

The Oban Times

& WEST HIGHLAND TIMES

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oban WINTER FESTIVAL

PHOTO SPECIAL INSIDE



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Connel man Billy is released from Indian prison nightmare

DAVID MCPHEE
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CONNEL man Billy Irving has been released from an Indian prison after being found not guilty of firearms offences. Billy and five other British ex-servicemen, known as the Chennai Six, who were sentenced to five years' imprisonment in 2016, were released on Monday (November 27).



Billy waves after his release from prison in India.

The former paratrooper was working as an armed guard protecting shipping from Somali pirates when he and 34 of his colleagues were arrested in 2013. They were initially found not guilty of straying into Indian waters with 'unlicensed weapons'. However, after a lower court appealed the decision, the men were jailed. Following a long appeal process of their own, the 35-strong crew of the MV Seaman Guard Ohio were finally acquitted this week by the appeal court in India. Speaking to *The Oban Times* on

Tuesday, Billy's fiancée, Yvonne MacHugh, said: 'I still don't think it's sunk in. Yesterday I was a big emotional wreck. Today I feel better, but it feels like it's not happening.'

'To have Billy phone me this morning, to hear his voice, was just amazing. He is in the embassy at the moment and they have given him a celebratory drink.'

'He said when he was told yesterday, he took it with a pinch of salt and carried on with what he was doing in prison - because they have been told that so many times before. It's unreal. But he is absolutely over the moon.'

'We are waiting for the certified order to come, which should be with us tomorrow and hopefully get him home within the next week or so. The hope for the lawyers and for the Foreign Office is to get them out of there as soon as possible.'

Including the Chennai Six, 35 men in total were arrested - 14 Estonians, 12 Indians and three Ukrainians.

The terminally-ill Ukrainian captain was repatriated on Monday November 20.

Argyll and Bute MSP Michael Russell said: 'I am delighted that at last there is good news. Yvonne and those she has inspired, cajoled, persuaded and sometimes shamed into support have formed an increasingly loud body of people demanding justice.'

'That ensured that Billy and his colleagues have always been at the forefront of the news. Their determination finally paid off today and everyone will want to see Billy home and the family putting this nightmare behind them.'

Argyll and Bute MP Brendan O'Hara echoed Mr Russell in

Winter festival ends with explosion of colour



Oban Winter Festival closed on Sunday with a spectacular and explosive conclusion. The fireworks over McCaig's Tower provided a pyrotechnical end to what was hailed by the organisers as a great success. Picture special on pages 12 and 13. Photograph: Stephen Lawson

welcoming the news. He said: 'I am absolutely delighted that justice has finally been done for Billy Irving and the rest of his shipmates.'

'The past few years have been immensely stressful for all the families of the Chennai Six but, if I may, I'd like to pay a special tribute to Yvonne MacHugh, Billy's fiancée, who has been an inspiration ever since I first

became involved in this case back in 2015. She has been a relentless champion for Billy and the others, taking the fight right to the Prime Minister's front door and it has been a privilege to work alongside her.'

'Now I'm looking forward to hearing that Billy is finally on a plane home to be with his family again and he can, once and for all, put this nightmare behind him.'

Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson said: 'This case has been a top priority for everybody at the Foreign Office and today's verdict is fantastic news.'

'The Foreign and Commonwealth Office has worked tirelessly behind the scenes to reunite these men with their families. I share their delight and I hope they can return home as soon as possible.'

The Chennai Six will be treated to a welcome home party after a man set up a crowdfunding page.

Jordan Wylie initially wanted to raise £1,000 to ensure the men 'had a pint waiting for them on their return to the UK', and at the time of going to print he had raised £1,560.

To donate, visit www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/chennai6needapint

INSIDE YOUR OBAN TIMES THIS WEEK

Best in the land

A SCHOOLGIRL from Islay has travelled to London as a finalist in a UK-wide competition to find the engineers of the future. Full story - page two.

Mum's campaign

AN OBAN mum-of-two has won the backing of Argyll and Bute MP Brendan O'Hara after launching a campaign to help desperate refugees. Full story - page three.

Distillery's award

OBAN Distillery has been recognised for providing the Best Visitor Experience in the country following a national awards competition. Full story - page four.

£2 million for road

THE controversial Kirk Road in Dunbeg has been awarded £2 million for a major upgrade that will include widening the road, and new lighting and pavements. Full story - page five.

Canal mystery

A MYSTERIOUS stone-lined canal on Skye, possibly built in Viking times, has been designated a historic monument by Historic Environment Scotland. Full story - page seven.

Amazing result

OBAN Lorne Ladies rugby team recorded another massive result at the weekend, meaning they have yet to concede a single point this season. Full story - page 30.



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Rat chewed right through wheelie bin

A DUNOLLIE resident has been left shocked after a rat chewed through his bin, writes David McPhee.



The hole in the bin after the rat chewed through it.

bins are overflowing. If I was a rat, I would have been in my element. If a rat can do that to a bin, what can it do in your house?'

Mr Telfer contacted Argyll and Bute Council following the incident.

He said on Tuesday: 'I was told I would be contacted by someone from the council. That was last Thursday but I've heard nothing. The bins were uplifted the same day I contacted the council.'

'I was getting feedback from the neighbours and they find it disgusting as well that the bins are left that long because it attracts rats.'

Mr Telfer said the problem is a real worry as he lives very close to Park Primary School.

He added: 'Three days of kids walking past the bins on the way to school, touching them and who knows what germs the bins carry which can be picked up.'

An Argyll and Bute Council spokesperson said: 'Our waste collectors were in the area as scheduled but were unable to access all of the bins due to parked vehicles and our small awkward access vehicle was operating in Colonsay.'

'The bins have now been emptied. We ask people to park safely and considerately to avoid this happening, which doesn't just affect bin lorries but also emergency services vehicles.'

'Anyone who has an inquiry about pest control and the services offered by the council can get in touch with our pest control technicians.'

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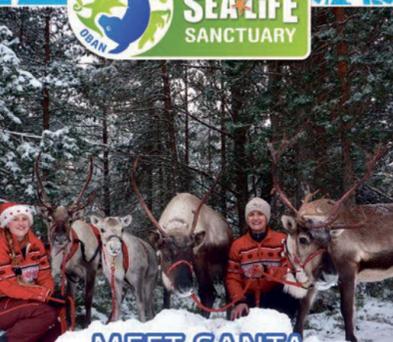
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New CalMac ferry is launched

THE UK's first liquefied natural gas (LNG) passenger ferry was launched on Tuesday November 21 on the Clyde by First Minister Nicola Sturgeon.

The 102-metre, roll-on/roll-off vehicle passenger ferry, named MV Glen Sannox, can operate on LNG and marine gas oil (MGO).

The innovative dual fuel vessel was launched at Ferguson Marine Engineering Limited's (FME) Port Glasgow shipyard and is the first of two LNG ferries being built as part of a £97 million contract on behalf of Caledonian Maritime Assets Limited (CMAL).

MV Glen Sannox is designed to carry 127 cars or 16 HGVs or a combination of both and up to 1,000 passengers. The vessel is due to be delivered in winter 2018/2019.

Islands scam warning issued

TRADING Standards at Comhairle nan Eilean Siar are warning residents of a telephone scam which has been circulating locally, where the caller states that your bank is under investigation and in order to protect yourself you are instructed to move your money to a different account.

The caller then provides the sort code and account number to enable the transfer.

The caller sounds genuine and will tell you that you need to act urgently. They will also say that you must not disclose the information with anyone, including bank staff.

A Trading Standards spokesperson said: 'This is a scam. A banking institution will not contact you in this manner. Our advice is to hang up, wait five to 10 minutes and call your bank on the legitimate phone number printed on your bank statements.'

Boost for Islay veterans

ISLAY veterans have received a £17,000 boost from a fund created by the UK Government after the Libor financial scandal.

The proceeds from Libor fines are being used to support Armed Forces and Emergency Services charities and other related good causes.

Islay and Jura Community Enterprises have been granted £17,167 and will use the funding to support veterans and retired emergency services personnel on Islay.

So far the Libor fund has awarded £3m to groups across Scotland.



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Islay girl makes UK final of young engineering contest

MARTIN LAING

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A PRIMARY school pupil from Islay has been to London after reaching the final of a prestigious UK-wide science and engineering competition.

Sarah McLennan is a pupil in P7 at Port Ellen Primary School and travelled to the capital recently as a finalist in the Young Imagineers competition.

Earlier this year Statoil and the National Science Museum asked children aged seven to 14 across the UK to submit their most creative, imaginative and inspirational ideas to help make the world a better place.

Young Imagineers was set up in search of Britain's most imaginative and creative young people. The competition celebrates the UK's youngest and most innovative minds in STEM subjects (science, technology, engineering and maths).

In total, 356 entries from across the country were received in just four weeks. After



Sarah McLennan presents her idea to the expert panel in front of a live audience at the Science Museum.

the competition closed, the 10 shortlisted entrants from all over Britain were given the opportunity to further develop their inventions with the help of a professional designer.

The finalists then presented their newly developed designs to the expert panel and live

audience. These ideas ranged from dream-makers and hovering wheelchairs, flying suits that are eco-friendly and technology which helps deaf people converse with those who don't know sign language.

Sarah wrote about her experience at the final in London.

'My Imagineers London trip'

'ON SATURDAY 18th November I went to London as a finalist for the Tomorrow's Engineer competition. In the competition there were 10 finalists from all around the UK.

'All the finalists had to meet up in the Science Museum to present their invention in front of four judges and the audience.

'We had professional posters made to show our inventions. My invention was the Scaredy Sheep, a device that would bark like a dog and is attached to the sheep's ear so when sheep get stuck on their backs they are scared into jumping up again.

'When the finalists first arrived, we went down into a room where the judges were and we got to talk to them and the host so we weren't as scared to talk about our inventions in front of them. We also had to get head sets on so we could do a sound check.

'After the break we all went and



Sarah with her finalist pass.

sat down. The first thing that happened was a balloon experiment and a bubble experiment. A lady got bubble mixture and big bubble stick. Another lady came out and got another bubble stick and each side of the room did a bubble competition. It was really cool because a lady put a balloon on fire and it made a REALLY loud bang.

'Then the first finalists went up to present their ideas, then we got a quick break to explore the museum. After about 15 minutes we had to go back and on my way

in there was a robot called Oscar who walked into me. Oscar was a really cool robot because he speaks to you and hands out chocolates and lollipops. Finally, we got into the room and sat down and then there was another quiz.

'After lunch we got to have a quick demonstration on how the body digests food. It wasn't a good sight at all!

'After the disgusting demonstration, I had to go up and present my idea. I was nervous but excited and was proud of explaining my invention.

'Then the judges came out and the host announced the winner. The winning design was an excellent hover wheelchair. We all congratulated the winner and then got to explore more of the museum. After a long day, I went back to my hotel. I really enjoyed the competition and I would like to be an engineer when I grow up.

'While I was there I learned that to complete something you have to stick with it and keep trying.'

Hugh Smith's letter from Islay

Why Port Wemyss

VISITORS to the island are often at a loss to understand where the attractive village of Port Wemyss, situated at the western tip of the Rhinns peninsula, gets its name from as it does not seem to have any local or Highland connections.

The village was created in 1832 by Walter Frederick Campbell, the island laird, and replaced an earlier settlement called Luib of which hardly any trace remains today.

Campbell hoped that the new village would attract residents from the inland areas of the peninsula and that they would, in turn, develop new skills as fishermen.

He called his new creation Wemysshaven after the eighth Earl of Wemyss, who was the father of his first wife Lady Eleanor.

Sadly, Lady Eleanor died at an early age and Campbell named the village of Port Ellen after her and built the Corraig Fhada lighthouse at Kilnaughton Bay in her memory. She is interred in a marble tomb at the Round Church at Bowmore and their infant daughter Margaret Susan is also buried in the Bowmore church. Lady Eleanor, a member of the Charteris family, was also the mother of the polymath and folk tale collector John Frances Campbell, better known to Gaels everywhere as Iain Òg Ìle.

As the fishing took off at



The award-winning Glenegedale House.

the new village, which stands above the coastline, the name was changed to Port Wemyss and the fertile land above the rocky shore began to be utilised for crofting purposes.

It, along with its neighbouring village of Portnahaven, looks across to the island of Orsay which is dominated by the Rhinns of Islay lighthouse, built in 1825 by Robert Stevenson of the lighthouse dynasty. The village is still referred to by the older Gaelic-speaking residents as Bun Othan (the mouth of the river) and is a reference to the stream which acts as a boundary between the two picturesque Rhinns villages.

And if you should be hapless enough as to mistakenly refer to a Port Wemyss resident as

coming from Portnahaven – or vice versa – you do so at your peril!

B&B award

Glenegedale House, the quality B&B establishment situated close to the island's airport, has been honoured with the Hidden Gem Award at a recent Evivio presentation held at the Café de Paris in London's West End.

The popular B&B proprietors Graeme and Emma Clark are delighted with their totally unexpected Evivio success which they describe as a great honour and a huge boost to their business, and to the island as a whole.

Many congratulations.

Festive coffee

THERE will be lots of festive cheer at the Round Church Christmas coffee morning which takes place on Saturday December 2, in the Bowmore village hall, beginning at 10.30am.

Among the treats on offer will be homebaking and produce, gifts ideas, bargain books and bric-a-brac. Competitions and guessing games will exercise the grey cells and seasonal music will add to the merriment.

Admission is £4 and the proceeds will go towards the upkeep of the island's most iconic building which is currently undergoing a £10,000 stone treatment and refurbishment programme.

Switched on

CONTINUING the Yuletide theme, the Bowmore village Christmas lights official switch-on also takes place on December 2 before what, it is hoped, will be a large and appreciative group of spectators.

This light-hearted ceremony begins at Morrison Square at 5pm and will include seasonal entertainment around the village Christmas tree.

This year's festive lights cover a larger area of the village thanks to the generosity of local businesses and private donors.

Hugh Smith, 4 Flora Street, Bowmore, Islay PA43 7JX. Tel: 01496 810 658.



Those who attending the meeting stand with the distinctive flag.

Flying the flag for Barra

THE ISLE of Barra's flag has gained official recognition from the Lyon Court and the community is 'delighted' with the news.

The green and white Scandinavian-style flag has been widely used by the community for decades – flying across the island and appearing on local produce. However, until now, it has had no legal recognition.

A community meeting was held in Barra by Alasdair Allan MSP and Philip Tibbetts, communities vexillologist of the Flag Institute, last December to explore the possibility of a petition being submitted to the Lyon Court. This initiative was championed locally by Dolina Manford, who chairs Northbay Community Council, with the support of the island's other community council.

Funding was provided by local community charity Barra and Watersay Voluntary Action.

The Court of the Lord Lyon, the legal authority on heraldry in Scotland, has the power to authorise community flags and ensure that only one community can use any one design.

An official unveiling will be held in the summer.

Ms Manford said: 'I am very happy to see that the Barra flag has now received official recognition from the Lord Lyon.'

'It has been a long process but now the green and white Nordic cross that has been used in Barra for a number of years is officially registered at the Lord Lyon.'

'Dr Allan, MSP, said: 'I am delighted that Barra's flag now has legal recognition and protection.'

'I would like to thank Dolina for her efforts in driving this forward and I look forward to seeing some of the benefits this will bring.'

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Oban mum's campaign to relieve refugees' suffering

SUSAN WINDRAM
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AN OBAN campaigner has this week launched an appeal for medical supplies – and for volunteers – to help two hospitals in a war-torn area of Iraq following the return of thousands of displaced Yazidi refugees who are desperately trying to rebuild their lives and homes.

Mother of two Fiona Bennett, of Ardchattan, is the UK secretary for Yazda, the global Yazidi organisation that works to bring justice, sustenance, healing and restoration to Yazidis, who have suffered under or are affected by the genocidal campaign against their people by the so-called Islamic State.

Fiona told *The Oban Times*: 'It is three years since IS attacked the Yazidi community in Sinjar and in that time the city has been destroyed. The security situation is still unstable but people are trying to return to their homes, trying to rebuild their lives.'

'There are two hospitals in the region. Sinjar and Snuni hospitals are open and trying to function



Fiona Bennett with Brendan O'Hara MP at the launch of the Missions For Medicine appeal. Photograph: Kevin McGlynn

with hardly any staff and no medicine. The most basic medication, such as paracetamol and flu remedies, is being smuggled in from Syria at great expense and danger to life.

'There are an estimated 60,000 people living back in the area and these two hospitals are fighting every day to provide care in unbearable circumstances.'

'The hospitals urgently need medical supplies, clothing and everything else we take for grant-

ed, as well as people to volunteer. That is why I am launching Missions For Medicine.'

'Once the supplies start coming in, I will also need a carrier to help get the medicine and equipment out to Sinjar. I would love to hear from anyone who is able to help in this area.'

Yazda is also running a mobile medical clinic in the Sinjar area. This vital service is treating up to 500 people every week. Most cases are as simple as

cold, flu, allergies and other less urgent conditions. But the team is short of medicines and medical support to treat appropriately those in need, and to expand its services to reach more people in these areas.

Speaking at the launch of Missions For Medicine, Argyll and Bute MP Brendan O'Hara said: 'This is a wonderful initiative, one that is seeking to alleviate the suffering of one of the most abused communities on the planet. And I wish it every success.'

'I know that the Sinjar and Snuni hospitals are enduring a chronic shortage of medicines, with even the most basic of painkillers in desperately short supply. Anything that we can send will be gratefully received by the doctors and nurses.'

Commenting on his own association with the Yazidi people, the local MP said: 'I have been involved in highlighting the plight of the Yazidi people since first being contacted by my constituent Fiona Bennett shortly after being elected in 2015. The story she told me was so shocking that it would have been impossible for

me not to try to help in whatever way I could.'

Since then, Mr O'Hara has raised the fate of the Yazidi community on numerous occasions in parliament and last year hosted Nadia Murad, a former IS sex-slave, at Westminster. He was the only UK parliamentarian to be invited to join her in New York when she was made a United Nations Goodwill Ambassador for the Dignity of Survivors of Human Trafficking in 2016.

He added: 'When Fiona contacted me with the idea of collecting medicines to send to Sinjar, I agreed without hesitation. This is yet another wonderful example of her humanitarianism and it shows the power that just one committed and motivated individual can make.'

'The people of Argyll and Bute have a long and proud record of helping those less fortunate than themselves, and I'm sure they'll rise again to the challenge of finding basic medicines to help the appallingly mistreated and impoverished Yazidi community.' For details of how you can help, email finacab@gmail.com

'Fantastic' Tobermory festive lights switch-on

THE community of Tobermory gathered on Friday night for the annual Christmas lights switch-on.

The honour of turning on the lights this year fell to Alec Livingstone – a street sweeper who was described as being an 'absolute credit' to the community.

Oban South and the Isles Councillor Mary-Jean Devon said: 'He is an absolute credit to us because of the hard work he does keeping our town tidy.'

The event is self-funded by the community, with everyone doing their bit.

Speaking about the night, Mary-Jean said: 'It was fantastic. It was the whole community coming together. Other communities should take a leaf out of our book.'

Shops stayed open late to accompany the event, with some offering a 50 per cent discount.

There were performances by the high school pipe band and the Natural Voices Choir. The Christmas tree was donated by Duffy Skylining.



Alec Livingstone.

Oban musician will host charity concert

AN OBAN musician suffering from multiple sclerosis is hosting a charity concert this weekend to raise money for stem cell therapy.

Guy Forteith, 24, was first diagnosed with the condition when he was 16.

So far he has raised around £9,000 of the £60,000 he needs to get the treatment. The singer-songwriter is hosting the concert on Saturday December 2 at Cuan Mor from 7.30pm.

Headlining the event is Larry Lovcraft, singing the music of Queen. 'The last time he came,' Guy said, 'he did Chip Shop Elvis, which was so, so funny.'

Also performing on the night are local musicians Shannon Taylor, Angus Smith, the North 56, Offshore 4, Finlay Wells and Elissa Conway.

'It completely spans from



Guy Forteith.

rock to jazz to comedy,' Guy said. 'It will be a really good night.' Tickets cost £5.

To stay up to date with his campaign, or to donate, visit Stem Cells for Guy on social media.

Tesco staff raise £5,600 for charity

STAFF at Tesco Oban have raised £5,600 so far for a charity that helps children suffering from cancer.

The money was raised for CLIC Sargent on behalf of two-year-old Harris McGougan, from Dunbeg.

Karen Kelso and Maureen Ford helped to organise the fundraiser after Harris was diagnosed with leukemia.

While he is being treated in Glasgow, he and his family have been staying in a house run by CLIC Sargent, so the fundraiser was a way to give something back.

The money was generated over the weekend with a race night being held on Friday at Glencruitten Golf Club, which raised around £2,000.

Saturday saw musicians, beauticians and Disney characters entertain shoppers, raising the remainder of the money.

The all-day event featured leg waxing, music, Mickey and Minnie Mouse, as well as glitter make-up and Queen Elsa.

The organisers had originally planned to raise £2,000, but have been 'overwhelmed' by the support.

Karen said: 'It's overwhelming, but it was really great. We do lots of fundraisers, but it's different when it's local.'

Maureen said: 'It's good, but it's exhausting right enough. You are worried that people won't turn up. But they came and it was a great day.'



The Tesco event was to raise funds for Harris McGougan from Dunbeg, inset.

Scottish writers flock to Oban for annual Book Week events

SCOTTISH author Christopher Brookmyre will be on stage in the Corran Halls tonight (Thursday) for a free event.

As part of Scottish Book Week, the author and former journalist will discuss writing, the impact of the internet as well as creating a crime novel set in space.

The event, organised by Live Argyll, starts at 7pm on Thursday November 30.

There are also a number of other events taking place over the weekend with Mary Whithall hosting a book signing in Oban Library tomorrow (Friday December 1). Mary will be signing copies of her new publication *Disruption* from 2pm until 4pm in the Albany Street premises.

On Friday night, Graeme Macrae Burnet will be in Waterstones from 7pm until 8.30pm. He will be speaking about his new book *The Accident on the A35*.

Then on Saturday it's Lindsay Campbell's and Alan Windram's turn.

Lindsay will be in Oban Library to sign and discuss



Christopher Brookmyre, top, and Alan Windram.

her new book *Now Prisoner Within*, which is described as murder, riot and crime in Old Argyll. She will be there from 10am until noon.

Oban's own Alan Windram, of Little Door Books, will be in the town's Waterstones on Saturday December 2 from 10am until 11am.

This is an event the youngsters can enjoy, as Alan is the author of several illustrated children's books for three- to seven-year-olds. However, be warned, audience participation, including singing, is compulsory.

And if music is your thing, rapper turned author Darren 'Loki' McGarvey will be hosting a non-stop hip-hop workshop in the Rockfield Centre from 2pm until 5pm.

This free event, hosted by the Hope Kitchen, will cater to aspiring poets, rappers, producers and musicians, who will be able to try different writing techniques, create original raps and produce beats.

Producers Blackboxx and Acidtone will be there to help with various aspects.

POLICE FILES with Sergeant Iain MacNicol

BETWEEN October 3 and 17, a yellow whacker plate compaction machine was stolen from a forest track near Kilchrenan. Police are investigating the incident and are appealing for anyone with information to contact them.

BETWEEN 11.50pm on Saturday November 18 and 12.30am on Sunday November 19, a gold Samsung Galaxy S7 mobile phone in a purple case was stolen from a handbag while the owner was in the Lorne Bar, Stevenson Street, Oban.

AT ABOUT 12.05am on Thursday November 23, in an Oban pub, several men were allegedly involved in a disturbance. A man allegedly assaulted another man and another man allegedly threw a glass which smashed against the bar area.

AT ABOUT 8pm on Friday November 24, police attended a report of a disturbance at a house at Bunessan, Isle of Mull. A 26-year-old woman was arrested for abusive behaviour. The woman had also allegedly been driving under the influence of alcohol and a blood sample was taken for analysis. The woman was later charged with abusive behaviour and a report will be sent to the procurator fiscal.

AT ABOUT 12.20am on Saturday November 25, a man allegedly assaulted a woman on the Corran Esplanade, Oban. Subsequently, a 55-year-old man was detained. The man was later arrested and charged with assault and a report will be sent to the procurator fiscal.

AT ABOUT 4.30pm on Saturday November 25, a woman allegedly behaved in a verbally abusive manner at the door of the Oban Bay Fish and Chip Shop, George Street, Oban.

IF ANY member of the public has information in relation to the above, or to any incident, they can contact their local police office on telephone number 101, or anonymously through Crime-stoppers on 0800 555 111.



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Distillery planned in Argyll's 'ghost village' at Polphail

PLANS for new distillery in the ghost town of Polphail on the Cowal peninsula have been submitted to Argyll and Bute Council.

The abandoned village was built for 500 offshore workers in the 1970s ready for an oil boom that never arrived on the Argyll coast. It was never inhabited and lay overgrown and desolate for 35 years until it became a canvas for graffiti artists called Agents for Change.

The 25-acre site, which cost £3.3 million to construct, overlooks Loch Fyne and is close to the Portavadie marina complex. It was put up for sale in summer 2012, and was reportedly purchased for £250,000 by whisky tycoon Alexander Bulloch.

Mr Bulloch applied on October 30 to build distillery and visitor centre at Polphail Village, Millhouse.

The single-storey building, complete with a pagoda roof, includes a visitor centre with



An artist's impression of the distillery.

cafe/bar, a tasting room and exhibition and retail area.

Iain Jurgenson, of Portavadie Estates, said the plan was 'compelling' given the growth of tourism in Argyll and particular on its 'secret coast', and would be of interest to its own visitors.

African school joins Oban High clan system

AN AFRICAN school has adopted Oban High's clan system, thanks to a link forged on WhatsApp.

Mazozo Community Day Secondary School in Malawi now shares Oban's four clans, named Ossian, Fingal, Diarmid and Somerled, which will also compete in its inter-clan sport contests.

Now, if a Malawian schoolpupil in Somerled wins a race 5,000 miles away in 'the warm heart of Africa', it will help that clan triumph in wintry Argyll, and vice versa.

Two teachers from Oban High School, Iain Fulton and David Duncan, visited Mazozo during the October holidays to forge cultural links between the two schools, partnered by the Connecting Classrooms education programme funded by the British Council, which helps teachers compare and share approaches.

Mr Fulton first established a link with Mazozo when the two schools began working on collaborative projects. It quickly became clear to Mr Fulton that the school roll in Mazozo was dropping significantly as a result of pupils being off owing to hunger. Mr Fulton was keen to help and his class took part in a feeding project which enabled them to raise enough money to feed all 129 pupils who attend the school. Since then, the link between the schools has gone from strength to strength.

Mr Fulton said: 'Oban High has school clans which the pupils are all members of, and

Mazozo has decided to adopt the same ones for its school. Each clan earns points from sports activities and we have decided that the points from the clans in both schools will be added up collectively.

'This is just one of the many ways that we are building curricular links between the two schools and I am confident that our partnership will grow in the years ahead.'

Teachers from Oban High and Cardinal Hume Catholic School in Gateshead visited their partner schools, Mazozo Secondary School in northern Malawi and the Chihame II CDS in Nkhata Bay on the shores of Lake Malawi.

The *Nyasa Times* reported that, at a conference in at Mzuzu International Academy, Mr Fulton said it was difficult to find a Malawian partner school that could effectively communicate with them in the UK, but later discovered WhatsApp made communication easier with Mazozo.

Jailos Mhango, of Mazozo Secondary School, commended the Connecting Classrooms programme, saying a lot has happened in the 11 months of partnership. Oban High donated MK826,000 (£850) to buy maize for porridge after discovering that students absconded from classes because of hunger. They are currently working on a zero hunger project with the children and the partnership has resulted in community engagement where parents are now stakeholders in the school work.

Oban Distillery is voted Best Visitor Experience

DAVID MCPHEE
dmcph@obantimes.co.uk

OBAN Distillery has been recognised as the Best Visitor Experience in Scotland.

The centre won the Association of Scottish Visitor Attractions (ASVA) award earlier this month, beating fellow finalists Blair Castle and Cardhu Distillery.

Tourist attractions from all over the country entered the competition, all of which were inspected to check if they were delivering what was promised.

Speaking about the achievement, Carol Bennett, brand home manager at Oban Distillery, said: 'We are absolutely delighted to have won this prestigious award.'

'Oban Distillery Visitor Centre is a five-star graded visitor attraction and as such we aspire to deliver a five-star visitor experience.'

'One of the principal reasons



Oban Distillery staff members, Piedad Carrion, Stuart Calder, Kyle Forsyth and Shona MacVicar show off the award.

for our success is that we don't stand still. Whether improving our bar area, developing new distillery-only bottlings or introducing new interactive panels, we are always striving to make things better for our

customers. Comments left on review sites such as TripAdvisor suggest that our efforts are really paying off, with visitors often talking about our fantastic staff and the great value for money that we offer.

'We feel that we are improving and developing on an on-going basis and have many more exciting future plans which we hope to deliver over the coming years.'

Oban Distillery, which has recently introduced a 'hot toddy' on its menu, is keen to promote its bar, where people can sit and have a drink.

'You pay your money and you get a drink,' Stuart Calder said. 'We do a couple of cocktails that we didn't do last year - and we are doing a hot toddy. 'We are looking to expand the use of the bar.'

Commenting on Oban Distillery's win, chairman of the judges Bob Downie said: 'Oban Distillery is a very well thought through and executed visitor experience, delivered by enthusiastic staff who are clearly very passionate about this classic malt. The attention to detail throughout the tour was first class.'

TIMESLINE

Where to drop old and foreign coins

BUSINESSES in Oban are collecting old and foreign coins on behalf of an Oban woman.

Margaret Ayling is collecting the coins to raise money for CLIC Sargent, a charity that helps children suffering from cancer.

CLIC Sargent is very close to Margaret's heart as her son is a cancer survivor.

Since her initial appeal featured in *The Oban Times* two weeks ago, she has received half a bucket of donated coins.

Anyone with old or foreign coins can hand them into the Royal Bank of Scotland in Oban; Dunbeg, Connell and Appin post offices; or at *The Oban Times*.

Bigbelly bins digest litter

LOCH Lomond and the Trossachs National Park has recently tested large solar-powered compressing bins to reduce litter at popular sites.

As part of a range of initiatives to tackle the ongoing problem of littering, the park authority trialled the use of the solar-powered Bigbelly bins in three visitor locations. Three bins were placed at Balmaha, Luss and the Duncan Mills Memorial Slipway at the beginning of September for the four-week trial.

The park monitored their usage and staff were responsible for emptying them. Bigbelly bins compact litter meaning they can hold up to eight times as much waste as ordinary bins. The units also sent text and email alerts to staff to let them know when they were nearing capacity.

Premier Inn work to start next year

PREMIER INN has said work is to start on its new hotel in Shore Street, Oban, at around Easter 2018. Rumours had been circulating that the firm had decided against the construction, but a spokesman assured *The Oban Times* building will begin in the spring.

Donations for Agnes hit £1,400

GENEROUS friends of Agnes MacKechnie had donated £1,400 to a Gofundme appeal at the time of going to press this week.

Oban woman Agnes was seriously injured in a hit-and-run accident in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, at Hallowe'en while on holiday visiting her brother in the United States.

A friend of the family, Shona Wallace, set up the Gofundme

appeal to help the MacKechnies offset some of the substantial financial commitments they have incurred as a result of the accident.

Agnes's son, Gavin, told *The Oban Times* this week his mum is continuing to make good progress in St Luke's Hospital in Pennsylvania.

To donate, go to <https://www.gofundme.com/help-agnes-and-david-mackechnie>



An Oban charity has donated a piece of equipment to Atlantis Leisure to help with resuscitation training. Argyll Beats Cardiovascular Disease (ABCD) donated the £600 apparatus that will enable lifeguards to tell if they are administering CPR correctly. ABCD was set up 17 years ago. The charity helps to provide medical equipment for treating and diagnosing cardiovascular disease. Since its inception in 2000, ABCD has raised more than £100,000. Yvonne Robinson, training officer at Atlantis, who demonstrated the piece of equipment, said it would be important for training lifeguards.

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Great winter fest but there's more in store

ANOTHER very successful Winter Festival is over, so congratulations to everyone who made it happen, writes *Oban town ambassador Kay McDonald*.

You deserve a wee rest now but, with Christmas fast approaching, you might not get the chance.

I know everyone is saying it, but I really can't believe how quickly this year has gone by. I'm having a bit of a panic attack about how near Christmas is and how little preparation I've done.

As in previous years, I'm doing all my shopping locally and I am really impressed at the range of gifts available in the town. It makes it so much easier than having to trek to a city and drag

yourself round boiling hot shops getting crushed and battered in the process.

Call me old-fashioned, but I also prefer to see what I'm buying if I can, especially after a few disappointments with things looking nothing like their picture on the internet. Shopping locally is also a much more sociable way to do it as you know who you're buying from and will always bump into someone you know while you're out, which means it might take a bit longer but also makes it more fun.

For all the book lovers or friends of book lovers among you, there is a chance this week to get signed copies of books (a very personal and unusual gift) from not one but four different authors. Christopher Brook-

myre is in the Corran Halls tonight at 7pm, Graeme Macrae Burnet is in Waterstone's tomorrow at 7pm, Lindsay Campbell will be in the library at 10am on Saturday and in the North Argyll Carers Centre on Monday at 1pm, and children's author Alan Windram will be in Waterstones on Saturday at 10am. As usual all details can be found on Oban Town Diary.

If you're looking for a fun evening out after all the hullabaloo of the Winter Festival, don't forget that *Rapunzel* by the Spotlight Theatre Company runs from December 6-9 in the Corran Halls. You can start practicing shouting 'He's behind you!' now.

Which takes us to last week's photo which was of one of the

trees outside the Corran Halls and this week's is at the other end of the town and perhaps more accessible.

WHERE IS THIS?



Unwrap the savings with Gordons Chemists

It's nearly December again, the Friday of all the months! So you know what that means, CHRISTMAS IS COMING! And Gordons Chemists are here to help you get ready for the festive season, with even bigger and better savings than ever before!

Gordons Chemists are known for their amazing fragrance offers, and this week is no different with Roberto Cavalli EDP 75ml priced at £18 saving a MASSIVE £44! Don't forget him this Christmas, Davidoff The Game 100ml is only £17.50, saving you an incredible £32.50! Hurry, because these deals end Sunday December 3! Get ready for the party season, with the BaByliss Pro 235 Smooth Straightener at less than HALF PRICE at £29.99! The Technic Train Case has everything you need to get gammed up for the festive period, and at half price at £9.99, can you really say no?

Get him something he'll love for less, Wilkinson Sword Hydro 5 Razor Gift Set is only £4.99, saving you £10. To protect his skin from whatever the Christmas celebrations throw at it, why not treat him to the Nivea Men Protect Gift Set at only £3.99!

Are you dreaming of a white Christmas? Don't miss out on the big savings with Gordons Chemists this year - keep those pearly whites, white with the Oral-B Power Pro650 Black Electric Toothbrush at less than HALF PRICE at £24.99!

Keep up to date on our weekly offers and more on our Facebook page www.facebook.com/gordonschemists.

To see more of our amazing offers and get a free £5 off voucher, pick up our Christmas Gift Guide in store.

With 53 stores across Northern Ireland, we have a store near you, or if you want to beat the crowds, you can get our great deals online at www.gordonsdirect.com.



Rotary Club enjoys 68th charter dinner

THE Rotary Club of Oban held its 68th charter dinner at the Perle Hotel on Friday November 24, the charter having been granted to the club on November 25, 1949.

The dinner was well attended with a good number of guests present who included Oban Rotary's district governor Garry Louttit and his wife Christine.

The top table and guests were piped in by Emma Hill from Oban High School Pipe Band and later the company was entertained by Oban Rotary's Young Musician of the Year Katie Houston, who played the flute accompanied by her mother Joanna on piano.

In his toast to the club, Garry mentioned specially the many activities which the members undertake in support of the local community and he praised the membership for being so active and successful.

The principal speaker was Eamon Arthur from the Oban Speakers' Club who talked of the changes in farming since he was a boy. Eamon's speech, which was well received, was interspersed with many humorous anecdotes.

A vote of thanks was given by Iain MacIntyre. The evening was compered by Tommy McQuade. A raffle raised £326 for Hope Kitchen.

Problematic Kirk Road is to receive £2 million in funding

DAVID MCPHEE
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A PROBLEMATIC road in Dunbeg has received almost £2 million in funding from the Scottish Government.

Kirk Road is the first area to receive money from the Scottish Government's Housing and Infrastructure Grant.

The money will be used to widen the road, turning it into a six-metre carriageway, with a three-metre footpath and cyclepath on one side and a three-metre verge on the other.

The area, which has been criticised for its lack of lamp-posts,

will also see lighting installed along the length of the road.

Councillor for Oban North and Lorn Elaine Robertson said: 'All I can say is I am delighted and very proud that this has been recognised as an area of growth. I understand we are the first area to receive the Scottish Government Housing and Infrastructure Grant.'

Fellow councillor Kieron Green confirmed the amount as being 'just under £2 million. This is something the community have waited for for some time now. It's fantastic and it benefits the community.'

