorrows of Scotland's best loved author, crowned 'Tusitala' - the Storyteller - by the Samoans

Oban Library
Friday 31st October at 7.00 pm

This is a free event. Please reserve a seat by phoning 01631 571444

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Gates get Golden Touch at Benmore

HISTORIC Golden Gates at Benmore Botanic Garden, near Dunoon, have been restored and replaced after an absence of almost 10 years.

The gates are among many additions to the Benmore estate made by Greenock sugar refiner James Duncan when he took over the estate in 1870 from Piers Patrick, a wealthy American who had bought the estate eight years earlier.

Having fallen into disrepair, the gates were removed and stored indoors to prevent further deterioration until funds were available to restore them.

Duncan commissioned a Berlin firm to design and make the wrought-iron gates for the Paris Universal Exhibition of 1878.

They feature central circles bearing Duncan's initials. Duncan brought them back to Benmore where they were erected at the Glen Massan entrance to the estate, complete with the marble pillars that had been carved by local stonemasons in 1873.

The original lodge house has been demolished so the Golden Gates now stand alone at the Garden's original entrance.

Benmore curator, Peter Baxter said: 'The Golden Gates and the surrounding landscaping will become a main attraction to the southern part of the Garden. It was our duty to preserve the gates and to have them restored to their former glory. Visitors can't fail to be impressed by the magnificence of the gates and the quality of the restoration work.'

Funds for the restoration of the Golden Gates were realised by Benmore's parent organisation, the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh (RBGE) with gilding made possible by funds from the Younger (Benmore) Trust, the Rowan Legacy and donations. Groundworks, landscaping and plantings were done by Benmore staff and intern students.

The gates and lanterns, which adorn the top of the marble posts, were refurbished by GH Currie Blacksmiths of Sandbank and gilded by John Nevin of Mackay Decorators. Consultant Jane Kelly advised throughout the restoration process and designed the new fences at each side of the marble pillars.



GOLDEN: Gates at Benmore Botanic garden have been restored and replaced.

Demand for new print of family Gaelic learning

PACKS OF Gaelic songs and nursery rhymes have proved so popular with families that the Scottish government is investing an extra £25,000 to reach thousands more households.

Minister for Scotland's languages Alasdair Allan made the announcement on the opening day of the Royal National Mòd as thousands of competitors and spectators arrived in Inverness.

Bòrd na Gàidhlig will use the funding to produce around 7,000 new packs after the original 10,000 were snapped up by parents across Scotland eager to develop their language skills and find out about the Gaelic medium education available to them.

Dr Allan said: 'Our greatest success in promoting Gaelic has been seen among younger speakers, with the latest census showing significant growth in this area and halting the historic decline. As more young people are introduced to Gaelic, we also have the opportunity to reach out to parents and family members who want to learn along with them in a fun way.'

'Today's announcement takes the total investment in these parent packs to £46,000 and will reach 17,000 households. It is shining a light on the excellent work being done across Gaelic early year's providers and schools and, along with the range of

other online and multimedia resources, are underpinning the sustainable expansion of Gaelic among young people.'

As well as a CD of nursery rhymes, the colourful packs include DVDs on the benefits of bilingualism, leaflets about resources available in Gaelic-medium education and contacts to organisations and groups that can provide support for each stage of Gaelic education.

Bòrd na Gàidhlig Ceannard (CEO), John Angus MacKay said: 'The educational choices you make for your child are among the most important that parents will ever have to make. Gaelic-medium education is open to everyone, whether you are coming from a Gaelic speaking background or not.'

'The first print run of the packs was very popular amongst parents looking to find out more about what their options and benefits of bilingual education are. These additional Fios is Freagairt packs will help reach even more families with an interest in Gaelic culture.'

The packs will be distributed through all local authorities currently offering Gaelic education, through Comann nam Bàrants' Parental Advisory System and from the Bòrd's own education officers.

Things to do across Argyll over the next seven days

Thursday
BEAT THE post Mod blues with a night learning your 'agus' from your 'ladir'.

A Gaelic conversation group is held in Oban for all levels of fluency including those who can't speak a word - but are willing to learn.

Come along and brush up on your Gaelic language skills or if you want to start learning Gaelic for the first time. Every Thursday night with the very patient Duncan MacNeil in the Furan Gaelic Centre at the Corran Halls.



Friday
VISIT Oban War and Peace Museum between 10am and 6pm.

The museum contains a fascinating collection of artefacts and photographs depicting the rich cultural history of the busy port town and its people.

The museum is run by a team of friendly and enthusiastic volunteers and relies on visitor donations to cover all its overhead costs. There is something of interest for all ages and youngsters can participate in the museum's quiz.

Saturday
FROM 11am until 3pm a craft fair in the Corran Halls, Oban will show off locally handmade crafts and provide mini creative workshops.

There is free entry and something for all ages.



Sunday
THE ROYAL apartments of Queen Mekhmen Banu are plunged into mourning - her young sister, Princess Shireen, is dying. The Princess will only be saved if the Queen gives Shireen her beauty. The Queen decides to sacrifice herself, but later regrets her actions.

This splendid tale of forbidden love, self-sacrifice, jealousy and suffering returns to the Bolshoi stage after a ten-year absence and is available to Oban audiences through Oban Phoenix Cinema's live link.

The Legend of Love is one of Russian master Yuri Grigorovich's earliest choreographic works, and its storyline explores the conflict between love and duty through its two heroines.

Featuring dance movements, sets and costumes inspired by the Middle East, this stunning ballet, which uses pure dance to tell the story, is further enriched by the talent of the Bolshoi troupe.

| Oban Phoenix Cinema | Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles | Alexander & the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day | Dracula Untold | The Book of Life | The Maze Runner | Annabelle | NATIONAL THEATRE LIVE Frankenstein | BOLSHOI BALLET LIVE Legends of Love |
|---------------------|--|---|-------------------------|---|---|---|------------------------------------|---|
| | Thurs 23rd 13.00, 15.30 3D, 18.00 3D, 20.30 Fri 24th 14.00 3D, 18.00 Sat 25th 16.00 3D, 18.00 Sun 26th 13.15, 18.00 | Thurs 23rd 13.00, 15.30 Fri 24th 13.30 Sat 25th 13.30 | Thurs 23rd 18.00, 20.30 | Fri 24th 14.00, 18.20 3D Sat 25th 14.00, 18.20 3D Sun 26th 12.40, 18.20 3D Mon 27th 18.20 Tues 28th 18.20 Wed 29th 18.20 Thurs 30th 16.05 | Fri 24th 15.30, 20.30 Sat 25th 15.30, 20.30 Sun 26th 18.00, 20.30 Thurs 30th 20.30 | Fri 24th 20.15 Sat 25th 20.15 Sun 26th 20.15 Mon 27th 20.15 Tues 28th 20.15 Wed 29th 20.15 | Thurs 23rd 19.00 Sun 26th 15.00 | Sat 25th 15.30, 20.30 Mon 27th 18.00, 20.30 Wed 29th 18.00, 20.30 |

Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles (12A)
Darkness has settled over New York City as Shredder and his evil Foot Clan have an iron grip on everything. The future is grim until four unlikely outcast brothers rise from the sewers and discover their destiny as Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles.

Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day (PG)
Follow the exploits of 11-year-old Alexander as he experiences the most terrible and horrible day of his young life.

Dracula Untold (12A)
Late Eren stars in Dracula Untold, the origin story of the man who became Dracula.

The Book of Life (U)
The Book of Life is the journey of Manolo, a young man who is torn between fulfilling the expectations of his family and following his heart. Before choosing which path to follow, he embarks on an incredible adventure that spans three fantastical worlds where he must face his greatest fears. Rich with a fresh take on pop music favorites, we are encouraged to celebrate the past while looking forward to the future.

The Maze Runner (12A)
Based on the best-selling young adult thriller, The Maze Runner is set in a post-apocalyptic world, where Thomas is deposited in a community of young men after his memory is erased. After learning they're all trapped in a maze, Thomas joins forces with fellow 'runners' to not only escape the maze, but solve its riddle and reveal the chilling secret of who brought them there, and why.

Annabelle (15)
John R. Lassetti directs this horror prequel to 'The Conjuring' (2013). Mia and John Gordon (Annabelle Wallis and Ward Horton) are terrorized by supernatural forces when John thinks he has found the perfect gift for his wife and unborn child, a rare vintage doll named Annabelle.

The family's joy however is abruptly ended when they are invaded and attacked in their home by members of a satanic cult. The terror of their night is nothing compared to what follows as the cult conjure an entity which takes over Annabelle and transforms her into a malevolent force of evil.

Frankenstein - National Theatre Live
The thrilling broadcast of Frankenstein returns to cinemas due to unprecedented audience demand. Directed by Academy Award®-winner Danny Boyle, Frankenstein features Benedict Cumberbatch and Jonny Lee Miller alternating roles as Victor Frankenstein and his creation. Childlike in his innocence but grotesque in form, Frankenstein's bewitched Creature is cast out into a hostile universe by his horror-struck maker. (DOORS CLOSE AT 19.00, PLEASE BE SEATED BY 18.30)

Bolshoi Ballet - Legends of Love (Live)
The royal apartments of Queen Mekhmen Banu are plunged into mourning - her young sister, Princess Shireen, is dying. The Princess will only be saved if the Queen gives Shireen her beauty. The Queen decides to sacrifice herself, but later regrets her action when she is disgraced and Shireen falls in love with the Queen's own lover, the painter Ferhad. Featuring dance movements, sets and costumes inspired by the Middle East, this stunning ballet, which uses pure dance to tell the story, is further enriched by the talent of the Bolshoi troupe. (DOORS CLOSE AT 15.00, MUST BE SEATED BY 14.50)

COMMUNITY NOTICEBOARD

Advertise in the Community Notice Board for just £15.71 (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.

SCOTTISH WILDLIFE TRUST
Argyll & Lochaber Group
Coffee Morning
Glencruitten Church Centre
Saturday 25 October, 10am - 2pm
Teas, coffees, home baking, light lunches, sales, tombola, displays. Free admission. All welcome.

Connel Sewing Club
Resumes
Thursday 30th October
Connel Village Hall
7pm - 9pm
£20 for 25 weeks
Old & New Members Welcome
All levels catered for
For more details contact 01631 710569

NETHERLORN PIPING SOCIETY LOCAL NIGHT
(performers - Oban High School and Oban Pipe band)
WEDNESDAY 29th
OCTOBER 2014
In the ARGYLLSHIRE GATHERING HALLS at 7.30pm
Entry: Adults £3
Children Free

HOLLY TEA
Oban Parish Church Centre
Saturday 1st November at 2.00 pm
in aid of Multiple Sclerosis Therapy Centre Oban
Donation at door
Tea / Coffee - Hot Mince Pies - Shortbread
Also Home Baking Stall, Bric-a-brac, Books, Xmas Cards and Lots more

Simply Handmade Craft Fair
Saturday 25 October
11am-3pm
Corran Halls
Locally Handmade crafts, Soup Lunch
Mini Creative Workshops
FREE ENTRY

To advertise in our community noticeboard call 01631 568000

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| Course | When | Start Date | Outline |
|---|-------------------------------------|----------------------------|---|
| Computing for beginners 55 plus | Tuesdays 10.30 - 12.30 Oban Library | 4th November for 6 weeks | A course aimed at beginners. |
| Internet, email, word, Excel Beginners and Intermediate | Wednesdays 7 - 9pm Lorn House | 12th November for 5 weeks | Spreadsheet course |
| SOA Computing evening class | Thursdays 7 - 9pm Lorn House | 13th November for 10 weeks | Certificate class for Beginners/Intermediate |
| ESOL daytime class | Tuesdays 2 - 4pm Oban Library | 21st October for 10 weeks | Conversational English class |
| ESOL evening class | Mondays 7 - 8.30pm Oban Library | 27th October for 6 weeks | Conversational English Class |
| Job Information Club | Fridays 10 - 12 Oban Job Centre | Ongoing | Help with CV's, job applications, computer skills |
| Beginners Computing Daytime sessions | 1 to 1 and group available | Please call to arrange | Ongoing Help with first steps in computing |

NEW YEAR CLASSES STARTING IN JANUARY 2015

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- Creative Crafts
- Driving Theory

For further information on any of the classes or to book a place, please contact us at: Lorn Community Learning Centre, Willowview, Lower Soroba, Oban 01631 567979/567974

For help with reading, writing and number skills, please call Brian on 01631 567952

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Oban FM Community Radio, 132 George Street, Oban, Argyll, PA34 5NT

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 Americano Show 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 Cornfort 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

SATURDAY: 0900 Maggie's Swingin' Sixties, 1000 Saturday Morning Live with Linda Crowther, 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

WRI hold new season meetings

Fort William

THE WOMEN'S Rural Institute of Fort William opened its new season with a trip to India when member Margaret Boyd spoke of her recent trip there.

The volunteer spoke of her work with Christ For India and said she felt she needed a trip there to learn more so with four other companions she travelled to Mumbai where part of the charity is based.

Ms Boyd explained about the group's interest in the provision of food, Christian teaching and basic education for slum children in India and said she travelled to deprived areas to deliver food for children.

The speaker was very enthusiastic about her experiences and felt that she was more able to inform others about the charity's work now she has returned home.

The competition for an Indian recipe was won by Martine Young and raffle winners were Joan Sherry and Alicia MacLean.

The next meeting will be on Monday November 3 in Inverlochly Hall at 7.15pm.

Alison Rennie from Children's Hospice Association Scotland will be speaking about the work of her organisation and the competition is 'a childhood memory'.

A warm welcome is extended to women of all ages.

Arisaig

ARISAIG'S Women's Rural Institute group gathered for their first meeting of the season on October 14.

Numbers were slightly below usual due to holidays and illness but nine members attended.

Alan Lamb was the guest speaker and gave an interesting talk about the Air Training Corps.

June Cairns won the competition for best Halloween mask, with Margaret MacEachan in second place and Ann Cameron third.

Ms MacEachan won first prize for the other contest 'something blue', with Ms Ciarns and Ms Cameron in second and third.

The next meeting will be held on November 20.

Hopes for Hebtember 2015

ORGANISERS of the first Hebtember festival hope the event will become an annual occurrence.

The month-long event, run by Pròiseact nan Ealan (the Gaelic Arts Agency), took place throughout September, celebrating Hebridean culture and heritage with events on Lewis, Harris, North Uist, South Uist, Benbecula, Berneray and Barra.

The events included arts exhibitions and cèilidhs, plus headlining performances by Gaelic singer Julie Fowlis and comedian Fred MacAulay on his Frederendum tour.

Gillebride MacMillan, the main performer in Barra's cèilidh, hopes that Hebtember will now become an annual event, having attracted visitors from all over the UK, Ireland and Germany.

She said: 'The Hebtember cèilidhs are a great way of showcasing the rich Gaelic culture of the Hebrides. 'September has tended to be a quiet month for cèilidhs but now Hebtember changes that.'

Next year, Pròiseact nan Ealan will be running exhibitions about World War One across the Outer Hebrides, displaying pictures, stories, artefacts and other items from the islands.

Lochaline bee talk

THE PEOPLE of Lochaline will have the opportunity to learn about bees as a group of enthusiasts prepare to give a talk.

Sarah Kennedy of Lochaber Beekeepers Association will be at Lochaline School on Thursday November 6 from 6.30pm to explain how honey bees survive in the region's variable climate.

For more information contact Ms Kennedy on 07768805040 or secretary@lochaber-beekeepers.org.

Tiree Music Festival misses out on Best Small Festival Award

TIREE Musical Festival (TMF) missed out on an award at this year's Scottish Events Awards but did receive a commendation from judges.

Since the musical festival on the Hebridean island began in 2010 it has increased in popularity from selling 600 tickets to 1,500 this year and it won the Best Small Festival at the 2012 and 2013 awards.

However, this year it lost out to the Southern Fried Festival, Perth's festival of American roots music.

Plans are already underway for TMF 2015 which takes place July 17-19.



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Kintyre champion sells for £1,100 at Dalmally

York buyer takes Argyll Limousin bullock back south of the border



Andrew Hamilton exhibits the show champion. 07_143cattle01

A KINTYRE farm took the top prize at Saturday's show of suckled calves in Dalmally, run by United Auctions.

The Hamilton family at Kilwhipnach, Southend took top honours with a home-bred March born Limousin cross bullock. It sold for £1,100.00 to Mr I Woodhead, York at the preceding sale.

Judge for the day was Duncan Henderson junior of Whitehouse Farm, Stirling.

There was a superb entry of 1,276 suckled calves and store cattle on offer to the packed ringside of buyers present from throughout Scotland and Yorkshire.

Autumn Born Bullocks: 1st - P Kennedy, Lephinkill 2nd & 3rd - N MacDonald, Auchgoyle. Autumn Born Heifers: 1st & 2nd - Lephinkill. Spring Born Bullock Calves: 1st - Mr T Hamilton, Kilwhipnach 2nd - Lephinkill 3rd - Auchgoyle. Spring Born Heifer Calves: 1st - M Hall, Tombuie 2nd - Lephinkill 3rd - M/s McVicar, Lephinchapel. Shepherds Class: 1st & 2nd - Mr Allan, MacFadyen, Braglenmore 3rd - Mr C Stewart c/o Barguilean. Pens of 4 Bullocks: 1st - Lephinkill 2nd - Auchgoyle 3rd - M/s MacNeill, Tiraghoil. Pens of 4 Heifers: 1st - Lephinkill 2nd - M/s Ronald, Keilator 3rd - M/s MacFadyen, Braglenmore. Champion Calf: Mr T Hamilton, Kilwhipnach - Limousin Bullock weighing 302kilo's and selling for £1,100.00 to Mr I Woodhead, York. Reserve Champion: Mr P Kennedy, Lephinkill - Limousin Bullock weighing 388kilo's and selling at £880 to Mr Woodhead.

Overall, the 732 Bullocks levelled out at 266.19 per kilo or £736.78 per head whilst the 544 Heifers levelled out at 251.83 per kilo or £664.27 per head.

Principal lots and prices
Top prices per head

Bullocks
AAx: £910 - Braglenmore: £770(3) & £760 - Pitcastle Estate: £750 - Braglenbeg (2) & Barndromin (3)

BSHx: £840, £820 & £780 - Ashgrove. BRBx: £1150 - Lephinkill: £1120 - Dunans: £880 - Lephinchapel & Balliemanoach (Lochgilphead): £830(2) - Kilwhipnach(2): £790 Lephinchapel: £770(2) - Kilwhipnach.

CHARx: £1300(2), £1280, £1230 & £1090 - Lephinkill: £1020 & £1010 - Braglenmore: £1000 - Dunans: £970 (2) & £960 - Lephinkill: £920(2) & £910(5) - Braglenbeg: £900 (11) - Ederline Estate & Braglenmore(2): £895(7) - Tiraghoil: £890 - Colintravaie: £860 - Braglenmore: £840(2) - Braglenbeg: £830 - Ashgrove & Lephinkill: £825(2) - Barnakill: £810 - Braglenmore(3), Dunans & Arileod (Coll). HIGH: £720 - Pitcastle Estate.