Kirk Road resident Marleen



Kirk Road in Dunbeg will benefit from new pavement and lighting as well as being widened.

MacInnes said: 'I think it's great - at long last. If they had this in the beginning, they would not have had so many problems.'

'It will be much safer for children and the parents, so

it's great news. I will feel much happier for the people passing with pushchairs.'

Chairman of Dunbeg Community Council Sean MacIntyre added: 'The community around the Kirk Road area are glad it's

finally coming to fruition. This is what we were promised over five years ago before any phases went in. It's going to be a lot safer for children to walk down there.'

'However, we're still waiting to see some other infrastructure put in place before any more houses are built. Everyone wants what was promised to them.'

An application was submitted in April this year to extend the village. Link Group plans to build 600 houses between Dunbeg and Ganavan.

However, the community council has set up a petition

asking for a bigger school, a roundabout at the A85 junction and play and recreational areas before any further building takes place.

Mr MacIntyre said: 'Marine Court has been there for three-and-a-half years, but there's still not a play area.'

Speaking about the Kirk Road upgrade, Mr MacIntyre said: 'As far as I am aware, it's going to be a road with pavements, lighting, speed humps and a junction into Marine Court.'

Link Group gave a presentation last Wednesday night showing the community potential plans.

MacLeod Construction Limited

IN LAST week's *Oban Times* there was a headline and article stating that 'Health and safety inspectors have stopped work on an Oban building site'. This was incorrect.

The article went on to say that 'HSE said on Tuesday it had also received concerns regarding work at other MacLeod Construction sites in Argyll and Bute'. Due to incorrect information received from HSE that statement was also incorrect.

The Oban Times unreservedly apologises to MacLeod Construction Limited for any distress caused by these inaccuracies.

MacLeod Construction Limited has operated in Argyll and Bute for more than 40 years and directly employs over 200 people.

Last chance to have your say

LOCAL residents have just two weeks to give their views that could help shape the future of Argyll and Bute.

The council is consulting on a new Local Development Plan (LDP2), which will set out the region's planning and development proposals for the 10 years from 2020 and a vision for the next 20 years.

You can take part in the consultation www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/ldp2

Deadline for taking part is December 11.

Following the current consultation, feedback will be reviewed and used to develop a formal LDP2 that will then go out to public consultation.

Subscribe for as little as 56p a week www.obantimes.co.uk/subscriptions

Argyll pubs and hotels asked to back child safety

MORE THAN 400 pub and hotel operators in Argyll are being asked for their help to keep children and young people safe.

The Argyll and Bute Council's child protection committee has been in touch with licensed premises' operators to ask them to keep an eye out for potential grooming victims. Operators of shops that sell alcohol are also being contacted and appeals are being made to taxi drivers to be aware. It is part of the committee's campaign to prevent child sexual exploitation.

The 400-plus hotels and pubs have now received leaflets, tailored for them, on what to look out for and what to do next.

These include considering if a young customer appears to be:

- With an older person or persons and appears to be in a relationship with one of them;

- Under the influence of alcohol or drugs;

- At their premises regularly with older people;

- Leaving and returning with multiple people while on the premises;

- Uncomfortable, agitated or stressed.

Councillor Kieron Green said: 'Child sexual exploitation is a very serious issue and one we must all be aware of. It's everyone's responsibility to keep our children and young people safe. We should know the signs to be aware of and how to act.'

'We are contacting many different groups...to raise their awareness of this issue and ask for their support.'

Anyone with concerns about a child or young person can contact the child protection team on 01546 605517.

Disability law delays hut decision

A DECISION on the fate of a hut built without permission by a Deputy Lord Lieutenant for his disabled wife by Seil Sound has been delayed until December to allow planners time to investigate disability law, writes Sandy Neil.

Argyll and Bute Council's planning committee met at Kilmory on Wednesday to determine Graham MacQueen's 'part retrospective' planning application to erect a recreational hut on land 830m north-east of the Atlantic Bridge, near Clachan Farm.

Planning officers recommended councillors refuse the plan, and so demolish the hut, because it was contrary to the local development plan and did not qualify as an exceptional case. They argued it had a 'significant adverse impact on the Knapdale/Melfort Area of Panoramic Quality'.

Their report counted 17 letters of objection and 116 in support,

but that tally was boosted in the last hours by supporters Michael Russel MSP and councillors Jim Lynch, Julie McKenzie and Elaine Robertson.

Objectors argued the hut was a 'humiliation' to the planning process, asking: 'If you pass this, what is there to stop anyone else doing exactly the same?'

Another, the report said, alleged, 'the applicant has knowingly from the start played the planning process by clearing and building on the site without permission to be able to feign ignorance of the need for planning consent and apply retrospectively and pay the token fine.'

Mr MacQueen denies this, telling *The Oban Times* his builder advised him the hut did not need planning permission and he stopped building the moment he discovered he did.

Mr MacQueen unreservedly

apologised, adding: 'I have spent my life trying to help people. I will endeavour to use all my resources and energy to make sure I do not offend anybody.'

In support, councillor Robertson wrote: 'Mr MacQueen is the main carer for his family, three of whom have long-term conditions and mobility issues. The health, well-being, and quality of life of this family will be greatly enhanced by access to this peaceful and very private area. This recreational hut is not visually intrusive. The area has been in the past an industrial site, and until recently was a campsite.'

Mr MacQueen's wife Morven, who suffers from MS, said the planners' report had made her feel she was 'being discriminated against', adding: 'You state that "sea-based activities do not depend on land-based

activities"'. Firstly, I note that these comments mimic those of an able-bodied objector and secondly they demonstrate a complete lack of understanding of disabled requirements. Do you imagine my husband can take me perched on the end of his kayak?'

'Disabled access and the need for a hut are crucial to this application and your report makes no specific comments on those aspects. Why does your report completely ignore the crucial element of disabled access?'

Planning head Angus Gilmour told the meeting: 'This is exceptional circumstance. We are taking a pause until December to allow us to take legal advice so we can better inform the committee. Legally we could not determine because there are some elements we discovered late in the day and these elements should be in the application.'

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OT

Appin

THERE was a party atmosphere in Port Appin Hall when Kay MacDonald held a cocktail evening at the Appin branch of the Scottish Women's Institute's November meeting.

Kay showed members how to mix cocktails including an Alabama Slammer, a Bahama Mama and Kay's own Pink Lady. Samples of all the delicious concoctions were enjoyed by everyone and Alison MacCorquodale thanked Kay for a pleasant evening.

Competition result: Gold – Catriona MacKenzie, who received a bottle of cream liqueur; Silver – Brenda MacLeod; Red – Alison MacCorquodale; and Blue – Jessie MacKenzie.

Oban

WOMEN campaigning against changes to the age at which they can collect their state pensions held a drop-in session at the Rockfield Centre in Oban.

The Women Against State Pension Inequality (WASPI) Argyll and Isles group was set up a year ago and saw McCaig's Tower lit up purple as part of the WASPI Paint Your Town Purple initiative in January.

The local group has also been given support from the Argyll and Bute branches of the Unison, Unite, EIS and GMB unions. WASPI Argyll and Isles estimates 6,700 women born in the 1950s will be affected by state pension age changes in Argyll and Bute. Contact the group at argyllisleswaspi@mail.com.

PARK Primary School, Oban, will be hosting its Christmas Fair on Saturday (December 2).

The event, from 10am until noon, includes Santa's Grotto, games, raffles, crafts, face painting, tombola stalls and home-baking. All proceeds will go to the school's Parent Teacher Association.

Rothesay

A STALWART of amateur football in Rothesay will be presented with his British Empire Medal today (Thursday).

David Meldrum, 79, will receive his medal from the Lord Lieutenant of Argyll and Bute Patrick Stewart.

David is receiving the medal for his life-long service to Rothesay Brandane Amateur Football Club, of which he is honorary president. Since leaving school, David has been player, manager and coach. He is about to celebrate his 80th birthday.

Mull

MULL Museum is changing the way visitors view its archives.

As it stands, people can immediately access the museum's catalogue, but now people who wish to view the library will have to fill out a form to make an appointment with a committee member. Appointments will be available between 10am and 4pm, Monday to Friday. Enquiries can still be made by phone, letter and email. The new system only applies to face-to-face visits.

Dunbeg

DUNBEG residents are being sought to set up a community group to develop services in the village.

Link Group, which hopes to build 300 new homes in the area, has said it will support the group with funding applications, development, legal advice and costs. Anyone interested should contact andy.jack@linkhalt.d.co.uk.

Seil Island

THE SEIL Island Hall annual Christmas Craft Fair will take place on Sunday (December 3).

There will be a variety of stalls as well as carol singing, refreshments, home-baking and light lunches. The event, from 11am till 4pm, is being organised by Seil Hall Recreation and Amenities Group.

Luining

SCOTTISH food writer Sue Lawrence will be at the Atlantic Islands Centre, Luining, on Saturday (December 2) as part of Book Week Scotland. Sue, noted for her promotion of traditional Scottish recipes and regional produce, will talk about her latest cookbook and her novel, *The Night He Left*. Refreshments will be on offer, and a selection of baking thanks to Luining Bakers. The event is at 11am.



Dunbeg primary pupils share Christmas cheer

Kind-hearted youngsters from Dunbeg Primary School filled 38 shoeboxes for the Blythswood Shoebox Appeal. The school delivered the boxes to the Blythswood shop in Oban which will send them to people in need in places, including Kosovo, Bulgaria, Pakistan and Romania.



Councillor Kieron Green, middle, joined Claire Rizos and Norman Martin.

Keeping Oban beautiful

THE KEEP Oban Beautiful group made the most of some rare blue sky earlier this month and tidied up the town's community sensory garden.

Oban and Lorn councillor Kieron Green helped out on the day, alongside Claire Rizos and Norman Martin.

Mr Green said: 'I welcome the enthusiasm and dedication of the group.'

'It's important for our town to look as good as possible and I know they would be delighted if more people got involved. I am not formally in the group. I just help out at some of their sessions if I'm free.'



Members of Lorn Organic Growers on top of where the compost toilet will be.

Busy year for organic growers

THIS year hasn't been the most fruitful for Lorn Organic Growers, based in Taynuilt, but it was a good one for cucumbers and courgettes – which they are still harvesting.

A lack of sunlight and warmth didn't help them in 2017, but the group's sheltered tunnels allowed them to still grow their own produce.

'It was also a good year for grant applications since we have successfully funded a new watering system which will work by gravity,' a group spokesperson said.

The spokesperson added: 'Thanks go to Carraig Gheal Windfarm Fund for enabling this and our new system will be operational for the start of our 2018 growing season. Our other project has been to fundraise for a composting toilet since we currently have no facilities on site and, with an increasing membership, it has made life a bit difficult.'

'Thanks to Taynuilt Windfarm, Taynuilt Medical Practice, a Carraig Gheal

micro grant, Argyll and Bute Health and Well-being Fund and a successful bakesale at SAMS, we are the proud owners of a new compost toilet kit.

'If anyone enjoys doing three-dimensional jigsaws, please get in touch to help us assemble it. We have, however, made a start and completed the base.'

The group's orchard, which they planted in 2015, has started to produce some fruit.

Members of Lorn Organic Growers are now adopting individual trees to look after, which will allow them to enjoy the fruits of their labour.

Growing beds will be available to rent from January next year. For more information or to get involved contact lornorganicgrowers@gmail.com or send them a message on Facebook.

'It's great exercise and a very rewarding activity and we have lots of experienced growers happy to help newcomers,' the group spokesperson said.

Young pair have the right idea

TWO BUDDING entrepreneurs from the Isle of Lewis and Barra have got the right idea when it comes to business.

Sean Kettle, of Lewis, and Anna MacLean, of Barra, won the Outer Hebrides Youth Entrepreneurship Scheme (OHYES) Business Ideas Competition, which coincided with Global Entrepreneurship Week.

A good range of business ideas were received, all of which would have been worthy winners.

The panel of judges deliberated in detail over each application before choosing Sean and Anna, who were

each awarded an iPad Pro, with the other entrants receiving a small cash prize. All entrants will be offered Business Gateway support to help turn their ideas into reality.

Business Gateway thanked everyone who entered the competition, which was run in conjunction with the OHYES grant scheme – a joint initiative between Scape Communities ReInvest Fund and Comhairle nan Eilean Siar.

Councillor Donald Crichton, chairman of the comhairle's sustainable development committee, said: 'The entrepreneurial spirit

evident through the competition entries is impressive.

The OHYES grant scheme is an excellent opportunity to assist young people with setting up their own businesses, helping to encourage as many young people as possible to remain in these islands.'

The OHYES grant scheme, being run over two years, was set up to support anyone aged 18 to 40 who lives in the Outer Hebrides who would like to set up a new business.

Right: Marion MacNeil of Business Gateway, presents an iPad to Anna MacLean.



Donald Crichton presents Sean with his iPad.



Oban Pipe Band ceilidh success

OBAN Pipe Band's annual ceilidh was an enjoyable evening with some of the best musicians in the area taking part.

They entertained locals and visitors to the town's Winter Festival from many parts, including overseas.

Comment from those present indicated they enjoyed the band's traditional music, song and dance.

Entertainment was provided by Crackin' Craic, Argyll Ceilidh Trail, Mary Catherine MacNeil, Sileas Sinclair, Angus MacColl, the Sinclair School of Dance, as well as Oban Pipe Band.

Fear-an-tighe for the evening was Dugald Cameron, who kept the audience entertained.

Oban Pipe Band committee is grateful to all the entertainers who kindly gave of their time. Special thanks go to the Winter Festival and Event Scotland for promoting the event.

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At Random

Great News at last for Billy

THERE is a very welcome rush of good news this week.

The most obvious is the release of Billy Irving from the nightmare that he has been living through in an Indian prison.

It was brilliant to hear the outcome of the Indian appeal court's decision on Monday that Billy and the other 34 men he was convicted with were, in fact, not guilty.

For four long years these men and their families have been forced to endure this ordeal so it was fantastic to hear their news.

However, as we report this week, the men may not be allowed to return home just yet so Billy, the ex-paratrooper from Connel, and his fiancée Yvonne MacHugh might have to exercise yet more patience.

The Oban Times has campaigned consistently along with Yvonne and others to secure the men's freedom so we are obviously thrilled that the desired result has been achieved.

On a personal level, I would like to thank the Indian justice system for finally righting the wrong done against the Chennai Six.

However, I still stand by my previous and regular caustic comments against the Foreign Secretary, Boris Johnson, and the Foreign and Commonwealth

Office for their utter inability to bring these former British servicemen home.

Mr Johnson and the FCO staff he commands still deserve all the opprobrium visited up on them.

There has been such a high level of interest in the plight of Billy and his colleagues, as was evidenced by the enormous surge of comment on our Facebook page on Monday when the news broke. We had scores of people welcoming the report.

For me, the real star of this excellent news is Yvonne. She has toiled unceasingly and with great dignity to have Billy freed.

Indeed, it was hard not to feel emotional on Monday night watching her on television. I'm so pleased for her.

the selfless people who work so hard to ensure these events take place and brighten brilliantly the arrival of winter's dark nights.

Great gig deserved better support

One other really good event I attended on Saturday night was the live music gig at the Corran Halls featuring Edinburgh band Supa and Da Kryptonites, as well as Oban's very own rappers K9 Kev and Rory O'B.

Now, given my advancing age, I have to fess up that I'm not naturally drawn to rap but I first encountered K9 and Rory at this year's Oban Live and became an immediate convert.

Kevin Irvine and Rory O'Byrne wowed the crowds at Mossfield back in June and were really well received on Saturday at the Corran Halls. Rightly so, as they performed a terrific series of songs before making way for a high-octane set from Supa and Da Kryptonites.

If there was one down side, it was the disappointing number of people in the halls for what was a terrific night of energetic music. With tickets at just a tenner each, it would have been good to have seen more people there. They'd have enjoyed themselves.

What do you think?

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

MARTIN LAING
mlaing@obantimes.co.uk

Let's cheer the winter festival

TO STAY with the buzz of positivity, this year's Oban Winter Festival has been a fabulous success.

I was out and about on Saturday at the Scottish food and craft market, as well as a couple of Christmas fairs. The weather – not entirely surprisingly – was less than ideal but the turnout from the public was superb.

I chatted briefly in the distillery with Pamela Lockhart, a member of the organising committee and she was understandably delighted with the number of people who supported the initiative.

I cannot praise highly enough

At Random

Great News at last for Billy

Let's cheer the winter festival

Rory O'B and K9 Kev gave a belter of an opening set at the Corran Halls.



Glen Forsa where Dugald Macphail's ancestors lived for upwards of 800 years. Photograph: Iain Thornber

Mull is the fairest of isles

MORVERN LINES
IAIN THORNER
editor@obantimes.co.uk

THIS week's column really should be called Mull Lines as it is the result of a recent expedition to that island.

The main purpose of my visit was to photograph a roadside cairn standing on a knoll at Strathcoil, near Loch Spelve. It was raised in memory of Dugald MacPhail (1819-1887), the Gaelic bard who composed *An t-Muileach (The Isle of Mull)* which has become the island's anthem.

Wherever a few Mull men and women are gathered together socially anywhere in the world, you are likely hear this evocative composition described by Sir Hugh Robertson (1874-1952), conductor of the Orpheus Choir and Britain's leading choral-master, as the finest folk-song in existence.

The MacPhails, according to tradition, were drovers and cattle-breeders and lived at Rhoail in Glen Forsa upwards of 800 years. By 1819, the bard's parents, Donald and Catherine (nee Campbell), had moved down from the hills to Strathcoil where Dugald was born and became a carpenter.

History does not record the circumstances, but shortly after he married Janet Merry, the couple went south. Perhaps they were evicted.

Dugald, who is described as a clerk of works on his death certificate, died of pleurisy on November 1, 1887, at Partick on the north bank of the River Clyde, across from Govan. Astonishingly, he is buried in the cemetery of Old Monkland and not on Mull. He left a widow and eight children one of whom,



Dugald Macphail's memorial at Strathcoil. Picture: Iain Thornber

Alexander (1872-1938), is said to have been Inspector for Anatomy for England and Wales.

Dugald's memorial at Strathcoil is unusual because not only was it built on the exact site of his old home, but it is constructed with stones from its walls. The monument was completed in March 1929 and unveiled on June 19 that year by Mrs Murray Guthrie of Torosay.

A large number of enthusiastic supporters from Tobermory, Salen, Dervaig and elsewhere on Mull were present. There were speeches in Gaelic and English by Mr MacMorran, Treshnish, and Mr C R Morison, Kingharair, Dervaig, who read quotations from the bard's poems showing his admiration for the beauty of Mull

and his regrets that the native population were forced to wander afar instead of remaining in their birth place.

I was pleased to hear that a public appeal, which went out a few days before my visit, for funds to carry out essential repairs to the monument had reached its target. It is good to know that Dugald MacPhail's name is still held in such high regard 130 years after his death.

I enjoyed my jaunt and admired the typical Highland grandeur surrounding Strathcoil as well as the hospitality I received in nearby Inverlussa, from Douglas and Helen Wilson, voted best mussel producers in Scotland by the Association of Scottish Shellfish Growers.

Here, too, I met former Mull

councillor John Wilson, who gave his full support to the Glensanda quarry when it was in its infancy, recognising the benefits it and many other innovative schemes in his ward would bring to the island.

Absent during my visit was a tame hind which comes to the kitchen window every morning for her breakfast, and the Jack Russell terrier who hops into the warming oven of the family Aga whenever she feels cold.

Taking the road to Craignure, Salen and Tobermory, I stopped off to look for the reef at the north side of the entrance to Loch Don, which the steamer Merganser hit on the night of December 30, 1902. Owned by Captain Donald MacDonald, Tobermory, the

vessel, was on a voyage from Glasgow to Ballachulish with a cargo of coal. The crew, four in number, the master and mate being sons of the owner, nearly lost their lives as they struggled to get ashore before the ship was wrecked.

I was impressed by the old-fashioned courtesy shown by every vehicle, large and small, that I met on Mull. Without exception, visitors and locals pulled into passing-places, some well in advance, with the drivers reciprocating my own wave in a cheery manner – something that has almost disappeared in Morvern and elsewhere on the mainland these days.

I would like to be able to say that I was as enthusiastic about the cost of a bite to eat in Tobermory. Judging by what I was charged for half a dozen tiny scallops and a handful of rabbit food in one establishment in the main street, I came away feeling that I deserved a share in the fishing boat that landed there.

To compensate, I took refuge in the burgh's famous book emporium where I was welcomed by Jean Whitaker, indomitable local historian, recorder of gravestone inscriptions and curator in chief of The Mull Museum, which is crammed with information about the history of the island and its people.

Despite the stunning light on Ben Talaidh and Ben More, I could understand, looking across the Sound on my way to catch the Fishnish ferry, the reason for the old saying that if it weren't for Morvern, the people on the east side of Mull would have nothing to look at!

Iain Thornber
iain.thornber@btinternet.com

Mystery surrounds canal found on Skye

A MYSTERIOUS stone-lined canal on the Isle of Skye, possibly built in Viking times to access an early medieval boat repair yard, has been designated a historic monument by Historic Environment Scotland (HES).

The canal, which links a small inland loch to the sea at the end of the uninhabited peninsula of Rubh' an Dùnain in the foothills of the Cuillins, is described by archaeologists as 'a rare and significant survival of a harbour complex associated with West Highland and Hebridean galley tradition'.

The peninsula overlooking the Sound of Soay is the hereditary homeland of the Clan MacAskill, once feared as coast watchers, galley masters and bodyguards to the Macleods of Skye.

The ancient settlement, which historians and scientists believe may have been occupied for millennia, was abandoned during the Clearances in the mid-1800s.

The MacAskills of Rubh' an Dùnain Society, which in 2015 launched a comprehensive website, Skye's Hidden Heritage, highlighting the history and im-



An aerial view of Rubh' an Dùnain. Photograph: © 2011 Morvern Maritime Centre C Martin

portance of the landscape, and which helped to fund a small part of the scientific research, welcomed the HES move.

Website editor Gordon Mack said: 'This is a decision which we applaud. It will afford this

unique location official protection and add to our campaign to repopulate the area with a virtual online community.'

The society's website (www.macaskillsociety.org) has been praised for minimising footfall

in the area by providing an internet tour of the peninsula.

The historic monument designation applies to a 117m stone-lined canal, two substantial boat docks and former 'noosts', or boat shelters, lochside quays

and the bed of Loch na h-Airde itself. A boat timber found in the margins of the shallow brackish loch in 2000 has been carbon dated to around 1100 AD.

The remote location, accessible only on foot with a 13km round trip, has preserved the remains in good condition and archaeologists are excited about the possibility of further discoveries.

HES said: 'The complex is particularly notable for its impressive survival of field remains, the possible relationship to an Iron Age dun, the rock-cut channel and the potential for further Norse and medieval boat remains to survive in the loch.'

'The scale of the docks, noosts and the presence of the canal and loch quays demonstrates that the site was a significant anchorage for the western seaboard.'

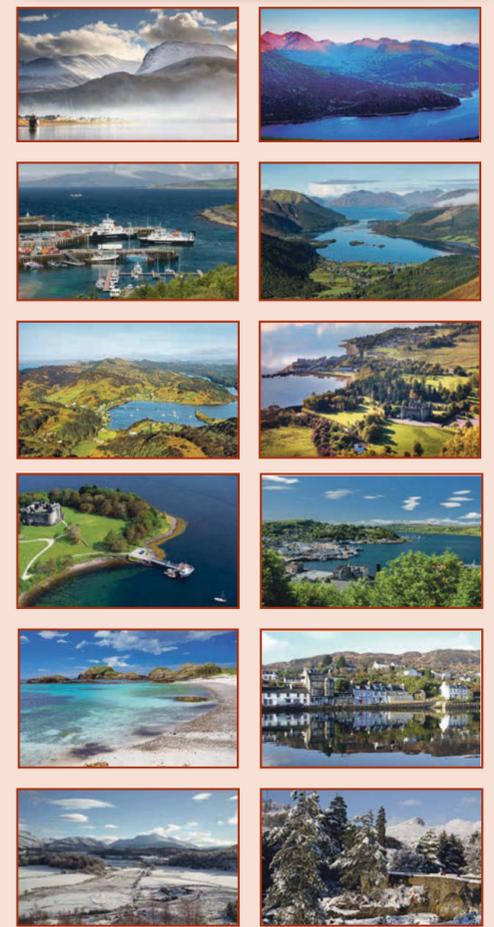
'Given its sheltered and important strategic location, it is possible the loch was used to shelter and overwinter boats, or that the site was a staging location. It may also have been used to repair or even construct boats.'

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Walkers to back paths project

MARTIN LAING
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MOUNTAINEERING Scotland and the Outdoor Access Trust for Scotland (OATS) are leading a campaign to raise £100,000 to support two Scottish path projects.

The path restoration projects are one in each of Scotland's two national parks, and are part of a GB-wide initiative, Mend Our Mountains: Make One Million, coordinated by the British Mountaineering Council (BMC) in collaboration with 15 national parks.

In Scotland, the first target is one of the nation's most heavily eroded mountain paths,

a highly visible scar up the slopes of Beinn a' Ghlo, the great three-Munro massif in the south of the Cairngorms National Park.

The campaign aims to raise £60,000 for this project, which will sustainably and sensitively restore the route up Carn Liath, currently so wide it is visible from several kilometers away on the A9 road north of Blair Atholl.

The second target is urgent path repair work on the popular Arrochar Alps peak, Ben Vane, in the Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park.

Despite claiming Munro status by a mere two feet, Ben Vane's location within an hour

or so of Glasgow has made it one of Scotland's most popular mountain walks and now £40,000 is required to create a route up this well-trodden mountain.

In a recent survey of Mountaineering Scotland's members, respondents placed a high value on the condition of mountain paths, with fundraising for restoration, repairs and maintenance of hill access being rated as one of the organisation's top priorities.

In joining forces with OATS and the BMC on the Mend Our Mountains: Make One Million campaign, Mountaineering Scotland hopes to give hillwalkers and climbers the

opportunity to put their money where their mouths are.

David Gibson, Mountaineering Scotland CEO, said: 'By making a donation, however small, this is a real opportunity for everyone

who values Scotland's mountains to make a difference to the quality of the experience on two much-loved Munros.'

Both the Scottish fundraising targets are also part of the The Mountains and The People project, which represents the coming together of Scotland's two national parks to work on access improvements at a scale never previously attempted.

It is a partnership led by OATS and the Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National

Park Authority, Cairngorms National Park Authority, Scottish Natural Heritage, Forestry Commission Scotland and the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF).

Walkhighlands, the busiest walking website in the UK, has become the official media partner for the Mend our Mountains: Make a Million campaign in Scotland. Walkhighlands' founders Paul and Helen Webster explained: 'The eroded routes up both Beinn a' Ghlo and Ben Vane need urgent repairs to heal their scars. We hope all hillwalkers will help by contributing what they can to help this vital work which will prevent future damage.'

Mend Our Mountains: Make a

Million will run for a year. It will employ a range of fundraising techniques, harnessing the generosity of 'ordinary' outdoor enthusiasts via online donations, crowd-funding and events, alongside seeking support from large businesses, corporate donors and charitable foundations.

The campaign kicked off with a reception at the Houses of Parliament in London on November 20, seeking to raise awareness among decision makers at Westminster.

People can keep track of the project in Scotland through the Mountaineering Scotland website at www.mountaineering.scot/campaigns/mend-our-mountains

National park puts five routes online

FIVE picturesque paths within Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park are now live on Google Maps for members of the public to view.

Staff and volunteers from the national park used hi-tech equipment from Google and headed out into the park to film some of the most popular paths with the aim of showcasing this beautiful area to a wider audience and enhancing visitors' experience.

The paths which feature on the site are: Balloch Country Park, Incheiloch island - woodland and summit, Puck's Glen, Bracklinn Falls, and Aberfoyle Forest Lodge paths.

The project was part of the Google Street View Camera Loan programme which allows organisations to borrow Street View Trekker backpacks at no cost. Over a two-week period the team worked together to capture a 360-degree experience of a selection of paths within the national park.

The footage is now live on Google Maps and will allow people to see the terrain before visiting so they can plan ahead.

Simon Jones, director of conservation and visitor operations at Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park, said: 'Having these paths available to view on Google Maps will allow millions of people across the world to experience the amazing landscapes and scenery the park has to offer. Filming in spring meant the team were able to capture footage of the paths in the best of the Scottish weather, including the stunning bluebells at Incheiloch.'

A spokesperson for Google said: 'Google Maps gives people access to some of the most beautiful places in the world. The impressive images taken by the Google Trekker camera of Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park will allow people to make the most of their trip by planning their route in advance.'

Loch Awe red squirrels given helping hand

DESPITE the weather, 16 volunteers, landowners and councillors gathered at Portsonachan Village Hall last week to put up the first squirrel feeder ready for the onset of winter.

It is at this time of year that mortality in young squirrels, especially any second litter youngsters, can be high.

The Portsonachan Squirrel Regeneration Project received initial funding from Glenorchy and Inishail Community Council and An Suidhe Windfarm to fund the purchase of 10 squirrel feeders and a supply of locally-sourced peanuts, which will supplement any natural food.

The aim is to promote a wildlife corridor along south Loch Awe side to encourage red squirrels to colonise new habitat by having a constant and consistent source of food supplied by feeding stations.

It is hoped the project will enable numbers to reach a sustainable level where they can survive the impact of any severe climatic conditions with the assistance of local volunteers erecting and filling the squirrel feeders.

The specialised feeders were sourced by a local resident who had them made from recycled wood. In lieu of expenses, a donation was requested and made of £110 to Macmillan Cancer Care in Oban.

The feeders, which have been weatherproofed, are being placed at locations identified locally



Sir Jamie McGrigor was joined by councillors Elaine Robertson and Kieron Green along with volunteers to see the first squirrel feeder erected.

as near 'hot spots' of squirrel activity, helping to encourage the health of these animals and enabling residents and tourists to see at close range these endearing creatures.

Volunteers from Cladich to Braevallich are monitoring the use of the feeders and sightings, where variations in colour, size and feeding habits are being recorded. Copies, especially

photographs, will be kept in Portsonachan Village Hall.

It is hoped the project can be expanded given further funding being made available.

THIS WEEK'S WALKS

LOCHABER AND LORN RAMBLERS

THE WALK leader is to be contacted beforehand for meet up and start times. Car sharing usually possible and people can try before they buy.

Further information at www.lochaberandlorn-ramblers.org.uk. Lochaber and Lorn Ramblers Group can be contacted by email on info@lochaberandlorn-ramblers.org.uk.

Thursday November 30 Sgorr a' Choise and Meall Mor Ballachulish

This route takes in a fine pair of Grahams affording splendid views of their bigger, well-known neighbours in and around Glen Coe.

Start from the CP at the Balla-

chulish TIC, NN083584. Walk SW

up East Laroch, cross the River Laroch on the footbridge and turn immediately S up to the primary school at the top of the village. Continue S on the track past some farm buildings. The track deteriorates to a path heading S in Gleann an Fhiodh and rises steadily on the W side of the River Laroch. Just before a large cairn at NN068548, fork left to cross the river and climb more steeply S to the col, Mam Uchdaich at NN065540, about 390m alt.

Turn NE along the ridge and up to the summit of Sgorr a'Choise, 663m, after a further 2 Km. Descend SE, over a small summit, turning E to reach the watershed at NN097547. Climb steeply N up the broad ridge to the rocky crest

of Meall Mor and turn NE to reach its summit, 676m.

Retrace steps for 2-300m, then curve NW around the rim of Coire nan Cuilc and descend the N ridge to the forest track on the col, 342m.

Turn right on the track and soon left at a junction to climb a narrower track up to the summit of Am Meall, 414m.

Cross the stile by the communications tower and head NW down the open hillside along the forest boundary. At the corner of the forest just above the quarry turn left and follow the path around its rim and down to the Ballachulish TIC.

Grade: S; Distance: 15km; Height to climb: 1161m; Map(s): LR41/50, EX384. Meet at Balla-

chulish TIC at 9.30am. Start at 9.30am. Leader: Isobel Bytautus 07512 042223.

Sunday December 3 Arieniskill to Meoble Lochailort

A walk to a remote estate passing a Prince Charlie's Cave and the hidden Loch Beoraid. The Lodge at Meoble was used by the S.O.E. to train agents sent into Europe during the 2nd World War.

Start near Arieniskill on the A830 at NM785831, where limited roadside parking is available.

Follow the Arieniskill Burn under the railway. Pick up the path heading up ENE by the Allt na Criche. Take the right fork at the junction and continue N, crossing some fairly level ground before descending into natural

woodland. Look out for Prince Charlie's Cave at NM796849. Cross the Allt a' Churn Mhoir in a steep-sided gorge and continue to follow the path up a narrow ledge before emerging on to more open hillside with views of Loch Beoraid.

Follow the path down to footbridges and a power house at the foot of the loch.

Cross to a track and follow it N to the settlement at Meoble and continue to the piers at Loch Morar. Retrace steps until S of the estate buildings and cross the river Meoble on the bridge at NM799866.

Follow the path SSW gradually climbing up to a high point at NM792849. Cross the fence-line, descend to re-join the outward

route at the junction and follow the path back to the start.

Grade: M; Distance: 16km; Height to climb: 560m; Map(s): LR34, EX400. Meet at Fort William woollen mill at 9.15am. Start of walk at 10am. Leader: Andrew Gilbert 07808 924722.

NEVIS HILLWALKING CLUB

Please see full walk details at www.nevishillwalking.club.

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

Saturday December 2 Meall na Teanga

Park at the parking area for Eas Chia-aig. Follow path until it joins the track. From NN180894 head E through short band of trees up to

minor 280m summit. Continue E

to 493m summit of Creag Dhonn. Turn N over Ruighe na Beinne Breac and finally NE to 872m top of Meall Odhar. Follow ridge E to 907m top of Meall Coire Lochain. Follow NE ridge to Meall na Teanga and then return to 906m top. Head SE to 588m top of Leac Chorrach. Head S to end of track at NN200890. Follow track E to point NN205889. Now descend S, hopefully avoiding trees, to car park near Clunes. Alternatively continue E along track to junction and then turn SW along track to car park.

Distance: 13km; Height to climb: 1100m. Suggested by Robert Paterson, co-ordinated by Suzanne Theobald.



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Eighty-some reeled in for Zumbathon



All Sunday afternoons should be spent like Sunday November 26 at the Winter Warm-up Zumbathon in the Corran Halls. More than 80 people took time out of from their weekend to come along and spend the afternoon smiling, laughing and having fun while dancing to rhythms from around the world, with four local instructors, to raise money for local charities Hope Kitchen and Home-Start Lorn. The instructors were pictured with Coolio and are, left to right, Karen Banaghan, Magdalena Sadlik, Sam Ford and Dorah Mothae-Hall. To find a Zumba class near you visit www.zumba.com



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The Oban Times
& WEST HIGHLAND TIMES

OT

Viewpoint



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

The Oban Times

& WEST HIGHLAND TIMES

The Oban Times joins all those who this week are celebrating, quite rightly, the wonderful news of Billy Irving's acquittal and release from his nightmare of a prison sentence in India.

There was an immediate and enormous engagement on social media when the news broke on Monday that the Chennai Six – Billy and five other British ex-servicemen – and 29 other colleagues had been freed from Puzhal prison.

The outpouring of delight was perhaps unsurprising but wonderful to read. Among those expressing their

pleasure at the news were Argyll and Bute MP Brendan O'Hara and MSP Michael Russell.

Interestingly, both men singled out Billy's indefatigable fiancée Yvonne MacHugh for the highest of praise. How right they are; she has been amazing.

Yvonne, mum to the couple's toddler son William, has fought a dogged campaign for four years to win the men's release and she has done so with great determination and dignity, often in the face of apathy from those in a position to influence the case. Yvonne has been a real star and has won her just reward.



Days gone by – 1960s

This week we turn the clock back to the 1960s – though we are unsure of the precise year – and the Oban High School second XI football team, captained by Davie Buchanan, today the long-serving secretary of Oban Saints FC. The full line-up of aspiring young players is, standing, left to right, Alex T Fleming, Ian Donn, Richard A Davidson, Leslie G MacPherson, Charles Millar, Alistair W Douglas and John A Carmichael; sitting, William O'Brien, John Plunkett, Kenneth Campbell, David Buchanan, Sandy Cameron and Nigel J Evans.

MacPhail

ANGUS MACPHAIL

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MY PLAN for a full piece about the launch of the latest addition to the CalMac fleet has been happily thwarted because of the brightest news to appear in the media in many months.

The MV Glen Sannox was blessed and put to sea with great applause last week, but superseding that great event is the news that Billy Irving from Connel and his fellow prisoners have been found not guilty, and will hopefully be home for Christmas.

Accordingly, a full report on the CalMac launch will have to wait till next week.

As mentioned in my last article, the result of a lengthy appeal in the case of the Chennai Six was to be given on Monday this week. With the verdict having been scheduled for announcement at 5pm on Monday it must have been a nerve-wracking wait for Yvonne MacHugh, Billy's fiancée, and all the other family members.

However, around mid-morning the news came that the men had been ac-

quitted and that they would be coming home at last.