LIMx: £1100 - Kilwhipnach: £1000(2) - Auchgoyle: £980 - Balliemanoach, Lochgilphead: £970(3) - Craignafoch: £955 - Feringa Farming, Coll: £950 - Lephinkill & Craig Farm: £910 - Craigmor: £905(2) - Lephinkill: £905 - Tiraghoil, Mull: £900(3) - Craig Farm: £900 - Pitcastle



A brisk trade as the sale gets underway. 07_143cattle02

Estate: £890 - Craigmor & Auchgoyle(5): £880 - Tombuie, Craig Farm(2) & Lephinkill: £870(5) - Craignafoch: £860(3) - Kilwhipnach: £855 - Caolis, Coll & 2 Keil Crofts: £850 - Ledcharrie(2), Garvie (2), Auchgoyle & Tom Na Coille(3). SALx: £660(4) - Balantyre Farm. SHx: £745 - Ichrachan Farm. SIMx: £1060(2) & £1050(2) - Dunans: £985 - Tiraghoil: £940 - Dunans: £930 - Duallin: £900 - Barguilean: £885 - Tiritigan Farm: £880(6) - Barguilean: £870 - Tiritigan & Barguilean(2): £865(5) - Tiraghoil: £860 - Barguilean, Duallin(2), Tiritigan & Pitcastle Estate: £850 - Barguilean: £820(8) - Keilator: £800 - Tiritigan(3) & Craig Farm.

Heifers
AAx: £760 - Barndromin. BSHx: £730 - Ashgrove. BRBx: £690 - Lephinchapel. CHARx: £880(6) - Lephinkill: £850(4) - Braglenmore: £840 - Lephinkill: £800 - Braglenbeg. LIMx: £955(3) - Feringa Farming, Coll: £890(2) - Craigmor: £880 - Lephinkill: £860 - Auchgoyle: £850 & £835(2) - Tombuie: £830(2) - Craignafoch: £820(4) - Ledcharrie: £815(2) - Tiraghoil: £805 - Feringa Farming, Coll. LUINGx: £690 - Pitcastle Estate. SALx: £770 - Arileod, Coll. SHOX: £720(3) - Balnahard, Colonsay. SIMx: £870 - Dunans: £800(2) - Auch Estate: £790 - Barachander Farm: £775 - Dunans.

Top prices per kilo
Bullocks
AAx: 292p - Pitcastle Estate: 288p -

Garvie: 273p(2) - Braglenmore: 268p(6) - Ardnacross: 264p - Barndromin: 258p(3) - Pitcastle Estate: 252p - Barndromin (3) & Kiloran Farmers(2). BSH: 299p(6) - Stronmagachan: 269p(4), 263p(2), 262p(7) - Castles Estate. BRBx: 278p(2), 273p & 263p(2) - Kilwhipnach: 261p - Lephinchapel(2). CHARx: 366p(12), 332p(4) & 321p(9) - Ederline Estate: 319p(7) - Tiraghoil: 318p(11) - Ederline Estate: 315p(5) - Myretonhill: 314p - Dunans: 312p(2) - Ballygown: 305p - Braglenmore: 301p(2) - Arileod, Coll: 300p(2) - Barnakill: 299p - Ederline Estate: 297p(4) & 294p(2) - Dunans: 286p(3) - Arileod: 286p(4) - Ballygown: 280p(3) - Braglenmore: 276p(4) - Dunans: 272p - Tiraghoil: 273p(2) - Myretonhill: 271p(2) - Arileod: 270p(2) - Barnakill.

HIGH: 193p(2) - Pitcastle Estate. LIMx: 364p - Kilwhipnach: 354p(6) - Auch Estate: 328p(2) - Tom Na Coille: 315p(3) & 313p(5) - Balantyre Farm: 312p - Brencaille: 311p - Tom Na Coille: 310p(7) - Lochoisige: 307p - Craig Farm: 306p - Auch Estate(4), Garvie(4) & Brencaille(2): 304p - Cuilaine: 303p(2) - Colintravaie: 302p - Garvie(2) & Craigmor(3): 299p - Caolis, Coll: 296p(4) - Glenshellaich: 295p - Brencaille: 294p(3) - Brencaille: 293p - Tom Na Coille & Musdale Farm: 292p - Colintravaie(2), Feringa Farming, Boreland Farms(4) & Musdale Farm: 291p(2) - Ledcharrie: 288p - Keilator: 287p - Feringa Farming. LUING: 292p & 279p - Scallasaig, Colonsay: 279p(4) - Muckairn.

SALx: 283p(4) & 274p(2) - Balantyre Farm Partnership. SHOX: 303p(3), 299p, 298p - Stronmagachan: 289p(7) & 279p(8) - Balnahard. SIMx: 332p(4) - Brencaille: 318p(5) - Pitcastle Estate: 316p(3) & 312p(2) - Brencaille: 310p - Dunans: 307p - Craig(2) & Pitcastle Estate(8): 306p(3) - Keilator: 305p(2) - Barguilean Farm: 304p - Myretonhill: 303p(2) - Shellfield: 301p - Barachander Farm: 299p - Tiritigan: 298p - Shellfield: 297p - Barachander(2), Dunans & Duallin(2): 292p - Ederline Estate: 289p(6) - Auch Estate: 288p(4) - Brencaille: 283p(4), 282p(6) & 281p(8) - Keilator.

Heifers AAx: 270p(2) - Musdale Farm. BSH: 213p - Ashgrove. BRBx: 267p - Lephinchapel. CHARx: 315p(6) - Ederline Estate: 298p(7) - Tullochmor: 294p(7) - Ederline Estate: 293p(7) - Ballygown: 292p(5) - Ederline Estate: 287p(11) - Dunans: 285p(8) & 280p(7) - Ederline Estate.

LIMx: 308p(2) & 302p(2) - Craigmor: 295p(2) - Garvie: 288p(5) - Boreland Farms: 287p(6) - Balantyre Farm Partnership: 285p(4) - Brencaille: 282p(3) - Cuilaine: 282p - Keilator: 281p - Glenshellaich.

LUING: 257p - Pitcastle Estate. SALx: 297p(3) & 290p(4) - Musdale Farm: 262p - Balnahard, Colonsay. SIMx: 314p(2) - Auch Estate: 292p(3) & 289p(4) - Keilator: 282p(2) - Auch Estate: 281p(2) - Keilator.

PORTREE

DINGWALL and Highland Marts Ltd held a cattle sale in Portree on October 13.

Bullocks (106) averaged 242.9p and sold to 378.6p per kg for a pen of 140kg Shorthorn crosses from Orbst, Isle of Skye, and £1,290 gross for a 730kg Limousin cross from 2 Hamaraviren, Glendale.

Heifers (84) averaged 228.4p and sold to 316.1p per kg for a pen of 155kg Limousin crosses from 5 Drynoch, Carbst, and £1,080 gross for a 510kg Limousin cross from 2 Tote, Skeabost Bridge.

In-calf heifers (3) sold to £1,400 gross for a Limousin cross from 3 Digg, Staffin.

In-calf cows (13) sold to £1,250 gross for a Shorthorn cross from 21 Borve, Skeabost Bridge.

Cows with calves at foot (9) sold to £1,220 gross for a Limousin cross cow with heifer calf from 27 Stenscholl.

OTM cattle (46) sold to 171.2p per kg for a 520kg Limousin cross cow from Braebost, Fdinbane, and £1,310 gross for a 950kg Charolais cross from 1 & 2 Stenscholl, Staffin.

Other leading prices per head and per kg: Bullocks up to 200kg - 5 Drynoch, £550, Orbst, 353.9p; 201-250kg - 5 & 6 Borneiskaig, Kilmuir, £700, 5 Satran, Carbst, 300.0p; 251-300kg - 3 & 4 Upper Halistra, Waternish, £770,

Strollamus, Broadford, 283.0p; 301-350kg - 5 & 6 Sheader, Uig, £750, 1 & 2 Conon, Uig, 241.9p; 351-400kg - 2 Eynort, Carbst, £890, 222.5p; 401-450kg - 7b 1 Lisigarry Place, Portree, £870, 212.2p; 501-550kg - 5 Drynoch, £1010, 190.6p; 551-600kg - Distillery Houses, Carbst, £1,120, 200.0p.

Heifers up to 200kg - 10 Carbsteg, Carbst, £540, 5 Drynoch, 307.1p; 201-250kg - 4 Bay, Waternish, £620, 7 Ullinish, Struan, 277.3p; 251-300kg - 1 Maligar, Culnacnock, £660, 227.6p; 301-350kg - Orbst, £800, 235.3p; 351-400kg - 10 Carbsteg, £830, 218.4p; 401-450kg - 7 Fiscoavag, Carbst, £890, 207.0p.

In-calf heifer: LimX - 21 Borve, £1,050.

In-calf cow: LimX - 9 Stenscholl, Staffin, £1,150, (twice); LimX - Viskigill, Carbst, £1,050; SimX - 10 Stenscholl, Staffin, £1,020.

Cow with calf at foot: LimX - 27 Stenscholl, £1,180; LimX - 27 Stenscholl, £1,150, (twice).

Other leading prices per head: OTM cows: 8 Digg, (LimX), £990; Braebost, (SimX), £970; 4 Treaslane, Skeabost, (ShoX), £910.

Other leading prices per kg: OTM cows: 3 Digg, Staffin, (LimX), 165.1p; Braebost, (SimX), 159.0p; 5 Satran, (ShoX), 150.0p.

NFU urges farmers to make their voices heard

AS IT prepares to make its submission on further devolution to the Smith Commission, NFU Scotland is meeting its members to seek their views.

Following the 'No' vote in the referendum on Scottish independence on September 18, the UK government appointed Lord Smith of Kelvin to chair a commission that will oversee the devolution of further powers to Scotland.

The commission's key role is to convene cross-party talks and engage with the public to seek consensus on the shape of future powers to Scotland.

It aims to publish the results of this wide-ranging consultation with a set of proposals in a White Paper by November 30, with draft clauses laid down in a new draft Scotland Bill by January 25.

As part of this process, NFU Scotland has been invited to submit evidence by the end of October. The Union has already hosted a number of meetings with representatives throughout Scotland, chaired by president Nigel Miller, with the union's parliamentary officer Clare Slipper in attendance.

Further meetings will be held over the next 10 to 12 days to gather a collection of views and

in particular NFU Scotland wants to know how members feel further devolution could help, or hinder, their family, business and community in years to come.

Ms Slipper said: 'Speaking to members across the country prior to the referendum, it was very clear that there exists a vast range of views on how Scotland can be a better and more prosperous place to live, work and farm.'

'Having been invited to submit a response to the Smith Commission, we feel that now is the time to talk with members about Scotland's future governance within the UK - including whether further devolution is required and how we can use the powers we currently have more effectively for the benefit of rural Scotland.'

'Our consultation looks at the various issues that came up time and again at our referendum engagement debates - such as EU representation, energy policy, and business incentives - and we are encouraged by the positive response we've had so far in the process.'

'If you are an NFU Scotland member and have thoughts on further devolution then I urge you to get in touch.'

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OBAN

Auctioneer Alistair Logan at Oban Livestock Centre oversaw the sale on Wednesday, October 15. 16_143sheep01

CALEDONIAN Marts led a sale of rams and ram lambs last Wednesday in Oban Livestock Centre.

Shearlings (379) averaged £287.73 (+£18.73 on the year) selling to £850 for a Suff from J M Elliot, Woodside, Yetholm.

Ram Lambs (43) averaged £175.68 (-£9.06 on the year) selling to £300 for a Suff from A MacDonald, Bunacaimbe, Arisaig.

The 75 Blackface Shearlings averaged £239.64 (+£25.89).

Leading prices: Shearlings - £600 Glengorm Est; £600 Brisbane Glen Estates; £480 (twice) Maidencroats; £420, £400, £380 Laigh Alticane; £400 Newton of Crathie.

The 18 BF Ram Lambs averaged £159.29 (+£23.81 on the year).

Leading prices: Ram Lambs - £280, £200 Hardridge; £220 (twice) Balliemanoach; £200, £180 Brisbane Glen Estate.

The 86 Cheviot Shearlings averaged £316.58 (+£35.59 on the year).

Leading prices: £800 (twice), £620, £580 Attonburn; £620, £600 (twice) Inverbroom; £550 Hawkshead; £520, £500 Balure.

The 30 Suff Shearlings averaged £334.33 (-£49 on the year).

Leading prices: £850, £500, £380 Woodside; £520 Maidencroats; £450, £400, £380 Tyree; £380 Baleuvllin.

The 10 Suff Ram Lambs averaged £202 (no chance).

Leading prices: £300, £200 Bunacaimbe; £250, £180 Achnaba; £250 Newton.

The 69 Texel Shearlings averaged £289 (-£32 on the year).

Leading prices: £800, £700, £500 (twice) Veltigar; £380 Torrax; £380, £350 Barcaldine HF; £360, £350 Achnaba; £380 Newton.

The 15 Tex Ram Lambs averaged £172 (-£99 on the year).

Leading prices: £250, £220 (twice), £200, £180 Barcaldine HF; £180 Aldersyde; £180 Laigh Alticane.

The 12 BF Leic Shearlings averaged £305 (+£100 on the year).

Leading prices: £550, £500, £400 Seaview; £300 (£160 Lamb) Balure of Shian; £300 Balliemanoach.

Other Leading prices: Beltex - £300 £260 Blythbank; Beltex - £250 Maidencroats; Suff x, Beltex - £420, £400 Torrax; Llyne - £200 (three times) Roseneath HF.



big energy saving event

home energy scotland technology showcase

Oban showcase set to provide latest energy options for householders

WITH the clocks going back an hour this Sunday and winter fast approaching, many people are already thinking about keeping their home warm.

The chances are you might be looking to improve your property's insulation, or even change to a lower-cost fuel or energy source to help reduce your current energy bills.

If you are looking for free, impartial energy advice to help your decision, Home Energy Scotland, in association with AL-energry, is holding a free-to-attend technology showcase event on Saturday, November 1 in Oban. Come along to Oban High School between 11am and 4pm for advice about solar, wind and heat technologies for your home from local Microgeneration Certification Scheme (MCS) certified installers and fuel suppliers.

On the day you can also talk to advisers about renewable technologies and

energy efficiency measures best suited to different properties and sites.

You can hear about savings and discuss any technical or planning issues, or arrange to find out about actual costs and savings from a Green Homes Network household.

Brian Barker, home energy and partnership liaison officer at Home Energy Scotland, said: 'This event offers a good opportunity for householders interested in improving their property's energy efficiency or installing renewables to find out more on what's on offer here in Argyll and Bute.

'We have held similar events in other parts of the Highlands

and Islands which have proved to be highly successful.

'I would urge everyone who is interested in learning more to come

SAVE ENERGY
SAVE MONEY

along and discuss their heating requirements on Saturday, November 1.'

A working biomass boiler will be sited in the school car park, and inside the venue you can also

find out more about local insulation schemes, how to get a Green Deal assessment and other helpful information. You can learn more about financial support available through local schemes and from the Scottish Government, including an interest-free loan of up to £10,000 for renewable systems.

The showcase will also provide details on financial assistance available for renewable and

conventional heating systems, and income from feed-in tariffs and the Domestic Renewable Heat Incentive scheme.

Dr Mandie Currie, Manager at AL-energry, added: 'The Home Energy Efficiency Programmes for Scotland scheme known as HEEPS ABS is now well underway in Argyll and Bute.

'We'll be at the showcase reminding local householders that free insulation measures, subject to qualifying criteria, are still available to help them have warmer and more energy-efficient homes.

'We look forward to assisting people at our stand where our team will be on hand to deal with enquiries.'

If you can't attend the showcase, to receive clear and impartial advice about renewable options and energy efficiency for your home, call Home Energy Scotland, funded by the Scottish Government, on: 0808 808 2282.

energy saving trust

thinking about wood fuelled heating for your home?

Scotland has an abundance of wood. However, is a wood fuelled heating system the right option for you and your home? We can give you free, impartial and in-depth advice on the best renewables options. We can also provide information on financial support available, including an interest free loan of up to £10,000 from the Scottish Government.

Speak to a renewables advisor at the Home Energy Scotland technology showcase on Saturday 1 November 2014, 11am-4pm at Oban High School, Soroba Road, Oban.

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Home Energy Scotland Technology Showcase
Saturday November 1, Oban High School, 11am - 4pm



Majority of Scots worried about energy bills

BIG ENERGY Saving Week – a joint UK campaign between Energy Saving Trust, Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC) and Citizens Advice – reveals almost three quarters of Scots are still worried about their energy bills.

The campaign helps householders learn how to take control of their energy bills with free advice available during the week over the phone, online and at events across the UK.

Mike Thornton, director of the Energy Saving Trust Scotland said: 'Rightfully, millions of householders are confused by their heating controls because, let's be honest, it is a bit of a minefield.'

'There are plenty of myths out there and it's no wonder people aren't getting it right. We are urging customers to learn about the myths, check their tariff, switch suppliers and insulate their homes.'

Housing Minister Margaret Burgess said: 'Rising energy bills remain a huge concern for the Scottish Government and fuel poverty is still a major issue in Scotland, with over 27 per cent of households affected.'

'That's why we are supportive of the Big Energy Saving Week campaign as it helps households take control of their electricity and heating bills.'

'Households can get advice on how to qualify for any energy saving improvements and find out how to save money on winter fuel bills through the Scottish Government's Home Energy Scotland hotline by calling 0808 808 2282.'

Energy and Climate Change secretary Ed Davey said: 'The easiest way to cut energy bills fast is to shop around for the cheapest energy deal and switch suppliers.'

'Thanks to government action to reform the energy market the number of independent suppliers has almost trebled since 2010 – encouraging greater competition which helps drive down prices.'

'We're also making it easier and quicker for people to switch, and the major energy suppliers have confirmed that switching times will halve by the end of this year to just two and a half weeks.'

Margaret Lynch, chief executive of Citizens Advice Scotland, said: 'The Scottish CAB service provides support for people who are struggling to pay for their fuel bills on a daily basis.'

'Energy prices having risen by third since 2010 and our advisors saw the number of cases related to household fuel bills in 2013/14 soar by 79 per cent from the previous year.'

'As energy prices continue to squeeze household budgets, it's important that people are aware of what they can do to keep their fuel bills down.'

'The Citizens Advice bureaux are running Big Energy Savings week events in Scotland to help people lower their costs in time for winter.'

The findings from a survey by marketing company Ipsos MORI of over 2,000 UK respondents show that four fifths of Scottish people claim to understand how to use their heating controls.

However, many of these respondents turn out to be using their heating controls incorrectly, and were guilty of believing these five common myths:

MYTH 1: Turn the heating up when it's cold outside. Over half (53 per cent) turn the thermostat up when it's cold outside. A home shouldn't need this as the thermostat is there to maintain the home temperature whatever the weather.

MYTH 2: Turn up the thermostat to heat the room quicker. Over a third (35 per cent) turn their room thermostat up when they want the room to heat up quicker. This does not help a room become warmer any quicker and only heats the home to a warmer temperature.

MYTH 3: Leave the heating on low constantly. 41 per cent think it is more energy efficient to leave the heating turned on at a low

temperature constantly, rather than turn

it on and off. This means these homes are heated when no-one is there to benefit and then the home is too cold when people are in the home.

MYTH 4: Hot water runs out if you stop feeding the tank. Nearly a third (32 per cent) leave their water heating on all the time to make sure they never run out, which could be costing far more on their energy bills than necessary.

MYTH 5: Keep electric storage heaters on all the time. Our research also found that few people with electric storage heaters understood how they work (only 37%). This means that households with electric heating could be paying through the nose by not taking advantage of cheaper night rate electricity.

SUPPLYING RENEWABLE HEAT FOR LOCAL FAMILIES AND BUSINESS

CASE STUDY: DOMESTIC WOOD PELLET BIOMASS BOILER



A local young family are now benefiting from a newly installed wood pellet Biomass boiler by Ferguson Energy. The system is providing a cost effective and efficient solution to the ever growing challenge of affordably heating your home. Mr Stuart McNae from Connel opted to modernise his existing night storage heating system with a Biomass alternative. Stuart and his family are delighted with the results and the level of service received from Ferguson Energy. With the combined Home Energy Scotland interest free loan and the domestic renewable heat incentive the switch really makes sense. Full application and incentive support as standard which means Ferguson Energy offer the complete service and even deliver our wood pellets as well.

CASE STUDY: COMMERCIAL LOG BIOMASS BOILER



Local businessman Chris James, who recently opened the Craignure Bunkhouse accommodation on the Isle of Mull, is delighted with the performance of the renewable heating system designed and installed by Ferguson Energy. The combination of a highly efficient Biomass log boiler and a solar thermal system are proving to be perfect partners. In keeping with the eco sensitive ethos of the bunkhouse, a cost effective and sustainable heating and hot water solution was provided by Ferguson Energy in partnership with local contractor Norman MacDonald. It makes perfect business sense to invest in renewable heat source which benefits from commercial renewable heat incentive support for the next 20 years.

CASE STUDY: AIR SOURCE HEAT PUMP



Local Luxury Hotel owner Mr Beppo Buchannan Smith, recently installed a Ferguson Energy Air Source heating solution at the exclusive Hilltop Reserve development at the Isle of Eriska Hotel. The system was installed in a purpose built plant room which has created a small scale district heating system that serves two individual luxury holiday apartments. Mr Buchannan Smith advised 'that our guests expect luxury and we wanted the heating solution to reflect this.' Ferguson Energy's system not only provides this but also gives us an extremely efficient and cost effective energy solution. The selected system deployed by Ferguson Energy is based closely on the design installed successfully by the company in many domestic homes through out Argyll.

Ferguson Energy is an Oban based renewable energy provider who have been operating in Argyll since 2011. The company which was formed by local engineers Barry and James Ferguson, specialises in the design and installation of affordable, efficient renewable heating systems. Ferguson Energy benefits from close working relationships with the manufacturers of the equipment they install and service. Director Barry Ferguson makes regular visits to the Burnit facility in Bulgaria and also to NIBE head office in Sweden to ensure the company is able to deliver a superior service to its clients. As Ferguson Energy is accredited to combine the interest free loan from the Scottish government and also the domestic renewable heat incentive, we can offer a serious alternative to in-efficient and expensive fossil fuel based heating systems of the past.

We have chosen to invest in the fuel supply market and from November will supply EN + Grade wood pellet fuel to users of Biomass. Ferguson Energy has secured an exclusive agreement with a top producer of wood pellets, this will enable us to offer a sustainable and cost effective source of Biomass energy. This new fuel supply service makes Ferguson Energy the only complete renewable energy provider in Argyll.



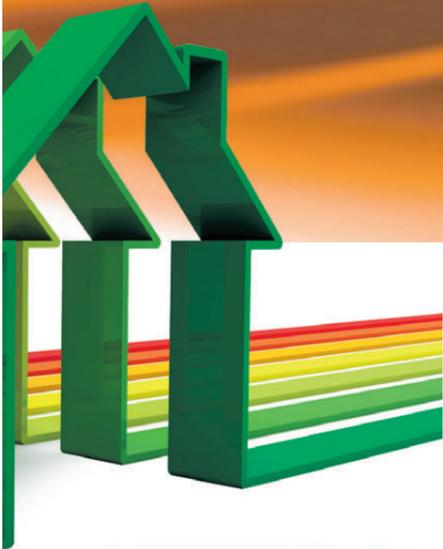
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Energy saving event

find these businesses at the home energy scotland event in oban



Switch suppliers and save

EST's research also found many households are still not regularly switching energy supplier.

Only a fifth of bill payers in Scotland claimed to have changed energy supplier in the last year, yet we found switching is easier than people think.

57 per cent of those who had switched energy suppliers in the last year agreed that it could save a lot of money, but only 28 per cent of those who'd not considered switching thought it could benefit them.

Older people are less likely to consider changing their energy supplier; 63% of those over 55 claim they are unlikely to consider switching in the next year, compared to 44 per cent of those under 35.

Big Energy Saving Week (20-24 October) is funded by DECC in collaboration with Energy Saving Trust and Citizens Advice Bureau. Other partners supporting the campaign include Global Action Plan, Age UK and ACRE (Action with Communities in Rural England).

The week will help householders to take

practical steps to cut to their bills by checking they are on the best deal, switching tariff or supplier and taking up energy saving actions such as using their heating controls in the correct way.

Big Energy Saving Week is part of a wider UK initiative known as the Big Energy Saving Network - a £1 million programme to support eligible third sector organisations and community groups and deliver help and advice to vulnerable consumers.

In order to reach as many households as possible, during the course of the week there will be local events across the UK which will be run by a network of Citizens Advice Bureau and community volunteers.

Any people needing help and advice on any of the issues raised in this release should call Home Energy Scotland (Scotland) on: 0808 808 2282.

For further advice about saving energy in the home visit: www.energysavingtrust.org.uk
For information about Big Energy saving Week visit: www.bigenergysavingweek.org.uk



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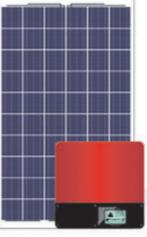


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THE AVERAGE HOME WITH A BIOMASS BOILER WILL SAVE **12.5 TONNES CO₂ PER YEAR = 62,500 PLASTIC BAGS!**

Figures are illustrative and based on an average. Factors including plastic bag weight and grey energy (energy used for production/disposal) vary greatly. Solar PV calculations based on average 4kW system. Biomass calculations based on burning 12.5 tonnes wood. Sources include timeforchange.org and www.scotsman.com

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Argyll, Lomond & the Islands Energy Agency

Thinking about installing a renewable technology?

Check your insulation first!

To get the most out of your renewable technology your property must be energy efficient. If your loft, walls and floor are not properly insulated then could be losing heat and not benefitting from using renewable energy.

ALIenergy will be attending the Renewable Fair run by Home Energy Scotland at the Corran Halls, Oban on 1st November 2014. Come along and speak to our team about the different insulation measures on offer for householders in Argyll and Bute.

ALIenergy deliver the Home Energy Efficiency Programme for Scotland Area Based Scheme (HEESPABS) in Argyll and Bute, which currently focuses on Bute. If you have recently received a letter about the scheme and you are interested in receiving insulation measures then please call the ALIenergy office on 01631 565 183, or email heepsabs@alienergy.org.uk to register your details and an assessor will call you to arrange a house visit.

Like **ALIenergy** on Facebook and follow our Tweets to keep up to date with what is available.

Other enquiries: enquiries@alienergy.org.uk; 01631 565183 or visit www.alienergy.org.uk



big energy saving

First dedicated energy advice centre in mainland Argyll

POWER TO The People Kintyre, a Climate Challenge funded not for profit organisation committed to reducing our carbon footprint and tackling climate change, operate the first dedicated Energy Advice Centre in mainland Argyll.

They are also committed to helping to reduce fuel poverty through reducing energy use and wastage and providing advice on energy efficiency within the home.

As part of this endeavour, they have been supported by Energy Action Scot-

land, the national charity dedicated to eliminating fuel poverty, in delivering an initiative to replace lighting in over 100 homes in Kintyre with LED lights.

They will also undertake a programme of draftproofing of these same homes. These low cost measures can reduce lighting associated costs by up to 90% and heating costs by up to 10%.

This initiative, funded by Energy Action Scotland through their Fuel Poverty Alleviation Fund, will reach those most in need of reduced

energy bills.

Commenting on the award, Norman Kerr, Director of Energy Action Scotland said: "Power To The People Kintyre has identified a need in its area for extra services to help people make their homes warmer and cheaper to heat. The funding that we can provide to boost their services should make a real difference to households this winter. No-one should have to live in a cold home and, by working together, we can plug more gaps in the assistance available for local people."



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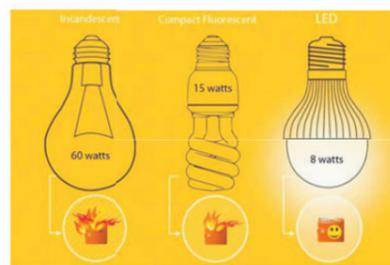
One 60W lightbulb consumes as much electricity as 10 equivalent LED bulbs



You can save up to 90% of the electricity you use to light your home by changing to LED lightbulbs.

If you have 10 lights on at home for an average of 5 hours per day, then the cost per year of running these lights if they are incandescent or halogen is £135. If you change these lights to LED equivalent bulbs, then your annual electricity cost for the same 5 hours per day would be £13 per year.

LED lightbulbs will on average last 10 times longer than CFL lightbulbs and 100 times longer than traditional incandescent or halogen light bulbs. This means that your replacement bulb costs are reduced dramatically when you change to LED light bulbs.



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LED Lights Are Everywhere

DOMESTIC LIGHTING, FLOODLIGHTING, TRAFFIC LIGHTS, Office and Retail

Energy efficiency in the home takes a number of steps. Some require potentially expensive intervention, some are simple and cheap to install.

Changing to LED lighting in your home is a great way to significantly reduce your energy use at little initial cost.

The problem with traditional lightbulbs is that they consume high amounts of electricity, produce a lot of heat and some light. This makes them very inefficient.

LED lights, which have improved massively over the last ten years, consume very little electricity, produce almost no heat, but a lot of light. For this reason, they are the most efficient choice available today.

In most cases, an LED lightbulb installed at home would last up to 10 years, in situations where lights are seldom used, this lifespan could easily reach 20 years.

Power To The People Kintyre Energy Advice Centre

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Climate Challenge Fund
Part of the Keep Scotland Beautiful Campaign

Help available to

HOUSING Minister Margaret Burgess said: 'Rising energy bills remain a huge concern for the Scottish Government and fuel poverty is still a major issue in Scotland, with over 27 per cent of households affected.'

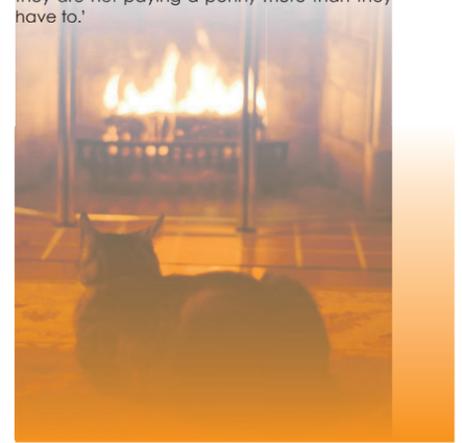
'That's why we are supportive of the Big Energy Saving Week campaign as it helps households take control of their electricity and heating bills.'

'Households can get advice on how to qualify for any energy saving improvements and find out how to save money on winter fuel bills through the Scottish Government's Home Energy Scotland hotline by calling 0808 808 2282.'

Gillian Guy, chief executive of Citizens Advice, said: 'Every day, Citizens Advice helps people who are struggling to meet the cost of their energy bills, and 80,000 people a year come to us for help with fuel debts.'

'With prices up a third since 2010, it's more important than ever that people know what they can do to keep their fuel bills down and what help is available.'

'That's why we're running events up and down the country to help people make sure they are not paying a penny more than they have to.'



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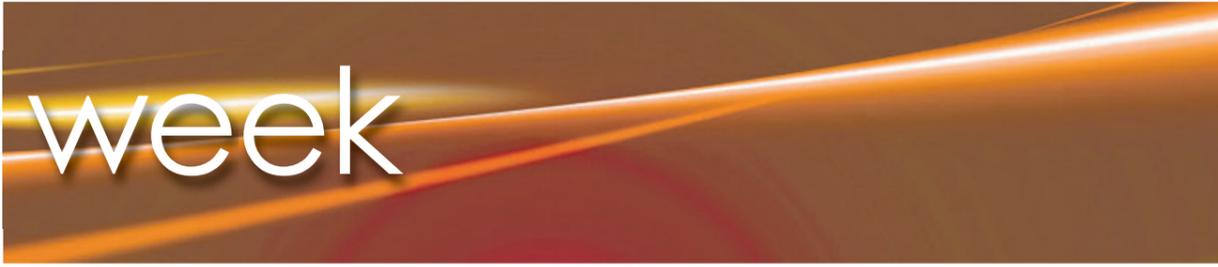
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make sure you only use the energy you need

THE findings from a survey by market research company Ipsos MORI of over 2,000 UK respondents show that 44 per cent of Scottish people have at some point received an energy bill higher than they were expecting.

One in five of us (20 per cent) still own a fridge or freezer at least 15 years old.

These products are more likely to be inefficient and to have developed faults that owners might not be aware of.

This could be causing them to consume more energy than necessary, for instance a freezer with a faulty thermostat could cost £45 a year more to run than it should.

Many of us in Scotland are now gamers. One in two of us (56 per cent) own at least one games console.

The research shows that whereas young people are more likely to own a games console, with 74 per cent of under 35s having at least one console, one in four over 55s (26 per cent) own a console too.

Around two fifths of respondents said they leave their games consoles on standby when not in use rather than turning them off, using up to £30 a year in electricity, or more if they have multiple consoles.

Big Energy Saving Week (October 20 to 24) is funded by DECC in collaboration with Energy Saving Trust and Citizens Advice Bureau. Other partners supporting the campaign include Global Action Plan and Age UK.

The week will help householders to take practical steps to cut to their bills by checking they are on the best deal, switching tariff or supplier and taking up energy saving actions such as switching their appliances off standby mode.

The number of appliances, electrical goods and personal electronics we buy is rising.

Follow these steps to make sure you're not using energy you don't need.

- **Standby Savers** – Fortunately there are a number of products available to help cut down your standby electricity consumption, such as standby savers that allow you to easily turn all of your appliances off from standby without having to reach for the plug.

- **Cold appliances** – Is your fridge-freezer 15 years or older? If it is, then the chances are that it could be using more electricity than required. As fridges, freezers and fridge-freezers are switched on 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, it could be worth finding models that are more energy efficient and will save you money on electricity bills. Tenants can ask their landlord to buy a newer model if the current one is faulty or not performing efficiently. If it's not possible to replace the model, then the following tips and advice can help save money on refrigeration:

- Make sure the back of your fridge-freezer is ventilated and dust free – dusting should be done at least once a year to keep it running efficiently;

- Make sure the fridge-freezer is out of direct sunlight from outside

or other sources of heat from inside the home, such as your oven or boiler;

- Make sure the door seal is not damaged
- Check that it is cycling on and off as it should – ideally you should only be able to hear your fridge or freezer running 30-40% of the time
- Don't keep the fridge-freezer doors open longer than necessary.

Over a quarter of electricity use (26 per cent) now goes towards entertainment equipment, such as TVs and games consoles.

In addition, there is greater public appetite for bigger TVs with over half (58 per cent) of those buying TVs last year purchasing one 39 inches or over.

Making sure TVs and other entertainment equipment is switched off when not in use and rather than on standby will bring savings on the electricity bill.

Lighting is a vital aspect of any home, especially during the darker winter evenings. Lighting makes up 16 per cent of household electricity consumption.

By turning off the lights when they're not needed you could save around £7 a year.

If households want to go further, replacing all the remaining old-fashioned bulbs with CFLs and all the halogens with LEDs could typically save around £45 a year.

For further information about saving energy in the home, call Home Energy Scotland (Scotland) on 0808 808 2282 or visit: www.energysavingtrust.org.uk

Save energy Save money

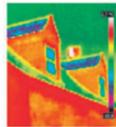
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Panelists talk up the town and the nation's interests in the Big Debate

THE BIG Debate came to Oban on Friday, with an expert panel discussing a range of moral, political and social issues live on BBC Radio Scotland.

The show, hosted by former Newsnight anchor Gordon Brewer, was held at the Corran Halls, with panellists Mike McKenzie, MSP for the Highlands and Islands, journalist Pennie Taylor, Neil Baxter, secretary and treasurer of the Royal Incorporation of Architects in Scotland and Willie Mack, editor of *The Oban Times*.

Gordon Brewer said: 'It's always interesting to do these shows outside of a big population centre because there's so much coverage of issues in the central belt.

'We're interested to hear what people have to say in smaller areas like Oban, so in some ways it's as much about hearing from the audience as it is the panel.

'It's fascinating to get a different perspective on Scottish life.'

Issues including poverty, the prospect of a second Scottish independence referendum, the

2015 General Election and empty buildings in Oban town centre were discussed by the panellists, with lively input from the audience.

Councillor Roddy McCuish, who was in the audience, said: 'It's good to have the opportunity to hear some points of view about issues affecting us both locally and nationally on Radio Scotland.

'With regards to the issue of social housing, it was encouraging that the whole panel agreed that more social housing was needed in town centres and the positive

impact that has on communities. However, I'm a bit disappointed that Mike McKenzie said 'the dead hand of Argyll and Bute Council' was to blame for the population decline and lower GDP in the area.

'Only by working together and by putting political differences behind us, can we address population decline in both Oban and Argyll and Bute.

'I urge all elected members in all levels of government to come up with solutions to the issues, not just trying to attribute blame.'



IT'S GOOD TO TALK: The Big Debate host Gordon Brewer (second left) with panellists MSP Mike McKenzie, architect Neil Baxter, The Oban Times editor Willie Mack and journalist Pennie Taylor

Draw on common sense and don't buy cigarettes for underage teenagers

A POSTER campaign to highlight the risks of buying cigarettes for children has been launched by the Trading Standards services in Highland and Argyll and Bute councils, in partnership with NHS Highland.

The campaign aims to increase awareness that it is unlawful for adults aged 18-or-over to knowingly buy or attempt to buy cigarettes, tobacco or cigarette papers for a person who is under the age of 18, which is known as a 'proxy purchase.'

The public are being reminded that it is the person buying or attempting to buy tobacco products, not the shopkeeper, who is guilty of the offence.

They face a fixed penalty notice of £200 and failure to pay may result in action in the criminal court.

Around 800 awareness posters are being distributed to registered tobacco retailers, in both The Highland Council and Argyll and Bute council areas, for display in their shops.

Trading standards manager with The Highland Council, Gordon Robb, said: 'We are keen to support responsible tobacco retailers in the fight against tobacco sales to children.

'We are aware that this is a real problem and wish to highlight the legal implications among the community, informing the public about the risks and penalties associated with proxy purchase of tobacco products.'

Regulatory services manager with Argyll and Bute Council, Alan Morrison, added:

'Older friends, relatives or even strangers supplying cigarettes and tobacco to those underage need to know they are breaking the law and that action can and will be taken.'

The Scottish Government has set a target date of 2034 to reduce

smoking prevalence to five per cent of the Scottish population.

Anyone who suspects a person of purchasing, or attempting to purchase, tobacco products on behalf of under-18s should contact the Trading Standards confidential helpline on: 01546 605 519.



James MacLeod who works at Onich Services near Ballachulish, displaying the poster, which warns of the dangers of buying cigarettes for under-18s

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Motors & Drivetimes

new car index

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VAUXHALL VIVARO 2008



(White) 2900 cdti 90 swb, 1 owner, 57,000 miles. £4750 excluding VAT o.n.o.