On the *Today* programme on BBC Radio 4, with stalwart morning broadcaster John Humphrys, Yvonne was being interviewed around 8am while still waiting for news of the verdict.

As she has done throughout this entire ordeal, she spoke with clarity, dignity and passion about the unjust situation and her hopes for an end to it.

Having been painfully disappointed so many times throughout this awful chapter, it came with overwhelming relief that the men had been found not guilty.

According to reports, there is still a chance that the Indian authorities will appeal against this decision and that must be a terrifying prospect which could potentially lead to many more months of delay and, of course, the dreadful risk of the verdict being overturned again.

I hope every back channel, front channel, official connection, unofficial connection, diplomatic and 'undiplomatic' pressure and any potential means of influence is being used by the British government and its representatives in

India to block the chance of this potential counter-appeal being launched.

However, in the meantime, Yvonne and those others who have spent more than four years of their lives campaigning on behalf of the prisoners, can enjoy this momentous success.

It has been achieved through having the courage, belief and dogged determination to keep fighting the case and all those involved are worthy of great praise for the efforts that have led to this resulting triumph. The men can look forward to the genuine prospect of their first Christmas at home for five long years.

There will be much rebuilding and recovering to be done in the times ahead and even in a best-case scenario, where the men will be home as hoped before Christmas, it will take many years for their lives to return to normal.

Billy Irving has lost four years of his life because of a ridiculous series of events outwith his control, allowed to escalate out of all conceivable proportions.

The scars left from a situation like this will not heal quickly, but at least that process, hopefully, can now begin.



Social media

There was jubilation on Monday when news broke that an Indian appeal court judge had found Billy Irving and the Chennai Six not guilty.

Margaret Blaylock: Wonderful news!!!! What an awesome Christmas present for all of you. God bless every one of you.

Sheila Ogilvie: Just the bestest news! Hope this wee family are reunited really soon

Margaret Shevlin: Great news praying they be home this christmas x

Jack Niall Anderson: Over the moon for them and their families

Andrea Mallon: Great news.....wishing Billy and all the others a speedy return

Tom Curry: About time too!

Barbara MacLean: Thank God- hope he gets home soon

Nikki Warham: Woohooooo

Margaret McPhail: Wonderful news. Praise God,!

Lynne Davis: Karen you have no idea how good this makes me feel today. To think David jumped off this boat had a chat with Billy & then he boarded it! This has been such an injustice for everyone involved. I just pray all men get Home to their families ASAP. David I know is smiling for his friend Billy. A true gentleman who David was privileged to call his friend x

Emma Telfer: Over the moon for them don't know them but Yvonne has never given up on Billy and so glad it's finally paid off for them! Wish them the best Christmas ever

Marian Milarvie: Fantastic news. Well done to the OT too for consistently keeping this on everyone's radar way before the national newspapers/media took it up.

Janine Calder: I don't know them but squealed with delight for them when I heard the news on the radio .

Linda Battison: Wow. Wow, wow -

wonderful news. What an amazing Christmas present for all the families.

Laura Pagan: Such wonderful news, after many years of suffering for these families. Couldn't be happier for them!!

Michelle Gallagher: Amazing news! He might not know everyone in our wee town but we all know Billy now and I'm sure he's gonna get one hell of a welcome home

Susan Barber: Brilliant news. They are neighbours of my mums. They have never given up hope. Congratulations. Have a wonderful family Christmas x

Lauren Files: This is brilliant news! I'm so so happy for you all, best wishes xxx

Sheila Smith: Hope he's home for Xmas. Delighted for everyone

Jane Macrae: Tears of joy and thankfulness for the lads and their loved ones.

Jane Gill: At last!! finally someone has put an end to this madness. an incredible day for the men and their families

Reindeer parade and Christmas lights

Sir,
What a fantastic evening on Saturday November 18 for the BID4Oban (Business Improvement District) reindeer parade and Christmas lights switch-on.

It was great to see so many people out and about for the arrival of Santa with his reindeer.

These events do not just happen without the support of the community and organisations that give up their free time to ensure the safety and enjoyment of the public.

BID4Oban could not put on the parade without the Rotary and Lions clubs of Oban. Along with Oban FM and the various vendors, everyone was well catered for.

Special thanks have to go to the street lighting and amenities teams at Argyll and Bute Council, some of whom travelled up from Lochgilphead and pulled out all the stops to ensure a seamless lights switch on.

BID4Oban acknowledges the support of West Coast Motors and taxi drivers for putting up with the inconvenience of having to move from their normal locations for the early evening. Thanks also to Oban Pipe Band for leading the parade and Police Scotland for ensuring safe passage through the town.

We will be back next year for another memorable parade and anyone who has any suggestions for how to make the event even better should feel free to contact us at the BID4-Oban office.

Andrew Spence,
Chief executive, BID4Oban Ltd.

Campaign needed to shake-up carriers

Sir,
As relative newcomers to Lorn, we have learned to endure the practice of parcel delivery companies that are happy to ship to Glasgow on their standard UK rates but then double or treble these rates to go 50 miles further to Oban.

When I have complained in the past, I have been told it is my fault for living on an island, although our postcode is definitely on the mainland – although we have suffered month-long delays before now while our deliveries toured the islands.

This practice, of largely English companies that profess a desire to keep us in the union, of treating us as foreigners within our own country is bad enough, but this year we are experiencing far worse.

Obviously stung by the loss of business these excessive charges cause to major online retailers, this festive season we no longer find exorbitant shipping charges as soon as the checkout discovers our postcode, but simply get a message 'Does not ship to the UK', often underneath a message saying 'Free delivery in UK'.

This new practice is worst with eBay retailers (many of whom ship further to get to London than to us) but is also gaining favour with many famous high

Beachd Ailein

ALLAN CAMPBELL

ailean@obantimes.co.uk



'S FHEÀRR A BHITH A dhìth a' chinn na dhìth an fhasain! Tha mi a' creidsinn gur ann gu sònraichte a' buntainn ri èideadh a tha an seanfhacal seo, ach 's fhiach faighneachd dè th' ann am fasan. Ann am mòran shuidheachaidhean chan eil ann ach cleachdadh, agus math na dona e, aon uair 's gum bheil àireamh àraid ris tha e "fasanta". Ach glè thric cha do dh'fhàg sin ceart neo ciallach e!

Bho chionn greise a-nise tha deasbaid a' dol a' thaobh a' chroin a dh'fhaodadh luchd-spòrs a bhith a' fulang ri linn bhuillean dhan cuid cheann, gu h-àraid an fheadhainn a tha ri sabaid-dhòrn agus cluicheadairean bhall-coise a bhios a' cur an cinn ris a' bhall.

Ged a tha mòran luchd-eòlais slàinte den bheachd gum bheil buillean den t-seòrsa seo a' dèanamh damaiste air eanchainn nam feadhna a tha ris, chan eil làn-dhearbhadh ann fhathast agus tha cuid a tha an sàs anns na cleasan sin gu proifeiseanta nach eil idir a' gabhail ris.

Le ceangal a-nise ga dhèanamh eadar buaidh leithid seo de bhuillean thar uine agus seargadh-inntinne, tha

obair-rannsachaidh air tòiseachadh gu a' chùis a dhearbhadh taobh seach taobh. Saoilidh mi fhìn gum bheil fiù 's amharas a thaobh an dochainn a dh'fhaodadh seo a bhith ag adhbharachadh na rabhadh gu leòr dha spòrs anns an fharsaingeachd barrachd faicill a ghabhail a thaobh a bhith a' dìon cluicheadairean bho bhuillean mun cheann.

Gun teagamh cluinnear cuid ag argamaid gum cailleadh ball-coise tòrr de chuid ealantais nan robhar dol a stad buillean-cinn, ach air an làimh eile ma tha leithid a ghluasad dol a ghleidheadh slàinte cluicheadairean agus dol a chaomhnadh dha seirbheis slàinte, tha fhios gun fhiach beachdachadh air.

Chaidh oidhirp a dhèanamh ann an iomain bho chionn bhliadhnaichean agus cluicheadairean òga a bhrosnachadh gus clogadan a chleachdadh. B' e a' bharrail a bh' ann gun leanadh am fasan bhon òigridh gu sgiobaidhean nan inbheach, ach cha do shoirbhich leis an amas gu tur idir agus chan eil ach beagan de cluicheadairean iomain a' dìon an cinn. Ach tha cuid de shàr chleasaichean ga dhèanamh,

Brian Philpotts,
Kilniver.

Thank you from Lochaber Trust

Sir,

On behalf of all the children and adults who benefit from the activities and work of Lochaber Rural Education Trust, we wish to thank the customers and staff of the Co-op in Corpach for their generation donation of £1,250. This will enable the trust to continue its good work with all ages and abilities. Thank you all.

Isabel and Linda Campbell,
Founder and chairman,
Lochaber Rural Education Trust.

Good Samaritan at Ganavan

Sir,

I would like to express my thanks to whoever the good Samaritan is who has been upgrading and adding drainage channels to the path to the Kissing Gate at Ganavan Beach. What a difference. No more slithering around in the mud. Sincere thanks from a regular user of the path.

Catherine Sunderland,
Ganavan.

Tory austerity is causing misery

Sir,
Conservative Councillor Alastair Redman claims 'rural Argyll is being sidelined by the SNP' (Letters, *The Oban Times*, November 23).

Like the Christmas turkey, Councillor Redman has got some neck. The leading independent financial think tank, the Institute for Fiscal Studies, has recently predicted austerity and wage stagnation are set to continue for at least a decade, and perhaps for as long as 20 more years.

Workers will earn less in 2022 than they did in 2008. Public sector workers who have waited seven years for a pay rise will have to wait for at least 10 more, possibly 20.

There are still £12 billion in cuts to welfare to come from the Tory government. George Osborne promised a budget surplus of £10 billion in 2019-2020, but now Philip Hammond has admitted that the deficit will be at

least £35 billion, with most independent commentators believing that that is literally a conservative estimate.

In the meantime, companies and individuals registered in offshore tax havens like the Bahamas make billions but avoid paying a penny in taxes towards the UK budget. And all of this doom and gloom doesn't even begin to factor in the potential additional deficits caused by the Tories' impending shambolic and suicidal stagger over the Brexit cliff.

The reason Islay and other Argyll and Bute communities are struggling to maintain infrastructure and services is not that the SNP government is incompetent, as Councillor Redman claims, but the Westminster Tory (and DUP) government is obsessed with protecting the wealth and power of the privileged few, and is determined to pursue its policy of austerity dogmatically, regardless of how much pain and misery that policy brings to ordinary working families.

Yowann Byghan,
Isle of Seil.

What will councillors do about ferries?

Sir,
Cash-strapped Argyll and Bute Council is about to consider budget options for next year.

We were heartened to read the interim harbour's report produced by Argyll and Bute Council last year which stated that all main harbours had to make money. However, recent clarification from the responsible officer has revealed that the term 'all' is a collective term meaning that all the harbours together must make money but that each individual harbour can still be allowed to lose money.

Our council professes that it wants to see economic regeneration of the town – regeneration that can only occur if we have good transport links. But a reliable ferry service (bigger boats) is being priced out of the market by our council.

In the local elections this year, all successful Dunoon and Cowal candidates confirmed that councillors would run the council and that officers would do as they were told.

So just what are our councillors going to do about setting the tariff for Dunoon Harbour from 2018? Hide behind councillors from Oban and Helensburgh? Answers required on the letters page ASAP.

Susanna Rice,
Convener, Dunoon-Gourock
Ferry Action Group.



find us on
facebook

www.facebook.com/obantimes

Ailean Caimbeul

agus a' dearbhadh nach eil clogad a' cur casg sam bith air an cuid cluiche.

Ghabh mi iongnadh nuair a chuala mi gum robh riochdairean bho bhuidheann nàiseanta rothaireachd air bruidhinn a-mach an aghaidh beachd gum bu chòir dhan lagh clogadan agus èideadh soilleir iarraidh dha luchd-baidhsagal.

Chan aithne dhomhsa dràibhear nach aontaicheadh gu tur le sin, agus gum feumadh iad solais a bhith aca air an oidheche cuideachd! Nach annasach ma-thà, riochdairean nàiseanta rothaireachd a bhith ag argamaid an aghaidh dìon den t-seòrsa, agus fiù 's ann neach ag ràdh nach eil dearbhadh ann gum bheil clogadan a' dèanamh uimhir sin de dh'fheum dha luchd-cleachdaidh bhaidhsagal! Dith cèille saoilidh mise!

ANY POSSIBILITY of a link between regular blows to the head in some sports and dementia should be enough to encourage change, prevent illness, and save future health service budgets.

Ailean Caimbeul
ailean@obantimes.co.uk

Press policy

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

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

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

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

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

We will abide by the decision of IPSO.

Your letters

THE EDITOR welcomes letters of approximately 300 words in length for publication on this page. The editor also reserves the right to shorten, to amend or to refuse to print them. Names and postal addresses

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

Anonymous letters or those supplied without a 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.

SANTA recommends



Hi Santa here, I'm running down to Crafty Ewe this Friday (tomorrow) to grab a bargain. Dont worry if you cant make it, they are also open on Saturday. Lots of gift ideas at great prices.

Crafty Ewe

CLOSING DOWN SALE Starts 1st December
Open Wednesday to Saturday

50% off

5 Albany Street, Oban, PA34 4AR
Tel: 01631 565161
Email: isla@craftyewe-oban.co.uk



If you are looking for an individual gift, incorporating your family tartan, Kit creates design-led clocks and art depicting landscapes, seascapes, wildlife and characters that make the perfect present this Christmas

Kit's Krafts

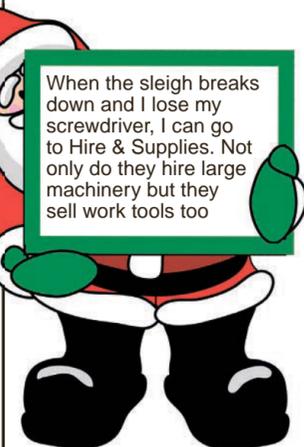
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Kit Elliott
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When the sleigh breaks down and I lose my screwdriver, I can go to Hire & Supplies. Not only do they hire large machinery but they sell work tools too

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Lochalsh Depot: Ardelve Industrial Estate, Kyle of Lochalsh, IV40 8DY

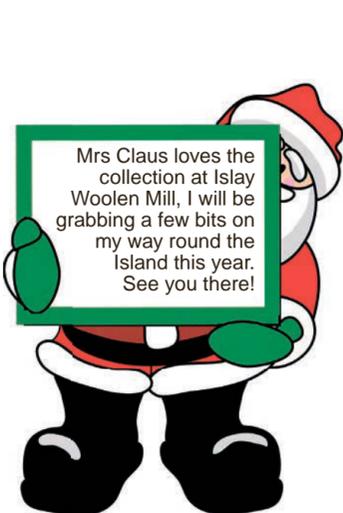
Regular services from Glasgow to Argyll, Highlands and Islands

PARCELS – PALLETS – GENERAL HAULAGE

Email Enquires to:
kenneth.smith@hebrideshaulage.co.uk



Hi, Santa here, I am going to be so busy delivering to all the good boys and girls this year, that I have asked Hebrides Haulage to help me out. They will make sure your presents are there on time.



Mrs Claus loves the collection at Islay Woollen Mill, I will be grabbing a few bits on my way round the Island this year. See you there!

Christmas at Islay Woollen Mill

We have a multitude of Christmas Gift ideas.

- Scarves in both Wool and Cashmere.
- Mens & Ladies Shirts, Gloves, Caps, Fleecy Body Warmers.
- A limited number of Sports Jackets and Trousers @ 50% off
- Knitwear & Jewellery
- Cashmere Throws and Tweed Throws

We have made some new long super soft scarves in Fine Cashmere, three times round your neck, down to the floor.

Islay Woollen Mill, Bridgend, Isle of Islay, PA44 7PG
Tel: 01496 810563 | Fax: 01496 810677
Email: mill@islaywoollenmill.co.uk | Web: www.islaywoollenmill.co.uk



When Rudolf was tired, Achmalaraig helped deliver the last of the parcels, and provided a unique gift for someone special this Christmas, Gift Vouchers for Riding lessons

Achmalaraig Riding Stables

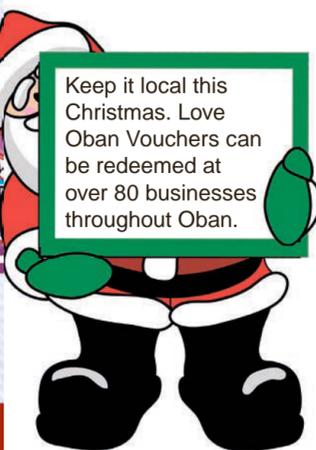
Riding & Trekking through beautiful countryside
Riding lessons available for all ages and abilities
01631 562745 / 07748 708141
Christmas gift vouchers available now

What's the best gift you can give this Christmas?

Love Oban Gift Vouchers can be redeemed at over 80 businesses throughout Oban and are valid for 12 months! Check out **Love Oban** on Facebook for Christmas promotions and Festive Headliners.

You can buy your **Love Oban** Gift Vouchers from:
The Sports Shop, Argyll Square
Webster of Oban Photographic Centre, 122-124 George St
Bid40ban, Stevenson Street

NOW IT'S EASIER THAN EVER TO LOVE OBAN!



Keep it local this Christmas. Love Oban Vouchers can be redeemed at over 80 businesses throughout Oban.

ORDER BY THE 9TH OF DECEMBER

HIGHLAND FOLD

Local Artisan ice-cream
FRESH NATURAL ICE CREAM FROM HIGHLAND COWS

FROSTY GIFT BOXES

Based in Barcaldine (11 miles from Oban). Delivering to:
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For flavours, price list, local pick-up points and to place an order e-mail
info@highland-fold.co.uk

WWW.HIGHLAND-FOLD.CO.UK



Coming from the North Pole, I love cold foods, and Highland-fold produces some of the most flavour-some homemade ice cream. I've ordered boxes for Mrs Claus, but they still have some left

Arena

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

WHAT'S ON

IN OBAN

In partnership with Oban Town Diary
bid4oban.co.uk



Thursday 30th November

St Andrews Day Celebration
St Andrew's Night Ceilidh Dance
Skipinnish Ceilidh House, Oban 7.30
Tickets £8 conc £5 Family Ticket £20 from Oban Music Shop and on the door.

LiveArgyll Libraries Bookweek Scotland Event With Author
Christopher Brookmyre
Corran Halls, Oban 7pm-8.30pm

Oban Health Walks
Start Oban Congregational Church, 10am-12pm

Oban Lorne Strathspey & Reel Society Practice Night
Oban Guide Hall, 7.30pm-9.30pm

Friday 1st December

Toy Cupboard
Glencruitten Church, 10am-12pm

Christmas Tree Festival
St Conan's Kirk, Lochawe 1.30pm-6pm

Boys Brigade
Oban Congregational Church, 6pm-9pm

Saturday 2nd December

Hill Walk Clunes
Clunes, Spean Bridge All day

Ganavan Sands Parkrun
9.30am-11am

Christmas Tree Festival
St Conan's Kirk, Lochawe 10am-6pm

Christmas Fayre
Connell Village Hall 11am-3pm

Saturday 2nd December

Cearcall Còmhraidh (Gaelic Conversation Group)
Furan Gaelic Centre, 12pm-1.30pm

Christmas at Kilbride
Historic site of Kilbride 2pm-5pm

Oban's Got Talent
The Widemouthed Frog 6pm

Winter Festival
Helensburgh
www.helensburghwinterfestival.co.uk

Sunday 3rd December

Christmas Tree Festival
St Conan's Kirk, Lochawe 1.30pm-6pm

Winter Festival
Helensburgh
www.helensburghwinterfestival.co.uk

Tuesday 5th December

Gaelic Toy Cupboard
Undercroft Church Centre, 1.30pm-3.30pm

Irish Dancing Classes
St Columba's Cathedral Hall, 4.15pm-5.45pm

Wednesday 6th December

Toy Cupboard
Undercroft Church Centre, 10am-12pm

Cancer Support Services - Drop in Wednesday
Oban Library, 2.15pm-4.15pm

Spotlight Theatre Group
Rapunzel - A tangled tale
Corran Halls, 7.30pm
Price: £6 - £35

Events may charge. Please visit

www.obanwhatson.co.uk for more details.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Contact Nadine or Rhona on **01631 568000**



oban WINTER FESTIVAL

Picture gallery: Oban Winter Festival was 'hailed' a success

OBAN Winter Festival has once again been hailed a success, writes David McPhee.

The word hail is particularly relevant this year, as millions of the little white stones pelted the town on numerous occasions.

Competitors in this year's Tartan Dash event had to endure one of these showers, but that didn't deter 60 people showing up to take part in the 5km run.

The nine-day festival offered something for everyone, from dancing and haggis hurling to gin tasting and fireworks.

'I really want to highlight that it's the whole community coming together,' one of the committee members said.

'It's not just about the committee, it's about everyone - everyone who takes part, everyone who puts on an event, because if no-one put on an event, there wouldn't be a festival.

'It's the whole community pulling together.' The community spirit was particularly prominent at the Christmas markets that took place on both Saturdays.

'The market numbers were up,' the committee member said. More than 2,500 showed up on the first Saturday and 1,300 braved rougher conditions for the second.

A spokesperson for the committee said: 'It was really good - everyone enjoyed it and there were lots of visitors

'The haggis festival on Sunday was busy from the moment it opened and the Victorian tea was a sell-out again.'

Another event that was highlighted was Santa's grotto which took place in the Rockfield Centre.

Children brought in gifts to give to Santa, and they will be given to those less fortunate in Oban.

This was a collaboration between the Salvation Army and Mary's Meals. The grotto was designed and constructed by volunteers from the Men's Shed.

'The ceilidh was fantastic,' the committee added. 'It was Crackin' Craic and Oban High School Trad Band, and they are both just so good.

'Although we have finished, there's still one more event,' they added.

That event will take place tonight (Thursday November 30) in Skipinnish Ceilidh House from 7.30pm.

It is the St Andrew's Night ceilidh dance, organised by the Oban High School Traditional School of Music.

Next year's Oban Winter Festival will take place from November 15 to 25.



The festival ended on Sunday with a fireworks display. 17_T48_Winterfestival18



M&Co fashion show. Photograph: Kevin McGlynn



M&Co fashion show. Photograph: Kevin McGlynn



Oban Gaelic Choir sing at Choirs by Candlelight at St John's, Oban. Photograph: Kevin McGlynn

Glasgow Letter

ROBERT ROBERTSON

robert.d.robertson@hotmail.co.uk



It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas...

YOU know the festive period has begun in earnest when the Glasgow Skye Association Annual Gathering weekend comes round.

This year's concert will be held tomorrow (Friday December 1) in the Glasgow University Union (GUU) with guest of honour Alastair P Campbell, The Right Honourable Lord Bracadale, singers Catriona Watt, Sineag MacIntyre, Darren Maclean, and Calum Angus Macdonald - with Eilidh MacFadyen on accordion. The piano accompanist for the evening

will be Alan Kitchen, and the Glasgow Skye Association Pipe Band complete a great line-up. The Dùn Mòr Cèilidh Band will play at the dance following the concert.

Tickets are available from Mrs Karen Campbell on 01786 832278, Iain Scott on 0141 237 3094 or 07761 799 238, or John D Robertson 07768 058139 and members of the committee.

Trad awards come to Paisley

WHO can forget, among all this Christmas cheer, the annual MG Alba Scots Trad Music Awards which, this year, will take place in the Lagoon Centre in Paisley as Paisley bids for the 2021

UK City of Culture. The votes have all been cast so everyone now awaits the results and, more importantly, a good night of craic, celebration, and (dare I say it) perhaps a wee libation here and there.

Beware, the Vatersay Boys!

AND one can hardly look ahead to Christmas time in Glasgow without a mention of the legendary Vatersay Boys gig in the Barrowland Ballroom which will take place this year on Friday December 8. For Highlanders in Glasgow, the Vatersay Boys gig is as much a Christmas staple as mince pies, mulled wine, and the John

Lewis Christmas advert! It is, as always, sold out; and it is bound to be an absolute Christmas cracker.

Glasgow Skye post-Mòd cèilidh

EARLIER this month, the Glasgow Skye Post Mòd Cèilidh was held in the Crawford Hall, Beith Street. It is always a great opportunity for youngsters to perform their Mòd pieces free from competition nerves and scary adjudicators! There was an excellent turnout of parents and friends - and no less than an incredible 27 acts took to the stage ranging through solos, duets, recitations, story-telling, dancing, pip-

ing, fiddling, and accordion playing - all giving great performances. The evening was compered in her usual friendly style by Eilidh Cormack and was generally agreed to have been a most successful function.

What's on

Thursday November 30: Glasgow Skye Association annual dinner at 7pm in the Glasgow University Union.
Friday December 1: Glasgow Skye Association Annual Gathering Concert in the Glasgow University Union at 7.30pm and dance at 10.30pm.
Friday December 8: Clydebank and District Highland Association Ceilidh in the

Napier Hall at 7.30pm.
Friday December 8: The Vatersay Boys Live in the Glasgow Barrowland.
Saturday December 9: Glasgow Skye Association children's party at 2.30pm in the Rensfield Centre, Blythswood Hall.

Pub scene

Islay Inn
Friday December 1: The Keelies
Saturday December 2: Deep River
Sunday December 3: Calum Macphail
Park Bar
Saturday December 2: Trail West
Sunday December 3: Trail West

Oban and Lorn Lions Club

Visit Santa

Saturday 9th & 16th December

Airds Crescent

Next to TSB Bank, Oban

11am - 4pm

Entry by donation

Table top sale

Seasonal gifts and crafts



Sponsored by Menzies Distribution



In association with Oban Winter Festival
St Andrews Day
scotland.org/winter

Oban High School
Traditional School of Music

ST ANDREW'S NIGHT

CEILIDH DANCE

SKIPINNISH CEILIDH HOUSE

THUR 30TH NOV, 7.30PM

£8, Conc £5, Family Ticket £20

Tickets from Oban Music and on the door.

This week's starter is bought to you by Kenny Meldrum, head chef at The Regent Hotel



Cullen Skink Tarts

Watercress & vine tomatoes

Serves 4

Short crust pastry

225g plain flour

150g butter

1 whole egg

25ml water

pinch of salt

Filling

1 fillet smoked Haddock

2 large potatoes (Maris Piper)

diced and part boiled

1 leek chopped finely

1 onion finely diced

600 ml cream

3 eggs

2 sprigs of thyme

Salt and pepper to taste

Method

Sift flour with salt. Rub flour & butter to crumb, add egg & water. Mix until a smooth dough. Rest in fridge for 30mins. Rollout into flan ring and blind bake for 12 mins at 165°C.

Lightly grill haddock fillet, flake once cooled. Lightly fry onions, leek & Thyme and allow to cool.

Finely chop boiled potatoes and mix all together, season with salt & pepper to taste and spread evenly in your pastry case. Whisk egg & cream and pour over the mix. Bake for 15mins 170°C. Serve with a little watercress & Vine tomatoes.

Open 7 days a week from 5pm-9pm

Book Now Tel: **01631 562341**



Pub & Gig Guide coming soon



Oban Charity Hope Kitchen had a stall at the Christmas market held in the distillery. 17_T48_Winterfestival07



M&Co fashion show. Photograph: Kevin McGlynn



Waitresses Anne Buchanan, Frances Melville and Sally Orr serve Lorraine MacCormick and Lyndsay Ross at the Victorian high tea at the Corran Halls. Photograph: Kevin McGlynn



Bill from Oban Distillery sports a Christmas hat and a bottle of Oban's finest. 17_T48_Winterfestival10



Two-year-old Harris from Hamilton met Coolio at the Christmas market. 17_T48_Winterfestival08



Golden haggis winner Ayr butcher Stephen Miller at haggis awards in Oban Distillery. Photograph: Kevin McGlynn



Members of Oban Rotary Club were on hand to ensure the parade went smoothly. 17_T48_Winterfestival15



Before the sky was illuminated in fireworks, the hat parade made its way from the Corran Halls to the distillery. T48_Winterfestival13



Some of the Christmas figures that featured at the festival. 17_T48_Winterfestival06.

Your local radio listings

OBAN FM Community Radio - your local radio station
Tune in to 103.3 or listen live at www.obanfm.com
For requests, competitions or questions please email: studio@obanfm.org.uk or call us on 01631 570057

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

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

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

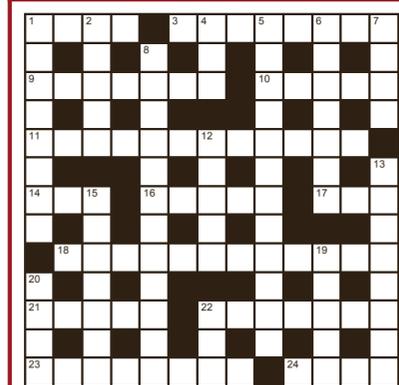
THURSDAY: 08.00 - 11.00 Breakfast with Andy and Sarah, 11.00 Molly's Mix with Molly Black, 13.00 Molly's Mix, 15.00 Drivetime with Stephen, 17.00 Drivetime with Stephen McPhee, 18.00 Drivetime with Stephen McPhee, 19.00 Christines Collection, 20.00 Christine's CD Collection, 21.00 Ann's Ceilidh, 22.00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

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

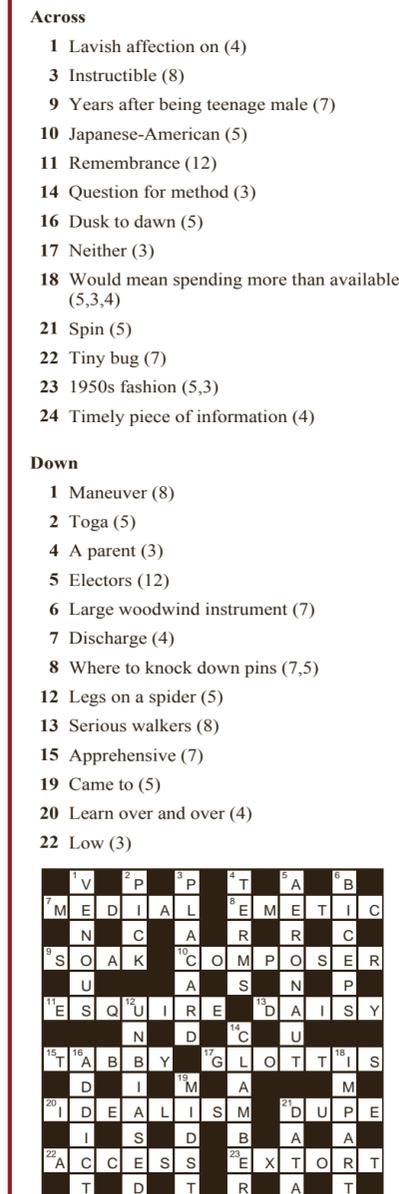
SATURDAY: 08.00 Breakfast Show with Stephen, 10.00 Sat Morning Live, 11.00 Saturday Morning, 12.00 Saturday Morning Live with Linda Crowther, 12.03 Sat Morning Live, 12.05 Saturday Morning Live, 13.30 Clyde, 18.00 Sports View - Dream Team, 19.00 Sounds Scottish with Archie Darling, 20.00 Dave Lewis,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

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

THE OBAN TIMES GENERAL KNOWLEDGE CROSSWORD



- Across**
- 1 Lavish affection on (4)
 - 3 Instructible (8)
 - 9 Years after being teenage male (7)
 - 10 Japanese-American (5)
 - 11 Remembrance (12)
 - 14 Question for method (3)
 - 16 Dusk to dawn (5)
 - 17 Neither (3)
 - 18 Would mean spending more than available (5,3,4)
 - 21 Spin (5)
 - 22 Tiny bug (7)
 - 23 1950s fashion (5,3)
 - 24 Timely piece of information (4)
- Down**
- 1 Maneuver (8)
 - 2 Toga (5)
 - 4 A parent (3)
 - 5 Electors (12)
 - 6 Large woodwind instrument (7)
 - 7 Discharge (4)
 - 8 Where to knock down pins (7,5)
 - 12 Legs on a spider (5)
 - 13 Serious walkers (8)
 - 15 Apprehensive (7)
 - 19 Came to (5)
 - 20 Learn over and over (4)
 - 22 Low (3)



COMMUNITY NOTICEBOARD
If you would like to advertise in the Oban Times Community Noticeboard please call 01631 568000

Oban Accordion & Fiddle Club
Thursday 7th December 2017, 7.30pm
Royal Hotel
Guest Artist: Graeme MacKay's Band
Admission £4 All Welcome!

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1st & 3rd Dec 1.30-6pm,
2nd 10am-6pm
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Hogmanay at the Nevis Centre is as much a Lochaber tradition as bringing in the New Year with the bells and Auld Lang Syne - except this year it is going to be very much better!

Doors will be open from 8.00pm on December 31st, with entertainment from award winning local band 'Wonderland' starting at 9.00pm. Then at 10.30pm the world-renowned Fergie Macdonald takes the stage to see you through the bells and into 2018 with his own brand of rip-roaring ceilidh music. With "Wonderland" coming back on stage at 12.30am to take us through until the close of the night.

Tickets are £25 each with tables of 8 available. Tickets can be bought over the phone with a card or pop in and see us.

find us on facebook
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Win a £50 M&S Gift Card to spend on your Christmas feast



To celebrate the opening of the brand new M&S Foodhall Fort William and just in time for Christmas, four lucky locals will each win a £50 M&S Gift Card to spend in store on festive treats or foodie gifts for friends and family this Christmas. The new store will open its doors on Thursday 30th November at 10am. Customers will be able to browse more than 4,500 quality M&S food and drink lines including a range of specialty pastries and cakes, freshly baked each day by the in-store Bakery. Customers are also invited to enjoy a hot drink and tasty treat from the store's 24 seat café. Showstopping fish dishes are expected to be a popular addition to the festive menu this Christmas. M&S has been working with expert seafood suppliers across the country to create new twists on firm favourites, such as smoked salmon with a beetroot and vodka marinade. Raw oysters from the Isle of Mull are also on the M&S menu for the first time this year along with Langoustine Tails, and a new Bone-in Scottish Monkfish Tail Wrapped in Pancetta.

Shoppers have until 15th December to place their Christmas food orders in store or online at <https://christmasfood.marksandspencer.com/slots>

Your chance to win one of four £50 gift cards to spend at your new local M&S Foodhall, Fort William

Simply answer the following question and send your answer, with your name, email address and telephone number to: M&S Competition, Wyvex Media, 22 High Street, Fort William, PH33 6AT.

Question: Where does M&S source its oysters for its Christmas menu?
a) Isle of Arran b) Isle of Mull c) Isle of Harris

Terms and Conditions
1. Four winners will be selected at random after the closing date of Friday 8th December
2. Each winner will receive a £50 gift card
3. Prize not transferable, no whole/part cash alternatives, delivered within 5 days of competition closing date

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Pulsating Islay Sessions show island spirit

By Mary Donnelly

The 2017 Islay Sessions are done and dusted, bringing an end to an eventful weekend of music, whisky and the release of the late island musician Fraser Shaw's tune book.

One first-time attendee, Cathy Pidsley, described the sessions as 'an annual event not to be missed', with an opening performance

by Scots Trad Award Composer of the Year nominee Adam Sutherland and Mark Clement.

Saturday gave visitors a hands-on experience during the day with a musical workshop run by Scots Trad Award Tutor of the Year nominee Emma Tomlinson, followed by a tour of various distilleries including

Bruichladdich, Caol Ila and Bunnahabhain.

The evening performances featured artists such as Joy Dunlop, Mhairi Marwick, Ron Jappy, Jen Butterworth and Laura-Beth Salter.

Finally, the moment arrived for Fraser's tune book to be introduced: Fraser's brother Greig gave a beautiful speech about him and his dream to release a

book, after which its first few copies were presented to a few people who were key to getting this immense project off the ground.

The band Tannara then took to the stage with a pulsating set of contemporary and traditional tunes and songs, before all musicians in the room got up to finish the night off with a

favourite composition of Fraser's, *The C-Side*.

The final day of the festival ended quietly with music by Innes Watson, setting to music his poems of ordinary daily life – namely of a robin and a chicken who were walking in the woods. Each night ended with a late night session at the Port Charlotte Hotel bar.



Friday night's session. NO_T48IslaySessions01



Tannara. NO_T48IslaySessions01



Eye to eye
with John Wallace

Vision and driving

For the past two weeks I have been working away from the practice, either on one of the west coast islands or on training courses down south. It has meant I have been spending lots of time on ferries or in airport lounges catching up on reading my professional magazines. I was fascinated to discover an article about European vision standards for driving. There is supposed to be harmony in standards across the EU. About the only

standard that seems to be implemented throughout Europe is the size of letters on the vision test chart that must be seen to permit you to drive.

What appalled me was finding out the UK has the lowest standard of all. The UK requirement is reading a number plate at 20.5 metres when you sit your driving test. This could be when you are only seventeen years old and you do not need another check of your vision until you stop

driving or die. As a driver over seventy you simply need to self-certify you can still read a number plate at 20.5m when you renew your licence. Many EU countries insist on regular eye examinations for drivers. They check you can read a set size of letter on the test chart and many also check your peripheral vision.

A recent survey of UK drivers were found 46% supposedly wear glasses. Amazingly, 20% of those drivers admitted

regularly driving without their glasses. If you don't wear your driving glasses you have a fourfold increase in the risk of having an accident. One in three drivers not needing glasses has not had an eye examination in the last two years.

In Scotland there is no excuse for not having regular eye examinations. NHS Scotland fund free two yearly eye exams for everyone resident in Scotland.

John Wallace BSc (Hons), FCOptom, DipCLP

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Ballet West will bring performance to Oban



Taynuilt-based Ballet West will present *Giselle ou les Willis* on tour to eight venues across Scotland, opening at MacRobert Arts Centre in Stirling on January 26 and including Oban on its itinerary.

The new production by the company's choreographer and artistic adviser, Daniel F Job, features two outstanding young dancers, Natasha Watson and Uyu Hiromoto, sharing the lead role of Giselle.

Natasha, from Falkirk, a graduate of Ballet West, is now a lecturer and principal

dancer with the company. She has danced with Scottish Ballet and English National Ballet.

Uyu, who is from Japan, is a third-year student. Both Natasha and Uyu have achieved the Royal Academy of Dance's Solo Seal. They will be partnered by Ballet West's senior principal dancer, Jonathan Barton, performing the role of Count Albrecht.

Nearly 100 of Ballet West's students, together with guest artists, and students from Ballet West's Glasgow and Edinburgh associates,

will be taking part in the tour to venues in Paisley, Greenock, Livingston, Oban, Glasgow, Inverness, finishing in Edinburgh on February 17.

Giselle is described as a ballet-pantomime in two acts. It was first performed in Paris in 1841.

Daniel F Job's choreography for Ballet West's talented young company is based on the revivals of Marius Petipa.

Gillian Barton, Ballet West's principal says: 'For students on HND and degree courses, our popular annual tours provide

invaluable experience in performing for audiences in many different venues across Scotland.

'It is an essential element of their training as dance artists of the future. Our classical ballet tours provide a wonderful opportunity for students to dance alongside experienced professional dancers. The high artistic standards achieved in our productions never fail to attract appreciative audiences of all ages.'

The ballet comes to the Corran Halls in Oban on Thursday February 8 at 7.30pm.

Opportunity for young Argyll pipers

The Scottish Pipe Band Championships will be commencing in Livingston on March 11 next year, with 120 schools from across Scotland taking part.

Schools require four or three pipers and a tutor to enter a quartet.

The event is organised by the Scottish Schools Pipes and

Drums Trust with cash prizes available for the winners. More than 800 young pipers and drummers are expected to take part.

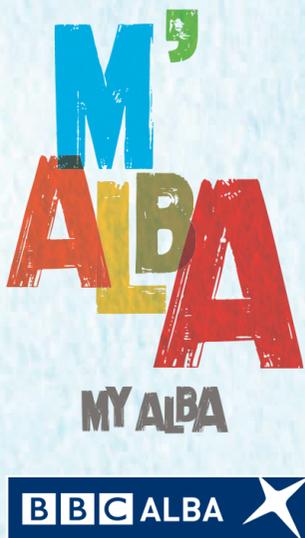
Alexandra Duncan, chief executive of the Scottish Schools Pipes and Drums Trust, said: 'The championships were established in 2011 to encourage the formation of school

pipe bands, and offer a positive and friendly experience for players who are new to competition, as well as a forum for bands at the very top of their game.'

'This year we are delighted to see entries from new schools pipe bands that have been created with the trust's help. The trust can help more state

schools in Scotland to expand music opportunities for pupils by introducing piping and drumming tuition, and we invite teachers and parents to contact us.'

The deadline for entries is the January 26. For more information and to submit entries, please visit www.the-championships.org.uk



DIARDAOIN 30 SAMHAIN
THURSDAY 30 NOVEMBER
17.00 **Prògraman Chloinne** – Children's programming
19.00 **Tathadh** – Balavil (rpt)
19.25 **Binneas – Na Trads** – The Speirs Family (rpt)
19.30 **Speaking our Language** (rpt)
19.55 **Earrann Eachdraidh** (rpt)
20.00 **An Là** – News
20.30 **UR | NEW: Eòrpa**
21.00 **An t-Ionnachadh Bòidheach** – the impact of an unconventional teacher (rpt)
22.00 **Féis Chiùil Thiriodh** – The Levellers (rpt)
22.30 **Là mu Dheireadh Lincoln** – following the last hours of President Lincoln's life (rpt)
23.20 **Belladrum 2016: Cridhe Tartan** – C. Duncan (rpt)
23.30 **Fonn Fonn Fonn** (rpt)

DIHAOINE 01 DÙBHLACHD
FRIDAY 01 DECEMBER
17.00 **Prògraman Chloinne** – Children's programming
19.00 **An Là** – News

19.25 **UR | NEW: Pro 14 Live Rugby** – Glasgow v Blues
21.30 **Kerry's Kirsty: Rothan gu Robhanais** (rpt)
22.00 **Na Trads aig 15** (rpt)
23.00 **Latha mu Dheireadh Lincoln** – the last hours of President Lincoln's life (rpt)
20.30 **Kerry's Kirsty: Rothan gu Robhanais** (rpt)
23.50 **Dhan Uisge** – Loch Maree (rpt)

DISATHAIRNE 02 DÙBHLACHD
SATURDAY 02 DECEMBER
16.00 **Prògraman Chloinne** – Children's programming
17.50 **Fraochy Bay** (rpt)
18.00 **UR | NEW: Scottish Premiership** – Heart of Midlothian v Hamilton Academical
20.00 **Aibisidh** – Quiz show (rpt)
20.30 **Eòrpa** (rpt)
21.00 **UR | NEW: Na Trads 2017**
23.15 **Men at Lunch – Dealbh sna Speuran** – the untold story of New York's greatest legend (rpt)
24.15 **Cuirim a' Celtic** – Stockton's Wings (rpt)

DIDÒMHAICH 03 DÙBHLACHD
SUNDAY 03 DECEMBER
16.00 **Prògraman Chloinne** – Children's programming
18.30 **Seachd Là** – News Review
19.30 **UR | NEW: Alleluia**
20.00 **Fuine** – Cooking for a day on the move (rpt)
20.30 **Prosbaig** (rpt)
21.00 **Opry an Iúir** (rpt)
21.55 **Ceòl Dannsa** – a tribute to Robbie Shepherd (rpt)
22.55 **Fraochy Bay** (rpt)
23.00 **Là mu Dheireadh Lincoln** (rpt)
23.50 **Dhan Uisge** (Loch Loyne) (rpt)

DILUAIN 04 DÙBHLACHD
MONDAY 04 DECEMBER
17.00 **Prògraman Chloinne** – Children's programming
19.00 **Innsean an Iar** – Hebrides (rpt)
19.30 **Speaking our Language** (rpt)
19.55 **Earrann Eachdraidh** (rpt)
20.00 **An Là** – News
20.30 **Kerry's Kirsty: Rothan gu Robhanais** (rpt)
21.00 **Trusadh – Siar gu Siorraidh** – West Side FC defend their Lewis &

Harris League title (rpt)
22.00 **H ro Gheallaidh** (rpt)
22.30 **Dileab Thormoid** – story of photographer and naturalist Dr Norman Morrison and his historic photographs (rpt)
23.30 **Féis Chiùil Thiriodh** – The Levellers (rpt)

DIMÀIRT 05 DÙBHLACHD
TUESDAY 05 DECEMBER
17.00 **Prògraman Chloinne** – Children's programming
19.00 **Tathadh – Caisteal Charabasdail** (rpt)
19.25 **Binneas – Na Trads – Deoch'n'Dorus** (rpt)
19.30 **Speaking our Language** (rpt)
19.55 **Earrann Eachdraidh** (rpt)
20.00 **An Là** – News
20.30 **Air an Smùid** – the battle to save a rusting old puffer (rpt)
21.00 **UR | NEW: Opry an Iúir**
21.55 **Dhan Uisge (Loch Loyne)** (rpt)
22.00 **Trusadh – Siar gu Siorraidh** – West Side FC defend their Lewis & Harris League title (rpt)
23.00 **UR | NEW: Quay Sessions** –

Adam Holmes & The Embers
23.25 **Fraochy Bay** (rpt)
23.30 **Alleluia** (rpt)

DICIADAIN 06 DÙBHLACHD
WEDNESDAY 06 DECEMBER
17.00 **Prògraman Chloinne** – Children's programming
19.00 **Innsean an Iar** – Hebrides (rpt)
19.30 **Speaking our Language** (rpt)
20.00 **An Là** – News
20.30 **UR | NEW: Prosbaig**
21.00 **Gàidhlig Obar Dheathain** – the history and future of Gaelic in Aberdeen (rpt)
22.00 **Fonn Fonn Fonn** (rpt)
22.30 **Hòro Gheallaidh** (rpt)
23.00 **An t-Ionnachadh Bòidheach** – the story about the impact of an unconventional teacher (rpt)
23.30 **Fonn Fonn Fonn** (rpt)

DIARDAOIN 07 DÙBHLACHD
THURSDAY 07 DECEMBER
17.00 **Prògraman Chloinne** – Children's programming
19.05 **Tathadh** – Caisteal Charabasdail (rpt)

19.30 **Speaking our Language** (rpt)
20.00 **An Là** – News
20.30 **UR | NEW: Eòrpa**
21.00 **Bho Mhinistear gu Modaratair** – a year following Angus Morrison's year as a Moderator of the church of Scotland (rpt)
22.00 **Féis Chiùil Thiriodh** – Highlights from Tìree Festival 2016 (rpt)
22.30 **UR | NEW: Reagan & Gorbachev** – Rogan Reagan & Michael Gorbachev putting an end to the cold war
23.30 **Fonn Fonn Fonn** (rpt)

New TMF stage spotlights young talent

By Mary Donnelly
Tiree Music Festival introduces its new Elevate Stage next year, to showcase emerging Scottish artists and young musicians. An aspiring artistic programmer will also be given the opportunity to help festival directors shape the stage and bring young people into the spotlight. Applications for the internship opened on Monday, inviting anyone aged between 18 and 26 to take part. If successful, the winner will work with the festival team between January and July 2018. The new stage is supported by the Year of Young

People, which aims to create new opportunities for Scottish youth to celebrate their talents. Festival director Daniel Gillespie said: 'We are really excited to be part of the Year of Young People 2018 and to create an opportunity through the brand new Elevate Stage for young people to really show what they are made

of, both through the artistic direction of the programming and the young artists performing on the stage itself.' Next year's festival also features a new creative programme for young people and their families. As part of this there will be workshops, sport, music and culture events focusing on four core elements that

are a key part of life on Tiree: sun, sand, wind and water. Over the years the island festival has grown in popularity, selling out every year since 2010, with tickets sales rising and visitor numbers increasing 25 per cent since 2014. The 2018 festival will run from July 13 to 15, and early bird tickets are on sale.



Photos: Alan Peebles



Dancing in the sunshine at the eighth year of the Tiree Music Festival in 2017.



Photo: Dol Eoin MacKinnon



Iona Community prepares to publish new book

The Iona Community's publishing arm, Wild Goose Publications, is about to release its latest book, *The Pieces We Keep, Stories for the seasons*, by Katie Munnik. A paperback priced at £10.50, the book will be published next month (December). Wild Goose said: 'The Pieces We Keep is a collection of short stories told by vivid voices. Some voices are familiar - characters from scripture, history, folklore, myth and legend - while others spring from the world around us and speak a modern tongue. Together, they direct our gaze to life's small

details - taking down the Christmas lights, swimming on a summer's day, remembering the names of wild flowers, looking back and looking forward. 'The familiar becomes strange and the overlooked beautiful as Katie Munnik calls us to consider anew why stories matter. The book charts the changing cycles and seasons of the year, reflecting the liturgical patterns of the church and all the weathers of our hearts.' Donald Smith, director of the Scottish International Storytelling Festival, said: 'Katie Munnik is an excellent storyteller and her sto-

ries are flesh and blood, like the Christian and Jewish scriptures. They bring those big stories to life, while opening up new insights and perspectives.' Katie Munnik is a Canadian writer based in Cardiff. Her work has appeared in Wild Goose anthologies as well as in magazines and journals. She has worked with congregations and communities in the UK and Canada, always asking questions and sharing stories. Her debut novel, *The Heart Beats in Secret*, will be published by the Borough Press (HarperCollins) in spring 2019.

ADVERTORIAL

Christmas at Kilbride

Friends of Kilbride invite you to 'Christmas at Kilbride': festive fun for young and old. Just a few minutes along the Lerags road, past The Barn bar turn-off, stands the historic site of Kilbride. On Saturday December 2, between 2pm and 5pm, the charity that looks after the site, the Friends of Kilbride, invites the community to come along to Café Kilbride, to enjoy some Christmas cheer, or munch on their home-made brownies or a scrumptious Christmas pie. Ssshhh! Whisper it, the man in the red suit just might make an appearance, with a wee gift for the weans. Round about Whether you've



visited historic Kilbride before, or it's a brand new experience, they would love to hear your views and ideas as to how they can preserve Kilbride and its enthralling history for future generations. For further info, see Facebook page or web site www.friendsofkilbride.scot (mind and view the lovely three-minute film all about Kilbride.) or send us an email to friendsofkilbride@gmail.com



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Published on 7th December

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Interface helps business idea come out of its shell

LOOKING to the future, a family-run oyster farm on Lismore wanted to diversify by introducing a new product which would help offer local employment and more economic security.

Poaching oysters in unusual flavours such as artisan gin, white wine, Champagne and lemon was the brainwave of Mairi Hawkes, whose father started farming oysters from the Isle of Lismore 25 years ago.

Before launching the new product range, Mairi wanted to carry out some research to ensure the shellfish didn't shrink during the process, had as long a shelf life as possible and to develop the flavours.

Lorraine Thomson, who heads up Interface's Highlands and Islands team, met Mairi at an event in Oban. Lorraine scoped up a brief of the project requirements which was sent out to universities and research institutes through-



Lorraine Thomson facilitated the link between Mairi Hawkes and Scotland's Rural College.

out Scotland for consideration. Mairi chose to collaborate with Scotland's Rural College (SRUC), which has expertise in food production and whose chefs helped the business work on the

technical challenges the idea presented.

Through SRUC, the project was awarded a £5,000 innovation voucher from the Scottish Funding Council, which Interface

administered to help offset the costs of the collaboration.

The business is now working on the logistics of producing the poached oysters and is preparing for the launch of a range of cocktail-inspired drizzles using similar flavours to complement their fresh oysters.

Interface has introduced almost 2,700 businesses in all sectors across Scotland to academic partners, from kitchen-table enterprises to family-run companies and community groups.

Lorraine explained: 'We are here to support businesses through their collaboration with academic expertise and make the process of finding a suitable partner as straightforward as possible; we really are matchmakers for businesses.'

Among the businesses Lorraine and the team have supported locally are Craine Communications, Zing Organics and Staffin

Community Trust, which were connected with Heriot-Watt University, University of Strathclyde and the University of the Highlands and Islands respectively, for projects to develop their business or organisation.

And it is more than just academic expertise on offer: business can also access specialist facilities including 3D printers, microscopy, human performance labs, wave tanks, virtual reality and textile printing, which come with the know-how at the university or research institute.

For more information on Interface, visit www.interface-online.org.uk/ob at any time, or contact the team in Inverness: Lorraine.thomson@interface-online.org.uk tel: 01463 245263 (for businesses in Argyll and the Isles) or Carol-Ann.Adams@interface-online.org.uk tel: 01463 245262 (for businesses in Lochaber, Skye and Wester Ross).

Oban pub has loo-xurious lavs

AN OBAN pub has received the highest award possible for the quality and standards of its toilets at this year's Loo of the Year Awards.

The Corryvreckan in Waterfront Centre, Railway Pier, has been awarded a platinum star rating by inspectors.

The awards, celebrating their 30th anniversary this year, are aimed at highlighting and improving standards of toilets across the UK.

Inspectors make unannounced visits to thousands of toilets in order to judge them.

All of the toilets are graded from bronze to platinum with unacceptable toilets not graded at all.

The platinum rating is given only to outlets which offer 'exceptional toilets'.

The toilets are judged against numerous criteria, including décor and maintenance, cleanliness, accessibility, hand washing and drying equipment and overall management.

Oban's Corryvreckan, a Wetherspoon pub, is



Staff at Wetherspoon's Corryvreckan pub in Oban are delighted with their win.

managed by Alan Yiatro and Elizabeth Piper.

Alan said: 'We are delighted with the award. Staff at the pub ensure the toilets are in first-class condition at all times and it is great that

this has been recognised by the inspectors.'

The Loo of the Year Awards 2017 managing director, Mike Bone, said: 'The toilets at The Corryvreckan have been designed and fitted out

to a very high standard and are both clean and well maintained.

'The pub richly deserves its platinum award - the highest individual award the judges can deliver.'

Kebabish opens revamped cafe

KEBABISH has officially opened its refurbished premises - functioning as a cafe, restaurant, coffee house, mocktail bar and Dzrts Parlour.

The establishment, which previously offered an all-you-can-eat buffet, will now produce something for everyone, all the while still providing its wide range of desserts, cakes, shakes, ice-creams and sundaes served at your table.

The cafe will open at 7.30am, serving freshly prepared hot crepes and waffles in Kebabish's new crepes and two-size waffle maker.

As well as this, it will serve hot meat pastries, sandwiches, rolls, baked potatoes, pancakes as well as coffee, tea and suki tea. From 4pm, Kebabish restaurant will offer authentic Pakistani curries, kebabs, fried chicken and pizzas, which will be made in their new pizza oven that is currently being delivered from America.

Accompanying both menus will be a mocktail list, which will feature freshly pressed juices.

Self-proclaimed coffee queen Natalia Grobicka, a barista specialist, said: 'I think it's real-



Danyal Ali Chaudhry, Shaukat Anwar Chaudhry, and Natalia Grobicka in Kebabish.

ly great. I really love the coffee shop idea - it's something I really enjoy doing, so I'm happy and look forward to serving oban community with best of my ability.'

Natalia will be ecstatic when Kebabish's new coffee machine arrives, which managing director Shaukat Chaudhry describes as being 'the first in this area, and probably the first in Scotland'.

He added: 'Our coffee is associated with Mathew Algie and we will be serving both double and triple roast beans coffee.'

Argyll businesses success at awards

TWO ARGYLL food companies came out on top at this year's Quality Food Awards.

The Wee Isle Dairy on the Isle of Gigha was awarded the best chilled dairy product for their whole milk, beating supermarket giants Aldi, Asda and Iceland.

The smokery's kiln-roasted salmon was also highly commended. Both firms attended the award ceremony in London.

'It's just brilliant news for Argyll,' said Allan McDougall, owner of Argyll Smokery.

'Our family-run smokehouse and the Wee Isle Dairy strive to make quality products and to be recognised by experts for our efforts here right in the centre of London makes it all worthwhile.'

The quality food awards have been going for almost 40 years, recognising the 'best in British food and drink'.

The awards were described as the Academy Awards for the UK food industry by winner Don Dennis. Speaking about the secret to his success, Don (above),



director of Wee Isles Dairy, said: 'All of our milk is from the herd of roughly 60 Freisian cows. Our milk is nearly unique in the UK these days, because we use old fashioned low-temperature pasteurising.'

Larger firms typically use a higher temperature allowing them to process milk faster.

'We tried it once when we first got our equipment,' Don said. 'And immediately said never again. That enables them to sell on to the supermarkets at the lowest possible price. But the real cost is in the damage that brings to the flavour.'

'Our milk is bottled in returnable and recyclable glass bottles in order to have the least environmental impact, as well as to avoid tainting the flavour.'

TSL lands Caol homes contract

TSL Contractors Ltd has been awarded the contract to construct 60 houses at the former Lochside Primary School site in Caol, Fort William.

Work will begin in January and continue into late summer 2019.

TSL said: 'We strongly believe in working closely with, and investing in the local economy. With this in mind, we would like to work with local labour, contractors and suppliers on the project wherever possible.'

'To provide an easily accessible platform for this, TSL will be holding a contractor and supplier open day. During the event, staff from our procurement and project departments will be on hand to discuss the various opportunities and would be delighted to meet any interested parties during the event which will run from 4-6.30pm at Caol Community Centre on Tuesday December 12.'

'If you are unable to make the event or would more information, please feel free to contact our general manager, John Forbes, at j.forbes@tslcontractors.co.uk for further details.'

Community transport project launched

THE LAUNCH of Argyll Food Producers' project to develop and pilot a unique community transport scheme was attended by an impressive range of local businesses and community representatives, during Argyll Enterprise Week's food and drink day at the Loch Fyne Hotel.

A grant from the Prince's Countryside Fund will allow Argyll Food Producers to create a communications network that raises awareness of the availability of transport between communities.

The system will mainly operate on an ad hoc basis co-ordinated initially by a telephone helpline with the development of an app or similar knowledge transfer platform being explored.

The Prince's Countryside Fund will provide funding to recruit and employ a project manager and provide the resources to build on the survey work that has been supported by Argyll and Bute Council.

This funding has been made possible thanks to the Players of People's Postcode Lottery.

Virginia Sumsion, co-coordinator for AFP, said: 'Argyll Food Producers are very grateful for the support received from the Prince's Countryside Fund and People's Postcode Lottery for this project and hope that its results will be

of benefit to food producers and other transport users throughout the area.'

Argyll and the Isles landscape of sea lochs, islands, hills and glens is one of its greatest strengths but poses major problems when transporting goods and people throughout the region.

The region offers a huge range of high quality produce and it is those food producers that offer a potential solution to Argyll's transport challenges. Both the traditional and, if feasible, digitally-based 'peer to peer' service delivery will link with existing transportation links, enhance community inclusion, improve access and transport links for people and lead to a significant reduction in carbon footprint.

In an area where there is a high level of self-employment and micro-businesses, there is a one dividing line between community and business. The project will combine the needs of businesses with the needs of the community in its widest sense.

Argyll Food Producers is a co-operative organisation trading as Food from Argyll. It aims to raise the profile of Argyll and the Isles as a good food producer area and a good food destination, creating greater market opportunities for its members to assist its financial growth and business development.



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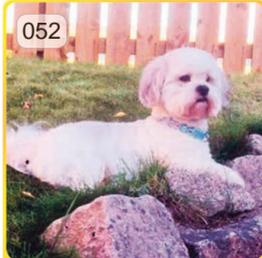
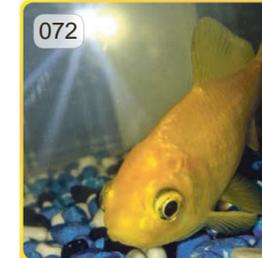
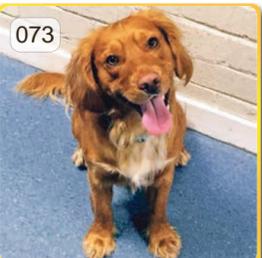
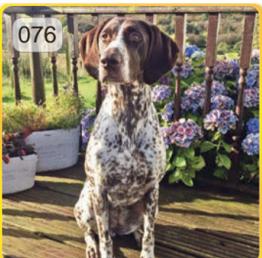
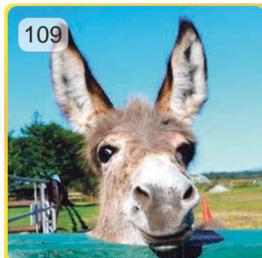
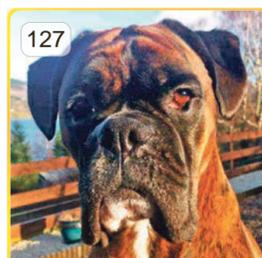
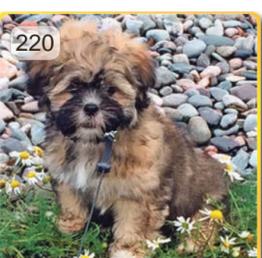
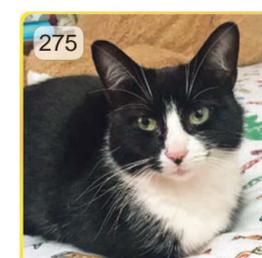
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Pet Idol

Time to vote for your TOP 20!

 <p>003 Indie Irish Setter Craignure, Isle of Mull</p>	 <p>013 Misty Miniature Shetland Collie Caol, Fort William</p>	 <p>014 Angus Cat Dunstaffnage, Oban</p>	 <p>018 Elvis Dog Tobermory, Isle of Mull</p>	 <p>029 Marni Jack Russell Terrier Caol, Fort William</p>	 <p>036 Oscar Spaniel Mallaig</p>
 <p>037 Max Cat Lochgilthead</p>	 <p>038 Scooby-Doo Dog Inveraray</p>	 <p>052 Baxter Shichon Appin</p>	 <p>065 Teddy Shih Tzu Lhasa Apso cross Oban</p>	 <p>068 Mr Bigglez Staffordshire Bull Terrier Bowmore, Isle of Islay</p>	 <p>072 Daniel Goldfish Lochgilthead</p>
 <p>073 Ozzy Dog Oban</p>	 <p>076 Breeze German Shorthaired Pointer Saddell, Campbeltown</p>	 <p>077 Remi Dog Campbeltown</p>	 <p>109 Marjorie Donkey Benderloch</p>	 <p>111 Meg Dog Kilmichael Glassary, Lochgilthead</p>	 <p>113 Friska Schnauzer/Poodle cross (Schnoodle) Oban</p>
 <p>123 Barney Goldendoodle Benderloch</p>	 <p>125 Cooper Cavachon Oban</p>	 <p>127 Bracken Boxer Fort William</p>	 <p>128 Finley Cat Campbeltown</p>	 <p>203 Henry Cat Campbeltown</p>	 <p>207 Max Cheviot tup lamb Oban</p>
 <p>220 Archie Lhasa Apso Oban</p>	 <p>235 Luna Welsh Terrier Lochgilthead</p>	 <p>246 Cooper Working Cocker Spaniel Dunbeg, Oban</p>	 <p>267 Chase Turner Dog Fort William</p>	 <p>270 Grayson Siberian kitten Lochgilthead</p>	 <p>275 Maisie Cat Tobermory, Isle of Mull</p>

Pet Idol

277
Bear Dog
North Connel

279
George Cat
Campbeltown

280
Hamish Cockapoo
Tarbert

282
Keira
Boxer/Staffordshire Bull Terrier cross Oban

283
Murrin Jack Russell Terrier
Ardishaig

287
Cilla Patterdale Terrier
Appin

298
Gracie Great Dane
Oban

300
Phoenix Syrian Hamster
Lochgilthead

301
Lottie May Jackawa
Tayinloan, Tarbert

303
Benji Spaniel
Port Askaig, Isle of Islay

308
Misty Border Collie
Campbeltown

311
Speedy Cat
Acharacle

324
Piglly Pig
Ardtalla Estate, Isle of Islay

326
Mac Dog
Oban

328
Isla Dog
Oban

329
Daisy Jack Russell/Bichon Frise cross
Campbeltown

332
Blue Dog
Oban

336
Niamh Golden Retriever
Lochgilthead

347
Coupar Working Cocker Spaniel
Machrihanish, Campbeltown

348
Finn Cockapoo
Campbeltown

351
Maya Dog
Oban

Time to vote
for your
TOP 20!

It's time to vote for your favourite pet for Round Three of Pet Idol!
Simply fill in the form and follow the instructions.
The pets can be viewed at www.wyvexmedia.co.uk/petidol
Good luck!

It is fair to say that you have all gone completely barking mad over Pet Idol. We have received around 2,000 votes so far for these fantastic furry and feathered friends, and now you have the incredibly difficult task of voting for your top 20.

With two of our contestants receiving the same number of votes in the last round, there are 51 pets for you to choose from.

You can vote by simply completing the voting coupon provided and send it to Wyvex Media, Pet idol Vote PO Box 1, Oban PA34 4HB.

Votes must be received by 10am, Monday 11th December.

You can vote for as many pets as many times as you like. Only one pet can be voted for on each voting form. Just make sure you use the number quoted on the pet's photograph when voting. Photocopied coupons will not be accepted. One coupon counts as one vote. We will also accept multiple vote coupons in one envelope. Good luck to the 51 hopefuls.

VOTING COUPON Round 3

I would like to vote for:
Pet number*:.....
Pet's name:

Please post to Wyvex Media, Pet Idol VOTE, PO Box 1, Oban, Argyll, PA34 4HB, or votes can also be handed in to our offices in Oban, Fort William, Lochgilthead and Campbeltown.

*Pet number must be supplied. This can be found at the top left of each pet photograph.
Photocopied voting coupons will not be accepted and will not count as one vote.
You may send in multiple voting coupons in one envelope.
Votes must be received by 10am, Monday 11th December.

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Scottish Government accused of 'neglect' by angry crofters

MORE than 40 angry crofters at a Scottish Crofting Federation (SCF) meeting on Uist have accused the Scottish Government of ignoring the threat by swarming geese to crofters and the acclaimed machair habitat.

Sam MacDonald, who chairs the North Uist branch of the SCF, said: 'This is not a sudden or new occurrence. Crofters have long been warning of the escalating geese numbers and the effect it has on crofting, and therefore on the machair habitat.'

'SCF has been fighting for movement on this for years and have raised a petition in the Scottish Parliament. But the Scottish Government has responded by systematically reducing any help.'

'Well, it has got to the point now that if something isn't done as a matter of urgency crofting will cease and the machair will suffer irreparable damage. What else can you call that but neglect?'

'Crofters are angry about this. The machair is an internationally acclaimed habitat that has European designations such as Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and Special Protection Area (SPA), largely due to the crofting methods we use.'

'Yet the Scottish Government has chosen to flout its obligations and to let the crofting that maintains that habitat be driven off by the damage caused by a plague of wild geese.'

'It is ironic that the Scottish Government is currently consulting on the future of crofting. The situation in Uist says quite clearly what the Scottish Government thinks of crofters and their environment.'



Crofters are concerned that swarming geese will damage the machair.

David Muir, secretary of SCF Uists and Barra, added: 'To rub salt into the wound, there is a sizable budget of £1.3 million per year for control of wild geese in Scotland, but a million a year is spent on control of geese on the farms of Islay.'

'Uist crofters need a small fraction

of that but this year nothing has been spent in the Uists. We had a very effective scheme funded by Scottish Natural Heritage but it stopped and so now the geese population is rapidly increasing again. Why does the budget get used up on Islay?'

'The UK government is saying that

post-Brexit rural support will be environment focused. Is the Scottish Government of this opinion too or does it intend to continue to funnel support to farmers at the expense of crofting and the environment?'

The SCF said current crofting management on the machair, based

on cattle and cropping, is demanding in terms of time and money. It added that 'if the geese population gets out of hand again, leading to unacceptable levels of damage to both crops and the best-managed and improved grassland, then that will lead to the most committed and energetic crofters switching to a lower input, and less risky, style of management. Put at its simplest - cropping would be abandoned wholesale and most would move to sheep. This would have a devastating impact on the diversity of cherished birds such as lapwing, corn bunting and corncrake, on the machair.'

Mr MacDonald said: 'We appreciate there needs to be a balance between protecting these important goose species and protecting the internationally acclaimed machair habitat, but it is way out of kilter to the detriment of the environment and crofting. Biodiversity is being lost and crofters have been abandoned by the government to deal with a disaster not of their making.'

'We have at last had some assurances from the Scottish Government that the Uist situation will be reconsidered at the National Goose Management Review Group and SNH will form an action plan. We cannot overstate the urgency.'

'We need immediate action: the reinstatement of a goose reduction scheme and redistribution of the budget if there is no new money. For the long term, we need a change to national goose management policy that will not only benefit Uist but also other crofting areas. We need policy that is fit for purpose.'

NFUS makes points in London

THE National Farmers' Union of Scotland has contributed to a high-level conference at Westminster on the future of UK farming and the environment post-Brexit.

Representing NFUS in a session on the competitiveness of UK agricultural products and future trading relationships with the EU and international partners last week, director of policy and member services Jonnie Hall restated the importance of ensuring the negotiation and future domestic policies complement the vast variety in farming systems and environments across the UK.

Addressing delegates last Tuesday morning, Mr Hall outlined the value that agriculture in Scotland holds to the wider rural economy and socio-economic public benefits, and how post-Brexit governments should support farmers to deliver these benefits and allow food producers to deliver healthy nutritious food to local populations.

Mr Hall and political affairs manager Clare Slipper then returned to the House of Commons on Tuesday afternoon to meet with MPs from the different political parties where it outlined its priorities for post-Brexit agricultural policy while its Brexit roadshow continued across Scotland.

The union met key spokespeople from Scottish Labour, the SNP and the Liberal Democrats as part of their regular engagements in London.

Mr Hall said: 'It is important that we work together with politicians during this period of change in order to come away from it with the best possible future for Scottish agriculture.'

'Scottish farmers and crofters need long-term guarantees, not quick fixes, in order to properly run their businesses and continue to supply the high quality produce that they are renowned for.'

'It is not enough just to make it through Brexit - we need to ensure that these changes are ones which allow strengthening and growth within the industry and that we continue to encourage ambition by delivering the right policies.'

'This is why we are here, to ensure that during these talks Scottish agriculture is at the fore of any discussions on post-Brexit decisions.'

Union blasts chancellor's Budget New tenancy option opens today

THE NFU Scotland has said it is 'disappointed' in last week's Budget from Chancellor Philip Hammond.

NFU chief executive Scott Walker said: 'For all the chancellor's talk of a Budget that builds an economy fit for the future, NFUS is disappointed with the announcement which is very light on any tangible measures that will excite and energise farmers, crofters, the agri-food sector or the rural economy.'

'The Budget statement could have been a good opportunity for the UK government to underline its commitment to UK and Scottish food producers by taking up recommendations made by NFU Scotland and the

other UK unions on measures that would help farm businesses to build resilience and deal with volatility at what is a pivotal moment of great uncertainty.'

'Scottish farmers and crofters form the bedrock of Scotland's booming food and drink industry, which delivers £14 billion back to the UK economy each year and now exceeds the oil and gas industry in terms of turnover. The industry has ambitions to more than double that contribution by 2030, but farmers and crofters will not be able to deliver on that ambition if they are not supported by governments to run viable, profitable and productive businesses.'

'However, with industry desperate for progress on Brexit, we

note Mr Hammond's comments that he believes the economy is ready for EU exit and a "global Britain" will be "an outward looking, free trading nation".'

'In recent months, NFU Scotland has ramped up its engagement with Westminster parliamentarians and UK government departments to highlight the importance of ensuring Scottish farmers and crofters are not taken as expendable in the Brexit negotiations. We will double up this work into 2018 to ensure that governments are left in no doubt of the importance of long-term strategic planning and support for Scotland's agricultural businesses, and seeing the industry as part of the solution.'

THE NFU Scotland is reminding its tenant and landlord members that the new Modern Limited Duration Tenancy (MLDT) comes into force from today (Thursday November 30).

The new type of tenancy was included in the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2016, and replaces the Limited Duration Tenancy (LDT) option, which has been available since 2003.

The new MLDT has a minimum term of 10 years' duration. However, tenants and landlords looking for a shorter term let will be able to continue using the Short-Limited Duration Tenancy (SLDT) option. Existing LDTs will continue unaffected until their term date.

The new MLDT has some new features, including a five-year 'break clause' for new entrants, and if an MLDT is not terminated on expiry, it will roll on for a further seven-year term. It also requires provision of a schedule of fixed equipment, which must be completed within 90 days of commencement of the tenancy.

NFU Scotland policy manager Gemma Cooper said: 'In recent weeks, NFUS has taken a higher volume of calls regarding tenancy options. Parties are increasingly looking at their choices, and wishing to clarify and discuss the legislation and policy around these.'

'It is important our tenants and landlords ensure they are aware of the new style of tenancy and the terms of it. Some

may wish to discuss or review their current letting arrangements, or considering moving to the MLDT, and we urge parties to do this in a positive and constructive manner and to seek professional advice where appropriate.'

Commenting on the availability of land to rent, she added: 'It is very encouraging that there appears to be some movement in the letting market, as this follows a period of inertia after the passing of the 2016 Act. NFUS continues to have open dialogue with both Scottish Government and the Tenant Farming Commissioner, and is very encouraged by progress to date on some of the major issues which were previously identified.'

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Around the markets

ISLAY - United Auctions held their last sale of cattle for the year on November 25 at Islay Auction Mart when they sold 440 head. All classes maintained levels obtained at the corresponding sale last year with bullocks averaging 224.1 pence per kilo or £682.93 per head whilst heifers levelled out at 209.07 pence per kilo or £603.88 per head. Dunlossit Farms, Lossit, led the prices per head with a British Blue bullock selling at £1340 whilst Dunlossit Farms, Knocklearach, led this section per kilo at 267 pence. Heifers from Uiskentuie sold to £940 per head and Knocklearach heifers sold to 238 pence per kilo. Principals lots and prices.