Contact 01496 810 382 or 07768 576 544

Citroen Relay, SWB



52 reg. LWB 2.8 Turbo Diesel Camper Van, 2 berth, 240 hook up, onboard water, cooker & hob, toilet, 9 months MOT, 4 new tyres, good condition for year, lots of new parts. £2,950 o.n.o.

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130hp. Black. Alloys. CD multichanger. Sports interior. 3 doors. 147000 miles. Good service history. In good condition inside and out. Very economical, 50+mpg! Will come with full MT. No tax. Used daily until very recently. New car forces reluctant sale! £1500 o.n.o.

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350 2005 738 Hours 5241 km Good condition Near Strachur £1900 o.n.o.

01369 860 669

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This high performance scooter, featuring unique dual front wheels for maximum stability, is in "as new" condition. A rare opportunity to acquire an excellent vehicle at a favourable price. Will deliver free anywhere in mainland Argyll. £500 o.n.o.

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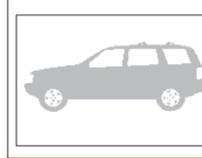
7 Seater Honda Stream Sport 2002



Low mileage (79000 miles), MOT and Tax Feb 2015, Petrol, automatic with manual option, Good reliable family car, priced for quick sale. £1650 Located in Oban.

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Isuzu Trooper, SWB



Dec 03, 80,000 miles, MOT March 2015, 2.9 engine. £2,400 o.n.o.

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WANTED URGENTLY



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Hyundai Tucson Comfort.



2009 (09), 79,000 miles, MOT end June 2015, full leather interior, electric windows, privacy glass, air conditioning, towbar. Family owned since new, recent battery, just had oil and air service. £4,750

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4 x 4's, all makes and models, Toyota, Landrover, Mitsubishi, high miles no problem, MOT or not, instant decision, same day payment.

Contact William 07730 130284 or 07923 091694 or email wlmotorhomes@outlook.com

WANTED

All types of good quality 4x4 vehicles, Landrovers, Mitsubishi, Kia, Ford etc and all 4x4 pickups, must be in good condition and reasonable mileage. Older 4x4s and non runners/ MOT failures etc considered. Will collect.

Telephone 07546 788945

WANTED 4x4

Any year or condition, would consider any kind of pick-up or jeep, will collect and pay cash.

Telephone 07925 715321

WANTED

Wanted all 4 x 4s, old or new Toyota Hilux, land cruiser, all pickups single or double cabs, any condition, runner or not, high miles no problem.

Telephone: 07703490572 ask for Robert

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Contact William 07730 130284 or 07923 091694 or email wlmotorhomes@outlook.com

5.4 meter Northcraft Rib with two seat centre console



75hp four stroke Mariner outboard on galvanised trailer. All 10 years old. Good condition. £4000 o.n.o.

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Oban Times RECRUITMENT
Oban Times RECRUITMENT

Caledonian MacBrayne
Crewing (Guernsey) Limited

Port Assistant (4 positions)

Rate of Pay £9.00 per hour
Oban Ferry Terminal
25 hours per week

Applications are invited for the position of Port Assistant based at the Oban Ferry Terminal. Reporting to the Port Manager, you will need a flexible approach to your day-to-day responsibilities. Your duties will include mooring operations, customer enquiries, sales of passenger/vehicle tickets, cash handling and control of passengers and vehicles embarking and disembarking from vessels.

You must be computer literate, with excellent verbal and written communication skills. You are expected to have a flexible approach to working as shift and weekend work will be involved. You must be customer focused, have a clear understanding of the customer interface and have a proactive approach to customer care.

The successful candidate must be able to commute to the Oban Ferry Terminal on a daily basis.

Night Watchman (2 positions)

Rate of Pay £7.05 per hour
Oban Ferry Terminal
24 hours per week

Applications are invited for the position of Nightwatchman based at the Oban Ferry Terminal. Reporting to the Port Manager you will be responsible for the security of the pier buildings and vessels connected to the port, for the call-out of crew in the event of an emergency or bad weather, overseeing a telephone watch in case of emergency call-outs by Fire, Police and Ambulance, monitoring and adjusting the gangway as necessary to maintain a safe access to the vessels.

You are expected to have a flexible approach to working as the shift pattern will be variable and dependent on local circumstances.

The successful candidate must be able to commute to the Oban Ferry Terminal on a daily basis. If you are interested in either of these positions, please respond by emailing your CV, quoting the appropriate reference number, no later than 30 October 2014 to: vacancies@davidmacbraynehr.co.uk, or mail to:

David MacBrayne HR (UK) Limited
Ferry Terminal, Gourock, PA19 1QP
t: 01475 650100 f: 01475 650268

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Location: Oban. 1x30 hours & 2 x20 hours per week. Salary: £7.80 per hour.

Please contact the local office for further details or information on 01631 565062 or email kirsty.mackenzie@enable.org.uk
Application forms are available online at www.enableScotlandjobs.org.uk
Closing date for all posts: 31st October 2014.

ENABLE Scotland is an equal opportunities employer. Scottish charity number SC009024.

Scottish Sea Farms
Marine Vacancies, Isle of Mull

Scottish Sea Farms is the UK's leading producer of premium quality Atlantic Scottish salmon specific for UK and International markets. Our business is extensive; based in Argyll, across the West coast and throughout the Northern Isles. We are trusted to supply Britain's most demanding retailers and need exceptional staff to build our business.

We operate a unique training programme specifically designed to give our staff the skills they require to grow and develop within our Company and currently have the following vacancies available within our Marine operations on the Isle of Mull:

Marine Husbandry Dependant on experience (£18,000 - £21,000 +1:3 duty weekend allowance)
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.

Trainee Farmer (starting salary : £17,250 plus OT)
Experience is not essential; however applicants must be hard working and committed to acquire new skills. The training course which accompanies this position is comprehensive and unique within the salmon farming industry.

In return Scottish Sea Farms offer a competitive pay and benefits package including entry into the company's pension scheme, occupational health programme, gym membership and cycle to work scheme. All applicants are required to hold a full UK driving Licence.

Interested applicants should contact claire.scott@scottishseafarms.com or call 01786 445521 for a job description and application form. Closing date for applications is Friday 7th November 2014.

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Alongside your solid background in maintenance, preferably gained within a manufacturing environment, you'll have experience of PLC systems and ideally hold C&G (or equivalent) and 17th Edition IEE Regulations qualifications. In addition, we expect basic mechanical skills, a good understanding of computer based systems and software, plus a willingness to help drive the business forward by implementing new technology and systems.

Closing date for applications: Monday 3rd November 2014.

For more information, and to apply, visit: www.bsw.co.uk/vacancies

Applications should be returned to Kathleen Woodhouse, Group HR Advisor, BSW Timber, Kenmuir Sawmill, Dalbeattie DG5 4PL.

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RECEPTIONIST/ADMINISTRATOR (MATERNITY COVER)

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Candidates should be proficient in Microsoft Word, audio typing skills preferable and good telephone manner. Other duties include general office admin.

Working hours are 9am to 5pm Mon to Fri. Salary negotiable/dependant on experience.

Apply in writing to Scott Donald, Kearney Donald Partnership, Hillside House, Fort William, PH33 6BT or scott@kd-partnership.co.uk

Glen Scotia Distillery



Due to continued expansion, Glen Scotia Distillery is looking to recruit: 1 x Distillery Operations Personnel

Working as part of a small team and reporting to the Distillery Manager duties include:

- Learning the process for the production of malt whisky
 - Liaise with external personnel
 - Manual handling
 - Reporting any faults to management
 - General housekeeping/warehouse duties
 - The understanding of company policies, procedures, risk assessments and acting in accordance with them
 - Undergo training when required
 - Any other duties as and when required
- Applicants are welcome from candidates who:
- Have a genuine interest in learning the process of making whisky.
 - Have a flexible approach to work.
 - Have a proven ability to learn an operations process.

The above role will operate on a shift system over 7 days.

Please apply by e-mailing your CV & Cover letter to the distillery manager at ian.mcalister@lochlomondgroup.com
Closing date is the 31st of October 2014.

LOCH MELFORT HOTEL & RESTAURANT

Sous Chef - Permanent

A permanent Sous Chef position has become available at Loch Melfort Hotel due to internal promotion. Position available end of October 2014 onwards. Live in available. Pay depending on experience.

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COSTA

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Covering Mid Argyll & Kintyre Full time post of 35 hours
Salary Scale: Grade 5 £27,033 - £32,613

Fyne Homes are currently recruiting for a Technical Officer to be based in either the Lochgilthead or Campbeltown office and will involve travel to cover the areas of Mid-Argyll, Kintyre, Cowal & Bute. Due to the nature of this role a current driving licence and use of a car for business purposes is required.

You will provide an effective and efficient property management service, as part of a small team within Fyne Homes and work closely with the contractors supplying services under our framework agreements.

Key tasks include the day to day management of reactive, cyclical and capital investment programmes along with working alongside our Design Teams delivering our high quality new build development programme.

You should preferably have at least 5 years practical experience of property maintenance, some of which consists of experience at a supervisory level. Much of the work involves communicating directly with tenants and other members of the public in a front line role. You will require good interpersonal and communication skills, a strong commitment to customer service and the ability to work as part of the team and on your own initiative within laid down objectives and targets. A knowledge and understanding of legislation and statutory responsibilities is necessary as is an ability to use current communications technology, such as smartphone, tablet etc to process workload.

It is desirable that candidates can demonstrate practical working knowledge and experience in the property maintenance/ building sector.

In return for the above we offer an attractive salary and good conditions.

Application packs can be obtained from Fyne Homes Ltd, 81 Victoria Street, Rothsay, Isle of Bute PA20 0AP
Tel: 0845 6077117
e-mail: postmaster@fynehomes.co.uk
or visit our website - www.fynehomes.org.uk
Closing Date: Monday 3rd November 2014
Fyne Homes Ltd believes in promoting equality and diversity

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NEW GIRLS JACKET black New Look short jacket with hood, checked lining to hood, age 10 - 11. Small sized would suit 8 - 9 years old better, lovely jacket, £10 Telephone 01397 702067.

NEW GIRLS JACKET New Look brown Aviator style jacket with fur lining, age 10 - 11. Small sized would suit 8 - 9 years old better, lovely jacket, £10 Telephone 01397 702067.

RED CONVERCERS pair of ladies size 4 red conversers in excellent condition worn once too small, £25 Telephone 01631 720382.

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LEC TABLE TOP FREEZER 5 months old, as new, £60 Telephone 07833 551164.

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Thank you

CREINA JACKSON, LOCHALINE

would like to thank all family and friends for their beautiful gifts, cards musical recitals and special birthday cake received on the occasion of my 80th birthday and making it such a memorable day.

ENGAGEMENTS

ROBERTSON - MELLOR - The engagement is announced between Jamie, younger son of Dr and Mrs Roderick Robertson, of Thorne, West Yorkshire and Charlotte, elder daughter of Mr and Mrs Jamie Mellor of Knipoch, Argyll.

DIAMOND WEDDINGS

MACLACHLAN - CAMERON - On October 19, 1954 in Oban, Ian to Christina. Present address Kilmory, Ardnarmurchan. - Lots of love from all the family.

DEATHS

BOWMAN - At home after an illness on October 19, 2014, aged 72 years, James Finlay Bowman, Craignure, Isle of Mull. Loving husband of Jessie, son-in-law, brother and uncle. Sadly missed. Private cremation at Cardross Crematorium on Friday October 24, 2014.

BOYD - Peacefully at home on October 19, 2014, in his 90th year, Alasdair Boyd, beloved husband of the late Nan. Much loved brother, dad, grandad and great-grandad and a special friend to many. Funeral service at Oban Free High Church, today, Thursday 23 October 2014 thereafter to Pennyfuir Cemetery. Family flowers only please. Retiring collection/donations, if desired, to Marie Curie/Macmillan Nurses.

CAIRNS - Peacefully in Edinburgh, after a long illness Christine Cairns (née Devine) beloved wife of Rab, mum of Andy and Martin, daughter of the late Jimmy and Flora. Interment at Pennyfuir Cemetery on Thursday, October 23, 2014 at 10.45 am.

DALGETTY - Suddenly, at the Lorn and Islands Hospital, Oban on October 15, 2014, in his 84th year, Ross, North Bay House, Oban, will be sorely missed by all his family. Private cremation service took place at Cardross Crematorium, on October 22, 2014.

GRAY STEPHENS - Douglas, suddenly in his 55th year, at home on October 13, 2014. Beloved son of Fiona Thorburn and the late Ramsay Gray Stephens. Much loved by Lauren, Harriet, and Christian. Much loved brother. Funeral to be held on Friday, October 24 at 11.30am at Christ Church, Lochgilphead.

MACDONALD - Peacefully, on October 16, 2014 at the Lorn and Islands Hospital, Oban, aged 68 years, Malcolm William, Ardachy, North Connel, dearly loved husband of May, much loved son, father, brother, seanair and uncle. Funeral service will take place at Ardchattan Kirk, Achnaba on October 23, 2014 (today) at 1.00 pm. Family flowers only. A retiring collection will be taken for Ardchattan Kirk.

MACDONALD - Neil MacKinnon, Balevullin, Isle of Tiree died suddenly but peacefully on October 15, 2014 in his 95th year at Tigh a Rudha. Funeral service was held at 1pm on Friday October 17 from Helylipol Church to Soroby Cemetery. Collection received will be divided between Tigh a Rudha and Baugh Surgery Fund.

MACKAY - Peacefully at Mossparck Care Home, on October 16, after an illness patiently borne, Marjory Gillies (née Stewart) age 74. Dearly loved wife of Donald, precious mother of Gordon, loving sister, sister-in-law, aunt & great-aunt. Funeral service, to which all are respectfully invited at Kilmallie Parish Church, Caol on Friday October 24 at 12 noon, thereafter to Innis-na-Birlinn Cemetery, Onich. Family flowers only but donations if so desired to Mossparck Care Home & Lochaber Hydrotherapy Pool.

MOSSMAN - Peacefully, on October 19, 2014, at the Lorn and Islands Hospital, Oban, Caroline Anne, aged 34 years, beloved daughter, sister and aunt. Funeral service will take place at Oban Parish Church, on Monday, October 27, 2014 at 1.00 p.m. Family flowers only please. Retiring collection/donations if desired, for Enable, Oban.

SEDGWICK - Patricia Jessie (Pat) (née Chisholm) North Connel / Edinburgh. Peacefully, at home on Thursday, October 16, 2014, Pat, beloved wife of the late Peter, dear mother of Rosie and John, proud granny of Orla and Niamh, much loved sister of Donald and the late Nessie and Ella. A Service has been held in Edinburgh in Celebration of her life.

SHAW - Suddenly, on October 20, 2014, in the care of the Beeches Nursing Home, Dunfermline, Jack Shaw, aged 87 years. Formerly of Inverlair Farm and latterly West Lethans Farm, Saline. Loving husband of the late Rena, beloved father of Jennifer and William, adored grandfather of Calum, Alistair and Isla. Funeral service to take place on Friday, October 24, 2014 at 1pm in Kilmornivaig Parish Church, Spean Bridge. Family flowers only please. Donations, if desired, to Beeches Nursing Home and MS Society may be given at the service or forwarded to John McLellan Funeral Directors, Dudley Road, Fort William

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

CAMPBELL - The family of the late William Campbell wish to thank most sincerely all relatives, friends and neighbours for their support and kind expressions of sympathy following their sad bereavement. Thanks also to Rev Norma Moore for the lovely service and The Co-operative Funeral Care for efficient funeral arrangements. The sum of £268 was raised for Cancer Research.

GAYDON - Florentine Gaydon (Twinkle) and family would like to thank the carers and all the many local people who knew and helped Harry over the years. Bless you all.

MACDONALD - The family of the late Neil MacKinnon MacDonald, Balevullin, Isle of Tiree, wish to thank Dr John Holliday and the medical staff, the staff of Tigh a Rudha Eventide Home, the ambulance crew, Josie and all the care team, those who delivered meals on wheels, friends and neighbours who called to visit and all those who enabled him to live in his own home in his final years. He will be sadly missed by all the family.

MENZIES - Kirsteen, Niall, Blair and Beth would like to thank family, friends and neighbours for the massive support, cards, flowers and telephone calls they received following the death of Peter. Special thanks have to go to all staff on Ward A, Lorn and Islands Hospital for the wonderful care Peter received before he died, Rev. Ken Hunter for his thoughtful funeral service, Angus MacFadyen for his excellent words of farewell and for all those who attended his funeral and gave so generously to the C F & Butterfly Trusts. A tremendous £1,079 was raised. Thanks also to Hoey Funeral Directors and staff at the Knipoch Hotel.

ROBERTS - Annette, Ewen, Christopher and Katie would like to thank all relatives and friends for their kindness and support after the death of their mother, mother-in-law and granny, Ina Roberts. They would also like to thank Rev Corbett for his fitting tribute to mum, Jamie and Mike of Mike McFall, Funeral Directors for their kind and efficient funeral arrangements and to Iain 'Tosh', Corpach Hotel for refreshments after the funeral. The sum of £170 was collected in lieu of flowers for Erskine Hospital.

ROSS - Jim and the family of the late Sandra (née Brown) would like to thank everyone for their support following the unexpected loss of Sandra. Special thanks to ambulance crew and Dr E. Jespersen, to Mr D MacKinnon for an uplifting service, to Stevie, Mairi and all staff at The Rowantree and to Funeral Directors Hamish Hoey. Thanks to all who attended the church and graveside and gave to Oban Lifeboat.

MEMORIALS

BISSETT - Robert, Craigard, Banavie, died October 27, 2005. Always in our thoughts - From the Stoddart family, Craigard, Banavie.

BLACK - Treasured memories of Donald, a dear husband, father and Seanair who died on October 21, 2013 in his 85th year. Loved and remembered every day.

CAMPBELL - In loving memory of our dear Peter, our son, brother, husband and nephew taken from us October 27, 2013.

To the world you may have been just somebody But to all of us you were our world Thank you for the precious years we had with you.

- Love Dad, Mum, Piers, Leanne and Uncle William xx.

CAMPBELL - Peter. In memory of our lovely son-in-law tragically killed on October 27, 2013.

A sadness still comes over us Tears in silence often flow Memory keeps you ever near us Though you died one year ago. Remembered always.

- Pamela and Desmond Reece.

FORBES - My beloved father Albert Francis, who died October 25, 1991, also my darling mother Rosina, who died February 20, 1991. Both loved and remembered every day.

- By their loving daughter Annette.

HILL - In loving memory of a special husband, dad and Seanair, John who passed away October 29, 2013. Remembering you is easy we do it every day and missing you is something that will never go away.

Always in our thoughts. - Babs and family.

JACKSON - Loving memories of Alasdair, who passed away October 28, 2005.

A page in our book of memories is gently turned today.

- Inserted by his wife Creina and family in Skye, Mull and Lochaline.

MACASKILL - In loving memory of my dear twin sister Margaret Ann (Annie), who died October 16, 2000.

Deep are the memories, precious this day No passing of time will take them away.

Fond and loving memories - Your loving twin sister Morag.

MACCUISH - Treasured memories of my beloved husband Norman, who passed away on October 20, 1997.

A bouquet of beautiful memories, sprayed with a million tears

Wishing God could have spared you for just a few more years You gave me many things in life, gift both great and small but above all else you gave me love, the greatest gift of all.