Bullocks
Aberdeen Angus: Uiskentuie - £1000 & £950
British Blue: Lossit - £1340
Charolais: Gartacharra - £960; Knocklearach - £810; Carrabus Farm - £800; Knocklearach - £800
Limousin: Ballychatrigan - £1030; Balaclava - £1010; Uiskentuie - £1000 (5), £980 (3) & £950; Balaclava - £930 (4); Kintra - £920; Balaclava - £900 (4); Kilbride - £890; Uiskentuie - £890 (4); Ballychatrigan - £850 (2)
Simmental: Corray - £800 (2)

Heifers
Aberdeen Angus: Gartacharra - £890 (7); Uiskentuie - £760
Charolais: Carrabus Farm - £740; Knocklearach - £670 (6) & £640 (9)
Limousin: Uiskentuie - £940; Balaclava - £910 & £900 (3); Uiskentuie - £890 (8) & £850 (4)
Simmental: Carrabus Farm - £770
Leading prices per kilo
Bullocks
Aberdeen Angus: Uiskentuie - 212
British Blue: Knocklearach - 245
Charolais: Knocklearach - 267 & 245; Carrabus Farm - 243; Kinnabus - 242 & 241
Limousin: Knocklearach - 267, 258 & 254; Kilbride - 252 & 250; Kintra - 250; Kilbride & Smalladh - 245; Kintra & Cruach - 241; Kintra - 240
Simmental: Knocklearach - 230
Heifers
Aberdeen Angus: Kelsay - 201
British Blue: Bayview - 208
Charolais: Knocklearach - 235; Kinnabus - 227; Carrabus - 224; Kinnabus 212
Limousin: Knocklearach - 238; Kintra - 235; Balaclava - 233; Kilbride & Knocklearach - 230; Bayview - 228; Kintra - 225
Simmental: Corray - 208

Heifers
Aberdeen Angus: Kelsay - 201
British Blue: Bayview - 208
Charolais: Knocklearach - 235; Kinnabus - 227; Carrabus - 224; Kinnabus 212
Limousin: Knocklearach - 238; Kintra - 235; Balaclava - 233; Kilbride & Knocklearach - 230; Bayview - 228; Kintra - 225
Simmental: Corray - 208

FORT WILLIAM - Dingwall & Highland Marts Ltd on November 24 sold 1031 store sheep of all classes. Lambs (592) sold to £67 gross for a Cheviot from Tign an Uilt, Kilchoan. Ewes (320) sold to £38 gross for a pen Cross from Blargie Farm, Laggan. Feeding sheep (119) sold to £47 gross for a pen of Cheviot from Ardnamurchan Estate. Other leading prices per head: Store lambs: CHT - Tign an Uilt, £60; Cross - Drumbuie, Drumadrochit, £60; BF - Invernahyle, £48. Ewes: CHT - Arisaig Farms, Arisaig, £37; Cross - Ard-tornish Farms, Morven, £36; BF - Breakachy, Laggan, £33. Feeding sheep: BF gmr - Ardnamurchan Estate, £38; BF ram - 16 Moss, Acharcle, £30; Cross wdr - Roshven Hill Farm, Lochailort, £29; ESY gmr - Roshven Hill Farm, £27; CHT ram - Ard-tornish Farms, £24.

STIRLING - Caledonian Marts sold 358 store cattle and suckled calves. Bullocks averaged 212p selling to 283p for Limousins from Craigievern, Balfron Station, and to £1150 for Aberdeen Angus' from Rievoch, Howwood.

Heifers averaged 198p selling to 226p for Charolais from Offers, Gargunnoch, and to £1050 (twice) for Limousins from East Kerse, Lochwinnoch. Bulls averaged 191p selling to 219p for shorthorn bulls from Highland Wagyu, Dunblane, and to £830 from the same home. Black & White bullocks averaged 140p selling to 158p from Merslaugh Farm, Ervie, Stranraer, and to £560 from Cuff, Beith. Leading prices
Bullocks per head:
£1140 East Kerse £1080
Wester Carmuir £1020 Walton (Kinloch) £1010 Wester Carmuir £980 Ardgate
Bullocks per kg:
276p Spittal (Bilsland) 269p
Craigievern 260p & 244p Spittal (Bilsland) 239p Burnside 236p Easter Jawcraig
Heifers per head:
£980 Rievoch & East Kerse
£930 Offers £850 Easterton
£830 Walton
Heifers per kilo:
224p Craigievern 222p
Tarbert (Isle of Gigha) 216p
Ballymeanach (Mull) & Offers
Bulls per head:
£760 Burnside of Balhaldie (twice) £750 & £720 Burnside of Balhaldie
Bulls per kilo:

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Bulls per head:
£760 Burnside of Balhaldie (twice) £750 & £720 Burnside of Balhaldie
Bulls per kilo:

215p & 213p Burnside of Balhaldie 212p & 209p Burnside of Balhaldie Black & Whites per head; £550 Wester Whitefield £470 Merslaugh Black & Whites per kilo; 138p Cuff 134p Wester Whitefield

DALMALLY - United Auctions on Saturday November 18 sold 1401 sheep of all classes at their end of season sheep sale. A good ringside of buyers ensured all stock was cleared at satisfactory levels. Selling to a top of £63 was a pen of Texels from Balantyne Farm Partnership. Top prices per head
Lambs: Balantyne (Tex) £63; Glenshero (Cross) £44; Evanachan (TexX) £41; Inerlair & Dunans (Chev) £40; Blarmafoldach (BF) £45; Auch Estate (BF) £43.50; Gargorie (BF) £40.50; Dunloskin (BF Ewe Lambs) £40. Ewes: Achnacree more (Suff) £52.50; Achnacree more (TexX) £43.50; Gargorie (Cross) £36; Glenshero (BF) £33; Glenshero (BF) £31; Ederline (BF) £29.50; Auch Estate (BF) £29.50. Tups: Craig (Lley) £100; Craig (Tex) £70.

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Skills shortages biting construction sector once more

Workloads in UK construction and infrastructure continued to rise in Q3 2017, according to the latest RICS UK Construction and Infrastructure Market Survey, with 22 per cent more respondents seeing a rise in workloads of the quarter, with a steady pace of growth.

However, while activity remains steady, comments left by respondents continue to highlight Brexit-related uncertainties as weighing on investment decisions and the lack of sufficiently skilled workers also remains an obstacle for many businesses.

Shortage of skilled workers

Having eased throughout 2016, the intensification of labour shortages is biting once more in the quarter with 62 per cent of contributors citing this as an impediment to growth. This contrasts with an average of 40 per cent when data collection first began in 2012. Within this, respondents to our survey are still seeing a lack of quantity surveyors (64 per cent) as well as other professionals (52 per cent). Forty-four per cent are also seeing a shortage of workers within specific trades.

Despite government efforts to bolster the workforce and the prominence of apprentices, through an apprenticeship levy introduced earlier this spring, only 42 per cent of respondents feel that government-

funded programmes are moderately effective, with one-third unsure. The quality of the talent pipeline is insufficient as well – less than half (45 per cent) of employers who currently hire apprentices view them as a long-term solution to their hiring needs.

Sector workloads

Breaking the rise in workloads and activity down to a sector level, growth is strongest in the private housing sector, while remaining broadly stable elsewhere. Meanwhile, the public non-housing sector continues to underperform all others. In infrastructure, 21 per cent more contributors reported a rise rather than a fall in workloads. Nationally, respondents expect the rail and energy sub-sectors to post the most significant increases in construction output over the coming 12 months.

Despite uncertainties, a net balance of 45 per cent of respondents expect headline activity to continue to rise rather than fall over the year ahead. Nevertheless, this is down from the four quarters immediately preceding the EU referendum, which averaged 62 per cent, reflecting a somewhat less optimistic outlook. Meanwhile, 30 per cent more contributors expect employment to rise rather than fall (broadly unchanged from Q2).



Other impediments on construction growth

While a shortage of workers is hampering activity and profit margins, financial constraints are still reported to pose the most significant challenge, although the share of contributors expressing this view has come down to 69 per cent (from 79 per cent in Q2). Access to bank finance and credit remains by far the most frequently cited issue, followed by cash flow and liquidity. This likely reflects a more cautious stance by banks given cyclical market conditions and Brexit considerations.

Higher input costs and a shortage of labour continue to restrict growth in profit margins, with a net balance of only +12 per cent of respondents expecting a rise

in margins over the coming year. This is likely to have impacted tender pricing as well, with 62 per cent and 56 per cent more respondents in the building and civil engineering areas, respectively, envisaging greater price pressures.

The view from RICS, 'While activity in the sector has moderated, growth and growth expectations remain in positive territory. Uncertainties due to Brexit continue to weigh on companies' investment and hiring decisions, and banks appear to be adopting a more cautious stance to providing finance.'

Meanwhile, challenges related to an inadequate supply of skilled labour are as pronounced as ever.'

New CIH guide makes case for exploring Housing First approach to tackling homelessness

A new publication from the Chartered Institute of Housing (CIH) explores the concept of Housing First and the principles behind it and looks at how it is being put into practice across the UK and Ireland as a one of a range of approaches to tackling homelessness.

Housing First offers permanent accommodation to people in chronic need without requiring them to go through the formal homelessness system of waiting lists, hostels and temporary accommodation.

Housing First tends to be directed at people who are sleeping rough or have experienced repeat homelessness and have mental

health and addiction problems. Under Housing First, there is no requirement for the homeless person to be 'housing ready' or to have addressed their addiction problems before moving into a permanent home. Health and addiction issues are addressed after housing has been secured, and intensive, open-ended support is provided to help the person to maintain their tenancy.

Entitled 'Housing First in the UK and Ireland', the new CIH publication includes analysis and case studies of Housing First in practice across Scotland, Northern Ireland, the Republic of Ireland, Wales and England.

The Scotland chapter of the publication considers the first Housing First project to be piloted in the UK, a project developed by Turning Point Scotland (TPS) in response to high levels of repeat homelessness amongst people with substance misuse issues in Glasgow, which ran from October 2010 to September 2013. It also outlines a new funding model which aims to support the expansion of Housing First across Scotland and eventually the rest of the UK.

Funded by the Scottish Government and working in partnership with Social Investment Scotland and Heriot-

Watt University, the Glasgow Homelessness Network is developing the Housing First Transition Fund. Set to be piloted in 2018, the fund will provide advice and loan funding to leading social landlords and homelessness organisations to support the transition to Housing First by acquiring homes on the open market to replace hostel accommodation.

Commenting on the new publication, CIH Scotland policy and practice manager, Ashley Campbell, said: 'Do date, the implementation of Housing First across the UK has been relatively small scale. But this new guide



demonstrates that, where Housing First has been adopted, there is strong evidence of positive

outcomes in terms of improved physical and mental health and reduced substance misuse.

'Here in Scotland, there is a growing recognition that it can be very difficult to help homeless people with complex needs within the confines of the traditional homeless system, leading to repeat homelessness for some people and others falling off the radar altogether.'

Ashley Campbell added: 'In this context, as the analysis and case studies in this new publication show, Housing First could offer a successful alternative solution where existing systems are not working.'

NEW ENERGY EFFICIENCY STANDARDS TO BE ANNOUNCED IN 2018



responses, we intend to lay draft regulations to this end in parliament in 2018.

'The changes will include provisions for the tolerable standard being included in the repairing standard; a minimum standard for safe kitchens; a fixed heating system; lead-free pipes (and, where it is not possible to establish if lead pipes are present, water quality testing); safe access and use of common facilities, including secure common doors; residual current devices; risk assessment of private water supplies and annual water quality testing; capacity for a fridge/freezer and safety of heating systems using other fuels.

'We will also provide clarity on whether holiday lets are subject to the repairing standard. A lead-in time of at least five years will be proposed for any changes to the repairing standard, along with the use of existing enforcement routes for the proposed new measures.

'At this time, we do not intend taking forward proposals for thermostatic mixing valves. Other proposals around asbestos surveys, the provision of cookers, fridges and freezers, sound insulation and food storage space are being considered further. Changes to the repairing standard will not be explicitly linked to wider government milestones on climate change.

'A decision has not yet been taken on extending the repairing standard to agricultural tenancies, rented crofts and small holdings. Further considerations will take place on this matter, and will be informed by findings from the Agricultural Housing Condition Surveys.'

The Scottish Government has published its analysis of a consultation it held this year on introducing a minimum energy efficiency standard and amending the repairing standard for private rented sector housing.

There were 198 responses and the government has now made an announcement on how it plans to proceed with the proposals.

It said: 'The Scottish Government has committed to introducing standards in the private rented sector to improve the energy efficiency of the least efficient properties. We will continue to refine the proposals taking account of the consultation responses.

'We will confirm the standards, including an appropriate lead in time, as part of the route map for Scotland's Energy Efficiency Programme, which will be announced in 2018.

'We are committed to ensuring that every private tenant is able to live in a safe and good quality home. Informed by your consultation

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BURNSIDE, APPIN

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- Private situation with sizeable garden
- EPC Rating - F

OIEO £225,000

A well-proportioned detached bungalow situated in a sizeable garden and enjoying far reaching views across Appin towards Castle Stalker. In need of modernisation the property offers six double bedrooms, two shower rooms, a large open reception room with lounge area with a large window, where far reaching sea views can be enjoyed. The kitchen offers plentiful storage cupboards and a dining area. Heating and hot water is provided via an LPG fired boiler located in the kitchen with large external storage tank located within the boundary.

LUNDRAVA ROAD, FORT WILLIAM

- 4th Floor Flat
- 3 Bedrooms/1 Bathroom
- Part Furnished
- Long Term Let
- EPC Rating - C (70)
- LL Registration 622153/270/13111

PCM £650

Spacious modern bright unfurnished 4th floor flat located on Lundrava Road, Upper Achintore, with stunning views over Loch Linnhe. Comprising of well proportioned lounge with picture window to view over Loch Linnhe. Modern fully fitted kitchen with integrated appliances. 2 Double and 1 Single Bedroom, 1 double bedroom benefits from a walking wardrobe, single bedroom also benefits from a built in wardrobe. Well-appointed bathroom with Jacuzzi bath and overhead electric shower. AVAILABLE NOW.

CALA SONA BALISCATE, TOBERMORY

- Detached House
- 3 Bedrooms / 2 Bathrooms / 1 WC
- Built 2012
- Spacious Rooms
- Excellent Family Home
- Easy to Maintain Garden
- EPC Rating - D66

OIEO £225,000

Cala Sona - A spacious 3 bedroom detached house situated above the town of Tobermory on the beautiful Isle of Mull. Built in 2012 the property boasts spacious rooms and modern fittings throughout. The property is accessed via a generous utility room which leads onto the main living area. The open plan lounge kitchen and dining room is bathed in natural light from the large windows to the front and features a modern fitted kitchen. The layout of the spacious living and dining area make this a fantastic space to enjoy time with family.

BURNBANK TERRACE, OBAN

- First Floor Flat
- 2 Bedrooms/1 Bathroom
- Unfurnished
- Long Term Let
- EPC Rating - C (71)
- LL REG:149580/130/06310

PCM £160

A spacious, unfurnished flat located on Breadalbane Street in Oban Town centre, just a moments walk to the main high street. The property comprises of 2 double bedrooms, WC, separate shower room with shower, kitchen with built in gas hob and dining area and large lounge with gas fire. Neutral décor and carpets throughout. Deposit and Full references required. Available January 2018.

A'CHALLTUINN, TOBERMORY

- Spacious detached bungalow
- 4 Bedrooms / 1 Bathrooms
- Quiet and private situation in Tobermory
- Sheltered private garden
- Excellent family home or potential holiday rental
- EPC Rating - C (70)

Fixed Price £199,750

A'challtuinn offers an opportunity to purchase a spacious family home in a popular residential area in Tobermory on the Isle of Mull. Situated in a generous plot the property comprises a bright and spacious lounge, dining area, kitchen, 4 bedrooms and a bathroom (with separate shower and bath). The property benefits from double glazing and an oil fired central heating system. Large windows allow plenty of natural light, in addition to views at the rear of the property towards the golf course.

APARTMENT 3, STEVENSON ST, OBAN

- Studio Flat
- 1 bed/1 bath
- Unfurnished
- Long Term Let
- EPC Rating - B(84)
- LL REG: 342259/130/31461

PCM £445

1 bed studio apartment in Oban town centre located just a few minutes walk to the main street and supermarket. The property has generously sized kitchen/living area, double bedroom and modern bathroom with shower. The property is unfurnished with built in hob and oven and fridge-freezer only. Available Now.

CNOC-A-CHALLTUINN, OBAN

- End Terraced house
- 3 Bedrooms/1 Bathroom/ 1 WC
- Island location close to Oban
- Manageable garden
- Well maintained
- EPC Rating - F36

OIRO £160,000

Cnoc-A'challtuinn is in the desirable location of Clachan on the Isle of Seil. The property comprises a generous sunroom to the front which enjoys views across the Sound of Seil. A perfect spot for reading in the afternoon or entertaining guests. Through the hall is a cosy lounge/diner with windows front and back allowing plentiful natural light. The kitchen has modern fitted units and worktop with integral electric oven and hob. A back door allows access to the rear garden.

APARTMENT 2, STEVENSON ST, OBAN

- First Floor Flat
- 1 Bedroom/1 Bathroom
- Unfurnished
- Long Term Let
- EPC Rating - B
- LL Reg: 342259/130/31461

PCM £445

One bedroom flat located in Oban town centre. This first floor flat comprises an open plan living room and modern kitchen with spacious double bedroom and bathroom with built in shower. Just a few minutes walk to local supermarkets and the high street. The property is ideal for students and professionals alike. Available January.

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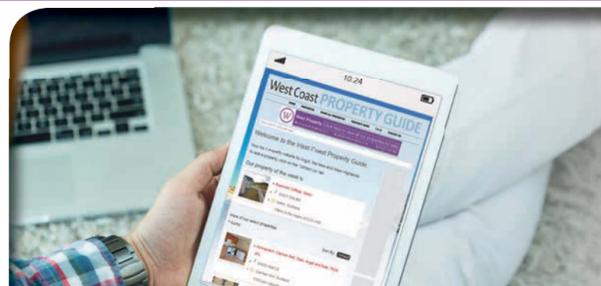
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ISUZU is pleased to announce the introduction of the New Generation D-Max Arctic Trucks AT35 which was officially launched on October 1, 2017. The Isuzu New Generation D-Max Arctic Trucks AT35 is a pick-up truck engineered to shine in the most gruelling conditions, and is the result of close technical collaboration between two respected off-road and pick-up specialists. Each AT35 is based upon the strong and durable D-Max pick-up vehicle, which is re-engineered by Arctic Trucks, a company with a long and renowned history in Iceland and Scandinavia as

a creator of 4x4 vehicles able to take on the most demanding terrains and conditions. The Arctic Trucks AT35 is based on the New Generation D-Max, which is equipped with a brand new 1.9-litre turbo diesel engine producing 164PS and 360Nm of torque. Key benefits include a 3.5-tonne towing capacity and a one-tonne payload, as well as meeting Euro 6 standards without AdBlue, making this truck more refined, quieter and economical than the previous model D-Max. The Isuzu D-Max Arctic Trucks AT35 will be

available as a double cab with a choice of manual or automatic transmission. AT35 is based on the New Generation Utah and will have the following equipment: keyless entry and push button start system, seven-inch multifunction colour touchscreen, DAB radio, Apple CarPlay and Android Audio, satellite navigation and a shark fin antenna. Black wheels will be fitted as standard, with silver wheels available as an option. In addition to the above upgrades, further exclusive Arctic Trucks upgrades have been

made to distinguish it from the rest of range such as tinted windows, tailgate damper, Arctic Trucks branded embroidered headrest, carpet mats, door sill covers, badges on the instrument panel and door panels. The D-Max Arctic Trucks AT35 will be available in splash white, cosmic black, obsidian grey, Venetian red, tundra green, titanium silver and nautilus blue. The Arctic Trucks AT35 Double Cab Automatic and Manual will be available priced at £37,995 CVOTR. The new model will be available at our 32 specialist Arctic Trucks dealers.



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IN THE week, town is home. But at the weekends, you like to explore. A trip might see pot-holes, tracks, even the odd field. Compact yet capable,

the Subaru XV isn't just the perfect vehicle to sweep you effortlessly through city traffic – it's also the ideal all-wheel drive crossover, too.



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£ Excellent basic + Bonus + BUPA + Benefits
Due to an expanding portfolio of products in both print and online, we are looking for sales staff to join our busy and successful team at Wyvex Media, the parent company of the Oban Times, Campbeltown Courier, Argyllshire Advertiser and Arran Banner.

We also publish a plethora of lifestyle magazines, tourist maps, holiday publications and business directories covering the west coast of Scotland and beyond.

We are looking for our next shining star and will offer flexible working patterns and working location for the right person. A hardworking, committed work ethic is essential, along with the desire to develop long term relationships with existing and new clients.

Experience in advertising sales is not necessary, as full training will be given.

We offer excellent pay and real career progression and benefits including BUPA, holidays to 35 days (Scale), realistic targets and achievable bonus.

You will benefit from on-going training, first class support, job stability and the opportunity to work for a professional company that believes in rewarding success and effort. A full driving licence is essential.

Please submit CV and covering letter to ali@wyvexmedia.co.uk

WYVEX MEDIA



The Majestic Line

The Majestic Line is an innovative small cruise company sailing out of Oban on the West Coast of Scotland. The vessels 'Glen Massan' and 'Glen Tarsan' are traditional wooden 85ft fishing boats which have been converted to provide a very high standard of hospitality for up to 11 guests. The 'Glen Etive' is a purpose built vessel providing accommodation for up to 12 guests. We are currently recruiting for 2018 season commencing April until the end of October.

We invite applications for experienced:
• Skippers • Marine Engineers
• Chefs • Bosuns/ Steward(ess)

Applicants should have the required experience and be willing to provide excellent standards of customer care for our guests.

For further details please apply to info@themajesticline.co.uk or telephone Neil on 01369 707951

Flit Self Drive Ltd

We require a

WORKSHOP MANAGER

to run our busy workshop, applicant must have full clean driving licence & be a fully qualified mechanic

Please apply in writing with C.V to flit@btconnect.com

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HIJOBS HIJOBS

HOUSEKEEPER AND GARDENER/ HANDYMAN – Live In Position

We are seeking an enthusiastic, honest couple to carry out housekeeping and general gardening and maintenance duties in a large family home on the island of Islay. Suitable live in accommodation will be provided.

The Housekeeper will be responsible for the day to day housekeeping when the family are in residence and also looking after the property when the house is vacated. You will also be required to carry out changeovers in a number of self catering properties on the Estate. You will be responsible for managing your own time and that of any extra staff that you would require during busy changeover periods.

It is essential that one of the couple has a good knowledge of gardening and has basic maintenance skills to be able to carry out minor repairs to properties. They will also on occasion (during quieter periods) be asked to assist our Maintenance, Game and Farm departments, therefore a love of the countryside is also important.

VACANCIES



Location: Cairndow, Loch Fyne
Leading Scottish craft brewery seeks two individuals to join passionate, hard-working team at Argyll brewery.

Sales & Support Coordinator

Full time, permanent. £23,000-26,000p.a. DOE

Key duties: developing local sales accounts, remote sales team support, prospecting new business, research, direct sales. Sales experience essential, telesales/digital sales desirable.

Retail, Bar & Events Manager

Full time, permanent. £DOE

Key duties: day-to-day retail and bar management, staff recruitment and training, events delivery, overall responsibility for growth of offerings. Bar or retail management essential, passion for beer desirable. Includes some travel, weekend and evening work.

FURTHER INFORMATION & TO APPLY:
www.fyneales.com
Cover letter & CV to work@fyneales.com

RECRUITMENT RECRUITMENT
HIJOBS HIJOBS
RECRUITMENT RECRUITMENT

ARGYLL CARAVAN PARK INVERARAY, ARGYLL, SCOTLAND

CARAVAN PARK MANAGER

Argyll Estates seeks a motivated & experienced Manager for their successful caravan and holiday park. The Manager will be responsible for all aspects of the daily and long-term management of the park including staff, sales, profitability, marketing and statutory compliance.

A full job description and further details can be obtained from Argyll Estates Office by contacting secretary@inveraray-castle.com

Applications in writing, together with a CV should be sent to secretary@inveraray-castle.com to arrive no later than 11th December 2017



If you are a *motivated team player*

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We're looking for skilled and semi-skilled **Mechanics** based at our Fort William depot!

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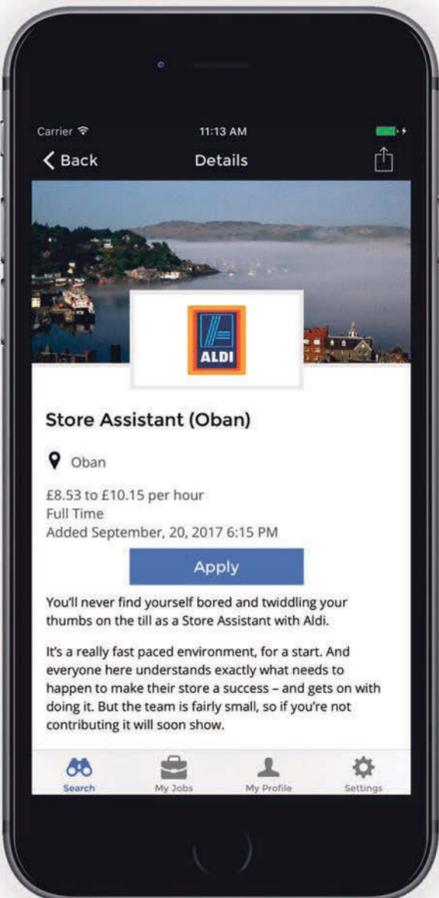
Senior Regeneration Officer (New Build)
Argyll & Bute
Salary £39,811 - £46,836 per annum
Fixed Term Contract (3 years)
35 hours per week

To apply visit our website at www.acha.co.uk/recruitment

If you cannot access the website please contact the recruitment team: 01546 605817 or email recruitment@acha.co.uk
This post will be subject to a Basic Disclosure Scotland check. CV's are not accepted.

For more information, please contact Matthew MacAulay, Regeneration Manager on 01546 605839.

Closing Date: 12 noon on Friday 8th December 2017
Interviews will be held in Lochgilphead on Wednesday 10th January 2018



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Argyll and Bute Council

PLANNING

These applications listed below together with other related documents may be inspected between 09:00-12:30 -13:30-16:00 hrs Monday to Friday at Municipal Buildings Albany Street Oban PA34 4AW, 1A Manse Brae Lochgiphead PA31 8RD, at the alternative locations detailed below during their normal opening times or by logging on to the Council's website at www.argyll-bute.gov.uk.

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT PROCEDURE (SCOTLAND) REGULATIONS 2013 REGULATION 20(1) ADVERT STATEMENT

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (SCOTLAND) ACT 1997 (AS AMENDED), RELATED PLANNING (LISTED BUILDINGS AND CONSERVATION AREAS) (SCOTLAND) ACT 1997

Ref. No.	Proposal	Site Address	Location of Plans
17/02799/PP	Erection of 2 dwellings, formation of vehicular access and installation of septic tank	Land South Of Lenanbuic Glen Road Bridgend Isle Of Islay Argyll And Bute	Sub Post Office Bridgend
17/02981/PP	Erection of 2 replacement self catering units	Lettershuna Ecopod Appin Argyll And Bute PA38 4BL	Sub Post Office Port Appin
17/02921/PP	Erection of dwellinghouse, installation of septic tank and formation of access	Plot 6 Imeraval Land Adjacent To Gartartan Port Eilen Isle Of Islay Argyll And Bute PA42 7BD	Sub Post Office Port Eilen
17/02844/PP	Erection of telecommunications equipment compound with 15 metre high lattice tower and formation of access track	Land North East Of Acharonish Ulva Ferry Isle Of Mull Argyll And Bute	Sub Post Office Aros Isle of Mull
17/02823/PP	Partial change of use of dwellinghouse to form small restaurant and one bedroom bed and breakfast accommodation	Tigh Air Creag Dervaig Isle Of Mull Argyll And Bute PA75 6QN	Sub Post Office Dervaig
17/02996/PP	Renewal of planning permission reference 14/02515/PP (erection of dwellinghouse)	Sorisdale Premises Isle Of Coll Argyll And Bute PA78 6TE	Sub Post Office Isle of Coll
17/02770/PP	Erection of dwellinghouse	Land North Of Anvil House Main Street Port Charlotte Isle Of Islay Argyll And Bute	Sub Post Office Port Charlotte

Written comments can be made to the above address or submitted online <http://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/planning-and-environment/plan-and-comment-planning-applications> within 21 days of this advert. Please quote the reference number in any correspondence. Any letter of representation the Council receives is considered a public document and will be published on our website. Anonymous or marked confidential correspondence will not be considered. A weekly list of all applications can be viewed at all Area Offices, Council Libraries and on the Councils website.

To find out more about living and working in Argyll & Bute visit us at: www.argyll-bute.gov.uk
Comhairle Earra - Ghàidheal agus Bhòid



www.highland.gov.uk

The Highland Council
Comhairle na Gàidhealtachd

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (SCOTLAND) ACT 1997
PLANNING (LISTED BUILDING AND CONSERVATION AREAS) (SCOTLAND) ACT 1997

The applications listed below, along with plans and other documents submitted with them, may be examined online at <http://wam.highland.gov.uk> or electronically at your nearest Service Point. You can find your nearest Service Point via the following link https://www.highland.gov.uk/directory/16/a_to_z

Written comments should be made to the EPC at the contact details below within the time period indicated from the date of this notice. Anyone making a representation about this proposal should note that their letter or email will be disclosed to any individual or body who requests sight of representations in respect of this proposal.

Reference Number	Development	Address	Proposal Description
17/05206/PIP	Land South West of Inchree Chalets, Righ Crescent, Onich		Erect 3 houses
17/05321/FUL	Land 40M West of Eilean Feoir, Portuairk, Kilchoan		Erection of house (renewal of 14/04382/FUL)
17/05375/FUL	Land N of Garvan House, Fort William		Erection of dwelling with integral garage, formation of vehicular access & installation of septic tank & soakaway (Amendment to 17/00636/FUL)
17/05376/FUL	Land 80M N of Garvan House, Fort William		Erection of Dwelling with Integral Garage, Formation of Vehicular Access & Installation of Septic Tank & Soakaway
17/05383/FUL	Nevis Bank Cottages, Belford Road, Fort William		Erection of 6 Flats and Upgrading of Access Road and Parking (Amended parking layout to 17/03749/FUL)

Time period for comments is 14 days
ePlanning Centre, The Highland Council, Glenurquhart Road, INVERNESS IV3 5NX
Email: eplanning@highland.gov.uk

Argyll and Bute Council

Councillor Roddy McCuish (E.W. 4 Oban South and the Isles)
Councillor McCuish will be holding a surgery on Friday 1st December 2017 in the Municipal Buildings, Albany Street, Oban from 1.30pm - 4.00pm.
He can be contacted by email - Roderick.McCuish@argyll-bute.gov.uk and by telephone 01631 567854.

Councillor Kieron Green (E.W. 5 Oban North and Lorn)
Councillor Green will be holding a surgery on Friday 15th December 2017 in the Municipal Buildings, Albany Street, Oban from 2.00pm - 4.00pm.
He can be contacted by email - Kieron.Green@argyll-bute.gov.uk and by telephone 01631 562444.

First Registration of a Croft

Elizabeth and Donald MacGillivray have registered their croft 37 North Ballachulish, Kilmallie on the Crofting Register held by the Registers of Scotland.

Any person who wishes to challenge the registration may apply to the Scottish Land Court by August 16, 2018.

Details of the registration can be found at www.crofts.gov.uk/register/home. The croft registration number is C4636.

CROFTING COMMISSION COIMISEAN NA CROITEARACHD DECROFTING APPLICATION

E McAllister
1/3 Claddach, Kilchoman
0.197 ha - Site for a dwelling house
84452

Written comments from any member of the crofting community within the locality of the croft and any expressions of demand for the croft (which may be made public), may be sent to the Crofting Commission by 26/12/17. Crofting Commission, Great Glen House, Leachkin Road, Inverness IV3 8NW, info@crofting.scotland.gov.uk

DECROFTING DIRECTIONS ISSUED

P Johnston
Croft 1 Lettershuna, Lismore & Appin
83075
0.096 ha
Reason - Proposed new dwellinghouse
Condition - Fencing

D MacInnes
Pt of 11 Cloullin, Ardour
83689
0.155 ha
Reason - Existing croft house site & garden ground
Condition - Fencing

Full details at www.crofting.scotland.gov.uk

First Registration of a Croft

David MacInnes has registered his croft Part of Croft 11 Cloullin, Ardour on the Crofting Register held by the Registers of Scotland.

Any person who wishes to challenge the registration may apply to the Scottish Land Court by August 14, 2018.

Details of the registration can be found at www.crofts.gov.uk/register/home. The croft registration number is C4615.

Contractor and Suppliers Open Day



TSL Contractors Ltd have been awarded the works to construct 60 dwellings at the former Lochyside Primary School site in Caol, Fort William.

Works commence in January 2018 and will continue into late summer of 2019.

At TSL we strongly believe in working closely with, and investing in the local economy. With this in mind, we would like to work with local labour, contractors and suppliers on the project wherever possible.

To provide an easily accessible platform for this, TSL will be holding a Contractor and Supplier open day on 12th December at Caol Community centre between 4pm - 6.30pm.

During the event staff from our procurement and project departments will be on hand to discuss the various opportunities and would be delighted to meet any interested parties.

If you are unable to make the event or would like further information on the project please feel free to contact our General Manager, John Forbes at j.forbes@tslcontractors.co.uk for further details.

Proposed Assignment of a Grazing Share

Ken Jarvie Stewart is applying to the Crofting Commission for consent to assign the tenancy of the grazing share pertaining to the croft at 133 Kilmory (share), Ardnamurchan & Sunart to Jonathan Andrew Alcock in the Kilmory Common Grazings of 147 Penmere Drive, Pentire, Newquay TR7 1NS. Written comments from those with a relevant interest (which may be made public) to: Crofting Commission, Leachkin Road, Inverness IV3 8NW, info@crofting.scotland.gov.uk by 28/12/2017

Proposed Assignment of a Grazing Share

Ken Jarvie Stewart is applying to the Crofting Commission for consent to assign the tenancy of the grazing share pertaining to the croft at 139 Kilmory (share), Ardnamurchan & Sunart to Jonathan Andrew Alcock in the Kilmory Common Grazings of 147 Penmere Drive, Pentire, Newquay TR7 1NS. Written comments from those with a relevant interest (which may be made public) to: Crofting Commission, Leachkin Road, Inverness IV3 8NW, info@crofting.scotland.gov.uk by 28/12/2017

Proposed Assignment of a Grazing Share

Ken Jarvie Stewart is applying to the Crofting Commission for consent to assign the tenancy of the grazing share pertaining to the croft at 140 Kilmory (share), Ardnamurchan & Sunart to Carol Bowes-Alcock in the Kilmory Common Grazings of 147 Penmere Drive, Pentire, Newquay TR7 1NS. Written comments from those with a relevant interest (which may be made public) to: Crofting Commission, Leachkin Road, Inverness IV3 8NW, info@crofting.scotland.gov.uk by 28/12/2017

THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL (LOCHABER) (DISABLED PERSONS' PARKING PLACES) ORDER 2011 AMENDMENT ORDER 2017 NO.2

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that The Highland Council propose to make an Order entitled as above in terms of Sections 32(1) and 45(2) and Part IV of Schedule 9 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984. When the Order comes into effect the Order will create parking places for the use of disabled persons' vehicles only on the areas of road detailed in the Schedule 1 hereto and delete parking places for the use of disabled persons' vehicles on the areas of road detailed in the Schedule 2 hereto. Copies of the proposed Order, as drafted, together with a copy of the relevant plans, a copy of the Authority's Statement of Reasons for proposing to make the Order and a copy of the Orders to be amended, can be inspected at the Highland Council Service Point, Lochaber House, High Street Fort William on weekdays during normal office hours.

Any person wishing to object to the proposed Orders should write to the undersigned specifying the Order to which objection is being made, and the grounds of the objection. All letters of objection must be received by the undersigned within 21 days from 30th November 2017
27/11/2017 Mrs Lesley Howie, Legal Manager, The Highland Council HQ, Glenurquhart Rd, Inverness

SCHEDULE 1
PROVISION OF DISABLED PARKING PLACES

Town	Street	Area of road designated as a disabled persons' parking place	No. of places	Manner of standing in Parking Place
Fort William	Bruce Place	On the south side of the street, outside No. 17 Bruce Place for a distance of 2.5 metres or thereby as shown outlined in red on the Plan No.1 annexed and signed as relative hereto	1	Perpendicular to the kerb line
Fort William	Wallace Place	On the south side of the road, outside No.16 Wallace Place extending in a westerly direction for a distance of 6 metres or there by as shown outlined in red on the Plan No. 4 annexed and signed as relative hereto	1	Parallel to the kerb line
Fort William	Grange Road	On the south side of the road, opposite No.2 for a distance of 6.6 metres or thereby as shown outlined in red on the plan No.10 annexed and signed as relative hereto	1	Parallel to the kerb line
Fort William	Alma Road	On the north side of the road outside No.20 Alma Road, extending in a westerly direction for a distance of 6.6 metres or thereby as shown outlined in red on the plan No.11 annexed and signed as relative hereto	1	Parallel to the kerb line
Inverlochly Fort William	Lundy Road	On the north side of the road outside No.46 Lundy Road, extending in a easterly direction of a distance of 6 metres or thereby, shown outlined in red on the Plan No.5 annexed and signed as relative hereto	1	Parallel to the kerb line
Caol Fort William	Erracht Drive	On the east side of the street, outside No.23 extending in a north easterly direction for a distance of 6 metres or thereby as shown outlined in red on the Plan. No.6 annexed and signed as relative hereto	1	Parallel to the kerb line
Caol Fort William	Clunes Avenue	On the east side of the street, outside No.24 extending in a south westerly direction for a distance of 6 metres or thereby as shown outlined in red on the Plan No.7 annexed and signed as relative hereto	1	Parallel to the kerb line
Caol Fort William	Blar Mhor Road	On the east side of the street, outside No.9 extending in a northerly direction for 6 metres or thereby as shown outlined in red on the Plan No. 8 annexed and signed as relative hereto	1	Parallel to the kerb line
Lochyside Fort William	Castle Drive	On the north side of the street, outside No. 64, for a distance of 2.5 metres or thereby as shown outlined in red on the Plan No. 9 annexed and signed as relative hereto	1	Perpendicular to the kerb line
Caol Fort William	Glenkingie Street	At the rear boundary fence of 116 Glenkingie Street, for a distance of 2.5 metres or there by as shown outlined in red on the Plan No. 12 annexed and signed as relative hereto	1	Perpendicular to the kerb line

SCHEDULE 2
REVOKE/REMOVAL OF DISABLED PARKING PLACES

Town	Street	Area of road designated as a disabled persons' parking place	No. of places	Manner of standing in Parking Place
Caol, Fort William	Banavie Road	On the south-west side of the road, opposite numbers 4/6, for a distance of 6.6 metres or thereby as referred to in the Schedule of the Principal Order and as shown on the plan No.2 annexed and signed as relative to the Principal Order and which area of road with its parking place is hereby delete from the said Principal Order	1	Parallel to the kerb line
Caol, Fort William	Cameron Place	On the south-east side of the road, opposite number 2 for a distance of 6.6 metres or thereby as referred to in the Schedule of the Principal Order and as shown on the plan No.3 annexed and signed as relative to the Principal Order and which area of road with its parking place is hereby delete from the said Principal Order	1	Parallel to the kerb line
Caol, Fort William	Cameron Place	On the north side of the road opposite numbers 12/13, for a distance of 6.6 metres or thereby as referred to in the Schedule of the Principal Order and as shown on the plan No.3 annexed and signed as relative to the Principal Order and which area of road with its parking place is hereby delete from the said Principal Order	1	Perpendicular to the kerb line

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Oban Times PUBLIC NOTICES

MARINE (SCOTLAND) ACT 2010
NEW WAVE FOODS - SOUND OF INSH AND SOUTH KERRERA

Notice is hereby given that New Wave Foods has applied to the Scottish Ministers of the Scottish Government, under Part 4 of the Marine (Scotland) Act 2010, in respect of two new moorings at:

Location	Latitude	Longitude
Sound of Insh	56° 18.009'N	005° 39.155'W
South Kerrera	56° 22.614'N	005° 33.927'W

(WGS84)

Plans showing the position of the works may be inspected at Balvicar Post Office.

Objections relating to safety of navigation or environmental issues in respect of the application should be made in writing to:

Licensing Operations Team, Marine Scotland, Marine Laboratory, 375 Victoria Road, Aberdeen, AB11 9DB within 28 days of the date of this notice or by email to: MS.MarineLicensing@gov.scot, quoting reference: MCMS No.: **New Wave Foods**
Applicant: 06530

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ROB 2 x Avalon Solid Pine Cot Beds £45 each. Matching Wardrobe with Internal shelves Hanging Rail and bottom drawers 187x89x54 £55, Tel 01631 571367.

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precious planet 2 in 1 wind up mobile, suitable for cot or buggy, £20 Telephone 01631 562750.
HIGH CHAIR Child's folding high backed high chair incorporating tray, rarely used and in excellent condition. Yellow in colour, £15 Tel 01631 562750.

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LITTLE TIKES, TODDLER TRICYCLE Lilac/pink on white. With front plaque and rear bucket. Parents handle. Excellent condition. Up to 5 years. Oban, £8 Tel 07795180964.

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WATER REEL FOR MOTORHOME/BOAT Food grade Water reel 20m flat hose on Cassette. Includes Connectors Used once, Excellent Condition. (Kentalen), £18 Tel 07970 544042.

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215/55/SR18 99H winter tyres, only used for trip to Austria Fitted on my Nissan Qashqai +2 lots of tread, needed for Europe, £99.99 Tel 07792 885852.

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Kenlowe 15" cooling fan, complete with new fixings, stat. and fitting instructions, £20 Tel 01631563051.

CHRISTMAS

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EARLY LEARNING CENTRE EASEL

For toddler. Excellent condition. Pink pastel -Chalkboard one side/wipe-clean whiteboard other. Paint pots & paper. Oban, £8 Tel 07795 180964.

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DOMESTIC APPLIANCES

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READY BED Child's inflatable jungle ready bed, used twice and in excellent condition, £15 Tel 01631 562750.

SOFAS Parker Knoll Burghley grand sofa, plus large two seater, excellent condition, £400 ono Tel 07833 462186.

SOLID PINE TV/HI FI UNIT D50,W102 H 620cm. Glass cupboard 1 side with adj Shelf. Other side 2 adj shelves & bottom drawer. VGC. Buyer collect (Kentalen), £50 Tel 07970 544042.

STACKING DINING CHAIRS Six modern chairs in white/chrome finish. Very good condition, £50 Tel 01631 730280.

ELECTRIC GRIDDLE Plate Boxed, never used (Kentalen), £15 Tel 07970 544042.

SALTER MINI BLENDER with attachments, unused, boxed, £20 ono Tel 01546 602563.

VACUUM CLEANER Good Condition. Can deliver locally, £15 Tel 01631 562802/ 07900 105675.

WHOLE FRUIT JUICER Breville, 1000 watt, boxed, used once, £45 Tel 01546 603245.

FARMING EQUIPMENT

RITCHY CATTLE FEEDER good order, £85 Tel 07770 623486.

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COFFEE TABLE light wood, modern, 3 ft 3 inches X 1 ft 7 inches, with shelf, good condition, £20 Tel 01546 602563.

WOODEN FULL SIZE

single bed with good quality mattress in very good, clean condition. Used by grandchildren for sleepovers, £50 ono Telephone 07494 100495.

GARDEN

SUN LOUNGERS Malibu black, set of two, 1 in excellent condition, 1 still in original wrapping, cost £50, sell for £40 Tel 01631 562750.

TOUGH PLASTIC RESERVOIR FOR Reservoir for water feature, black, round. Depth 12"/30cm. Outside diameter 26"/66cm. Could be pool, pond. Good condition, £30 Tel 01631 770631.

VINTAGE CART WHEELS and smaller implement wheels. Colourful garden display items. Prices from £30, Tel 01631 564578.

VINTAGE CHIMNEY POTS Vintage chimney pots in various sizes and styles, make lovely garden planters. Prices from £40, Tel 01631 564578.

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DIMPLEX ELECTRIC STOVE black, free standing, log effect, 2KW. Oban, £30 ono Tel 07748 070247.

ELNUR WALL MOUNTED HEATER Used but as new IP 24 bathroom rated electric wall heater w/ timer. Must be wall mounted & hard wired. 40w x43 long x 7cm deep, £25 Tel 07795 187861.

STOVAX PHOENIX CONVECTOR LOG

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HOME OFFICE

COMPUTER DESK Computer desk, excellent condition. Measures: L=82cm, W=57cm, H=80cm. Calls evening, £50 Tel 01852 300154.

EXECUTIVE DESK As new, excellent condition. light colour, 3 drawers right. 1 drawer left+1 draw filing. Call evening, £75 Tel 01852 300154.

MAT MASTER SYSTEM Mat master cutting tools system, 1260B. Bevel mount cutter guide rule 120cm. Never used, excellent condition, £99.99 Tel 01852 300154.

WATER FEATURE bronze effect, mermaid on a shell pool with 3 glass lights, photo available. Cost £350, sell for £99.99 Tel 01631 562750.

LEISURE AND LIFESTYLE

GOLF CLUBS Right Handed clubs by Bay Hill, high modulus graphite shafts, includes set of Irons, Putters, Woods plus others with bag, VGC, £55 Tel 01631 563518.

HOT STICKS

by Babyless, in carry case and in excellent condition, £25 Tel 01631 562750.

LOST AND FOUND

LOST CAT OBAN Our friendly young boy cat has gone missing. He is chipped, quite small, white with grey on top and a black nose. Any info pls, Telephone 01631 562824.

MAIL ORDER

SCOTTISH FIELD CALENDARS featuring spectacular photography of some of our most scenic lochs, rivers, beaches and mountains. Places include: Stirling, Fort William, Glencoe, Aberdeen, Isle of Skye, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Loch Lomond, Kelso, Aviemore, Forfar, Rum and Egg, Shetland, Glentroot and Dryburgh. Always a popular gift for family and friends at home or abroad. Order on-line at www.scottishcalendars.co.uk or tel 01371 851868.

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MISCELLANEOUS

WATER FEATURE bronze effect, mermaid on a shell pool with 3 glass lights, photo available. Cost £350, sell for £99.99 Tel 01631 562750.

MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS

PIANO not enough space to keep. In Campbeltown, Free Tel 07380 944289.

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3 FLY FISHING REELS & SPOOLS + Includes 200+ Various Flies & cases. Spare weights, loops, leaders. Includes Ron Thompson Shoulder bag. Buyer Collect Kentalen, £99 Tel 07585 184642.

3 VINTAGE FISHING RODS Includes 1 Rod bag and 1 rod rest. Buyer collect, Kentalen, £99 Tel 07585 184642.

WANTED

ADVERTISING ITEMS garage, shop or agricultural pre 1980's advertising items required by local collector. Metal or cardboard signs, tins and boxes with manufacturer name, product or logo. Will pay reasonable price, Tel 01631 564578.

HOGMANAY TALENT

We require either a table magician, pianist or band to entertain our guests during the New Year period at Isle of Eriska. Contact Steve on Tel 01631 720371.

STRING QUARTET

for a very short wedding ceremony on Hogmanay afternoon at the Isle of Eriska Hotel. Contact Steve on Tel 01631 720371.

PRIVATE REG PLATE MC10 STY (mcoisty), Offers

Tel 07900 441543.

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PROMOTIONAL MATERIAL, market your business effectively with professionally designed leaflets, posters and flyers from Krisp Print. Contact on Tel 01586 554975.

TOYS AND GAMES

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MINI MOTO 49cc Rev and Go miniature motorbike. Black Bodywork. Excellent condition, Good runner. Buyer Collect (Kentalen), £80 Tel 07970 544042.

WANTED

ADVERTISING ITEMS garage, shop or agricultural pre 1980's advertising items required by local collector. Metal or cardboard signs, tins and boxes with manufacturer name, product or logo. Will pay reasonable price, Tel 01631 564578.

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PERSONALS

AUSTRIAN LADY IS LOOKING FOR A NICE MAN ABOUT 50 WHO LIVES IN SCOTLAND.

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PERSONALS

AUSTRIAN LADY IS LOOKING FOR A NICE MAN ABOUT 50 WHO LIVES IN SCOTLAND.

BIRTHS



BURNETT

Scott and Cheryl (née Witherspoon) are delighted to announce the birth of their son Aaron Scott, born November 16, 2017. First grandchild for Keith and Mairi and third for Margaret and the late Kenny. Thank you to all at Oban Maternity and RAH, Paisley.

GOLDEN WEDDINGS

MACKINNON - HOWARD - On November 25, 1967 in Reno, Nevada, Donnie to Thelma. Donnie is formerly of Soroba Park Terrace, Oban. Present address: 38 Sandhaven, Sandbank, Dunoon.

DEATHS

GUDELIS - (Wilson) Elizabeth. Peacefully in Raigmore Hospital on November 22. Funeral to take place on Thursday November 30 in Moorings Hotel, Banavie, Fort William at 12 noon followed by interment in Glen Nevis Cemetery. All welcome.

MACFARLANE - Alexander (Sandy). Peacefully at home, Shore House, Taynuilt, on November 23, 2017, aged 73, dearly loved husband of Deirdre and loving father to Fiona, Rona, Duncan and Kirstin. Much loved Seanair to Cara, Callum, Dallas, Skye, Kenna, Sandy, Eilidh, Bonnie and James, beloved brother of Martha and Helen, a dear father-in-law, brother-in-law, uncle and cousin. Funeral service will take place at Muckairn Parish Church, Taynuilt, on Monday December 4, 2017 at 1.00 p.m. Family flowers only please. Donations, if desired, to June Hancock Mesothelioma Research Fund.

MACINTYRE - Peacefully at the Lynn of Lorne on Thursday, November 23, 2017 Kenneth (Kenny), much loved father and grandpa. Funeral to take place on Thursday (today), November 30, 2017 at 1pm, at Oban Parish Church, Glencruitten Road, Oban. Thereafter to Pennyfuir Cemetery. Family flowers only. Donations, if desired, to Oban War and Peace Museum.

BIRTHS, MARRIAGES, DEATHS
Oban Times
BIRTHS, MARRIAGES, DEATHS
Oban Times

MACKENZIE - Peacefully at Lorn and Islands Hospital, Oban on Monday November 20, 2017, aged 63 years, Murdo James MacKenzie (James), a much loved dad and granda. Funeral will take place from the Argyllshire Gathering Halls, Breadalbane Street, Oban on Saturday December 2 at 10.30 a.m., thereafter to Pennyfuir Cemetery. Family flowers only, please. Retiring collection/donations if desired for Mary's Meals.

MACLEAN - Archie. Peacefully at Tigh a Rudha, Tiriee on October 23, 2017. Loving husband to Margaret, devoted father, grandfather, great-grandfather, uncle and brother of John Donald, Ann and Allina. A good man at rest.

MACLEAN - Peacefully at home on November 23, 2017 in his 95th year, Archie (Wobbles) MacLean, Salen, Isle of Mull. Loving son of the late Malcolm and Jeannie, a special uncle who will be dearly missed. Funeral service to be held at Salen Parish Church on Friday December 1, 2017 at 11.30am thereafter to Pennygown Cemetery.

MELVILLE - Peacefully at Lorn and Islands Hospital, Oban on November 23, 2017, aged 85, Willie, beloved husband of Margaret, devoted dad to Donald and Robin, grandpa to Jamie and Catriona, seanair to Jordan and Bethany and great-grandfather to Hunter and Levi.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

FRASER - Janice, Graeme, Lorne and family would like to thank all friends and neighbours for flowers, cards, phone calls, visits and offers of help following the sudden loss of Jim. Special thanks to the ambulance crew for their assistance. Sincere thanks to Rev. Dugald Cameron for a comforting service. To Hamish Hoey and Son for their professional handling of the funeral arrangements. To Moreen Gracie for the beautiful flowers and The Royal Hotel for the catering. Finally, thanks to all who came to pay their last respects to Jim at the church and Pennyfuir. Thank you everyone who donated to the retiring collection which raised the sum of £750 for Friends of the Beatson.

HAGGART - The family of the late Duncan Haggart would like to thank everyone for the many cards, flowers, home baking, meals and visits following the sad loss of Duncan. Special thanks to Mr Colquhoun, his team and the nursing staff at the Golden Jubilee Hospital, Clydebank for their professionalism, care and support. To Richard Baxter

and Morag Muirhead for the warm and comforting services and May MacIntyre for her musical accompaniment. Thanks also to Mike McFall Funeral Directors for their professional handling of the funeral arrangements. Finally thanks to all those who came to pay their last respects to Duncan and generously donated £640 to Craig Nevis Surgery, who had cared for Duncan over many years.

HERON - Val and family would like to thank all relatives, friends and neighbours for the many kind expressions of sympathy extended to them following the recent sad loss of Paddy and for the many cards, letters, flowers and messages of support. Special thanks to the haematology Unit at Raigmore Hospital for their care over the last few years and to the Macmillan Nurses, Lochaber, for their ongoing support to Paddy and the family. To Dr Joe Tangney, Glen Mor Practice and the District nurses we give our sincere appreciation for their care in Paddy's final days. Grateful thanks, also, to Mike McFall, Funeral Directors, for the professional and sympathetic handling of the funeral arrangements and to McDonald Bros for the beautiful flower arrangements. Our gratitude goes to Fr Andrew for officiating with such compassion at the reception and funeral service and to Fr Donald MacKinnon for his generosity. Thanks also to John Cameron, organist and piper Sandy MacKenzie. Finally, our appreciation to all who came to pay their respects at the church and graveside and to all who so generously donated to Cancer Research and Macmillan Support Lochaber now in excess of £1000.00.

MACDOUGALL - Marion, Pamela and Malcolm would like to thank friends and family and all who sent cards, flowers and have supported us since our devastating loss. Ian and Munn's for their professional and compassionate funeral arrangements. Moreen for her beautiful wreaths, Donnie for his musical tribute and Soroba House for their lovely buffet. Heartfelt thanks to all NHS staff and community staff involved with us and Malcolm in his last four weeks, without your dedication it would have been impossible to have Malcolm at home which was his and our wish. Especially all who were with us throughout, Jayne, John and Linda, Dr Glen, Macmillan and Marie Curie, district nurses and ECCT. To the girls who were with us out with their working day - Teenie, Lorna, Laura, Frances and Rebecca, you are angels!

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MCINTYRE - James (Jaz) McIntyre. Sheena, Nick and Margaret would like to thank all who attended the ceremony to celebrate Jaz's life. Particular thanks also go to Dr McLroy at Taynuilt and staff on Ward A and the Macmillan Unit of Lorn and Islands Hospital, for the wonderful care and support shown to the whole family throughout Jaz's illness; Catriona and all at Hamish Hoey and Son for funeral arrangements; Amanda at Argyllshire Gathering Halls for refreshments; Kenny and Elaine for arranging music as Jaz would have wanted it, and Belinda Braithwaite of the Humanist Society Scotland for her warm and personal tribute.

MEMORIAMS

CRYANS - In loving memory of George Carlin Cryans, passed away on November 30, 2013. Some day I hope to meet you Some day, I don't know when To clasp your hand in a better land Never to part again. Loving and missing you always - Catherine.

CRYANS - With love and lots of special memories of our dad and granddad. Partings come and hearts are broken Loved ones go with words unspoken Deep in our hearts there's a memory kept For a father and granddad we'll never forget - Ann and family.

GILLIES - In loving memory of Graeme, who died on December 3, 2006. No longer in our lives to share But in our hearts you're always there. - With love Dad, Mam, Scott, Kevin, Cameron and Rory, Ross, Asha, Sandy and Lauren.

MACCOLL - In loving memory of our devoted Dad, John, who died November 30, 2010. Those we love don't go away They walk beside us every day Unseen, unheard, but always near Still loved, still missed and very dear - Elspeth, Iain and families.

MACDONALD - Marybell. Precious memories of my loving mum, who passed away on December 1, 2008. Always loved and remembered. - Angus, Morar.

MACINTYRE - Treasured memories of beloved parents, parents-in-law and grandparents, Archibald (Baldy) and Mary (née Boyd), whose anniversaries occur at this time. - Iain, Jane, Caroline and Boyd, Oban and Edinburgh.

MACLACHLAN - Cherished memories of my dear husband Ian MacLachlan, who passed away on November 28, 2016. Deep in my heart you will always stay. Loved and remembered every day. - Chrissie, Caalmojo, Kilmory.

MACLACHLAN - In memory of Ian MacLachlan, a loving father and shenair, passed away November 28, 2016. Always remembered. - Allan and family.

MACLACHLAN - In loving memory of a much loved father and shenair Ian, who died November 28, 2016. Just a memory fond and true Of those who thought the world of you. - Catherine, Bill, Iain, Katie and families.

MACLACHLAN - Treasured memories of our dad, senair and sinn senair Ian, who passed away November 28, 2016. There's a face we shall always remember There's a voice we shall always recall A memory to cherish forever Of one so dear to us all Always in our thoughts. - Morag, David, Allan, Angus, Iain and families.

MACLACHLAN - Your constant stream of love, laughter and wisdom remain in my memories Miss you so much dad and love you forever. - Joan xx Love and miss you senair. - Emma and Kirsty.

McMONAGLE - Treasured memories of Peter, who passed away on December 3, 2014, a dearly loved husband, father, granda and great-granda. The rolling stream of life rolls on But still the vacant chair Recalls the love, the voice, the smile Of the one who once sat there. - Love from Phil and families.

TIMMS - Cherished memories of a dear mum and loving nana Sheena, who passed away November 30, 1971. Also remembering all other loved ones. Treasured memories keep you near As time unfolds another year - Love Catherine, Lachie and family.

YEOMAN - In loving memory of my dear wife Chrissie, who died November 28, 2014. Loved and remembered always. - Hamish, Tommy and family.

Oban Times BIRTHS, MARRIAGES, DEATHS

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Colonsay to join national campaign to help homeless

SLEEP in the Park is a plan to raise £4 million and address the needs of homeless people in Scotland.

Many thousands of people (up to 9,000 in all) have undertaken to sleep out in Princes Street Gardens in Edinburgh on December 9 in order to highlight the plight of our fellow citizens.

This initiative has the wholehearted support of Scotland's churches, trades unions, businesses, politicians and local communities.

The Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, the Rt Rev Dr Browning, drew

attention to the campaign in September and Colonsay replied at once.

Now the parish will play its part in this national endeavour.

With a population of 124 people, the aim is to raise a total of £1,240 including Gift Aid.

If every parish did the same the total raised would be £54 million, so Colonsay is punching above its weight.

If any reader can find it in their heart to support this worthy cause, please donate even a single pound at <http://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/kevinbyrne1>

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SHINTY

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Marine Harvest Media Award winners 2016

Camannachd Association holds AGM

CLUBS from across the country gathered for the Camannachd Association's annual general meeting in The West End Hotel, Fort William, on Friday November 24.

Annual report

In his final annual report, out-going Camannachd Association president Jim Barr looked back on a challenging last 12 months.

There was a six-month gap between the anticipated departure of chief operating officer Torquil Macleod and his replacement, chief executive officer Derek Keir, taking post. This meant additional responsibilities and increased workload for association staff and directors throughout the intervening period.

It was also clear from the 2016 budget deficit that the organisation was living well beyond its means and the requirement to urgently reverse this situation placed additional demands on the personnel involved.

Against this difficult backdrop, the 2017 development programme and competition schedule were delivered within the constraints of the new budget.

Although the association expects to record a modest financial surplus for 2017, the financial outlook remains challenging, highlighting the importance of the game's loyal commercial sponsors.

The association will look to Derek Keir to bring fresh energy and outlook, whilst the election of Keith Loades for the next three years leaves the governance of shinty in good hands and they have already forged an effective partnership.

Colin Cameron and Wendy Chamberlain were co-opted onto the Camannachd Association board during the season. Ted McDonald retired from the board in April having served for six years and his role was acknowledged.

With one of the wettest summers of recent times in Scotland interrupting and extending the senior league programme for several clubs, all the cup winners and the majority of league outcomes were determined before the end of October.

The shinty/hurling/camogie programme gave senior head coach Ronald Ross a fourth successive home win against Ireland, whilst Alan MacRae's U21 side showed promise for the future. Stuart Reid's women's team also recorded success in Ireland in July against a Dublin County Select.

The development team is making specific efforts to retain interest at secondary schools by organising round robin competitions. The women's game is growing and developing under the careful direction of the Women's Camannachd Association and the Marine Harvest Awards night is always an enjoyable occasion with Lord Robert Smith of Kelvin, former SSE chairman and personal sponsor of the Balliemore cup for 21 years, and Steve Bracken, who has been behind the 33 years of Marine Harvest involvement, both richly deserving the presentation of silver mounted camans.

Tulloch Homes signing up as the Camannachd Cup Sponsors until 2020 is a major boost, whilst Anderson, Shaw and Gilbert stepped in at short notice as match day sponsors for the MacTavish Cup Final. Marine Harvest extended their sponsorship package of all leagues, the international programmes and the annual awards until 2020, a record breaking 33 years of continuous sponsorship.

Jim Barr also used his report to acknowledge and express appreciation to all volunteers

who give up their time to be members of the Camannachd Association committees and sub-committees, as well as those who support competitions and development activities as coaches, team leaders, drivers, groundsmen, supporters and match officials.

Jim Barr thanked all staff and board members, partnership managers and member clubs who he has worked with over the last nine years, particularly the last three years as president, and added: 'Shinty has a new chief executive officer in post, an experienced president elect, a refreshed and more diverse board, a small but effective professional organisation and a new four-year strategic plan with clear opportunities for growth. In short, much to look forward to and a future as bright as we dare to dream.'

Jim Barr was presented with a silver-mounted caman by past-president Archie Robertson as a token of appreciation for his work in office.

New appointments

The Camannachd Association has a new president after Keith Loades was unanimously elected to the position.

Keith Loades has been shadowing outgoing president Jim Barr for the last six months in a president-elect role and has been a Camannachd Association board member for the last three years, latterly as vice president.

Colin Cameron and Wendy Chamberlain were voted in unanimously as directors with Wendy becoming shinty's first female director.



New Camannachd Association president Keith Loades. Photo: Neil Paterson.

Annual accounts

The Camannachd Association's 2016 annual accounts reported a £38,573 reduction in turnover, prompting a £48,066 deficit for the year. This means the association's reserves reduced to £75,962 as of December 31 2016.

The association signalled a potential £44,000 loss at the 2016 AGM so the final count was slightly above expectations.

The association's financial target for 2016 was to deliver a break-even outcome or, in the event a sponsor for the Camannachd Cup was not found, to manage any deficit to below £20,000.

With the target not achieved, the association re-based its activities, re-doubled its efforts to attract commercial sponsors, improved its business processes and made economies across the board to balance the books for 2017.

The 2016 annual accounts show grant funding reduced by £23,743 from 2015. The sportsScotland grant remained similar and was the largest single contributor to shinty funding. However, local authority grants were reduced because of the general squeeze on budgets. Specific activity events/grants from Awards for All (£10,000) and Cholmille/BnG (£5,000) were not forthcoming. Sponsorship income also reduced in 2016, down by £21,368 which was largely attributable to the loss of SSE sponsorship for

the Camannachd Cup, partially offset by the establishment of the Shinty Business Club.

Not for the first time, Marine Harvest were shinty's principal sponsors in 2016, combined with additional support from the Royal Bank of Scotland, Gilmour Sports and the BBC.

Total expenditure in 2016 was £595,655, an increase of £1,806 on the previous year. Key areas of expenditure remain: competitions, development, wages and office expenses. An increase on wages is principally as a result of having the central belt Development Officer in place for the full reporting year.

Competition costs reduced in 2016 as a result of savings made across the programme. Membership numbers increased slightly in 2016 to 2,900, generating an associated increase in income.

The association expects to record a modest profit of around £5,000 in 2017 which will go towards rebuilding reserves to the target level of £90,000 which the board believes is appropriate for the size of its business.

However, the association looks likely to break the VAT de-minimis threshold this year. This will place an extra annual burden of between £8,000 and £10,000 in VAT payments unless the de-minimis threshold, which has been in place for many years, is revised upwards.

New resolutions

With 27 voting clubs in attendance, a raft of minor amendments to Byelaw 1 (Rules of Play) went through unopposed.

- Minor alterations to the ball composition.
- Players will no longer have to wear the same colour helmets as their team mates.
- Secondary shorts no longer need to be the same colour as the team shorts.

- The procedures following a sending off have been expanded to include any team officials and anyone representing a club who has been dismissed.
- If the two centre players are one left-handed and the other right-handed, the choice of the side for the throw up shall alternate throughout the game.
- The rules in relation to 'clecking' have been clarified.
- A warning for persistent fouling will be issued after a minimum of three fouls and a caution will follow if the player continues to foul.

- Foul and abusive language, including frustration with oneself, is now a distinct cautionable offence and could be a red card if directed specifically at the referee or a goal judge.
- Deliberately preventing a clear goal scoring opportunity through foul play is now categorised as a cautionable offence.

Participation in the 2017 senior leagues increased to 54 teams from 52 in 2016. This was as a result of Strachur re-joining the league and Strathglass entering a second team.

There were 689 senior fixtures scheduled in 2017 compared to 618 in 2016. However 39 fixtures were unfulfilled due to team raising difficulties, an increase from 27 in 2016. Of the 125 fixtures which were postponed and rescheduled, 103 were due to unplayable fields and 13 due to bereavement. Nine fixtures were rescheduled at the request of both clubs in compliance with the byelaws. This compared with 75 postponements in 2016. During 2017, nine fixtures were reversed or transferred to an alternative venue to ensure the game took place on the scheduled date compared to 12 previous years.

There were no changes to fees for membership, insurance, competition entry or player transfers and there were no

appointments for members of Honour or Honorary Patrons.

After the meeting finished Kilmallie voiced displeasure at the switching of fixtures at short notice.

A few clubs questioned the need to provide after-match meals and although this is an issue for the clubs, the Camannachd Association agreed to circulate a poll to gather views.

Oban Celtic boost as Kenny Wotherspoon stays on



Kenny Wotherspoon is staying on as manager of Oban Celtic. Photo: Kevin McGlynn.

Oban Celtic received a boost when manager Kenny Wotherspoon agreed to stay in charge of the Marine Harvest National Division side for a third season.

Speaking after his decision to remain in the hot-seat was confirmed, Kenny Wotherspoon said: 'I feel it would be a wasted effort to step down now after all the work that's been put in. The boys are great and in the matches we lost last season, we were only beaten by the odd goal on most occasions. I'll be looking for effort and commitment from the players and I feel I can offer more encouragement to improve our side.'

After their promotion from Marine Harvest South Division 1 at the end of the 2015 season, Oban Celtic finished sixth in the eight-team Marine Harvest National Division last term.

Wotherspoon added: 'We are always looking to improve the playing squad and we relish the forthcoming season.'

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Cup as committee player of the year.

The Ian 'Dubh' Memorial Shield for U21 player of the year went to Ally Nixon.

Duncan 'WD' MacRae was presented with the WD MacRae Cup for U17 player of the year.

The CalMac Quaich for U14 player of the year went to Duncan MacMillan with the most improved player of the year award for this age group going to Arron Jack.

Archie 'Ach' MacRae was U12 player of the year, whilst Fraser MacRae was the most improved player of the year at this age group.

Club stalwarts Bert Loades and John MacDougall, with more than 80 years' service to the club between them, stepped down as directors and, as a mark of appreciation, they were presented with gifts and became Kinlochshiel's first honorary chieftains.

Annie MacDonald was also presented with gifts to thank her for taking photographs at club matches this season.

Newtonmore Player of the Year awards

Newtonmore announced their player of the year awards at their annual dinner dance at the Newtonmore Village Hall on Saturday November 25.

Michael Russell was named first team player of the year following a season in which he was named in the Scotland squad.

Kenny Ross received the second team player of the year accolade for the third successive season.

The U17 prize went to promising youngster Tommy Stewart. Newtonmore will hold their annual sale of work at 2pm at Newtonmore Village Hall on Saturday December 2.



Newtonmore's first team player of the year was Michael Russell. Photo: Neil Paterson.

Col Glen awards

Col Glen have announced their player of the year awards.

Cally Mcnaughton is the club's player of the year after the youngster had an excellent season in Marine Harvest South Division 1.

Tom Irvine was young player of the year, with Kyle Kerr, who captained Dunoon U14 to South of Scotland League success, named most improved player. Another youth player, Neily Mcnaughton, was Col Glen's top scorer.

Oban Camannachd AGM on Friday

Oban Camannachd's annual general meeting takes place at the Rockfield Buildings on Friday December 1.

The AGM starts at 7pm. Everyone welcome.

Inveraray AGM

Inveraray's annual general meeting takes place at the Inveraray Inn on Friday December 1.

The meeting starts at 7pm and members and non-members are welcome.

Boleskine AGM

Boleskine Camannachd will hold its annual general meeting at Farr Hall on Monday December 4.

Boleskine, who finished bottom of Marine Harvest North Division 2 last season, are especially keen to hear from any players who would consider joining the team for next season.

Scottish student squads announced

The Scottish Student representative squads have been announced for the upcoming shinty/hurling/camogie matches against Queens University in Belfast on Saturday December 2.

Lochcarron's Niall Arnott has had to pull out of the men's squad and he has been replaced by Duncan Gorman from Newtonmore.

The squad includes a number of top flight players with places for Kingussie's Rory MacKeachan, Newtonmore's Iain Robinson, Craig Anderson from Glasgow Mid Argyll as well as Skye Camannachd's James Pringle.

Men's squad from: Rory MacKeachan - UHI; Darrin Fowler - UHI; Ewan Fraser - Aberdeen; Donald MacRae - RGU; Iain Robinson - Abertay; Nathan Whear - Edinburgh University; Jack Berg - Edinburgh University; Daniel Donald - Edinburgh University; Sandy Elrick - Edinburgh University; Duncan Gorman - Edinburgh University; Daniel Lamont - Heriot Watt; Jono Price - Heriot Watt; James Pringle - Heriot Watt; Alex Dunning - SRUC; Craig Anderson - West College Glasgow; Cameron McCue - Glasgow School of Art; Matthew Young - Glasgow University; David MacLean - Glasgow University; Seamus Gordon - Glasgow Caledonian; Angie Grant - Glasgow Caledonian.

Lochaber's Christy MacIntyre has withdrawn from the women's squad and has been replaced by Shannon Birnie from Strathglass.

Women's squad from: Shannon Wilson - UHI; Taryn Neilson - RGU; Rona Stewart - RGU; M J Malcolm - RGU; Aofie Tangey - RGU; Juliet McDavitt - St Andrew's; Sarah Hart - St Andrew's; Catriona Kirk - Stirling; Rhona MacIntyre - Edinburgh University; Erraid Sinclair - Edinburgh University; Mairi Stewart - Edinburgh University; Morgan Redpath - Edinburgh University; Shannon Birnie - Edinburgh University; Rosie Mulligan - Heriot Watt; Megan Ralph - Glasgow Caledonian; Donna MacKenzie - Glasgow University; Zoe Reid - City of Glasgow College; Amy Harris - Strathclyde; Caitriona Stark - Strathclyde; Christy Doherty - Strathclyde.

Shinty coaching

The Camannachd Association has confirmed that its United Kingdom Coaching Certificate (UKCC) Level 1 & 2 courses have once again been accredited by UKCoaching.

This accreditation, which lasts until 2020, shows the Camannachd Association courses are of the highest quality and stand comparison with all other sports in the United Kingdom and beyond.

The close season programme of courses includes: UKCC Level 1: Bute - TBC; Inverness - January 20/21 2018; Glasgow - January 20/21; Ardnamurchan January 20/21.

UKCC Level 2: Oban - November 29/December 1 (two evenings); Inverness - January 28 2018; Glasgow - February 4.

WCA round-up

Play-off postponed

The WCA Marine Harvest North Division 2 play-off between Strathspey and the Lochaber second team at Grantown Grammar School on Sunday November 26 was postponed because of an unplayable pitch.

Strathspey won home advantage following the toss of a coin but, with Spean Bridge also unplayable, the match will now be rescheduled for early in the New Year.

After ten league matches, the teams would have gone into this 1.30pm throw-up level on 14 points at the top of the table.

Strathspey were beaten by Glengarry and Strathglass in the league and drew twice against Lochaber.

Lochaber's only defeat came against Glenurquhart in their final league match but they also drew four matches.

This rescheduled play-off will be the final fixture of the 2017 women's shinty calendar.

Fort William ladies seek new head coach

Fort William ladies are seeking a new coach to inspire their team.

The Fort currently run senior and development teams and train once a week.

With the new WCA season starting in March 2017, the new coach will be supported by senior players and will be expected to:

- Plan and deliver a well-structured and progressive training programme.
- Ensure a high quality, positive coaching experience which centres on the needs of both senior and development players.
- Provide positive guidance during matches.
- Uphold a level of professionalism in every aspect of delivery and representation of Fort William Ladies.

Although a coaching course can be provided, the Fort William Ladies are looking for the successful candidate to have suitable experience and attitude.

Any interested parties should send their CV to Katherine Anne Gall at kamunro70@hotmail.com highlighting experience and what skills they can bring to the team.

This is a voluntary post and the closing date is Friday December 29.

Youth shinty

Lundavra set for youth competitions

Camannachd Association regional development manager (East) and Scotland head coach Ronald Ross recently spent time at Lundavra Primary School where they put their young shinty players through their paces.

Youth coaches Kirsty Delaney, from Lochaber Ladies, and Shannon Wilson, from Fort William Ladies, work with the Lundavra youngsters.

Shinty sessions take place in the school gym hall on Thursdays between 4.30pm and 5.30pm and will be for boys and girls from primary 1 to primary 7.

Lundavra Primary School hopes to enter teams in local competitions in the future.