Love and miss you always. - Flora

MACKILLOP - Remembering with love our dear mother and nana Mary, who died on October 26, 2004. The rolling stream of life goes on

But still the empty chair Reminds us of the face, the smile Of one who once sat there Mum, you are not forgotten Though on earth you are no more

Still in memory you are with us As you always were before. - Helen and Joe. A special person, a special face Someone we loved and can't replace

Never selfish, always kind These are the memories, nana, you left behind. - Iain, Deirdre and Mhairi.

MACKILLOP - Remembering with love a dearly loved and respected brother and uncle Willie, who passed away October 14, 2007. You always had a smile to share Time to give and time to care A loving nature kind and true Is the way that we'll remember you

Rest in peace. - Helen and Joe. There's a face we shall always remember

A voice we shall always recall A memory to cherish forever Of an uncle who was dear to us all

Loved and remembered always. - Iain, Deirdre and Mhairi.

MACPHAIL - In loving memory of my father, Neil, who passed away on October 28, 1992.

Loved and remembered always. - Mairi and George.

MCCOLL - Madaline (Mairi) who died 26 October 2004. Precious memories of a wonderful wife and mother. 10 years since you fell asleep forever. Always in our hearts.

- Robin, Morven, Isla and family.

MORRISON - In loving memory of Donald, a much loved husband, father and grandpa, died October 31, 2004.

We who loved him sorely miss him but trust in God to meet again.

- Chrissie and family.

MUNRO - In loving memory of Lizzie, who passed away October 21, 2013 and Alasdair, who passed away August 7, 1999. Much loved parents and grandparents.

Always loved and never forgotten. - Alasdair, Jean and family

RILEY - Cherished memories of a loving brother Frankie, who died October 23, 2013. He had a nature you could not help loving

And a heart that was purer than gold And to those who knew and loved him His memory will never grow old

A silent tear, always in our thoughts. Love and miss you so much. - Pauline, Colin and Ryan.x

RILEY - Cherished memories of our darling brothers and uncles, Frankie who died October 23, 2013 and Alan who died February 22, 2011, not forgetting our dear Maggie and father Frank.

We miss you now our hearts are sore As time goes by we miss you more Your loving smiles your gentle faces no one can fill your vacant places. Forever in our hearts.

- Irene, David, Craig, Linzi and Amie.

RILEY - In loving memory of a special brother Frankie, who passed away October 23, 2013. Gone from our lives that smiling face.

The cheerful happy ways, The heart that won so many friends in bygone happy days. A bouquet of beautiful memories sprayed with a million tears, wishing God would have spared you if just for a few more years.

Also remembering another special brother Alan, who died February 22, 2011.

Loved and missed every day. - Betty, Tam and all the family xx

RILEY - Precious memories of Frankie, so loved by all of us and sorely missed. - Pat, Charlie, Karen and Catherine.

ROBERTSON - In loving memory of William, who passed away October 23, 2008 a loving husband, father, grampa and great grampa. Sadly missed

- By Betty and family

SMITH - Remembering our dad Dougie Smith, taken from us October 24, 1995. Dad you were taken from us far too soon,

You're our guiding star, sun and moon The time we had wasn't nearly enough to pack in an entire life time of love

We miss you dad very dearly the memories we have stay with us clearly. Forever in our hearts

- Your loving daughters Elinore, Norelle, Vanessa and Victoria xxxx

THOMSON - Precious memories of our beautiful boy Calum. You are and always will be 'Our North, Our South, Our East and Our West' In our hearts always! - Mum, Dad and Eilish.

WALKER - In loving memory of a wife and mother, Marion, who passed away October 26, 2001. Always in our thoughts. - Allan and family, Islay, Gartmore and Blanehead.

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Thought for the week

Last week both ministers from Kilmore and Oban Church of Scotland competed at the National Mod in Inverness. Rev Chris Fulcher sang with Tarbert Gaelic Choir and I sang with Oban. Thankfully, we were in different competitions so the congregation did not have to decide between us and therefore could root for both ministers.

If anyone noticed on the Mod TV coverage that an Oban Choir member (me) kept his mouth shut during a line of a choir piece, honest, this was not because I forgot the words. As a minister I was contractually obliged not to sing a line from Gur Tu Mo Bhean Chomain. It reads, Dol Didomhaich dhan Chlachan gur e 's fasan dhomh bron.

Which translates as - Going to church on Sunday I always become miserable.

In our Sunday morning congregational worship in Kilmore and Oban we often use Gaelic; indeed we hold a monthly afternoon service entirely in the language. In addition to the organ we also regularly use clarsach and fiddle to praise God. All this reflects our West Coast heritage which is so vibrant, alive and forward looking.

My hope is that we can close the gap between ceilidh and church so that in all aspects of our lives we may make a joyful sound before the Lord.

Rev Dugald Cameron (Kilmore and Oban)

Mull congregation set to welcome new graduate preacher



Rev. Sean Ankers, who will begin his post with the Free Church of Scotland later this month. 142minister1no

A 25-year-old Gaelic graduate originally from Fort William is set to be welcomed as the new preacher to the Free Church of Scotland congregation on the Isle of Mull.

Rev. Sean Ankers completed his studies for the ministry at Edinburgh Theological Seminary in May, and is set to move onto the island as Argyll Presbytery worker.

The three-year post will primarily be based with the Isle of Mull congregation, supporting one of the most remote churches in Scotland.

A welcome service will take place in the Tobermory Free Church on Main Street, on Saturday, October 25 at 2pm, to which everyone is warmly invited to attend.

The reverend spent part of his summer in Mull preaching, and built up links with communities around the Tobermory and Lochdon areas.

Mr Ankers, who will also get married at the start of the year, said: 'It's something my fiancée Virginia and I feel drawn to help in, and we are sure that the Lord will employ us on the island.'

'There are exciting prospects for outreach and I look forward

to working with the other congregations in evangelising Mull and Argyll.'

Peter Morrison, who has helped to oversee Glasgow and Argyll Presbytery's strategy for the Argyll region, added: 'The Presbytery are delighted that Sean is taking up the post.'

'It will mark a transformation on the provision for worship and of pastoral care on Mull, which has not had a settled pastorate for many years.'

'We look forward prayerfully to a great work by God's grace.'

Mr Ankers became one of the youngest ministers in Scotland earlier this year when he was licensed for the ministry at the age of 25.

As well as being an active member of the Leith Free Church congregation in Edinburgh, Sean has had extensive placements with the Stornoway Free church congregation on the Isle of Lewis as well as the Kilmearn Free church congregation in Evanton, near Dingwall.

A fluent Gaelic speaker, Sean spent several weeks on the Isle of Mull primarily working in Tobermory, and networking with Christians in other congregations around the island.

Gordon serves up a 'wild' gig in Oban

ACCLAIMED wildlife cameraman Gordon Buchanan brought his Lost Adventures tour to Oban on Friday, to a sell-out crowd at the Corran Halls.

Gordon, who has presented television shows including The Bear Family and Me and The Polar Bear Family and Me, gave exciting personal recollections of his wildlife experiences from the past 20 years as part of the tour, one of 10 dates in Scotland.

Gordon, who grew up on Mull, said: 'I think everybody has got an appetite for wildlife,

from people in their 80s and 90s to young kids, it really has a broad appeal worldwide.'

'Oban is a place close to my heart and I wanted to do a home gig so this is perfect as people from Mull can get to Oban quite easily.'

'It's always great to be back here, it's still home to me and I get a real feeling of belonging when I'm here.'

'Despite travelling all over the world, there really is nowhere quite like the west coast of Scotland.'

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WEDDING



MCCULLOCH - CAMERON
Both families are delighted to announce the marriage of Thomas, eldest son of Arthur and Margaret McCulloch, to Melody, youngest daughter of Janice Smith and Allan Cameron, on July 22, 2014 at Lochside House Hotel, Ayrshire, by Rev. Calum Jack.

GRADUATIONS



Angela MacLeod Matthews graduated from Glasgow University in 2013 with a Bachelor of Science in Human Biology. Angela is a former pupil of Park Primary and Oban High School, she is the daughter of Bill Matthews and Fiona Duff, grand-daughter of the late Christy Ann MacLeod, Berneray.



Graduated with a BA Honours in Child and Youth Studies from University of Highlands and Islands. Stephanie Power, daughter of Michael and Marion Power, granddaughter of David and Elizabeth McCutcheon, Clydebank and Charles and Isobel Power, Oban. Stephanie is a former pupil of Dunbeg Primary School and Oban High School.

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Magnificent seven for Saints in West Cup tie

'We played well in difficult windy conditions and on a narrow pitch'

West of Scotland Cup Second Round
Glenburn Athletic 1 Oban Saints 7
SAINTS returned to winning ways with an emphatic West of Scotland Cup second round win against Paisley and District AFA Premier Division side Glenburn Athletic at St James Park, Paisley, last Saturday.
Once again the squad had to be changed from the previous week as David McArthur was on holiday, Martin Bonar was injured and Lewis Cameron was out due to illness.
However, on the plus side Craig MacEwan, Dougal Graham and Scott Maitland made a welcome return and the club hopes its skipper Marc Mac-

Callum and Donnie Campbell will be back in training within the next week or so.
Playing into the strong breeze and up a pronounced slope in the first half, Saints took some time to get into their stride but once they found their rhythm there was only going to be one winner.
Blasted
The home side had the first half chance but Craig Reilly blasted the ball over the bar from the edge of the box.
Allan MacKay opened the scoring in the 31st minute with a left foot tap-in at the back post after good work from Dean Smith and Ross Maitland.
The visitors went 2-0 up in the 43rd minute when Ross

Maitland found Dean Smith in the box. Dean's left foot shot flashed past Glenburn keeper Martyn Elliot and into the top left hand corner of the net.
Allan MacKay then got his second goal and Saints third in first half stoppage time after another neat move down the Saints left wing.
The visitors started the second half slowly and were made to pay for their sluggish start in the 57th minute when Daniel Cassells misjudged a long throw which evaded his attempted punch and the ball was bundled in at the back post by Charlie O'Donnell.
The goal gave Glenburn some encouragement and they continued to look dangerous from long throws until Saints

got the killer fourth goal.
Dean Smith was up-ended in the box in the 69th minute and Allan MacKay stroked home the penalty kick to complete his hat-trick.
David Beaton replaced Craig MacEwan who had put in a good shift on his return from injury in the 70th minute.
Saints other returning injury victim Scott Maitland, who looked impressive in midfield, then set up namesake Ross for the fifth goal. Scott's deep cross from the left wing found Ross at the back post, where he neatly turned the Glenburn full back before curling a left foot shot low into the bottom corner of the net past a helpless goalkeeper.
In the 80th minute Saints made their second and final change when Dougal Graham replaced Dean Smith. Dougal had only been on the pitch four minutes before he cut in from the left to slot away an Allan MacKay pass for Saints sixth goal of the game.
Glenburn were a well-beaten side now with Paul Kerr, Scott Maitland and Myles McAuley running the show from midfield.
A good day at the office for Saints and hopefully the start of a long overdue extended run

FOOTBALL



ATTACK: Myles McAuley attacks the Glenburn Athletic defence during last Saturday's West of Scotland Cup tie in Paisley. Photo: Derek Black

Oban play well but lose out to GHK

HOCKEY

NON LEAGUE Oban hockey club kicked off their season with a hard-fought match against regional league side GHK at Anniesland last Saturday.
And the Argyll side looked like getting a result against their more experienced opponents after shocking them with a goal in the early minutes.
GHK came back into the match through a well-worked counter attack to even the score but Oban continued to play some great hockey to retake the lead with a second goal from Mark Lockhart.
The home side started to show their experience as they raced into a 4-2 lead by half time and after the interval some smart stops from goalkeeper David Love and alert defending from Simon Hutton kept the scoreline down. Ultimately, the superior experience and fitness of their Glasgow opponents started to tell with a flurry of goals near the end. A return leg is expected in the new year when Oban will be hoping to learn from the experience and bring the game to their opponents once again.
Oban hockey club welcomes all ages and abilities. Training is on a Thursday night between 6pm and 8pm at the high school.

Athletic beaten by Third Lanark

FOOTBALL

OBAN Athletic travelled to Torgylen in Glasgow last Saturday to take on Third Lanark in a West of Scotland League game. Unfortunately the Oban side lost 5-2. Both Athletic's goals were scored by Alan Buchanan.

Macaulay Sixes

SHINTY

THE MACAULAY Association will host a national six-a-side competition at Mossfield this Sunday. The annual competition for under 17 teams will start at noon.



CURLER: Ross Maitland curls a well-placed left foot shot into the bottom corner of the Glenburn net for Saints' fifth goal of the game. Photo: Derek Black

Youth fixtures and results

LAST weekend's result:
Under 15s 14, Broomhill SC 1. Scoring for Saints were Lewis Buchanan (4), Couper Munt (4), Daniel MacCuish (3), Craig MacMillan, Andy Ritchie and an own goal.

YOUTH FOOTBALL

This weekend's fixtures:
Kilpatrick v Under 13s; Under 14s v Ardencaple; Under 15s no game; Under 16s no game; Under 19s v Westerton.



ON THE BALL: Oban Saints under 15s defeated Broomhill 14-1 in a Dumbarton development league game held at Glencruitten last Saturday. Our picture shows Craig Easton winning the ball in midfield. Photo: Kevin McGlynn

Six Nations dream for Oban student

WOMEN'S RUGBY

AN OBAN student is close to fulfilling her dreams of playing in the Six Nations for the Scotland Women's team.
Abigail Evans, 18, recently joined a 28-woman training squad to play in three upcoming friendlies, which started with a 49-0 thrashing of Irish Exiles on Saturday.
She is a regular in the under-20s team, as well as playing domestically for English Premiership side Darlington Sharks.
In her hectic schedule, Abigail also plays for Northumbria University's team and recently captained the Scotland 7s team at the Sainsbury's School Games in Manchester.
But she revealed a career in rugby was little more than an afterthought until recently.
She said: 'I was just playing for fun but then this year it sunk in that I could play for Scotland.
'I used to be a swimmer and that was my main focus.
'I had a scholarship at Strathallan for swimming, but changed it to a rugby scholarship.'
Abigail, who hopes to join the army as an officer,

WOMEN'S RUGBY

is studying for a degree in sport, exercise and nutrition at Northumbria university and formerly played for Oban high school.
Abigail stated that her proudest moment was leading the Scotland 7s team to the final of the bowl competition at the Sainsbury's School Games, where they lost out to Ireland.



DREAMS: Abigail Evans in action for Scotland at the Sainsbury's School Games, where she captained the side

Top volunteer award for Oban's Tommy

RUGBY

AN OBAN man has won the season's first BT volunteer of the month award for his contributions to two local rugby clubs.
Tommy Sutherland, 31, who helps at both Oban Lorne and Argyll and Bute rugby clubs, was the standout candidate from a list of ten nominations who were put forward for the September award.
The awards are organised by Scottish Rugby and BT to give recognition to people working hard behind the scenes in rugby clubs across Scotland.
Tommy was responsible for reviving and managing Argyll and Bute rugby club, which brings players together from Bute, Kintyre, Mid Argyll and Islay to ensure they have regular and quality game time.
During the winning month, Tommy, who works as a hotel manager in Oban, helped coach the ladies team in the town, as well as the under-16 boys team and the school of rugby at Oban high school.
Organised
He also organised and catered for the annual club dinner, continued to send out a weekly club bulletin that he is responsible for and turned out for the first XV.
Tommy said: 'I was ecstatic when I found out I had won the award.
'When I first came to Oban I

wasn't playing rugby but they were short on numbers and the coach asked me if I wanted to take part. From there everything fell in place for me to get more involved.
'We want to drive Oban Lorne and rugby in the region forward so in August last year we tried setting up a second XV but that didn't work so

we formed Argyll and Bute Rugby club to provide a vessel for more players to play rugby.
'Results haven't gone our way but we're now providing a means for rugby to grow in the area and to give players some proper game time.
'Back at Oban Lorne I'd love to see the club promoted into BT West Regional League



TOP AWARD: Tommy Sutherland from Oban, who won the BT club volunteer of the month for September, organised by Scottish Rugby

SPOT THE SHINTY BALL

COMPETITION

WIN £1000

ALL YOU HAVE TO DO

We have removed the shinty ball from the photograph opposite. Now look carefully at the position of the players and use your skill and judgement to place a cross at the exact point where you think the centre of the ball was. You may have a maximum of 20 attempts on this coupon at a cost of £1.
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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, P.O. Box 1, Oban, Argyll PA34 4HB by 12noon Tuesday.
You may hand it into The Oban Times Head Office, Lochavullin, Oban by the same time. Otherwise all entries must be posted.

Competition rules

No responsibility will be accepted for entries which are delayed, mislaid or lost, and proof of posting cannot be accepted as proof of delivery.
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Employees of Wyvex Media, their immediate relatives and any person otherwise connected with the competition are ineligible to enter.

This week's nearest the ball winners, who each receive £25 are:

F Beaton, Furnace, Argyll & S McGillivray, Fort William

LAST WEEK'S SHINTY BALL WAS HERE.

I enclose £1 for 20 crosses (tick box) The maximum number of attempts on this coupon is 20, but you may enter on separate coupons as many times as you wish. No photocopies allowed. You agree to abide by the rules. How to enter: Mark your crosses using a ballpoint pen. Twenty crosses may be put on this coupon for £1. Send to 'Spot the Shinty Ball' Competition, The Oban Times, P.O. Box 1, Oban PA34 4HB

Please tape your £1 coin here

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The victorious Scotland team celebrate after winning the first test match against Ireland at Bught Park, Inverness, last Saturday. Photos: Neil Paterson

Scotland win first test match

KYLES Athletic's Roddy MacDonald described Scotland's performance as the best of recent times as the dark blues secured a win over Ireland in the first test of the Marine Harvest Shinty/Hurling series.

Hailed

The 23-14 victory in Ronald Ross' first match in charge was hailed by nearly 2,000 supporters at a sunny Bught Park on Saturday.

It was significant and now gives the Scots a platform

from which they could secure their maiden overall series win, at Paice Esler in Newry on Saturday.

MacDonald, lured back into the international fold by Ross, played a key part with two of Scotland's three point goals.

Afterwards, he was effusive about the quality of Scotland's performance.

Problems

'I think we caused Ireland a lot of problems and that is the best I have seen from us for a long while.

'It is good to get a win going into next week and what will be an even tougher game. They are a very good, fast side but I felt we handled it really well. The defence was excellent and Stuart MacDonald made some great saves.

'The key thing for us was to get the ball on the ground, get it wide and score goals. The goals we got were like shinty goals you would score in a normal week and I think that approach worked. When you are playing with good shinty

players, it helps.'

Scotland started out with a two point hit from Kevin Bartlett, who would go on to grab 13 points from hits over the uprights in a display which, rightly, earned him the man-of-the-match prize.

Nine points

The Lovat man took nine points in the opening period alone, with Paul MacArthur also smacking a single pointer over the posts at the 'town end'.

Ross' men also hit the net

and it was Kyles star MacDonald inflicting the damage.

Fraser MacKintosh refused to give the Irish back-line peace and, when the ball fell to MacDonald, he executed the perfect finish.

Ireland's half was defined by a stunning goal from Conor Lehane and several long-range hits over the uprights.

Lehane weaved with the ball seemingly glued to his stick and only let go to fire a volley past MacDonald. Patrick Horgan struck three single point-

ers over the bar and half-time saw Scotland 13-6 to the good.

Ireland had the wind in the second half but the home side managed to take the heat out of their comeback.

Responded

When Darragh O'Connell struck a point seconds after the restart, Scotland responded with MacDonald's second goal from a Bartlett assist.

Lehane and Bartlett both added scores, one point and two points respectively, before Ireland found the net again.

SHINTY/HURLING

Patrick Maher, like Lehane in the first half, juggled the ball on his bat before dispatching it past MacDonald.

Scotland, thankfully, were to hold on. Bartlett added a two pointer before scoring from a Shaun Nicolson cross.

Ireland were served by single strikes from Lehane, Paul Divilly and Horgan but they now have work to do if they are to peg back the Scots this weekend.

Marine Harvest National Shinty Awards 2014

THE 2014 Marine Harvest National Shinty Award winners were announced last Friday night at a ceremony and dinner in the Kingsmills Hotel, Inverness.

The awards were presented by Marine Harvest's managing director Alan Sutherland.

The winners were as follows: Marine Harvest Coach of the Year - Davie Anderson and Russell Jones, Kingussie Shinty Club; Marine Harvest Player of the Year - Steven MacDonald, Newtonmore Camanachd; Marine Harvest Club of the Year - Skye Camanachd; Marine Harvest Centenary Award (for outstanding contribution to shinty, awarded every three years) - Davie Hamilton, Oban Celtic.

League Coaches and Player Awards - Marine Harvest Award - Premiership Coach of the Year - Paul John MacKintosh, Newtonmore; Marine Harvest - National Division Coach of the Year - Gus Campbell, Oban Camanachd; Marine Harvest South Division 1 Coach of the Year - Roddy MacColl, Kyles Athletic; Marine Harvest North Division 1 Coach of the Year - John

MacLeod, Skye; Marine Harvest South Division 2 Coach of the Year - Ruairidh Graham, Inveraray; Marine Harvest North Division 2 Coach of the Year - Peter Wood and Lachie MacDonald, Fort William; Marine Harvest North Division 3 Coach of the Year - Iain Sinclair, Lewis.

Marine Harvest Award - Premiership Player of the Year - Stuart MacDonald, Lovat; Marine Harvest National Division Player of the Year - Daniel Cameron, Oban Camanachd; Marine Harvest South Division 1 Player of the Year - Innes MacDonald, Kyles Athletic; Marine Harvest North Division 1 Player of the Year - Steven Morrison, Skye; Marine Harvest South Division 2 Player of the Year - Fraser Watt, Inveraray; Marine Harvest North Division 2 Player of the Year - Peter Wood, Fort William; Marine Harvest North Division 3 Player of the Year - Andy Hay, Strathspey.

Women's Awards - Women's Camanachd Association Marine Harvest Volunteer of the Year - Sarah Corrigan, Skye; Marine Harvest National Division 2 Team of the Year - Lorn Ladies; Marine Harvest National Division 1 Team of the Year - Skye Ladies; Marine Harvest

SHINTY AWARDS

National Division 2 Player of the Year - Morgan Redpath, Strathglass and Katie Urquhart, Lovat; Marine Harvest National Division 1 Player of the Year - Niamh Donnelly, Aberdeen.

Youth Awards - Marine Harvest Youth Coach of the Year - John MacLeod, Skye Camanachd; Under 14 Player of the Year - John Gillies, Skye; Under 17 Player of the Year - Savio Gemini, Kingussie; Under 21 Player of the Year - Fraser Heath, Glenurquhart; Donella Crawford Award for Youth and Schools - Ewen MacColl, Beaulieu.

Volunteer - William Paterson Salver Volunteer of the Year - George Hay, Glasgow Mid Argyll.

Referees - The Johnny 'Ach' MacRae Quach - Referee of the Year - Innes Wood, Fort William; Emerging Referee of the Year - Andy MacLean, Kirkhill.

Fairplay - Fair Play Award One Team Club - Lewis Camanachd; Fair Play Award Two Team Club - Aberdeen.

Media - Media Award - Cuillin FM.



PLAYER OF THE YEAR - Steven MacDonald of Newtonmore. All photos: Neil Paterson



CLUB OF THE YEAR - Skye Camanachd club stalwart John Angus Morrison picks up the award.



NATIONAL DIVISION PLAYER OF THE YEAR - Daniel Cameron, Oban Camanachd



WOMEN'S CAMANACHD ASSOCIATION TEAM OF THE YEAR - Lorne Ladies. Alison MacVicar and Amanda MacKenzie picked up the award on behalf of the club.



NATIONAL DIVISION COACH OF THE YEAR - Gussie Campbell, Oban Camanachd



COACH OF THE YEAR - Russell Jones and Davie Anderson of Kingussie Shinty Club were presented with their award by Marine Harvest's managing director Alan Sutherland



SOUTH DIVISION TWO COACH OF THE YEAR - Ruairidh Graham, Inveraray



SOUTH DIVISION TWO PLAYER OF THE YEAR - Fraser Watt, Inveraray



NORTH DIVISION TWO PLAYER OF THE YEAR - Peter Wood, Fort William



SOUTH DIVISION ONE COACH OF THE YEAR - Roddy MacColl, Kyles Athletic

The Orion Group Premiership

| | P | W | D | L | F | A | Pts |
|----------------|----|----|---|----|----|----|-----|
| Newtonmore | 14 | 10 | 2 | 2 | 37 | 17 | 22 |
| Lovat | 14 | 7 | 5 | 2 | 32 | 20 | 19 |
| Glenurquhart | 14 | 7 | 4 | 3 | 25 | 16 | 18 |
| Kingussie | 14 | 7 | 2 | 5 | 31 | 29 | 16 |
| Kyles Athletic | 13 | 6 | 3 | 4 | 25 | 20 | 13 |
| Inveraray | 14 | 3 | 4 | 7 | 18 | 29 | 10 |
| Kinlochshiel | 13 | 2 | 2 | 9 | 21 | 34 | 6 |
| Lochaber | 14 | 1 | 2 | 11 | 18 | 42 | 4 |

Marine Harvest National Division

| | P | W | D | L | F | A | Pts |
|----------------|----|----|---|----|----|----|-----|
| Fort William | 13 | 11 | 2 | 0 | 70 | 10 | 24 |
| Oban Camanachd | 13 | 11 | 1 | 1 | 46 | 12 | 23 |
| Kilmallie | 14 | 10 | 1 | 3 | 54 | 22 | 21 |
| Beaulieu | 14 | 7 | 1 | 6 | 37 | 29 | 15 |
| Caberfeidh | 14 | 5 | 1 | 8 | 31 | 39 | 11 |
| Glasgow MA | 14 | 4 | 0 | 10 | 25 | 47 | 8 |
| Glenorchy | 14 | 2 | 1 | 11 | 12 | 57 | 5 |
| Bute | 14 | 1 | 1 | 12 | 8 | 67 | 1 |

Marine Harvest North Division 1

| | P | W | D | L | F | A | Pts |
|--------------|----|----|---|----|----|----|-----|
| Skye | 14 | 13 | 1 | 0 | 53 | 7 | 27 |
| Newtonmore | 14 | 9 | 1 | 4 | 42 | 16 | 19 |
| Strathglass | 14 | 7 | 1 | 6 | 38 | 32 | 15 |
| Beaulieu | 14 | 6 | 2 | 6 | 31 | 36 | 14 |
| Glenurquhart | 14 | 5 | 3 | 6 | 28 | 33 | 13 |
| Kingussie | 14 | 5 | 1 | 8 | 35 | 48 | 9 |
| Lovat | 14 | 4 | 0 | 10 | 30 | 48 | 8 |
| Inverness | 14 | 1 | 3 | 10 | 21 | 58 | 5 |

Marine Harvest South Division 1

| | P | W | D | L | F | A | Pts |
|-----------------|----|---|---|----|----|----|-----|
| Ballachulish | 14 | 9 | 5 | 0 | 39 | 15 | 23 |
| Kyles Athletic | 14 | 8 | 4 | 2 | 47 | 19 | 20 |
| Oban Celtic | 14 | 6 | 4 | 4 | 20 | 27 | 16 |
| Aberdour | 14 | 6 | 3 | 5 | 32 | 31 | 15 |
| Lochside Rovers | 14 | 6 | 3 | 5 | 32 | 34 | 15 |
| Strachur | 14 | 3 | 3 | 8 | 18 | 33 | 9 |
| Taynuilt | 14 | 2 | 4 | 8 | 32 | 46 | 8 |
| Kilmory | 14 | 2 | 2 | 10 | 16 | 31 | 6 |

Marine Harvest North Division 2

| | P | W | D | L | F | A | Pts |
|--------------|----|----|---|---|----|----|-----|
| Fort William | 14 | 11 | 1 | 2 | 55 | 20 | 23 |
| Lochcarron | 14 | 8 | 2 | 4 | 38 | 46 | 18 |
| Glenarry | 14 | 8 | 1 | 5 | 25 | 31 | 17 |
| Lochaber | 14 | 6 | 1 | 7 | 50 | 39 | 13 |
| Kinlochshiel | 14 | 5 | 3 | 6 | 27 | 33 | 11 |
| Boleskine | 14 | 5 | 0 | 9 | 29 | 48 | 10 |
| Skye | 14 | 4 | 1 | 9 | 38 | 35 | 9 |
| Aberdeen Uni | 14 | 3 | 3 | 8 | 29 | 39 | 9 |

Marine Harvest South Division 2

| | P | W | D | L | F | A | Pts |
|--------------|----|----|---|----|----|----|-----|
| Inveraray | 14 | 12 | 2 | 0 | 66 | 7 | 26 |
| Tayforth | 14 | 12 | 1 | 1 | 51 | 10 | 25 |
| Glasgow MA | 14 | 7 | 1 | 6 | 46 | 29 | 15 |
| Bute | 14 | 5 | 2 | 7 | 25 | 37 | 11 |
| Col Glen | 14 | 5 | 2 | 7 | 36 | 36 | 10 |
| Ballachulish | 14 | 6 | 0 | 8 | 28 | 43 | 10 |
| Glenorchy | 14 | 3 | 1 | 10 | 20 | 40 | 6 |
| Aberdour | 14 | 1 | 1 | 12 | 14 | 84 | 3 |

Marine Harvest North Division 3

| | P | W | D | L | F | A | Pts |
|------------|----|----|---|---|----|----|-----|
| Caberfeidh | 14 | 10 | 2 | 2 | 52 | 17 | 22 |
| Kilmallie | 14 | 6 | 3 | 5 | 51 | 28 | 14 |
| Lewis | 14 | 6 | 2 | 6 | 29 | 30 | 14 |
| Strathspey | 14 | 6 | 1 | 7 | 28 | 44 | 12 |
| Lochbroom | 14 | 4 | 4 | 6 | 19 | 36 | 9 |
| Inverness | 14 | 3 | 2 | 9 | 24 | 48 | 8 |

Strathspey docked one point for failing to fulfil a fixture
Kilmallie docked one point for failing to fulfil a fixture

The Oban Times
& WEST HIGHLAND TIMES

best for shinty news, views and photographs

Top award for Oban shinty stalwart

'Davie is an outstanding example of someone that has committed himself to the game'

- Camanachd Association President Archie Robertson

AN OBAN shinty coach, described as an 'outstanding example' of volunteering, has won the most prestigious accolade at the sport's annual awards.

The Marine Harvest Centenary Award is only presented every three years and is for outstanding contribution to shinty.

This year's winner, Oban Celtic president Davie Hamilton, was presented with the honour at last Friday's Marine Harvest National Shinty Awards.

Speaking to *The Oban Times* about the award panel's decision, Camanachd Association president Archie Robertson said: 'Davie is an outstanding example of someone that has committed himself to the game.'

Mr Hamilton, the sixth winner in the trophy's history, said: 'I was surprised to have won this award because if you look at the previous winners they are well-known names throughout the shinty world.'

Having been involved in the game for 50 years, Mr Hamilton only began playing shinty at the age of 15 but went on to

SHINTY

represent Oban Celtic as player, player/manager, manager and president.

The 64-year-old is also secretary of the Macaulay Association and is involved in organising a series of competitions in Oban, from primary school tournaments to Camanachd cups.

Mr Robertson added: 'The judging panel drew on Davie's long-term commitment to Oban Celtic, shinty in general in Oban and particularly youth shinty through his work with the Macaulay Association.'

'All the awards we present to volunteers only scratch the surface - they are the people keeping the game going.'

'Davie represents the huge volunteer source, without which we wouldn't have a game.'

In total, four of the awards on the night came back to Oban but there was a wide geographical spread of the main prizes, from Lewis and Skye to Glasgow.



TOP AWARD: a delighted Davie Hamilton receives the Marine Harvest Centenary Award for outstanding contribution to shinty, awarded every three years, from Marine Harvest managing director Alan Sutherland. See full list of prizewinners and more photographs on page 31 Photo: Neil Paterson

New shinty team for Oban

A NEW shinty team is being formed in Oban to help young players struggling to get a game for the town's more established clubs.

Oban Lorn will play in blue and white and compete in Marine Harvest South Division Two, as well as cup competitions, next season.

Oban Lorn will be the town's fourth team after the more established Oban Camanachd, Oban Celtic and Lochside Rovers.

Manager Jocky Martin, who resigned as Oban Celtic coach earlier this season, will lead the team, which will be made up of nine under-17 players and a handful of more experienced players.

Mr Martin said: 'The aim is to give games to young players that cannot get a game at the other clubs. If they want to stay with us as they get older, or if they want to leave, we'll roll with it.'

'But there are too many good kids not getting shinty and we are constantly getting asked about the team.'

Oban Lorn has sponsorship in place for the new season and Mr Martin will be supported by coaches Les Kinvg, Donald MacVicar and Alan Duffy. Tony Howlett will be club president.

Green Machine progress in West Shield

RUGBY

OBAN Lorne progressed to the quarter final of the BT West Regional Shield without having to break sweat after their opponents in the previous round, Cambuslang, failed to raise a team.

But the lack of opposition may have been a blessing in disguise for the Green Machine who would have been forced into fielding a weakened team for the game.

A number of injuries are still present within the squad, along with suspensions to Corrie Louw, Andrew Johnston and Craig Wright.

Oban have been drawn at home to Division 1 side Garnock in the quarter final on November 8.

The Green Machine suffered two narrow defeats to Garnock last season in the Ayrshire men's title winning season.

For now, Oban must focus on the league and will hope to bounce back with a win away to Cumbernauld at 3pm this Saturday.

Oban currently lead West Division 2 by three points with McLaren and Cambuslang the nearest challengers.

Scottish AFL results and fixtures

FOOTBALL

LAST weekend's results: West of Scotland Cup second Round - Glenburn Athletic 1, Oban Saints 7; Kilbride Thistle 1, Dunoon 5; Premier Division - Campbeltown Pupils 3, Fannart 6; Premier Division Two - Lochgilphead Red Star 3, Motherwell Thistle 2; Division 1B - FC Clydebank 7, Tarbert 3.

This week's fixtures: Premier Division - Eaglesham v Campbeltown Pupils; Oban Saints v Alba Thistle; Premier Division One - Dunoon v Rolls Royce East Kilbride; Premier Division Two - Drumchapel Amateur Colts v Lochgilphead Red Star; Paisley v Dunoon Athletic; Division 1B Tarbert v Carlton YM.



CLAY TARGET BIG SHOTS: entrants to the charity shoot organised by Lorn Clay Target Club

Lorn Clay Target Club hold charity shoot

A CHARITY shoot held by Lorn Clay Target Club has raised £1,000 for charities in the area.

The event, which attracted more than 30 entrants, was sponsored by Highland

Fasteners of Oban, Scottish Sea Farms, Tobermory Distillery, Tesco Oban and 1 Wynne Butchers.

£500 cheques
Cheques for £500 were presented to

Oban Multiple Sclerosis Centre and Oban Hospice.

High gun for the day was Bob MacColl from Tarbert. The next club shoot will be on November 8.

Podium finish still proves elusive

A FIRST podium place for Connel rider John McPhee continues to be elusive, despite an excellent run of form that has seen him finish fourth and fifth in consecutive weeks.

McPhee recently delivered another self-assured ride at Phillip Island to take a well-earned fifth place in the Australian GP Moto3 race.

The RSF-backed Saxo-Print-RTG rider stuck with the front-runners from start to finish to end the 23-lap thriller just over a tenth of a second behind Red Bull Ajo's race winner Jack Miller.

The 20-year-old, still in pain following his high-side in second free practice on Friday, played another patient waiting game towards the back of the group before relieving soon-to-be team-mate

MOTO3

Alexis Masbou of fifth on the final lap.

Fifth was McPhee's second best GP finish and continues the strong run of form which netted him fourth at the previous round in Japan.

'Obviously after the last race in Japan, the target was to get on the podium here so I'm a little bit disappointed not to have achieved that,' he said.

'But, in view of the high-side I had on Friday and the damage it did to my shoulder, I'm still pleased, and more than a little relieved to have got fifth.'

'Clearly it was a tough race for me but, like I did in Japan, I just bided my time towards the back of the lead group and saved myself, and tyres, for a final push at the end.'



SPEEDSTER: Connel Moto3 rider John McPhee

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| WEATHER | | TIDAL INFORMATION | | | |
|------------------------|---|--|---|------------------|--------------|
| Thursday | Heavy rain Winds moderate south westerly Temperatures 10°C to 13°C. | Tide tables for Oban during the week from Thursday, October 23, 2014 are listed below with differences for major ports listed on the right. | | | |
| Friday | Heavy rain and hail showers Winds moderate south westerly Temperatures 10°C to 11°C. | Date | am pm | | |
| Weekend Outlook | Heavy rain showers on Saturday Heavy rain showers on Sunday Winds strong south south westerly Temperatures 10°C to 12°C. | Thur | 05.16 3.9 11.20 1.0 17.23 4.0 23.50 1.0 | | |
| | | Fri | 05.47 4.0 11.53 0.9 17.53 4.1 ** ** * | | |
| | | Sat | 00.20 0.9 06.14 4.0 12.26 0.9 18.22 4.0 | | |
| | | Sun | 00.50 0.9 06.43 4.0 13.01 0.9 18.53 4.0 | | |
| | | Mon | 01.22 1.0 07.16 3.9 13.38 1.0 19.27 3.8 | | |
| | | Tues | 01.58 1.1 07.55 3.8 14.22 1.2 20.07 3.3 | | |
| | | Wed | 02.41 1.2 08.41 3.6 15.14 1.4 20.55 3.3 | | |
| | | Tidal Constants: (Add or deduct from High Water at Oban) | | | |
| | | Ardrishaig | -5.35 | Mallaig | +0.25 |
| | | Campbeltown | -5.30 | Portree | +0.55 |
| | | Crinan | -0.47 | Tobermory | +0.16 |
| | | Islay Port Ellen | 2.00 | Dover | +5.30 |
| | | Lochboisdale | +0.30 | | |
| | | Ferry Crossings/Sea States | | | |
| | | Oban to Barra/South Uist | | Moderate | |
| | | Oban to Coll/Tiree | | Moderate | |
| | | Kennacraig to Islay | | Moderate | |

The Oban Times

FORT WILLIAM & LOCHABER EDITION

& WEST HIGHLAND TIMES

Established 1861 No 8222

Thursday 23 October, 2014

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Don't forget to turn your clocks back this weekend



Fort man facing jail following attack

A FORT William man could be facing jail following a violent attack in the town.