Sportsdesk
01631 568000

High School reunion for Saints

Greenock HSFP
Oban Saints
Scottish Cup - 4th Round

OBAN Saints' Scottish Amateur Cup travels take them to the tail o' the bank this Saturday afternoon where they will renew old acquaintanceships with Greenock High School Former Pupils.

Saints and the 'High' enjoy a healthy rivalry having crossed swords on many occasions over the years since Saints gained entry to the Scottish Amateur Football League in 1976. At that time the 'High', who last month held their 110th anniversary celebrations, had already been members of Scotland's oldest surviving amateur football league for 52 years. During that golden period, the 'High' clinched four Division One titles, three West of Scotland Cups and two Scottish Amateur Cups.

The 'High' continued to gather trophies and in 2007 celebrated their centenary year by clinching their first Scottish Amateur Football League Premier Division title. That league title success proved to be the 'High's' final piece of Scottish Amateur Football League silverware before departing for a fresh challenge in the Central Scottish Amateur Football

League after finishing runners-up to Champions Saints at the end of the 2009 - 10 season.

Entering the Central League at the bottom of the pyramid system, the 'High' took just two attempts to secure promotion to the Premier Division. After a creditable Division 1B fourth place finish in their debut season, the Greenock men reached the top flight by topping 2012 - 13's Division 1A. To round off a successful season, they then bagged their first Central Scottish Amateur Football League trophy with a Division 1 play-off victory over Division 1B winners Drumchapel Amateurs to clinch the Division 1 Champions trophy.

Success on the home front was overshadowed in May 2015 by yet another major trophy to add to the High's impressive collection. A fourth West of Scotland Amateur Cup found its way into the Greenock trophy cabinet after a thrilling final victory over Colville Park at New Douglas Park, Hamilton elevating them to third place on the all-time winners list.

After leaving the Scottish Amateur Football League, the 'High' continued their rivalry with Saints with a series of pre-season friendlies, the last of which was played in 2015 at the tournament to celebrate



Saints face a tough test against old rivals Greenock HSFP in the Scottish Cup on Saturday.

the 120th anniversary of Rhu Amateurs.

The 'High's' progress to the Scottish Amateur Cup fourth round has seen them put seven without reply past Troon Dundonald of the Ayrshire Amateur Football Association First Division in round two following a first round bye. In the third round, AS Airdrie of the Strathclyde Saturday Morning Amateur Football League Premier Division proved a harder nut to crack with the 'High' edging out the Lanarkshire men thanks to a successfully converted first half penalty.

Saints started their Scottish Cup campaign with a 4-0 home win over Mauchline United in the first round thanks to goals from Craig MacEwan (3) and Shaun MacIver.

This was followed by a convincing 6-0 home win against Plains in round two. Donald Campbell (3), Fraser Macfarlane, Scott Maitland and Paul Carmichael were on target for the Oban side.

It took Saints two hard games to get past an impressive Falkirk side in round three, the first game ending in a 3-3 draw at Alva Academy. Donald

Campbell (2) and Craig MacEwan were Saints' scorers. The replay in Oban a week later saw Saints edge through 3-2 thanks to goals from Craig MacEwan, Willie Gemmell and Myles McAuley.

Saturday's trip to Greenock will see Saints face the 'High' on their home turf for the first time since August 2009. On that particular occasion it was the home side who prevailed by the odd goal in three to land an early blow in what was to prove an epic league title race.

Saints gained their revenge in the reverse fixture at Glencruitt-

Football

ten emerging 4 - 1 victors to inflict Greenock's only defeat of the season. That result was to prove pivotal with Saints eventually pipping the 'High' by a single point to land their first Premier Division title.

Unlike almost every other cup competition in amateur football, the Scottish Amateur Cup includes replays therefore a re-match will follow at Glencruitt in seven days if the two sides cannot be separated after 90 minutes.

Oban Lorne get back to league action

Rugby

Helensburgh
Oban Lorne
BT West Division One

OBAN Lorne are back in action after almost a month off due to a combination of Scotland's Autumn Tests and poor weather that has badly affected the West Regional fixture card.

The squad travel to face the league's bottom-placed side, Argyll rivals Helensburgh RFC, who have only won one game so far this season. The men in green will be hoping for a much needed win that will lift themselves clear of Saturday's hosts and catch up with the teams above them in the table.

Oban have struggled for any consistent team selection so far this season which has led to inconsistent results. These include a 106-13 hammering away to Kilmarnock, while home wins have come from a 30-0 and 28-12 victories over Greenock Wanderers and Irvine.

The club's weekly training sessions have also been badly hit by poor weather recently with all of Glencruittens grass pitches being closed for the last six weeks due to drainage problems. Training sessions have been delivered at Oban High School's astro turf pitch along with the Oban Lorne Ladies 1st XV.

The Green Machine's next home game is on Saturday December 16 against high flying Kilmarnock. Kick off 2pm.

Oban Saints youths' results and fixtures

Youth football

LAST weekend's results:

Under 13s 5, Helensburgh 0.

On target for Saints was Kyle Cooper with all five goals.

Lenzie 0, Under 14s 6.

Scoring for Saints were Innes MacDonald (3), Thomas McCrindle, Ross Higgins and John Douglas.

Busby 0, Under 15s 8.

Saints goalscorers were Connor Moore (4), Toby MacFarlane-Barrow, Ross Campbell, James Beaton and Ellis Hunter.

Under 16s v Milton postponed.

Motherwell Community 1, Under 17s 5. On target for Saints were Keir MacLean (2), Cameron Kerr, Nathan Allan and Scott Mossman.

Next weekend's fixtures: Dunoon v Under 13s; Dumbarton Riverside v Under 14s; Under 15s no game; Under 16s v Milton; Dunoon v Under 17s.



Fort William juniors unveil new strips

JUNIOR footballers at Fort William Football Club have a new set of kits thanks to their generous coach.

A group of talented young primary school footballers will be sporting new orange strips - marking a new era for youth football in the area after joining forces with

Michael Gillespie of G Welding presented the new strips to Fort William FC juniors last week.

Photo: Abrightside Photography.

Fort William youth development. Lisa MacGillivray, who helped set up the junior club, said: 'Last year we started some training for a group of young talented footballers from primary three, four and five as there was nothing available for them at the time. We had some dads get involved and we started to take the boys to tournaments and festivals. Last month we joined with Fort William youth development and we now have Fort William under nine, 10 and 11s.'

Youth football

The junior team's coaches are going to take SFA courses and are looking forward to advancing through the SFA coach development programme. One of the club's coaches, Michael Gillespie of G Welding, sponsored the new strip. Lisa added: 'We are all delighted to be involved with Fort Youths and we are hoping our talented boys will progress through all their teams.'

Youth rugby round-up . . . youth rugby round-up . . .

Mitsubishi Motors West U18 Conference

Oban Lorne U18s P

Bishopton P

Oban Lorne's U18s fixture at home to Bishopton was postponed on Saturday as the visitors failed to raise a side for the game. This was a blow for Oban who have built up great momentum in recent weeks and boasted a squad of 18 players for the match.

Oban Lorne v Newton Stewart/Wigtownshire

This Saturday the team will look to continue their recent good form as a combined Newton Stewart/Wigtownshire team make the long trip to Oban.

The sides met in Stranraer earlier in the season playing out a 12-12 draw. A win for Oban, would strengthen the teams grip on third place in the league.

Saturday's game will be played at North Connel, Kick off TBC.

Scottish Schools National U16 Bowl Final

Excitement is building at Oban High School ahead of the U16 National Bowl final to be played at BT Murrayfield's back pitches on Wednesday next week as part of Scottish Rugby's School Finals Day.

Oban High School U16s will meet the winner of Jedburgh Grammar School and Auchinleck Academy.

The Oban side have impressed in previous rounds of the competition recording some big wins and have stepped up their preparations over the past couple of weeks.

Supporters are welcome to attend the game and can stay for both the U16 & U18 main finals that will be played inside BT Murrayfield.

U15 Girls Friendly Fixture

Oban U15 Girls P

Islay RFC P

Poor weekend weather put a stop to the first girls meeting between Argyll neighbours Oban and Islay at U15 level.

This was due to be Islay's first competitive fixture at this level with the school starting up a girls rugby section at the start

of the 2017/18 season.

The fixture will be rearranged for the new year.

Mitsubishi Motors West

U13 & U14 Conferences

Oban Lorne U13 & U14 P

Waysiders Drumpellier P

Oban's U13 & U14 teams

were left without a fixture on Sunday with a combination of poor weather and unavailable playing surfaces forcing games

with Waysiders Drumpellier to be called off. These fixtures will be rescheduled into 2018.



Oban High School Under 16s will contest the final of the Scottish Schools National Bowl at BT Murrayfield next week.

SPOT THE SHINTY BALL

THIS WEEK'S JACKPOT £3050

LAST WEEK'S SHINTY BALL WAS HERE. . .



This week's nearest the ball winners, who each receive £25 are:

D Mitchell
Muasdale Cottage
Tarbert

C Allan
Drumvargie Terrace
Oban

We have removed the shinty ball from the photograph opposite. Now look carefully at the position of the players and use your skill and judgement to place a cross at the exact point where you think the centre of the ball was. You may have a maximum of 20 attempts on this coupon at a cost of £1. If you wish to have more attempts, you must enter on separate coupons.

Easy to enter
Cut out your completed coupon and put your entry plus £1 per 20 attempts into a sealed envelope and post it to 'Spot the Shinty Ball' Competition, The Oban Times, PO Box 1, Oban, Argyll PA34 4HB by 12noon Tuesday. No refunds will be given for entries received after the deadline.
You may hand it into The Oban Times Head Office, Lochavullin, Oban by the same time. Otherwise all entries must be posted.
Competition rules
No responsibility will be accepted for entries which are delayed, mislaid or lost, and proof of posting cannot be accepted as proof of delivery.
The Company's decision is final on all matters relating to the

Please remember to enclose £1 for 20 crosses. The maximum number of attempts on this coupon is 20, but you may enter on separate coupons as many times as you wish. No photocopies allowed. You agree to abide by the rules. How to enter: Mark your crosses using a ballpoint pen. Twenty crosses may be put on this coupon for £1. Send to 'Spot the Shinty Ball' Competition, The Oban Times, P.O. Box 1, Oban PA34 4HB

The game starts with a jackpot of £500 and will increase by £50 per week until it is won outright. To win the jackpot, the centre of your cross must be in the exact centre of the ball. If the crosses overlap the entry will be void.
If no correct entry is received, two 'near miss' prizes of £25 will be awarded. When the jackpot is won, no other prizes will be awarded that week.

competition and no correspondence will be entered into. The final decision rests with the Company.
In the event of more than one correct entry, the jackpot will be shared equally between all winning entries. Any decision regarding the awarding of a prize is entirely at the discretion of the Company.
The Company reserves the right to declare the competition null and void at any time, subject to its discretion and to make full refund of the price of the coupon to any person who has entered the competition at that time.
Employees of Wyvex Media, their immediate relatives and any person otherwise connected with the competition are ineligible to enter.



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Lorne Ladies still to lose a single point in another dominant display

Oban Lorne Ladies 53
Kelso Ladies 0
BT Women's National League 2

AFTER a couple of weekends off, the Green Army took to the pitch once more, this time at North Connel against visitors Kelso Ladies.

With snow on the surrounding hills, it was a cold day, with conditions underfoot not ideal on the waterlogged and muddy pitch.

The visiting team of 17 players made their long journey to Oban the day prior to the match to arrive on the pitch fresh-faced so Oban were expecting a tough, physical game. Oban began with matching numbers, although one substitute was already suffering from a broken finger before the game began.

Despite appearances, Kelso's size and strength was no match for the Oban team on the day. Determined to maintain their undefeated record in the league to date, every single player worked hard from start to finish.

The focus of recent training has been defence, which showed in the game as Kelso were not afforded any breakthrough runs at any point in the match.

The opening try of the game came for prop Georgia Mitchell

after only two minutes, running straight through the Kelso defence to dive over the line, successfully converted by fly-half Lucy Stewart.

Five minutes later, Oban secured their second try, this time up the left wing for Rachel MacDonald, although Kelso fought hard to try to hold her up. Outside centre Erika Skofca smashed through the defensive line for another piece of impressive individual play as she brought the score to 19-0 after 12 minutes of play. This was quickly followed by another try for MacDonald, once more showing her impressive speed up the wing.

Stewart was then afforded a try herself, keeping hold of the ball at fly-half position from a breakdown to smash through the Kelso defence once more as missed tackles started to become their undoing.

The Oban forwards pack played impressively throughout the match, turning over multiple scrums under slippery conditions and securing the ball for the backs to show off their best moves. Some good handling and a well-executed set piece brought the ball to Skofca once more as she secured the final try of the first half, bringing the score to 38-0 at the half-time whistle.

A hat-trick for Skofca opened the second half, as she shrugged off tackles left, right and centre, sitting two Kelso players on the ground as they attempted to get in her way.

Oban have certainly benefited from her wealth of playing experience in Italy before joining the squad.

Try number eight of the match came for prop Ellie MacNiven, once more running straight through Kelso's defensive line to drive over for a touchdown.

Kelso rallied as the second half played out, and the home side were beginning to show signs of fatigue. The hosts allowed them significantly more time in Oban's half during this 40 minutes than the opening equivalent.



Oban Lorne Ladies celebrate after their 53-0 win over Kelso at North Connel. Photos: Stephen Lawson

Rugby

However, after some motivational encouragement from captain Laura MacCormick and coach for the day Darrell Williams, this was put to an end, and the final score of the game was a well-deserved try from quietly determined scrum-half Audrey Barr, bringing the final tally to 53-0.

Once more Oban Ladies have shown that they are a force to be reckoned with, despite initial feelings of uncertainty as the unknown Kelso team arrived in Oban. Impressively, they have managed to maintain their record of zero points conceded in the whole season of league matches and aim to continue this winning streak against RDVC in Edinburgh on Sunday.

The ladies train on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 6pm to 7pm, with information about this typically shared on their Facebook page 'Oban Lorne Ladies Rugby Club'.



Captain Laura MacCormick and vice-captain Ailsa MacLachlan received new substitute jackets kindly sponsored by Gleaner Oils from team managers Darrell Williams and Ellie MacNiven before Sunday's match against Kelso. The team would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to Gleaner Oils for their generosity, which is greatly appreciated.



Erika Skofca in action.



Ellie MacNiven barges through the Kelso defence for a try.



Lucy Stewart dives over for a try.



Alex Craik.

Weather wipes out Argyll derby

Football

LAST Saturday's Argyll derby in the Jimmy Marshall Cup between Oban Saints and Lochgilhead Red Star had to be called off when a Saturday morning pitch inspection found the all-weather surface at Oban High School covered in ice.

The game was due to be played on the grass at Glencruitten but a telephone call from head groundsman Ian Hay saying the grass was unlikely to be playable prompted a late switch to the 3G surface at Oban High School.

However, a pitch inspection at 9am on Saturday morning found the playing surface to be covered in ice, leaving the Oban club no option but to call the game off.

Manager Alex Craik was bitterly disappointed at the call-off as his side have a big Scottish Cup tie away to Greenock this weekend and he had planned to try out some new tactics in the game against Red Star.

Club secretary David Buchanan said: 'I wonder why they call them all-weather pitches as they certainly aren't. They can take any amounts of rain, but as soon as there is any snow and frost they become dangerous and unplayable.'

As well as the senior team game being called off, the Saints under-16s regional cup tie against Milton, also due to be played on the all-weather surface on Saturday, fell foul of the weather.

This Saturday, Saints face a tough match when they travel to take on old friends and rivals Greenock HSEF in the fourth round of the Scottish Cup. The game will take place at Battery Park 3G with a 2pm kick-off. Referee in charge is Mark Caldwell.

Scottish Amateur FL results/fixtures

Football

LAST Saturday's results:
Premier Division One – Campbeltown Pupils no game;
Premier Division Two – FC Argyll v Tarbert postponed.

This Saturday's fixtures:
Scottish Cup – Greenock HSEF v Oban Saints; Premier Division One – Rosehill Star v Campbeltown Pupils; Premier Division Two – Cardross v Lochgilhead Red Star; Tarbert v East End United.

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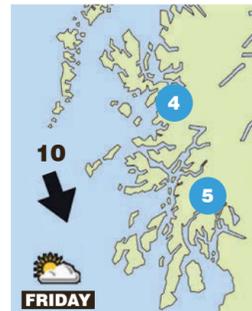
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WEATHER

Thursday Sunny intervals
Winds light North North Westerly
Temperatures 0°C to 4°C.

Friday Cloudy
Winds light North Easterly
Temperatures 6°C to 7°C.

Weekend Outlook Cloudy on Saturday
Light rain on Sunday
Winds moderate North Westerly
Temperatures 7°C to 9°C.



Stop Press: New pontoons at Ulva Ferry and visitor moorings installed at Lochaline by North West Marine Ltd

TIDAL INFORMATION
Tide tables for Oban during the week from Thursday November 30, 2017 are listed below with differences for major ports listed on the right. All times are GMT (add one hour BST)

Date		am		pm	
Thur	02.58	3.3	08.52	1.5	15.24
Fri	03.37	3.6	09.44	1.2	16.05
Sat	04.15	3.8	10.32	1.0	16.45
Sun	04.55	4.0	11.19	0.8	17.25
Mon	05.35	4.1	12.06	0.6	18.06
Tues	00.21	0.5	06.17	4.2	12.54
Wed	01.07	0.5	07.01	4.1	13.44

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

Tidal Constants: (Add or deduct from High Water at Oban)

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Canal camping pods plan panned by councillors

MARK ENTWISTLE
mentwistle@obantimes.co.uk



John Fotheringham.

IF SCOTTISH Canals gets the green light to build six camping pods at Gairloch, it will result in an unregulated campsite with more problems of noise, anti-social behaviour, and alcohol and substance abuse, according to a community council.

Scottish Canals is seeking planning permission to install the pods along with a services building, but Spean Bridge, Roy Bridge and Achnacarry Community Council has lodged an objection with Highland Council.

Community council chairman John Fotheringham has told planning officers he and his fellow councillors were unimpressed by the proposed pods and say Scottish Canals already has an unoccupied listed building, namely Telford House, that it previously promised to renovate as a café and bunkhouse.

Mr Fotheringham claims the pods proposal fails to satisfy various planning and tourism policies and believe they would have a detrimental effect on the Caledonian Canal and the iconic Telford House.

Mr Fotheringham informed planning officer Christine Millard: 'They promote themselves as the guardians of the scheduled monument that is the Caledonian Canal. The local community sees them as opportunistic in their current planning proposal and are failing to adequately protect the very thing they seek to develop.'

He added that posting warning

notices was not enough and that Scottish Canals needed to be far more proactive in enforcing rules of behaviour by existing campers.

'We have a right to expect taxpayer-funded organisations to react positively to complaints and find solutions, but Scottish Canals has demonstrated an inability to take positive action to protect the environment,' he said.

In its supporting statement to planners, Scottish Canals says it had not been fully aware of the extent of wild camping at Gairloch and perceived nuisance problems arising from this.

'There is limited scope to prevent wild camping, although this should not be taking place on the scheduled monument. Scottish Canals envisage greatly improved site management at Gairloch with the introduction of the pods, stated the organisation.

'These will reduce the area available to wild campers and there will be a greater staff presence on site.'

As far as Telford House is con-

cerned, Scottish Canals states there are now advanced plans to refurbish the property for use as a bunkhouse with tea room and funding proposals are being finalised.

But Mr Fotheringham dismissed this as a 'smokescreen', stating four years have now elapsed since Scottish Canals said it intended renovating Telford House.

'As a community council we are not opposed to development but believe it has to be one that brings real benefits to our area and this proposal for a virtually unregulated campsite does not fulfil the criteria in the Local Plan,' he told Ms Millard.

'The problems of noise, anti-social behaviour and alcohol and substance abuse that have blighted the lives of residents and visitors to date are likely to remain.

'If Scottish Canals want to genuinely contribute to the economic sustainability of our area then the refurbishment of the existing Telford House is the only viable solution we could support, to provide the accommodation they desire.'

And at its monthly meeting this week, Kilmallie Community Council agreed to support Spean Bridge, Roy Bridge and Achnacarry Community Council.

Kilmallie council secretary Russell Leaper said he could understand the frustration felt by Mr Fotheringham and his colleagues: 'There's still derelict buildings at Banavie. They [Scottish Canals] are wasting a lot of money on this and not looking after their own buildings.'

Festive fun for Santa's little helpers



Faolan Hunter and Kayla Duncan joined Santa and his reindeer to wave to the cheering crowds.

IF F48 Winter Festival 01

THERE were some special festive visitors to Fort William at the weekend, when Santa and his reindeer drew big crowds to the town for its annual Lochaber Winter Festival.

Santa and his team of Cairngorm reindeer were the star attraction of what turned out to be a fantastic event last Friday night and Saturday.

The fun kicked off on the Friday evening with a lantern parade along the High Street,

followed by the switching on of the town's Christmas lights. Then on Saturday morning, Faolan Hunter from Lundavra Primary School and Kayla Duncan from Caol Primary School, joined Santa on his sleigh for the ride through town after being named as winners of the *Lochaber Times*' Christmas card competition.

Turn to pages 12 and 13 for full report and pictures.

MSP slams Christmas delivery charges

MSP KATE FORBES has slammed what she describes as Christmas rip-off delivery charges to rural areas.

The MSP for Skye, Lochaber and Badenoch is backing a new campaign calling for fairer delivery charges to these communities.

With less than a month to go to Christmas, Ms Forbes said it was ridiculous parts of the Highland mainland were classified as 'overseas' by some retailers. It has been reported one company wanted to charge more than £40 extra for taking an item to the other side of the toll-free Skye Bridge.

The campaign is being led by Moray MSP Richard Lochhead in a bid to stop 'rip-off' parcel delivery charges that discriminate against homes and businesses in many parts of Scotland.

Ms Forbes added: 'In the run-up to Christmas, we'll all be ordering parcels and will again be reminded of the injustice of paying more just because we live in the Highlands. It is ridiculous to pay more at all, when we know that Royal Mail delivers parcels to every corner of Scotland every day. However, it is doubly ridiculous that parts of the Highland mainland are classified overseas by some retailers. I fully support my colleague Richard Lochhead's campaign to name and shame retailers that don't give Highlanders a fair deal.'



LOCHABER'S CHRISTMAS CAROL EXTRAVAGANZA

Join Gary Innes and an incredible house band featuring Ingrid Henderson, Iain MacFarlane, Ewen Henderson, Hugh MacCallum, Ewan Robertson and James Lindsay for a night of festive fun and Christmas cheer.

Highlight will include performances by Spean Bridge, Caol, Inverloch, Bun-Sgoil Ghàidhlig, St Columbas RC, Banavie Primary schools and Lochaber High School Pipe Band and Folk band.

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Tickets available from the Nevis Centre

Hotel owners encouraged by public response to redevelopment plans

THE OWNERS of the Kings House Hotel in Glencoe say they are encouraged by the public's response to their controversial plans to redevelop the historic droving inn, writes Neill Bo Finlayson.

More than 50 people attended an open information forum at St Mary's Church Hall, Glencoe, to hear from the owners Black Corrie Estate Management and project managers Bidwells, about their plans for a £10m renovation of the hotel.

The owners propose to build a three-storey, 60-bedroom hotel on the landmark site in Glencoe, with work on the site already under way. In her address to the gathering, owner Diane

de Spoelberch said: 'When the Kings House suddenly came up for sale in 2014 we didn't want somebody buying it to create a large development on the site or build something which wasn't in keeping with the environment so we bought it to develop a sustainable project.'

Several formal objections have been lodged against the outstanding planning application for the development from organisations including the National Trust for Scotland and the John Muir Trust on the grounds the designs are not in keeping with the surrounding area.

Glencoe and Glen Etive Community Council has voiced its support for the

project again this week, with chairman Alistair Sutherland saying the development 'will provide some scope for young people who might otherwise leave this area'.

Ms de Spoelberch continued: 'Although my brother Rodolphe de Spoelberch and myself consider this project as an impact investment, which is close to us and the things we love, we have to ensure what we are proposing is economically viable.'

'However, we are responsible investors and don't want to do anything that would displease the community. We will not proceed with something that is not supported, even if this means no hotel at all.'

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WHAT'S ON IN LOCHABER

ARISAIG'S Land, Sea and Islands Centre is extending a warm festive welcome to visitors this weekend. From Friday December 1 to Sunday December 3, visitors can enjoy a glass of mulled wine while having a look round the newly-refurbished centre. Hours of opening will be Friday, 2pm to 6.30pm, Saturday and Sunday 10am to 4pm.

HIGHLAND Hospice is hosting a Christmas carol service on Monday December 4 at the Faith Mission Centre, Fort William, at 6.30pm. Everyone is invited to go along for an evening of singing. Refreshments will be served.

THE FORT William branch of the Scottish Women's Institute is celebrating its 100th anniversary on Monday December 4 in the Salvation Army Hall, Fort William, from 7pm. Current members will be delighted to welcome former members to the party. If you would like to come along, meet old friends and chat about your 'rural memories' call Edythe Knowles on 01397 702744 or Martine Young on 01397 702758.

STAFF and volunteers from Caol-based Lochaber Sensory Care (LSC) for sight and hearing support will visit Mallaig on Tuesday December 5.

The team will be at Mallaig Medical Centre from 2 to 3pm to offer help and advice to anyone with a hearing or sight loss. The LSC representatives will also supply NHS hearing aids and batteries and re-tube and maintain hearing aids. No appointment necessary.

LOCHABER Local History Society will host Viking expert and enthusiast Paul Rigby from Glen Loy to its meeting on Thursday December 7. Paul's talk is entitled 'Wanton Warriors or Terrific Traders? - The Vikings of Lochaber.' Everyone is welcome to the event at 8pm at the Ben Nevis Hotel.

THERE will be a Jacobite festive steam train service from Monday December 4 to Friday December 22, departing 10.15am each day. The train will arrive at Mallaig at 12.25pm where doors will be open on Santa's Grotto, courtesy of Mallaig Fishermen's Mission. For £5, children will meet Santa and receive a present. For more information contact Karen Calder on 07917 754407.

LOCHABER Transport Forum is holding a bus user's meeting on Tuesday December 5 at 11.30am in Duncansburgh Church Hall. This is an opportunity for members of the public to discuss local

bus/coach issues with representatives from the service operators. The meeting is open to everyone.

FORT William Accordion and Fiddle Club will host a musical evening on Tuesday December 5 at 7.30pm in Railway Club, Inverlochy. Guest artistes are the Ross MacPherson Trio. £5. Tea and raffle extra.

ART LOCHABER is holding a pop-up gallery and shop at the Pinemarten Cafe, Nevis Range from 10am to 4pm daily from Tuesday December 5 to Sunday December 10. Framed paintings, mounted pictures and cards will be on sale. Everyone is welcome to browse the gallery and have coffee or lunch.

THE WINTER concert of the wind bands of Lochaber High School will take place on Wednesday December 6 at 7.30pm in the school hall. It will feature the senior and junior bands as well as the 'big' band. Music will include original wind band works and tunes from Michael Jackson, Earth, Wind and Fire and the Blues Brothers. Tickets, which are free, are available from the school office.

THE MUSIC Shed Community Choir holds its Christmas concert on Saturday December 9, at St Mary's Church, Glencoe, at 2.30pm. Everyone welcome. Donations in aid of St Mary's.

KILMALLIE Community Centre in Corpach is holding a Christmas Fayre on Saturday December 9 from 11am to 3pm. The fayre will include meat, home-grown vegetables, candles, jewellery, knitted crafts and more. Soup, cakes and refreshments will be on offer. Tables cost £8 each. To book a table, contact the centre manager on 01397 600111. All proceeds go towards the upgrading of Kilmallie Community Centre.

DON YOUR Santa hat and walk, jog or run 5k on Saturday December 9 in the Mallaig Pool and Leisure Santa Dash. The dash starts from Morar train station at 11.30am and will finish at the Steam Inn, Mallaig. It will be followed by mulled wine, mince pies and a 50/50 raffle draw. To enter, collect a form from Mallaig Leisure Centre. There is no entrance fee. Donations will go towards the refurbishment programme.

KILMALLIE Singers' annual Christmas concert is on Saturday December 16 in Duncansburgh MacIntosh Church at 7.30pm. Tickets, priced £5 for adults, concessions £4, children £1, are available at church door on the evening or from choir members.

Young dancers step out in style at annual event

MARK ENTWISTLE
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THREE hundred talented youngsters from across Lochaber came together over three nights to put on a dance display to packed audiences every evening.

Staged at Lochaber High School from Wednesday to Friday last week, the annual Lochaber Dance Platform is a key part of the Active Schools calendar.

Primary and secondary school pupils showcased a huge variety of styles of dance and costume.

Thirteen pupils from Lochaber High School, alongside a number of former pupils, parents and school staff, ran after-school dance sessions leading up to the event allowing all local primary schools to perform a dance.

Pupils from Lochaber, Mallaig and Kinlochleven high schools choreographed and danced their own routines.

Dance groups from throughout Lochaber gave performances, including Lochaber Gymnastics Club, Ballet West, ConnXion (majorettes), Lochaline Primary School, Sunart Stomers, Ben Nevis All-Stars (cheerleading), Feis Lochaber Scottish Step Dancers and Highland dancers from Nevis School of Highland Dancing and the Jane Douglas School of Dance.

A lively dance by primary pupils, choreographed and taught by local teacher Leah Burns, finished the first half.

Leah, alongside Sarah Gilanders, was also responsible for running the sound desk.

A finale dance, taught by Highlife Highland's 'Movers and Shakers' teacher Amy Gallagher, brought the show to a close each evening.

This intensive dance input from a professional tutor is an important part of the Dance Platform programme, teaching



Ballet West's Mad Hatters routine held the audience spellbound.

JP F48 Mad hatter performance 01



Kinlochleven High School dancers.



Sophie Knox of Ben Nevis All Stars.

dancers new moves and giving them fresh ideas to incorporate into their own choreography.

Active Schools co-ordinator Bridget Thomas said she continued to be amazed by the time and effort put into this event by so many people.

'It could not happen without the community behind it. Thank you to all the dance leaders and volunteers who choreographed

routines, and in particular to Sarah and Leah, who contributed a huge amount of time, energy and enthusiasm to organising this year's event,' she added.

'Thanks also to Bill Cameron who took on the lighting for this year's show. The standard and variety of performance was truly stunning.

'It gets better every year. Well done everyone.'



St Columba's Primary dancers.



Lauryn MacKenna in the primary finale.



Lundavra Primary School pupils perform.

For more photographs visit www.lochabertimes.co.uk

View from the Chamber

LOCHABER Chamber of Commerce represents businesses throughout Lochaber with a focus on encouraging economic growth, job creation and promoting Lochaber as a great place to live, work, study and visit.

If you're a local business, why bother joining Lochaber Chamber of Commerce? As people who work in the chamber, we think the reasons are obvious, but if you're busy focusing on the vital work of the day-to-day running of your business, it's all too easy to overlook the benefits that joining your local business organisation can bring.

So what's the point of the chamber? Put simply, it's an easy way to get involved in your local business community, make valuable connections, access

business expertise and promote your business.

Lochaber Chamber of Commerce is well-known within the Scottish business community as an extremely proactive and involved organisation that punches above its weight in standing up for the needs of our local business community. Join us and you benefit from the combined clout of being part of a respected business organisation when it comes to getting your voice heard.

We hold regular free, member-only seminars and workshops focusing on a range of relevant business issues and your business will have the opportunity to hold a showcase event to promote what you do to your fellow members. Our informal networking events

are also a great way to get involved and make business connections that would be difficult to do otherwise. We'll keep you in the loop with business developments and news and help you spread the word about developments in your business through our monthly newsletters.

As part of the Scottish Chambers of Commerce network, you'll gain access to valuable business guidance and advice, as well as specialist business services at fantastic rates.

Lochaber Chamber of Commerce also promotes Lochaber as a visitor destination and runs the successful Outdoor Capital of the UK website. If you're involved in any aspect of tourism, your Chamber membership automatically includes you on the Outdoor Capital

of the UK website and in social media campaigns.

Membership subscriptions work on a sliding scale depending on the size of your company, but start at just £95+VAT for a sole trader. A typical small business with up to five employees pays £125 +VAT.

Give us a call or pop in to the office above the Visitor Information Centre in Fort William High Street. We'd love to have a chat about how we can help your business.

At Lochaber Chamber of Commerce, we're committed to helping our members achieve their business goals. If you'd like to join us please give us a call on 01397 705765 or visit www.lochaber-chamber.co.uk.

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Glencoe wheelchair user pleads for bus solution



The MacGillivray's sign was unexpectedly uncovered during the renovation of the shop front.

Shop revamp uncovers Fort High Street history

PREPARATIONS for the opening of a new café in Fort William revealed a piece of High Street history – and stirred a few memories of times gone by.

When workmen carrying out renovations to a shop in the centre of the town removed part of the shop front recently they revealed the beautifully scripted and well-preserved sign of a former business, MacGillivray's Groceries and Provisions.

The business, owned and run by Hughie MacGillivray was based in the premises up until the late 1960s, meeting the needs of outlying communities as well as local people.

For Ronald Ross of Inverloch, 71, the newly-exposed shop front took him back more than half a century to his first job as a delivery boy in 1961, later progressing to

a position behind the counter until 1964 when he was old enough to get a job building the 'new' pulp mill.

Working alongside many well-known local names including Wick Hutchison and Johnny Kennedy, they would set off on their bikes, baskets laden with anything from vegetables to meat, cheese and canned food for customers near and far.

The MacGillivray's sign was unexpectedly uncovered during the renovation of the shop front.

Work is on-going to turn the unit into a new vegan cafe, Origin, which is set to open in January and will be the first of its kind in Fort William. The owners of the shop intend to keep old MacGillivray's sign to pay homage to the previous owners.



Ronald Ross outside his former workplace. Photographs: Iain Ferguson, the Write Image.

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IONA GRANT has spent almost her entire life in a wheelchair after being born with cerebral palsy, but it has not prevented the Glencoe student travelling abroad or halted her skiing or taking the helm of a tall ship racing from Lisbon to Cadiz.

But what the 21-year-old cannot do is be sure of a bus to take her the short distance from her home to college in Fort William and back three days a week.

For 10 years she has repeatedly found herself either missing buses because of malfunctions with the vehicles' disability access ramps or being stuck for hours on buses for the same reason.

A perfect example was Monday last week, when ramp problems prevented her catching her usual morning bus for college and then the one bringing her home had a ramp malfunction that left her stuck on board for three hours.

That particular night saw Iona's mum, Johanna, forced to seek help from staff and customers at a nearby hotel who came to the rescue and helped lift Iona and her motorised wheelchair from



Shortly after speaking to the Lochaber Times about problems with buses, Iona Grant was stuck again after another ramp broke. JP

F48 Iona Grant bus row 01



Mechanics work on Iona's bus after problems with the ramp last week. JP F48 Iona Grant bus row 02

the vehicle. Even firefighters have been called in the past to help get Iona and her wheelchair lifted off a bus safely.

And this week an angry Iona pulled no punches, saying Stagecoach and Citylink bosses should be ashamed of what she has had to put up with.

She said: 'It's been the same sort of problems for the last 10 years. I just want them to get a solution that makes sense. The drivers aren't able to fix the ramps when things go wrong.'

'Now something happens almost every single day. But the management of the bus companies just don't seem to really care.'

'If they were ever put in my position, how would they feel?'

Iona's mum says coach and bus drivers are usually sympathetic and generally try to help, but companies need to have a better policy in place to help her daughter when a problem arises.

Mrs Grant said: 'I actually don't know from day-to-day if Iona's going to get home okay. There needs to be better maintenance of ramps and when these breakdowns happen they need to declare an emergency

right away, not wait until Iona's been stuck for four hours.'

Asked to comment, an apologetic spokesperson for Stagecoach North Scotland said staff received on-going training on the use of the wheelchair ramp and the company is investigating a technical adjustment that could help improve reliability.

'We have already met with this customer to discuss her concerns and we are happy to meet again,' added the spokesperson.

But Arthur Cowie, chairman of Lochaber Disability Access Panel, says the breakdowns are unacceptable, adding: 'We have raised this matter continually over the years and it's equally frustrating for us.'

'This isn't a new problem and it doesn't just affect Iona, but a great many people across Lochaber with mobility problems.'

'Politicians need to come to the table and sit down and talk with people who actually use these services and look at accessibility across the board.'

'We need politicians to tell civil servants, to tell bus company managers, that maintenance of these ramps needs to be improved.'

Roy Bridge lorry crash driver airlifted to hospital



The driver of a lorry that overturned on the A86 near Roy Bridge was taken to hospital in Glasgow by air ambulance after being cut free from the wreckage.

The lorry crashed about two miles east of Roy Bridge on Sunday November 26, shortly after 9am.

The 61-year-old driver was cut free by firefighters and airlifted to Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Glasgow for treatment to serious but non-life threatening injuries.

The one vehicle incident resulted in the road being partially closed for several hours on Sunday.

The road had to be closed again on Tuesday night, November 28, to recover the lorry.