Christopher Standen of 68 Lochaber Road was warned he could end up in prison after he admitted repeatedly punching a man and striking his head on the ground, as well as putting him in a headlock and attempting to stamp on his head multiple times at MacRae's Lane, off High Street.

Fort William sheriff court saw video evidence last Thursday (October 16) showing the 28-year-old and the victim approach each other and begin fighting in the early hours of June 22 but Standen soon got the better of his opponent who, procurator fiscal Andrew Hanton said, was under the influence of alcohol. Defence solicitor Hamish Melrose said the two men had fallen out in the past and when they crossed paths Standen 'just snapped' when the man threatened his family.

He added: 'Mr Standen was walking away and was followed by the complainer. He was standing outside the entrance of a bar with his arms waving about making a nuisance of himself.'

'Mr Standen was challenged to a fight and you can see he got the better of the complainer.'

Mr Hanton said it was 'surprising' the injured man was able to walk away from the scene and was treated at Belford Hospital for a bleeding head the following day.

Sheriff Richard Davidson called the victim a 'drunken nuisance' but warned Standen he had not ruled out jail for what he said had 'the potential for extremely serious injuries'.

He added: 'I must take into account you had your forearm round his throat and were squeezing, something that can cause death readily. Also you repeatedly struck his head off the wall and ground and that can easily cause potential brain damage. I want to give you no indication that you may not go to jail.'

Sheriff Davidson deferred sentencing until November 11 for a background report.



Fergus hits the right notes at Mòd

Fergus Munro, 16, from Corpach, had a successful Royal National Mòd, winning the gold badge for boys solo singing in the 16-18 years category and the Turriff trophy for the highest marks in Gaelic between both the girls and boys competitions. He also lifted the Highland Society of London trophy for the highest marks overall between both the girls and boys competitions. The Mòd in Inverness closed with one of the finest massed choirs in memory. The economic value of the Mòd to the local economy was believed to be in the region of £2.5 to £3.5 million. Full news on the final events of the Mòd see pages 10-14.

'Road to the Isles' repair work starts

THE BUSY 'Road to the Isles' is to benefit from £200,000 worth of improvement works.

Resurfacing is already underway on the Fort William to Mallaig A830, from west of Corpach, and is expected to be completed by October 31.

Temporary traffic lights and a 10mph convoy system are in place between the 7am-7pm working hours and a 30mph speed limit is in place outside these hours.

Eddie Ross, of contractors BEAR Scotland, said: 'These resurfacing works have been designed to

improve the running surface of this stretch of road which will ensure it is smoother and safer for motorists.'

'Because of the location and nature of the works, some disruption is to be expected and we thank road users for their patience in advance.'

Sheriff slams police officers during trial

LOCHABER CONSTABLES HAD NO WRITTEN RECORD OF WARNING

EMMA CRICHTON
ecrichton@obantimes.co.uk

POLICE in Lochaber have come under fire from a local sheriff who said he is 'concerned' about how crimes may be dealt with in the area.

Sheriff Richard Davidson reprimanded two officers during a court trial last week as neither of them had a written record of giving an alleged dangerous driver a warning he could be prosecuted.

Constables Hugo Martin and Martin Blair both told Fort William sheriff court on Thursday October 16 they believed a verbal warning for speeding had been given to Kenneth Ferguson when they dealt with him in May last year but when procurator fiscal Andrew Hanton asked if they had written down the

warning neither of the officers had it in their notebooks.

Constables are required by law to explain to an accused they could be charged and what they have done to warrant this. There is no legal obligation to write the warning down although it is normally done as it may be used as evidence in court.

The accused Mr Ferguson, of 7 Appin Road, Kinlochleven, said he hadn't received the said warning about speeding on the Glencoe to Kinlochleven Road on May 14 and was found not guilty.

But Sheriff Davidson said it caused him 'considerable concern' there was no evidence of the warning.

He added: 'I think there's a problem here that needs explaining. I'm concerned that two police

officers may have come in here and told me a pack of lies. Not having a proper record of warnings could be a real problem in Lochaber.'

Fort William and Ardnamurchan area inspector Donald Campbell said he had spoken to one of the officers involved and was treating it as an 'ongoing enquiry'.

He said: 'I'm having a meeting with the sheriff next week to discuss it. I wasn't in the courtroom myself and my officers had left by the closing statements. Until I know exactly what the situation is I'm treating it as an ongoing enquiry.'

'It is up to the officers to take notes on what they think is important but a section one warning is an important part of the process when it comes to this kind of offence or any other.'

Thieves target Fort and Ballachulish

POLICE in Lochaber are appealing for information about two thefts in the area.

Sometime between 8.20pm on Tuesday October 14 and 9am the following morning entry was forced to a vehicle in Park Road, Ballachulish, and a number of power tools were stolen.

Sometime between October 4 and October 16 entry was forced to Fort William Football Club premises at Claggan Park and confectionery was stolen.

Anyone with information about either of these incidents is asked to contact local police on 101 or the confidential line on 01397 702000.

Tenants' group wins award

A FORT William community group has won an award for making improvements to the area they live in.

Upper Achintore Regeneration Group won first place in Highland Council's 'making a difference to your community' award at the annual tenants participation conference in Nairn. The group received a trophy and a £50 voucher in recognition of its hard work, which includes creating a picnic area with swings, installing planting barrels, arranging litter picks and initiating path and step repairs.

Young member Connor MacDonald was also highly commended in the 'young person

of the year' category for his work on the group's newsletter.

Jackie Carswell, chairwoman of Upper Achintore Regeneration Group, said: 'We are delighted and encouraged to receive this prestigious award. We have many more projects planned and we feel we are making a difference to our community. The awards have boosted the confidence of our hard-working group of volunteers and we are very proud of young Connor.'



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TOGETHER AGAIN: past pupils of Lochaber high school, who are this year celebrating their 40th birthdays, were reunited at the weekend. The class of 1986 gathered in Caol community centre on Saturday night. Some had travelled the length of Britain and were seeing their classmates for the first time in 28 years

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Fuel surcharge sparks outrage

EMMA CRICHTON
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FAMILIES in the Highlands and islands are paying hundreds of pounds more for electricity because of where they live in what one politician called a 'national disgrace'.

Public representatives have called on both the Scottish and UK governments to put an end to a surcharge which sees households in the north pay two pence more per unit than anywhere else in Scotland because of regional variations in prices.

In the western isles, 71 per cent of residents are living in fuel poverty - spending more than 10 per cent of their income on fuel - and could be paying hundreds of pounds more each year than other areas.

Charles Kennedy, MP for Ross, Skye and Lochaber, said: 'Too often, consumers are poorly treated by energy companies. 'Barely a day goes by without a negative story appearing in the media, the recent news from the Highlands and islands being pertinent indeed. 'Consumers must be protected by building a fair, open and competitive energy market.

'Big steps have been taken but we have yet to reach the end of the journey.'

Councillor Angus Campbell, leader of Comhairle nan Eilean Siar, has backed a campaign by charity Western Isles Poverty Action Group (WIPAG) for the charge to be scrapped.

He said: 'Not only are people in the Highlands and islands being charged two pence per unit more than the rest of Scotland, we also face higher charges for the transmission of energy out of our area. 'So we are faced with a double whammy - particularly as much of

that electricity is produced in the Highlands and islands. 'At the same time we have the highest fuel poverty figures in the UK. 'To impose an additional burden on the people of the Highlands and islands is completely unacceptable and completely contradicts the principle of universality.'

And councillor Angus McCormack, chairman of WIPAG added: 'This is a national disgrace. A two pence reduction in unit costs would have a significant impact on fuel poverty. A consumer using 1,500 units per year would save £300.

'We call on the Scottish government to resolve this iniquity as a matter of urgency.'

Highland Council has also backed the campaign. Council leader Drew Hendry called the charge 'extremely unfair' and said he is keen to support the work of Comhairle nan Eilean Siar.

Decision Energy giants Scottish and Southern Energy insisted it had no control over the regional pricing system and would like to see it scrapped but the decision is with regulator Ofgem.

Charles Gallacher, Ofgem's Scotland director, said: 'We

recognise that the north of Scotland faces higher costs for the distribution of energy across the region. 'This reflects the cost of running the network in that area and the same methodology applies across Britain, resulting in regional variations. 'Ofgem is committed to ensuring that network companies deliver value for money for consumers. Na h-Eileanan an Iar MP Angus MacNeil said he is writing to the UK energy minister Matthew Hancock MP regarding the pricing structure and called fuel poverty in the UK 'a scandal'.

Drivers face diversion as A82 trunk road closes for five nights

LOCHABER'S trunk road is to be completely closed for five nights to allow maintenance work to be carried out.

The A82 resurfacing, just north of Fort Augustus, means the road has to be shut between 8pm and 6am from Sunday November 2 until Friday November 7.

A diversion will be in place via the A87 and the A887 leaving the A82 at Invergarry and rejoining at Invermoriston, and vice versa, but Stewart MacLean of campaign group the A82 Partnership said the road should not have to be fully closed to carry out the work.

He said: 'Once again the A82 demonstrates its inadequacy by requiring to be fully closed to carry out normal maintenance work.'

A spokesman from contractors BEAR Scotland said: 'Works have been programmed to be carried out during the night to avoid any conflict with potentially busy daytime traffic. 'We apologise for any inconvenience caused.'

Glenfinnan powers ahead



SUCCESS: Donald Cameron, Lord Lieutenant of Lochail, cuts the ribbon at Slatach hydropower station, with Bob Middleton 20_43hydro02

A NEW renewable energy scheme near Glenfinnan is now open following five years of planning and work.

The hydropower station at Slatach was officially opened by Donald Cameron, Lord Lieutenant of Lochail, on October 9 along with Bob Middleton of operators TLS Hydro and LoCo2 Energy.

Mr Middleton said: 'This project has been five years in the making and has been a lot of hard work. We'd like to thank everyone who has been involved in the project and for everyone to benefit from Scotland's vast natural resources. We are committed to investing in new renewable hydropower projects and Slatach has already been a runaway success in terms of its output exceeding all our expectations.'

A west Highland charitable fund will also benefit from the scheme as LoCo2 has pledged £10 to the Moidart trust for every customer in Scotland who signs up to a renewable or low carbon tariff.

Anus MacDonald, founder of the trust, said: 'We award enterprise grants to help grow sustainable businesses. Part of our work is to attract investment from other charitable trusts, individuals and companies and we are delighted the Moidart trust will benefit.'



GENEROUS: Banavie primary school pupils with food they collected for the elderly

Pupils spread harvest cheer

FORT William youngsters celebrated the harvest festival by gathering food for the elderly.

Lochside RC primary school held a special assembly including songs and prayers before pupils handed out food to pensioners who live close to the school.

Banavie primary school also celebrated the festival by baking their own bread and delivering food collected by the pupils to elderly in the village.



ASSEMBLY: Lochside RC primary school pupils celebrate the harvest festival 20_43harvest01

Meeting will shed light on new group

FORT William is to get a 'men's shed' - an area set aside in the community for the male population to relax, talk and take part in practical activities.

The concept originates in Australia and has spawned thousands more 'sheds' across the world, including very recently in Scotland.

The new 'shed' in Fort William is holding an open meeting in the Alexandra Hotel next Wednesday, October 29, giving men the chance to meet group members.

Guest speaker Nick Pilbeam, from the Westhill men's shed near Aberdeen, will share his experiences of setting these groups up. The meeting runs from 7.30pm until 9pm.

Faster internet an 'economic boost'

FASTER broadband will deliver a 'real economic boost' to Lochaber, according to Charles Kennedy MP.

Ballachulish, Onich and Spean Bridge will receive new fibre broadband through a Scotland-wide scheme.

Charles Kennedy, MP for Ross, Skye and Lochaber, said: 'People in Lochaber have been at the back of the queue when it comes to improvements in digital services. Broadband has unique potential to transform job opportunities and business in areas like the Highlands which have previously been poorly served by communications infrastructure. It's crucial we get this investment working for the communities and businesses it is intended to support as quickly as possible.'

Yes supporters dig deep for food bank

INDEPENDENCE supporters in Lochaber have turned their attention to helping those in need.

Yes Lochaber held its first post-referendum meeting in Caol community centre on October 6 and members brought food and money to be donated to the region's food bank.

Two car loads of provisions and £378 was delivered to the charity's Fort William storage depot and food bank manager Alec McConnachie said it will make a 'huge difference'.

He added: 'It was a massive amount, six kilograms of food and £378. It's really good of them and we've had a lot of donations from churches and other groups as well.'



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OBAN AND MULL FACING DRAMATIC RISE IN TRAFFIC

Cheap fares could bring roads chaos

LOUISE LEE
llee@obantimes.co.uk

URGENT action is required to prevent Oban grinding to a halt as an estimated 65,000 extra vehicles a year make their way through the town heading for Mull.

That's the view of community groups and politicians ahead of the introduction of the Scottish government's Road Equivalent Tariff (RET) next October which will slash the cost of travel to Mull to as little as £27 for return tickets. The current average return car journey costs £67.

Experts calculate that traffic to Oban's ferry terminal will rise between 35 to 55 per cent.

Community groups, on both sides of the water, are urging government planners to consider the implications of increasing the traffic and the proposed introduction of hourly ferry sailings without improving the roads infrastructure in Oban and Mull.

Steve Willis, of Mull community council, said: 'We need to think seriously about the implications of increased sailings and reduced costs on the ferry network.'

'It will mean there is a huge increase in traffic, and in turn Mull and Oban will become the biggest car park in Scotland as no one can move anywhere.'

When RET was introduced to Tiree five years ago, the increase in traffic of more than 100 per cent saw the roads go into meltdown.

There was also a lack of infrastructure such as roads, toilets and accommodation.

Lack of consideration to the long term effects in Oban are worrying,

say residents. John Miller, a van driver, from Soroba said: 'When the traffic lights at the school were broken last year, it took me an extra 20 minutes to an hour to get through the town. One problem in Oban can cause chaos because there is nowhere else to go.'

'With an extra 65,000 cars a year and the unrelenting nature of the ferry every hour - we need to think about a new road.'

George Berry, community councillor and van driver, said: 'There should be no work undertaken in the town until a full traffic management appraisal has been completed. The town is a nightmare already.'

Alan Reid, Argyll and Bute MP, said: 'RET alone is not a solution - infrastructure has to go along with it.'

'On Mull, the roads are badly in need of improvement. Something must be done. A study for both Oban and Mull has to be completed

to find out what work needs to be undertaken, as soon as possible.'

A spokesman for Transport Scotland, the government agency behind RET, said: 'We would expect a reduction in fares to lead to an increase in demand on these services, particularly during the summer timetable. We will therefore work with members of the affected communities to find ways of managing this demand.'

'The introduction of RET on ferry services to Arran in October 2014 will also provide valuable information that will help us with demand management around the roll out to the rest of the Clyde and Hebridean Ferry Services.'

In a response to a question on its plans to improve infrastructure on either side of the crossing, a spokesman for Argyll and Bute council said: 'We are aware of this issue and will be discussing it with the Scottish government.'

Gas testing to be carried out in town

GAS HEATING customers in Oban have been selected to trial a new, more efficient type of gas that could be pumped into homes across the UK.

Scottish Gas Networks said it selected Oban as the ideal location for the testing, as it has a mix of business and residential property and its own dedicated gas network, which is not attached to the national network.

The town also has its own liquefied natural gas plant and

this closed system makes it easier for the company to check performance.

Testing will begin on November 3 in Glencairn and Scottish Gas Networks expects to test a total of 235 properties in phase one, which will last four to five weeks.

Scottish Gas Networks said it had written to the first 100 customers and that they could contact the company to alter appointment times or ask any more about the project.



STORM-TOSSED: tour vessel 'Elizabeth G' lies beached on the Oban Esplanade foreshore. Photo: Stephen Lawson

Gonzalo visits west Highlands but doesn't leave a lasting impression

THE REMNANTS of Hurricane Gonzalo hit Scotland on Tuesday, with areas in the west Highlands and islands experiencing some of the strongest winds in the UK.

Ferry operator Calmac cancelled 14 routes and suspended many others, with the Skye Bridge also closed to traffic.

The highest recorded winds in Scotland were gusts of 66mph in Port Ellen, Islay, along with 62mph in Machrihanish and 61mph on Tiree.

Chief inspector Marlene Baillie, who is based in Lochgilphead, said: 'We have had a few weather-related calls, such as traffic disruption, debris, trees that have come down and alarms going off, but that is all routine stuff really. Thankfully there doesn't seem to have been any serious issues.'

Ian Laurie, who runs a shop in Port Ellen on Islay, said: 'There has obviously been disruption

because there are no ferries, but structurally there is no damage to the village that we're aware of.'

'It's not too bad from our point of view, we're used to the weather here.'

An Oban tour vessel washed up on the edge of the Corran Esplanade on Tuesday morning, in what the owner called 'a lucky escape'.

The boat, named *Elizabeth G*, drifted for 150 metres after the riser, which anchors the boat, snapped during high winds.

The ship's owner Rob Parlow said: 'When the coastguard got in touch, I feared the worst but as bad as it looks, we've been very lucky.'

'If the mooring had broken at high tide she would have smashed against the Esplanade, and that would have caused significant damage, so it's a lucky escape as the damage is only superficial.'

'The vessel is an ex-Norwegian rescue boat and heavily built,

so it's actually built to take the impact, to a degree.'

The boat will be towed back out into the open water on the first high tide.

Meanwhile, a North Connell man has described the terrifying moment he saw a tornado blow past his house, uprooting trees in its path.

Robert Miller was working inside his home on Sunday, October 19, when he saw the twister pass by his house on the banks of Loch Etive.

Robert said: 'When I saw the tornado it was like time stood still.'

'You don't really know what to do because you feel helpless - I was worried it would blow into the house and take it down with it.'

The wind left a trail of destruction, uprooting four trees, one of which landed on his trailer and boat. Robert added: 'It's a miracle no-one was hurt.'

Fellow motorists help crash victim

A 22-YEAR-old man survived his car rolling over twice in the road before it came to a standstill close to the edge of Loch Etive on Tuesday evening.

Shortly after 6.15pm the vehicle crashed on the A85 near to the Achnacloch Bridge.

Passers-by helped the man out of his car but could not raise the alarm because there was no mobile phone reception. Police arrived at the scene by chance, and called for an ambulance.

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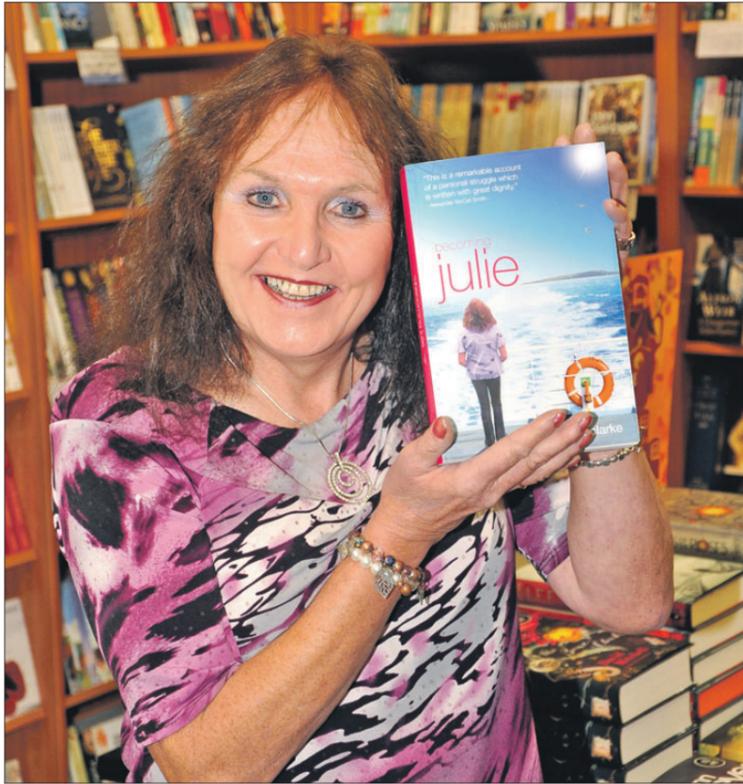
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Coll gave Julie the zest for living and a new chapter in her story



ODYSSEY: Julie Clarke will launch her book, *Becoming Julie*, in Waterstones Oban next month

EUAN PATERSON
epaterson@obantimes.co.uk

THE MOVE to the 'sanctuary' of Coll became a lifesaving one for Julie Clarke, as she reveals the story behind her journey from fire-fighting male to female pier attendant.

Only now, at the age of 58, does she feel comfortable in talking about her transgender change in her first book, *Becoming Julie*, which is launched on November 6 in Oban's Waterstones.

As a child in Callander, Julie knew she was 'different' and admits the subsequent battle to suppress her inner woman almost 'destroyed' her.

Speaking to *The Oban Times* ahead of the book launch, Julie is keen to share her experience in order to help others who may be in a similar situation.

But she remains tight-lipped about some of the content and one thing readers will not find in the book is her old male name. 'My name before is dead,' she says. 'Some people know it but it is not in the book. Why should I go there, it's not who I am.'

Her story begins at the age of seven.

'That's when I started to realise something was different,' she said. 'I tried to run away from it but as I got older the female side of me was winning this push-and-pull battle. I decided I had to follow a stereotypical male life because that was what was expected of me.'

'I got married to a woman and I put on a face because you couldn't

tell people what you were, not in the 1970s and 1980s. The prejudice was huge.

'I went to great lengths to escape Julie's clutches: I became a fire-fighter and a chartered boat skipper because those were stereotypically male jobs but this struggle pushed me close to destruction many times.'

'What people didn't know about me, they made up and would speculate wildly, especially in the 1980s. Those were particularly dark times because people thought I was 'up to something'. I wasn't accepted anywhere because I was seen as this dark character not to be trusted.'

A turning point came in 1995 when Julie and her then wife moved to Arinagour, Coll. The island had always been a happy holiday destination for Julie, a place of 'contentment' as she struggled to maintain her heterosexual male lifestyle. Julie said of her move: 'I was still a million miles away from becoming what I am; I was still married and trying to escape the female side.'

'But it was inevitable what would happen and I ran out of excuses. There is a chapter in the book, *Point of no return*, documenting when I separated from my wife and was free to get on with it. It was around 2000 that I lost the battle, or, as I look back, I won the battle.'

Julie's journey will be a familiar one to the residents of Coll, who know her as a pier worker for Cal-Mac on the island. However, she admits her new book, published by Fledgling Press, will have a few

surprises, even for those on the island.

'Rather than be anonymous in the city, I moved to Coll and was able to make friends,' she said. 'It was really important having that support.'

'Like anywhere, there are people for you and people against you but that is normal. I fit in there and there are a lot of people who respect me.'

'By the time I came to write the book I had been living as Julie Clarke for nearly 10 years and I was happy in myself, I had nothing to hide. I am Julie Clarke, I travel to lots of places, I get chatted up by men and I am not afraid of my past.'

The book, which Julie began to write two years ago after the idea was mooted at a Hogmanay party, will be the first in a series of three: book two will be a 'more controversial and darker' side to her own personal story, while book three will be a fictional piece based on her experiences.

Her first step into the literary world has been a joy for Julie, who described getting the first copies of her book as 'the best day of my life'.

Indeed, Alexander McCall Smith reviews her book as "a remarkable account of a personal struggle which is written with great dignity, or, as I look back, I won the battle."

Further launch signings will take place at the Island Café on Coll on November 8, Waterstones Edinburgh on November 13 and Waterstones Islington, London on November 20.

Alcohol problem for ten-year-olds

CHILDREN as young as 10 are regularly being admitted to NHS Highland hospitals with the signs of alcohol abuse.

In the last two years, 233 children aged 10 to 18 were admitted to hospital, a new survey has revealed.

The Scottish government suggests a delay in the minimum unit pricing for alcohol, because of a legal challenge, is a hurdle in mending 'Scotland's difficult relationship with alcohol'.

The government said: 'We are currently taking forward substance misuse education work in schools where children and young people will learn about a variety of substances including alcohol, medicines, drugs, tobacco and solvents.'

A smart move for high school pupils

ELECTRONIC ticketing is being trialled on schoolbuses to Oban high, with a view to introducing the scheme throughout Argyll and Bute by the end of the financial year.

Known as 'smart ticketing', it will see pupils continue to use their Kidz and Young Scot cards to board buses, but by swiping them through a ticket machine.

The current system involves students showing their card to the driver, which gives written details of the buses they are entitled to travel on.

Malcolm MacFadyen, head of facility services at Argyll and Bute council said: 'The council is delighted to be part of this initiative.'

'Anything which makes travelling easier and more convenient for the people who use our transport services is to be welcomed.'

Decision on island slate is at hand

A FINAL decision on whether local slate is to be chosen over a Spanish variety was being made as *The Oban Times* went to press. Islanders argued that Luig slate should be used on the Atlantic Islands Centre, while builders argued that the slate was too fragile and opted for Spanish tiles.

An inch is as long as a mile when it comes to a ticket

A WOMAN who claimed she was 'one inch' over a council car parking line will be disputing her parking contravention notice (PCN).

Rachel Anne McKenzie, from Howwood in Renfrewshire, said:

'I was recently in Oban visiting my family when I received a parking ticket. I parked my car in a space and displayed my ticket. While I did this, I saw the parking warden watch me.'

'When I went online to the council

to dispute the PCN with my pay and display ticket in hand, I was told I was an inch over the parking space.'

'I find this outrageous and I am disgusted by this. I am disputing this as I was in a parking space

and not obstructing anyone or anything.'

'There are not enough parking spaces in Oban as it is and when you park legally and pay for parking you still receive a ticket.'

'Oban is supposed to be a small,

friendly, welcoming town. This is definitely not what I was expecting.'

A spokesman for Argyll and Bute council said: 'There is an established process for people to appeal a PCN. Information about this is

available on the back of the PCN and also on our website at www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/parking. If we receive an appeal within 14 days of the date of issue of the fine, the charge will be put on hold pending the outcome of the appeal.'

Action call for community-spirited people

PEOPLE across Argyll and Bute are being encouraged to get involved in their local communities when elections for the area's community councils take place on November 27.

In Mid Argyll, Kintyre and the Islands, the following community councils will be holding elections:

Southend, West Kintyre, Tarbert and Skipness, Islay, Jura, Colonsay, North Knapdale, Lochgilphead, Ardrishaig, West Lochfyne, Inveraray and Dunadd. This includes a new community council in North Knapdale.

In Oban, Lorn and the Isles the following community councils will

be holding elections: Mull, Oban, Luig, Kilninner and Kilmelford, Kilmore, Lismore, Appin, Connel and Ardchattan.

In Bute and Cowal, the following community councils will be holding elections: Strachur, Kilfinan, Hunter's Quay, Kilmun, Dunoon, South Cowal and Bute.

No decision on poll tax debt write-off

REPORTS of a potential £7 million poll tax debt write-off in Argyll and Bute have been dismissed by the local authority.

It said a decision to stop pursuing the multi-million pound historic debt, from up to 25 years ago, has not yet been made.

Other local authorities have

already made a decision not to pursue those people who enrolled on the electoral register to vote in last month's referendum for outstanding community charge debt.

A spokeswoman for the council said: 'No decision has been made yet about writing off poll tax debt.'

'There would be no financial

implication if this did go ahead, as there is full provision and income from poll tax is very small in any case.'

It is likely that a report will be presented to Argyll and Bute councillors to consider the situation in light of the stance taken by other local authorities.

Islanders angered as Holyrood backs MoD last-gasp turbine objections

GORDON WEBSTER
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THE SCOTTISH government has refused planning permission for the North Uist wind turbine scheme, with the chairman of the project calling it 'a kick in the teeth' for the island's residents.

The proposed development - which could have generated £200,000 a year for the community, rising to over £450,000 after 15 years - was rejected by Holyrood.

This followed a late objection lodged by the Ministry of Defence

(MoD), claiming the turbines would interfere with defence radar systems.

Robert Fraser, chairman of North Uist Development Company (NUDC), said: 'We do wonder if there is a pattern here and whether such flagrant disregard for the clearly expressed wishes of the community would be the norm.'

'What would have been the outcome, if we were 50 miles nearer Stornoway, where most of the councillors' votes are to be found.'

'We are now virtually the only community in the islands which

is not able to derive community benefit from the great wind resource we have.'

The project had been given the all-clear by the Ministry of Defence in 2010 when it began, only for a change of tack well into its development, which has dismayed and angered the local community.

An Ministry of Defence spokesperson outlined the reason for their eleventh-hour objection.

He said: 'We objected to the applications due to the unacceptable impact of the proposals on the Benbecula air defence

radar and also on the Hebrides range control radar.'

'The Ministry of Defence continues to work with Comhairle nan Eilean Siar to consider the way forward.'

A Scottish government spokesperson said: 'Scottish Ministers were responsible for the determination of the North Uist Development Company's wind turbine development at Locheport.'

'As such, these determinations were made following a thorough consideration of all relevant material issues and related assessments.'



FILMING: Callum MacLeod with Eje Kim (centre right) and two members of the South Korean production team

Following in Isabella's footsteps

LOUISE LEE
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EXPLORING the traditions of Oban and Mull has led a modern day adventurer from the Royal National Mod in Inverness to the heartland of one of her all-time heroines.

Professor Dr Eje Kim, who is a cultural geographer and fieldwork

designer from South Korea, has been so inspired by the life of a Tobermory woman that she has been commissioned to make a film about her.

Isabella Bird, who moved from her home in England to the Mull village, was a hugely influential scientist and geographer.

Her work led her to be one of the first women to hold a senior position in South Korea and, as Eje ex-

plained, is regarded as a folk hero in the Asian country. The geographer said: 'Isabella is almost forgotten - perhaps that is because she is not all that well known, or because she was a woman working in a time where women were not recognised.'

'For the people of South Korea, she is someone who is revered and respected. She was certainly one of the great influences on my career.'

Callum MacLeod of Ee-usk restaurant, welcomed the production team to Oban and gave them a taste of local seafood.

The production team are planning to film in Mull at the site of Isabella Bird's home before returning to Oban. Today, Thursday, they hope to visit Skipinnish for a ceilidh with Angus MacPhail. Before leaving the area, they want to meet some of the women from Oban Lorne ladies rugby team.

The newt kid on the block

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A YOUNGSTER from Kyle of Lochalsh is making his mark in the conservation world, conducting surveys about newts in the north of Scotland.

Callum Ullman-Smith, 12, has been contributing to reptile and amphibian studies since he was seven years old and made a presentation to the Amphibian and Reptile Conservation Symposium in Edinburgh on Sunday.

The Auchtertyre primary school pupil talked about the three years he had spent recording numbers of palmate newts on the seashore near Reraig, Loch Alsh at the event held in the Royal Botanic Gardens.

Callum initially discovered the small amphibians in a rock pool next to Loch Linnhe, Fort William, which is unusual, as they are normally only found in fresh water.

He said: 'I was about six when I first got interested in amphibians and reptiles going out on adventures with my mum and I really got fascinated by them.'

'I really enjoyed the presentation, there were 60-70 people there, it was brilliant.'



Callum Ullman-Smith at nine years old, in 2012, beginning his three-year survey of palmate newts Photo Janet Ullman

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Lochaber boxers put on a show

BOXING

LOCHABER boxer Adam Watson has made it to the semi-final of a national competition.

The newbie from Lochaber Phoenix Boxing Club won against James Amos from Inverness ABC in a unanimous points decision.

Showing a greater understanding of ring mechanics than seen previously, Watson tried to manoeuvre the elusive Amos onto his straight backhand and picked up points with his jab and neat right hooks to the body and head. This weekend, he will be fighting in the semi final then possibly the final at Ravenscraig.

Meanwhile, Igor Sliwinski of the club had a baptism of fire at the AIBA European Youth championships in Croatia last Sunday.

The up-and-coming boxer narrowly lost on points against Alijaksandr Vashchychka from Belarus in his first fight representing Scotland but the head coach Mike Keane praised Sliwinski's attempts in the ring.

Both Watson and Sliwinski will be among the boxers competing at the club's home show in the Nevis Centre next Saturday (November 1). Tickets are available from the venue or from Niall Clark (07554 994744) and Steve Docherty (07881 379851).

Equipment sale

SALE

TWO LOCHABER sports groups are holding an equipment sale next weekend.

West Highland Wheelers and Lochaber Ski Club will host the sale in the Nevis Centre on Saturday November 1 to fundraise for the groups.

Items for sale will include used skis, bikes, clothing and equipment.

Anyone with items they would like to sell should drop them off at the venue between 9am and 10.30am on Saturday, labelled with a price. The event will run from 11am until 12.30pm.

Fort brought back down to earth with double defeat



Fort William striker Nick Stein shields the ball from Nairn County's Sean Webb during last Saturday's match at Claggan

'After all the excitement of the recent home win there seemed to be a flatness today'

FOOTBALL

FORT William went down 3-1 to Nairn County at home last Saturday.

New signing Gordy McCarroll scored the Claggan side's goal, making it his third of the season and narrowly missed out on a hat-trick thanks to good saves from Nairn's keeper Calum Antell.

County's marksmen were Robbie Duncanson, Sam Urquhart and Martin MacDonald.

Favour

David MacDonald of Fort William Football Club said on Saturday: 'It was a strange day at Claggan Park. After all the excitement of the recent home win there seemed to be a flatness today. Here's hoping

the breaks that went against us today will go in our favour next week.'

Defeat

This came just days after another defeat for Fort when they lost 4-1 to Forres Mechanics at Mosset Park last Wednesday.

As *The Oban Times* went to print on Wednesday Fort were heading to Dudgeon Park to face defending Highland League champions Brora Rangers.

The action returns to Claggan Park on Saturday (October 25) when Fort face Rothes in what MacDonald called a 'must win game'.



Fort's Iain Foggo takes on Nairn's Wayne Mackintosh

Gr...eight win for Lochaber Leisure

INDOOR FOOTBALL

LOCHABER Leisure had the biggest win of this week's Ali Young indoor football league with an 8-1 victory over Barcelochy.

Portowcy were the second top goal scorers at the Nevis Centre when they beat HWE 7-4.

Nevis Range won their first game on Sunday night with a 3-0 win against Harlem Globe Stoaters and Goon Squad beat Fiorentina Turner 6-4.

Inverlochly United won 4-1 against Barowcy and Outer Milan took a 3-0 win without even having to play as the Ali Young team couldn't attend.

MHB and the Volley had the only draw of the night in a closely-fought 1-1 game.

Tight at the top in bowling league

TEN PIN BOWLING

THREE teams are now fighting for the top spot after week two of the Lochaber Building Supplies ten pin bowling league as the Creeps, Rotavators and 3+1 all have the maximum 10 points in the scratch division.

In the handicap division Rotavators is the only team with 10 points while Artoe/Nevis Radio is in second place with nine points.

Tony Whitecock of Alleycats and Manuel Costas of Bandits were joint winners of the individual scratch games, both rolling 171. Manuel also shot the top handicap game of 233. Tony's 315 was the top score of the two-game scratch series while Colin Pinkett of Council took the top spot in the two-game handicap series with 439.

Alleycats won the scratch team game scoring 575 in the single league before going on to win the two-game scratch team series with 1,115.

Council won the top spot in both the handicap single and two-game competition with scores of 784 and 1,523.

Early morning opening hours

SPORTS FACILITIES

ATHLETES in the Hebrides will now have more opportunities to train as the regional sports centre has extended its opening hours.

The swimming pool and gym at Ionad Spòrs Leòdhais (ISL) on Lewis is now open from 7am most mornings for a trial period of 12 months, allowing sport competitors longer to train and the general public to use the facilities before the working day.

Tony Wade, sports facilities services manager for Comhairle nan Eilean Siar, said: 'By working with voluntary group Swim Western Isles, we have a really exciting opportunity to both develop gifted swimmers and enhance the service for the general public.'

Isle of Skye

GOLF

ISLE of Skye Golf Club Burton Cup, played on Saturday October 18:

Team results: 1 Andy Shaw and Kyle Prie, 66 points; 2 Stuart Johnson and Ryan Morrison, 64 points.

Individual results: 1 Ryan Morrison, 35 points, 2 Andy Shaw, 34 points; 3 Jamie Beaton 33 points.



CELEBRATIONS: members of the Railway Bowling Club celebrated a home victory when they welcomed visitors for the Cowdenbeath triples competition. Agnes Boyle, Eddie Downs and Helen Ross, front, of the Inverlochly green were this year's winners and hope to return the visit and play bowls at Cowdenbeath next year.

Kara is a golden girl

SWIMMING

A SWIMMING star from Stornoway has been inducted into the country's gold squad.

Kara Hanlon narrowly missed out on selection for the Commonwealth Games team but was then identified as a growing talent by the Scottish Swimming group and invited to join the team.

The 17-year-old was met by Ally White, Scottish Swimming's director of performance, who travelled to Stornoway to welcome her to the squad.

For the last year, Kara has been part of Sport Scotland's local performance development programme and will now become a full athlete with the scheme's Institute of Sport.

Chris Hildrey, Highlands and Islands network manager for Sport Scotland, said: 'We are delighted to be supporting Kara now she is in the Scottish Swimming gold squad. The fantastic commitment shown by Kara, her family and coach over recent years has resulted in this well-deserved selection.'



IN THE SWIM: Kara Hanlon

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| WEATHER | | TIDAL INFORMATION | |
|------------------------|--|--|-----------------------------------|
| Thursday | Heavy rain Winds moderate south westerly Temperatures 9°C to 13°C. | Tide tables for Oban during the week from Thursday, October 23, 2014 are listed below with differences for major ports listed on the right. | |
| Friday | Heavy rain showers Winds moderate south westerly Temperatures 9°C to 11°C. | Date | am |
| Weekend Outlook | Light rain showers on Saturday Light rain on Sunday Winds moderate south westerly Temperatures 9°C to 12°C. | Thur | pm |
| | | Fri | Ardrisaig |
| | | Sat | Campbeltown |
| | | Sun | Crinan |
| | | Mon | Islay Port Ellen |
| | | Tues | Lochboisdale |
| | | Wed | Ferry Crossings/Sea States |
| | | | Oban to Barra/South Uist |
| | | | Oban to Coll/Tiree |
| | | | Kennacraig to Islay |
| | | | Mallaig |
| | | | Portree |
| | | | Tobermory |
| | | | Dover |
| | | | |