Left: The overturned HGV was recovered on Tuesday after crashing on Sunday morning. Photograph: Anthony MacMillan Photography.

Forestry officials probe Lochside tree felling

THE FORESTRY Commission has confirmed it is investigating after an area of woodland at Lochside was felled.

Local resident John MacLeod complained to the forestry authority, as well as to Highland Council, Scottish Natural Heritage and the police, after returning home one weekend recently to discover an acre of mixed deciduous woodland behind his home had been cleared, except for a line of trees bordering nearby housing.

'This was an amenity site full of mature broad-leaved trees for as long as I can remember. I have lived here for 33 years and there had always been trees there,' an angry Mr MacLeod said.

'It was home to various species of wildlife, including deer, foxes, birds and bats. And now nearly all of the trees have gone, with just a single line of trees left along one side.'

'But as far as I can find out, no planning permission has been granted to develop this site and there has not been a consent issued by the Forestry Commission for the trees to be cut down – which is the regulation if the area to be felled is greater than five cubic metres.'

'In such a case you require a felling licence and according to my research, no such licence has been issued for this piece of ground.'

Mr MacLeod, a bricklayer who lives with his wife Jacqueline at Rustic View in Lochside, continued: 'Twenty-odd years ago, the divisional planning officer at the time stated this area of woodland would be retained as a green area of amenity trees to separate various housing developments.'

'And if you look at the Caol-Lochside master plan drawn up in 1994, it clearly states this woodland was to be kept and reinforced as far as possible.'

'So what's changed? I don't know who the current owner is.'



John MacLeod surveys the area in Lochside where the trees have been felled.

IF F48 John MacLeod

Highland Council confirmed it received Mr MacLeod's letter and a planning officer had liaised with the local authority's own forestry officer and visited the site.

But the council stated the felling works were not connected with any planning consent and there had been no breach of planning control. In those circumstances, the council confirmed it had referred the matter to the Forestry Commission.

Asked if it could shed any light on the mysterious felling operations, a spokesman for the Forestry Commission told us that two of its officials had also visited the Lochside site last week.

'They are writing up the report – it's not yet completed as they haven't yet tracked down the land owner,' he added.

'The complainant has not yet been contacted. However, the complaint is under investigation.'

Festive cheer for Lochaber elderly

COMMUNITY groups have been awarded grants for Christmas celebrations in a bid to tackle loneliness among older people in Lochaber this winter.

Age Scotland awarded the grants to Care Lochaber, based in Fort William, and Acharacle Senior Citizens Lunch Club.

It is part of an annual scheme to help older people in rural areas with reduced mobility come together and celebrate. Many of the recipients live alone or have disabilities and have difficulty taking part in community activities.

Older people in Fort William will be treated to a performance of the *Nutcracker* ballet at Eden Court, Inverness, while the Acharacle group has been given money for a Christmas shopping trip to Stirling, including a visit to Stirling Castle.

Morar bridge repairs under way

MOTORISTS are being warned to expect disruption as repair work starts on the A830 Morar River Bridge this week.

The £1m project involves installing scaffolding around the bridge to allow teams safe access to the bridge components. Work is expected to be completed by the end of March.

A specialist protective coating system will be applied to the bridge to protect it from corrosion. The original paint was applied when the bridge was built in 1994 and this investment will allow the protective coating to be restored.

A lane will be closed during the project.

Dragon's Glen winners

IN LAST week's edition, we mistakenly published the wrong photograph for the story on Kinlochlovin' winning the Lochaber Chamber of Commerce's Dragon's Glen competition.

We apologise for any confusion and are happy to publish the correct picture this week.



Back row, left to right: Anna McBride, Esme Leitch and Hugh Purvis. Front, left to right: Kai Bashir, Cameron Purvis, Ian MacCallum and Morgan Lawrence.



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Island gets behind forest school plan

A COMMUNITY company on Skye is backing plans to establish a forest school on the island.

In 2012, Broadford Primary School pupils said they would like to use their community woodland to build dens, watch animals, put up bird houses, collect pine cones and more.

Keen to see the community forest meet the wishes of a wide cross section of the community, Broadford and Strath Community Company has been working to make the children's wishes a reality.

The directors of the community company have now announced an award of £32,500 from the Aspiring Communities Fund to explore the options for a woodland school.

Project officer Shirley Grant will now prepare a business plan and submit a funding application.

The forest school could include after school care or activities, nature clubs, an outdoor nursery, outdoor classroom sessions and/or school holiday activity days.

Over the next two to three months, Shirley will be arranging a community meeting to allow the community to find out more about forest schools and to gather views from parents and children on how they would like to see the school function.

All community members are encouraged to contribute ideas. Contact Shirley at shirley@broadfordandstrath.org or on 07896 658490.

This project is funded through Aspiring Communities Fund with support from European Social Fund.

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Missing Applecross fisherman honoured

A COMMUNITY wind turbine near Achiltibuie has been named after the boat of a missing Applecross fisherman.

Coigach Community Development Company (CCDC) has honoured Alasdair MacLeod by naming one of its turbines after his fishing boat, Varuna.

Alasdair, 57, was reported missing last Monday when his boat was found on rocks north of Applecross Bay with its engine running.

Searches for the father-of-four were made by the RNLI, police and coast-guard teams, including a crew from Coigach.

Police in Skye and Lochalsh have now scaled back the search for Alasdair.

Last week, Alasdair's family thanked everyone involved in the search but admitted there is now 'no chance' he will be found.

CCDC has shown support for Alasdair's family and villagers of Ap-

plecross. In a statement released this week, CCDC said: 'Ali Macleod's boat was named Varuna - a reference to the majesty of sky and sea, justice and truth, and this was the suggested name that set us back on our heels.'

'Notwithstanding the naming competition, and with apologies for those

who made other suggestions, CCDC directors felt Varuna would be a very good name for our turbine.

'Not only is its literal meaning appropriate, but the tribute it would pay to an admirable man and friend of Coigach, and the link with his community, would be particularly fitting.'

Helipad re-opens on Skye

SKYE'S helipad was officially re-opened at Portree last week, following an extensive refurbishment.

The helipad will be a base for two rapid emergency response helicopters to treat patients in urgent trauma cases, saving vital minutes when transferring patients by air ambulance to hospital. The Scottish Ambulance Service believes it will save more lives.

The helipad will be used jointly by the Scottish Ambulance Service and HMS Coastguard and will provide an important additional resource for Skye.

Portree and Braes Community Trust was key in securing

funding for the helipad refurbishment. By approaching the HELP Appeal, the only charity in the country dedicated to funding hospital helipads, the organisation secured funds for the upgrade work to be completed.

Trust chairman Donnie Nicholson said: 'Portree and Braes Community Trust has in recent months undertaken a substantial upgrade of the Portree helipad with financial assistance from the charity Helicopter Emergency Landing Pads (HELP) to bring the landing site up to current Civil Aviation Authority standards.'

'Portree Helipad has over the



The new helipad just outside Portree will be used by local emergency services.

years undoubtedly helped save the lives of many and will now continue to do so.

The HELP Appeal pledged £18,000 to the upgrade of the Portree helipad, saying that it wanted to ensure the most seriously ill or injured patients get the treatment they need as quickly as possible.

Andy Moir, head of air ambulance, added: 'This new helipad will allow us to treat seriously injured patients more quickly in circumstances when every second counts, minimising the transfer time to hospital. It will make a huge difference to patients and ultimately save more lives.'

Centenary of Iolaire tragedy marked by new book

A NEW book on the Iolaire tragedy, to be published next year to mark the centenary of the disaster, will tell the story of every single person on board for the first time.

The new book is being written by Malcolm Macdonald, chairman of Stornoway Historical Society, and Donald John Macleod, who have been researching material for almost 20 years.

HMV Iolaire hit the Beasts of Holm in the early hours of January 1, 1919. She was bringing Lewis and Harris servicemen home after the war but hit the rocks in a rising gale and sank within sight of the lights of Stornoway, with the loss of 201 lives. There were 80 survivors.

The Iolaire book will be a hardback, with many photographs, pieces of writing and personal stories, and will be published thanks to a £10,000 special donation from Point and Sandwick Trust.

The community wind farm charity gave the money to publisher Acair to help with the costs of producing such a special book.

Point and Sandwick Trust chairman Angus McCormack said they were 'delighted' to be involved in this new book - the result of 'significant new research' by the authors.

Stornoway Trust and EDF urged to share wind farm project

WHY WOULD anyone support the construction of a corporate wind farm project over community-owned turbines was the question at Point and Sandwick Trust's (PST) recent annual general meeting.

Trust chairman Angus McCormack spoke of his bewilderment that anyone could support EDF's plans for a corporate wind farm in Stornoway over a community-owned one during his address at the trust's annual general meeting last week.

Mr McCormack compared the numbers, saying the three turbines at Beinn Ghrideag on the Pentland Road generate £900,000 in profit, with every penny going back to the community.

That is exactly the same sum

of money which Lewis Wind Power (EDF and Amec-Foster-Wheeler in partnership with Stornoway Trust) plans to give to the community if it gets the go-ahead for its 36-turbine wind farm.

'Why anyone supports the EDF proposal over the community, I do not understand,' said Mr McCormack.

Mr McCormack, who is also a councillor for Steornabhagh a Deas, continued: 'Surely it would be better to have all the benefits remaining locally? That really would be transforming for our community.'

'It should have been possible, and it still is possible, for EDF and the Stornoway Trust to come to an agreement to share the wind farm development.'

'We wish to talk about how best we can use the money we are creating to benefit Point and Sandwick. Both organisations have a responsibility to do that and I look forward to an early meeting between PST and the Stornoway Trust.'

Around 50 people gathered in Ionad Stoodie in Point on Tuesday night (November 21) for the yearly update on Beinn Ghrideag and how the money it generates is spent.

There were a number of speakers - Mr McCormack, wind farm developer Calum Macdonald and general manager Donald John MacSween - followed by presentations.

One of these was from Croft Woodlands project officer Viv Halcrow on the progress

of Point and Sandwick's Croft Woodlands project, a mission to plant 70 hectares of new woodland on croft ground in the Western Isles by 2020.

Altogether, since the beginning of the project two seasons ago, 42,410 trees have been planted.

Smaller scale planting is also taking place, with applicants helped by funding from Woodland Trust's MOREwoods scheme.

Last season there were 14 MOREwoods schemes, with nearly 9,000 trees going into the ground from the Butt to Barra. This season, 20 schemes have been uploaded. With between 300 and 1,350 trees in each scheme, there will be 10,640 trees altogether.

Interested members of the public, local councillors and Point and Sandwick Trust members also heard from Amy Kapher-Diamant, who works on PST's LED Energy Communities project which is aimed at cutting fuel poverty and helping the environment.

Mr MacSween gave a report about the many organisations and good causes that have benefited from Point and Sandwick Trust donations through the year. A total of £300,000 has been paid out.

Various other updates were given, including on the recent agreement from National Grid to pay £124,000 compensation for having excessively curtailed power generation at Beinn Ghrideag in the past.

Skye Gaelic teachers' online creation wins award

AN ONLINE Gaelic education resource site for primary school teachers received the award for Innovation in Education at the prestigious Gaelic Awards in Glasgow on November 15.

'Lasadh' was created by Highland Council Gaelic medium primary school teachers Mairi MacDonald and Gwen Culbertson who teach at Bun-sgoil Shlèite on Skye.

Reflecting on the award, Mairi MacDonald said: 'We are thrilled to receive this award that recognises how important and innovative Lasadh is to Gaelic Medium Education.'

Lasadh is a literacy resource website for Gaelic Medium practitioners developed in partnership with Stòrlann Nàiseanta na Gàidhlig following a shared desire to develop high quality educational resources for use across Gaelic Medium schools nationally.

Gwen Culbertson added: 'We are very grateful to Stòrlann and Highland Council for their support and partnership. We are looking forward to what further development lies ahead.'

Sponsored by Bòrd na Gàidhlig, the Scottish Gaelic Awards celebrate all aspects of Scottish culture.



Gwen Culbertson, left, and Mairi MacDonald with their prize at the Gaelic Awards in Glasgow last week.

Unwrap the savings with Gordons Chemists

It's nearly December again, the Friday of all the months! So you know what that means, CHRISTMAS IS COMING! And Gordons Chemists are here to help you get ready for the festive season, with even bigger and better savings than ever before!

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Get him something he'll love for less, Wilkinson Sword Hydro 5 Razor Gift Set is only £4.99, saving you £10. To protect his skin from whatever the Christmas celebrations throw at it, why not treat him to the Nivea Men Protect Gift Set at only £3.99!

Are you dreaming of a white Christmas? Don't miss out on the big savings with Gordons Chemists this year - keep those pearly whites, white with the Oral-B Power Pro650 Black Electric Toothbrush at less than HALF PRICE at £24.99!

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Skye MP calls for assurances on midwifery services

SKYE MP Ian Blackford has called on NHS Highland to give assurances over the island's healthcare services after temporarily closing out-of-hours midwifery services.

NHS Highland temporarily closed the Community Maternity Unit (CMU) at Broadford's Dr MacKinnon Memorial Hospital and the out-of-hours midwifery service for Skye and Lochalsh until mid-December. In a letter to NHS Highland chairman David Alston, Skye MP Ian Blackford expressed concern over the temporary closure of midwifery services, saying: 'I would appreciate an assurance that midwifery services, including out-of-hours cover, will be preserved in Skye and Lochalsh, with steps taken to ensure a situation such as the current one does not happen again.'

'Also, mindful of what has happened in Stron-tian with the closure of Dail Mhor Care home - originally announced as a 'temporary' measure - I would appreciate an assurance there is no intention to close the midwifery unit 'by stealth'.'

Mr Blackford also highlighted that rural support team paramedics on Skye are in dispute with NHS Highland over out-of-hours cover as they are being routinely required to work 'on call' at a hospital site, yet not paid their hourly rate. He added: 'Again, this appears to show NHS Highland has no workable strategic plan for managing out-of-hours cover on Skye.'

NHS Highland announced in October that the Scottish Government had approved a request for an external view to look at the arrangements for north Skye in terms of urgent care, minor injury and access to A&E services.

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Max with MP Ian Blackford.
IF 48 Max Blackford 01

Community ambassador role for Max

GLENCOE student Max Maclean, 16, has been named as an ambassador for a national community initiative.

A prominent member of the High Life Highland Leadership programme, with more than 200 hours of work in the community, Max has been selected to become a #iwill ambassador.

#iwill is a UK-wide campaign to promote communities, represented by 150 young ambassadors. They are 10- to 20-year-olds who are leading fantastic social action in their communities.

Since leaving Kinlochleven High School in August, Max has been studying maritime skills at college in Mallaig while maintaining his volunteering and furthering his coaching skills training in partnership with the school and High Life Highland.

He travelled to London recently to receive his award at a ceremony in the Tower of London and was invited to meet with his local MP Ian Blackford at the House of Commons.

Ian Blackford's office is not far from the debating chamber in the Palace of Westminster and as it was budget day, Max, accompanied by his father Grant, experienced first hand the buzz around the 'corridors of power'.

Manager braced as doors open at new M&S store

MARK ENTWISTLE
mentwistle@obantimes.co.uk

SAM NUGENT is bracing himself – with good reason.

Because today, the manager of Marks & Spencer's newest food hall is getting ready for one of the biggest days in his near decade-long career with the retailer.

As the manager of M&S's new Fort William store, he will be at the forefront of the razzamatazz surrounding the official opening on the town's North Road.

Over the summer and autumn, Fort William residents watched closely as the food hall took shape. There's certainly not another M&S food hall, or store for that matter, with a more stunningly picturesque setting than this newest branch, lying as it does in the shadow of Ben



Sam Nugent outside M&S Food Hall in Fort William which opens today.

Nevis. As with other branches, there's a wide range of food, a Click & Collect service, an in-store bakery and a café.

The new food hall will have

the accolade of being the world-famous company's remotest on the UK mainland, but Sam is not daunted having been handed such a challenge by company

bosses. He told the *Lochaber Times* the excitement and energy around the town is overwhelming.

Sam, who now lives in Corpach, said: 'Everyone I have met since moving up in September has asked about when the new M&S will be open. Those questions end today and people from Fort William and across Lochaber will be able to start shopping in their own M&S.'

The food hall will be officially opened today at 10am by a secret special guest and Sam was not giving anything away about who that might be.

'That will be a surprise for everyone and it will all be part of the excitement of opening day,' said Sam, who started out nine years ago with the company as a temporary Christmas staff

member. 'This is the second store I will have managed, but my first store opening as a manager, so it is really exciting.'

'It is going to be fantastic. Fort William will be the remotest foodhall in the M&S family and we're sure it is going to prove to be something special.'

'Having a presence in Fort William has been on our radar for a long time and very much part of the M&S plan to offer its services to as wide a part of the UK as possible.'

'This will make a massive difference to all those who already like to shop with M&S and for those who have never experienced shopping with M&S in person. I can assure them the run-up to Christmas really is the right time to experience that. There will be nothing like it.'

Council to collect unwanted garden bins

HIGHLAND Council will collect brown bins from households who do not wish to use the garden waste service.

The bins will be collected between Monday December 4 and Friday December 15. Householders need to check which day their bin will be collected by visiting the Highland Council website or calling 01349 886603.

Brown bins should be empty before collection and householders should refrain from returning their brown bin if they may need to use the garden waste collection service in future. Empty brown bins will also be accepted at council recycling centres.

Recycling centres will still take garden waste free of charge. Householders are also encouraged to compost garden waste at home wherever possible. A list of recycling centres that accept garden waste can be found at highland.gov.uk/recycle.



Pupils reunite for 50th birthdays

Former pupils of Lochaber High School celebrated their 50th birthdays with a reunion in the West End Hotel on Saturday November 6. IF F48 50s reunion 01 Photograph: Iain Ferguson, the Write Image.

Action on abandoned cars

OFFICERS from Police Scotland working with partner agencies have removed a number of abandoned and untaxed vehicles from Highland roads.

Road policing officers have supported the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA), Highland Council Environmental Health enforcement officers, the Health and Safety Executive, Trading Standards and HM Revenue and Customs to carry out enforcement action.

The first week of action saw more than 50 vehicles seized and 40 clamped. The action followed complaints from local residents regarding apparently abandoned vehicles which have clearly been used without road

tax. Other road traffic offences, including vehicles being driven without insurance, were also detected.

Highland Council and the DVLA will continue to carry out enforcement action across the region, supported by Police Scotland.

Chief Inspector Iain MacLellan said residents had raised concerns about anti-social behaviour linked to these vehicles and that there was the obvious danger of vehicles which are not roadworthy being used.

'Seizing these vehicles will not only clean up local communities but also keep our roads safe,' he said.

Gregor MacCormick,

Highland Council's Senior Environmental Health Officer, added: 'Abandoned cars cause significant concern within communities and the council spends a considerable amount of time and money investigating and removing them. Our team will continue to work to tackle this serious problem.'

Constable David Miller, who led the operation, confirmed the action was generally positively received by the community.

'Other road traffic offences were detected during the operation. The owners of all the vehicles clamped or seized will receive fines in addition to the vehicle excise due directly from the DVLA,' he said.

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Spean Bridge, Roy Bridge and Achnacarry Community Council

SPEAN Bridge, Roy Bridge and Achnacarry Community Council held its November meeting at Kilmonivaig Church Hall recently.

Items discussed included: The road surface at the junction of the A82 and A86 had broken up in two areas. BEAR Scotland sealed the holes and promised an investigation to determine why the surface had deteriorated after two years.

Chairman John Fotheringham had written to Donald Cameron MSP who had offered to host a meeting with Transport Scotland at Holyrood to discuss local road safety issues including Telford Bridge, pedestrian crossings on the A82 and A86, trunk road access, speed limits, signs, Aonachan crossroads and repeated overnight closures on the A86.

The community council agreed to examine whether the use of social media should be used to promote community council work.

It has been confirmed the B8004 at the Commando Memorial will be prioritised for resurfacing in the new financial year, but as an interim measure the worst potholes will be treated with a coarse material. Highland Council has requested the prompt removal of used road signs and will remove and store these themselves if this is not carried out.

Discussions with Highland Council's housing development manager had brought assurances of no further commuted affordable housing payments for the foreseeable future. Spean Bridge is now a priority area for affordable housing. Roy Bridge, Gairloch and other areas will not be forgotten and when opportunities occur they will be examined.

The community council has received notice of a major development on the 4.4 hectare site opposite Spean Crescent in Spean Bridge, which will be subject to a community consultation in March 2018.

As far as the community council has been able to determine, telephone boxes at Tulloch, Gairloch and Bohuntin will remain, with Murlagan, Achnacarry and Roy Bridge Drill Hall being removed, although a year has elapsed since the consultation without any formal notification from BT.

New Citylink coaches have been deployed on the Fort William to Inverness route.

The chairman will submit a request for village halls to be reinstated as polling stations and for the community council area be used for all elections to allow residents at Corroul easier access to a polling station at Roy Bridge by either road or rail.

The chairman attended a national resilience conference. It was agreed a resilience committee should be formed with Ian Langley and Amy Exeter taking the lead.

A complaint about car parking at Spean Bridge Railway Station had led to Abellio ScotRail and Network Rail confirming car parking for rail passengers is available on both sides of the railway lines.

The treasurer reported Highland Council had decided it was inappropriate for the ward discretionary fund to support Christmas party funding in its cumulative form. After a debate it was decided the chairman should write and highlight concerns and suggest this might be an opportunity under the community empowerment act to delegate a sum to community councils to support local charities that are neither constituted or have bank accounts.

The chairman said he hoped to schedule presentations by SSE on Coire Glas and Ronnie Macrae of Highland Small Communities Housing Trust on plans for affordable housing locally over the next two months.

A request to repair the 20mph warning lights at Spean Bridge Primary School and turn off the ones at Roy Bridge School will be made to BEAR Scotland after intervention from the public.

Inappropriate car parking in Aonachan Gardens and Altour Road in Spean Bridge was concerning residents and Police Scotland will be asked to investigate. The absence of a police officer at community council meetings will also be raised.

The chairman was asked to write to CJ Lang, owner of the village Spar Shop, requesting it tidy up the area surrounding the shop.

The experiment of moving to Kilmonivaig Church Hall appears to have been a success so the community council will continue to meet there for the next few months.



Father Tom with the parishioners who organised the retirement ceilidh.

Invergarry holds ceilidh for retiring Father Tom

A CEILIDH was held recently to mark the retirement of popular Lochaber priest Monsignor Thomas Wynne of Roy Bridge.

The congregation of St Finnan's organised the ceilidh and afternoon tea in the Caledonian Hotel, Fort Augustus. The hotel is run by the Stephenson family, parishioners of

Invergarry. Father Tom served Invergarry for more than 20 years. He said mass every Sunday at St Finnan's RC Church as part of the diocese of Argyll and the Isles until his recent retirement.

Musical entertainment was provided by Mòd Gold Medallist and clarsach player Eilidh Davies and Father Tom,

87, played the piano. He said he had many fond memories of Invergarry but was now looking forward to a rest after more than 60 years as a priest.

Father Tom was based at St Margaret's Church, Roy Bridge, for 21 years where he also had responsibility for Spean Bridge and Invergarry. He retired to Fort William earlier this year.



Angus named Rotary's young chef of the year

THE WINNER of the Rotary Club of Lochaber's Young Chef of the Year was Ardnamurchan High School's Angus Dunn, an S3 pupil who entered the competition for the first time this year.

Angus will now carry Lochaber hopes to the district final in East Kilbride in late January and is already

working on his new menu.

The local competition was held in Ardnamurchan High School earlier this month, with guest judge Gary Phillips, from Kilcamb Lodge, having the unenviable task of picking a winner.

The competition was supported by the Rotary Club of Lochaber and Marine Harvest.

Left: Angus Dunn receives his winner's trophy from Donald Young, Rotary Club of Lochaber.

Plockton

THERE was a good attendance in Plockton Hall on Monday November 13 to hear fiddler Graham MacKenzie who was on a tour of Scotland from Edinburgh to the Orkney Isles.

Seven tables were in play at a whist drive in Plockton Hall on Thursday November 9 in aid of Plockton and District Horticultural Society.

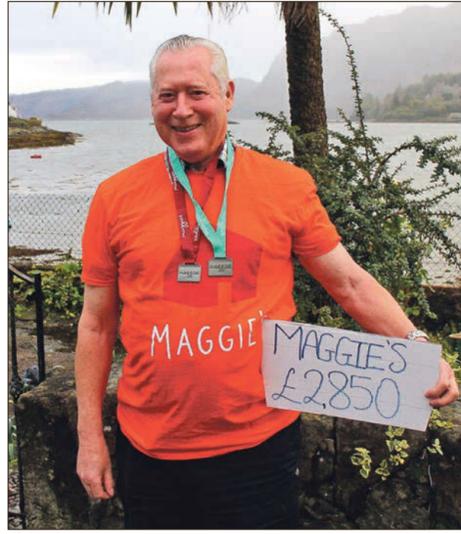
A bingo night with a curry supper in Plockton Hall on Saturday November 18 attracted 80 people and raised more than £1,000 for Plockton Primary School's parent teacher association.

Kyle Free Church ladies for church missions raised £1,113 at their annual sale in the Lighthouse Centre, Kyle, on Friday November 17.

The Lochalsh branch of Legion Scotland hold regular bingo sessions in Lochalsh House and, on Wednesday November 15, raised £437 for branch funds.

Charlie G MacRae, Plockton, took part in the five mile Staggie's for Maggie's Walk at Dingwall on Saturday November 11 in aid of Maggie's Highlands Centre, Inverness. Charlie raised the most sponsorship money, a staggering £2,850, and thanks everyone who sponsored him. CM MacRae

Right: Charlie G MacRae after his charity fundraising walk in Dingwall. Photograph: CM MacRae.



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Pupils at the Gaelic school in Caol take a break during a recording session.

Pupils on song with new CD

PRIMARY Gaelic pupils in Caol are hoping to fill stockings this Christmas after recording a festive studio album.

Pre-orders are being taken for a new album featuring the young voices of Bun-Sgoil Ghàidhlig Loch Abar (Lochaber Gaelic Primary School) pupils.

The album, which goes on sale tomorrow (Friday December 1), is part of a project to raise money for school funds, with partial funding from Bòrd na Gàidhlig.

The CD features new Gaelic Christmas material, produced by famous Scottish traditional musicians.

It includes a new arrangement of 'Silent Night' composed by Peter MacPherson, a new translation of 'O Holy Night' translated by Flora MacPhail and an Irish version of the hymn 'Away in a Manger'.

The CD also includes tracks by award-winning duo Iain MacFarlane and Ingrid

Henderson, Mòd Gold Medal winner and singer Rachel Walker and Traditional Mòd Gold Medal winner and Lochaber Gaelic School head teacher John Joe MacNeil.

Recorded at Old Laundry Productions in Glenfinnan, the album was engineered by Hector MacInnes and produced by Ingrid Henderson. John Joe MacNeil said: 'This has been an exceptional experience for our children to be involved in, singing and seeing the recording and production of the CD.'

'I would like to express my thanks to all our children for singing so beautifully. Thanks also to staff, parents and school community. The CD would not have been possible if it were not for the funding support of Bòrd na Gàidhlig as well as the fantastic support of Old Laundry Productions.'

The CD is available to pre-order by going to bsgla.co.uk.

RETRO Roamer

More Roamerisms from the 1980s

On Tuesday there were meetings galore in Lochaber House, all of which over-ran their allotted time. So much so that the soup and sandwiches lunch break passed almost unnoticed. Till one councillor strolled into the annexe room for a cup of coffee and found lunch was there waiting. By that time the Scotch broth was more like cauld kale. Discussion ensued on the future requisitioning of a microwave. Alternatively, the council may buy a dinner gong as long as the presence of a staff member can be assured to give it a bong at the appropriate time. There were different problems at the Regional Council meeting, convened simultaneously in the 'Alex'. A motion from one member ensured the extinguishing of all the cigarettes glowing illicitly in the Aonach Mor suite. Then a follow-up proposal was carried for the 'removal of all that drink from the top table'. Thus two bottles of Irn Bru and one of Rose's lime juice cordial were binned. Meanwhile, the Lochaber development committee meeting had to be postponed - because of a lack of agenda items. I ask you!

We're waiting for Lochaber District Council (LDC) to rediscover and remedy the MacIntosh Steps. If LDC has recycling plans it should redouble its efforts and do something with the litter and lager cans strewn along the sides of the steps.

It's high time our planners took a look at a few of the alleged 'retail shop fronts' in the High Street. There must be a dire shortage of curtain fabric and display material because one of the shops, close to the Bank of Scotland, has had tatty brown paper covering its windows for ages. And, if my guess is correct, this will become a permanent fixture. Unless, of course, the Chamber of Commerce gets its act together.

I believe local train drivers are none too chuffed at a directive that they carry flares in the cab in case they get stuck in a snowdrift. These were issued in the middle of last week's bucketing rain and are being looked on as a collection of damp squibs. Come the summer, I expect those driving the steam train will be allocated high powered hoses in case they set the heather on fire.

And our postmen are being rerouted, with some doing the rounds and bounds of Blarmafalach and Glenlyon for the first time in their careers. But that great leveller, the stray dog, is keeping the boys on their toes. Already one rugby playing postie's posterior has been a prime target for a canine caper which left its mark.

Doggone it! The evidence has gone walkabout. Following a weekend break-in at business premises, a stone was found on the floor on the inside of a smashed window. Just as the offending object was about to be dusted for fingerprints, along came the establishment's wee dog. It picked up the stone and ran off out the door with it in its mouth.

I'm sitting in the office in Monzie Square on Monday. Pick up a phone. Dial a Fort William number. Then the other phone beside me rings. I answer it while I await the response to my call. I say hello, nicely, several times. Then it dawns on me. I'm talking to myself. I'd rung our other number by mistake.

Interesting feature on the Mallaig Line in one of the Sunday supplements. Apparently, for years, a cuckoo used to put in an appearance at Glenfinnan Station at the same hour every day during the early summer months, almost as if it was a regular cuckoo commuter. Then, at Lochailort Station, there were whimbrels, whinchats and mallards. Seals were frequently seen at Arisaig Station, along with the occasional wildcat. And at Mallaig Station there were, of course, sheep!

Have you taken a dander in the direction of the Old Fort recently? I can never understand how it is that LDC can landscape an area so nicely and then not maintain it. The amount of rubbish lying about under the bushes and near the picnic table is reminiscent of An Aird in its town dump days. Even the higher reaches of the shore in the lee of the Old Fort look like a disaster area. Loch Linnhe, lapping the shore, is not a pretty sight, either. When Freddie had his onshore fox run he was approached by LDC's environmental health brigade to tidy things up. Understandably Freddie's response was: 'The blankety blank tide brought all this blankety blank stuff up onto the shore and the blankety blank tide can take it blankety blank back out again.' Now, perhaps, just once, we could break with tradition, with our local authority (regardless of ownership) setting to for a tidy-up of the shore line in the interests of our much vaunted tourist trade - if not for the enjoyment of the locals.

Bryan (Geordie) Nicholson was up to high doh at the latest Fort game. At the interval he asked several of the earphoned spectators if they had heard any half time scores on the radio. 'Aye,' replied one of the listeners. 'Hearts and Rangers are 1-1 and there's no score between Hibs and Dundee'. Said a distracted Geordie: 'Na, Na, I mean the real football. what's the Newcastle score?' Needless to say this was met with blank looks. And, indeed, blank was the scoreline at half time, but Newcastle did find the net in the second period. Unfortunately Spurs scored four against them!

Meanwhile, a forthcoming match for all you enthusiasts is to take place at Black Parks. Between, would you believe, the railway's permanent way crew and the traffic department. They're even having a referee to keep them on the right track. The date is to be confirmed, but the weekend kick-off is scheduled for 2pm. However, there will probably be a delay before the whistle blows.

Entente cordiale flourished at the BA last Saturday. A French lorry driver appeared with a load of furnace firebricks. Normally the consignment would have been unloaded on Monday. But the Frenchman didn't have enough money on him to cover the weekend. So management stepped into the breach to finance him, while the Saturday squad emptied the lorry. And we thought our economy was in a bad way!



Retro shopping: Who remembers JA Gordon, fishmonger and poulterer?

Connell man Billy is released from Indian prison nightmare

DAVID MCPHEE

dmcphoe@obantimes.co.uk

CONNEL man Billy Irving has been released from an Indian prison after being found not guilty of firearms offences.

Billy and five other British ex-servicemen, known as the Chennai Six, who were sentenced to five years' imprisonment in 2016, were released on Monday (November 27).



Billy waves after his release from prison in India.

The former paratrooper was working as an armed guard protecting shipping from Somali pirates when he and 34 of his colleagues were arrested in 2013.

They were initially found not guilty of straying into Indian waters with 'unlicensed weapons'. However, after a lower court appealed the decision, the men were jailed.

Following a long appeal process of their own, the 35-strong crew of the MV Seaman Guard Ohio were finally acquitted this week by the appeal court in India.

Speaking to *The Oban Times* on

Tuesday, Billy's fiancée, Yvonne MacHugh, said: 'I still don't think it's sunk in. Yesterday I was a big emotional wreck. Today I feel better, but it feels like it's not happening.'

'To have Billy phone me this morning, to hear his voice, was just amazing. He is in the embassy at the moment and they have given him a celebratory drink.'

'He said when he was told yesterday, he took it with a pinch of salt and carried on with what he was doing in prison – because they have been told that so many times before. It's unreal. But he is absolutely over the moon.'

'We are waiting for the certified order to come, which should be with us tomorrow and hopefully get him home within the next week or so. The hope for the lawyers and for the Foreign Office is to get them out of there as soon as possible.'

Including the Chennai Six, 35 men in total were arrested – 14 Estonians, 12 Indians and three Ukrainians.

The terminally-ill Ukrainian captain was repatriated on Monday November 20.

Argyll and Bute MSP Michael Russell said: 'I am delighted that at last there is good news. Yvonne and those she has inspired, cajoled, persuaded and sometimes shamed into support have formed an increasingly loud body of people demanding justice.'

'That ensured that Billy and his colleagues have always been at the forefront of the news. Their determination finally paid off today and everyone will want to see Billy home and the family putting this nightmare behind them.'

Argyll and Bute MP Brendan O'Hara echoed Mr Russell in

Winter festival ends with explosion of colour



Oban Winter Festival closed on Sunday with a spectacular and explosive conclusion. The fireworks over McCaig's Tower provided a pyrotechnical end to what was hailed by the organisers as a great success. Picture special on pages 12 and 13. Photograph: Stephen Lawson

welcoming the news. He said: 'I am absolutely delighted that justice has finally been done for Billy Irving and the rest of his shipmates.'

'The past few years have been immensely stressful for all the families of the Chennai Six but, if I may, I'd like to pay a special tribute to Yvonne MacHugh, Billy's fiancée, who has been an inspiration ever since I first

became involved in this case back in 2015. She has been a relentless champion for Billy and the others, taking the fight right to the Prime Minister's front door and it has been a privilege to work alongside her.'

'Now I'm looking forward to hearing that Billy is finally on a plane home to be with his family again and he can, once and for all, put this nightmare behind him.'

Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson said: 'This case has been a top priority for everybody at the Foreign Office and today's verdict is fantastic news.'

'The Foreign and Commonwealth Office has worked tirelessly behind the scenes to reunite these men with their families. I share their delight and I hope they can return home as soon as possible.'

The Chennai Six will be treated to a welcome home party after a man set up a crowdfunding page.

Jordan Wylie initially wanted to raise £1,000 to ensure the men 'had a pint waiting for them on their return to the UK', and at the time of going to print he had raised £1,560.

To donate, visit www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/chennai6needapint

Rat chews through wheelie bin's lid

A DUNOLLIE resident has been left shocked after a rat chewed through his bin, writes David McPhee.

TJ Telfer spotted the rodent when he went to put rubbish in his bin one night last week. He closed the lid, trapping the rat inside, and placed an object on top to confine it.

When he went out the next day to check, he noticed a hole in the side of his green general waste wheelie bin.

'It chewed through the bin,' he said. 'I can't believe that's what it did. The collection was three days late, so all the bins have been out in the street for ages.'

'I think it's disgusting. Some bins are overflowing. If I was a rat, I would have been in my element. If a rat can do that to a bin, what can it do in your house?'

Mr Telfer contacted Argyll and Bute Council following the incident.

He said on Tuesday: 'I was told I would be contacted by someone from the council. That was last Thursday but I've heard nothing. The bins were uplifted the same day I contacted the council.'

'I was getting feedback from the neighbours and they find it disgusting as well that the bins are left that long because it attracts rats.'

A council spokesperson said: 'Our waste collectors were in the area as scheduled but were unable to access all of the bins due to parked vehicles and our small awkward access vehicle was operating in Colonsay.'

'The bins have now been emptied. We ask people to park safely and considerately to avoid this happening.'

'Anyone who has an inquiry about pest control and the services offered by the council can get in touch with our pest control technicians.'

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LOCHABER TIMES
& Oban Times

FW

Viewpoint



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

LOCHABER TIMES & Oban Times

Iona Grant sounds like an incredible woman who knows what she wants. At 21, she is trying to live her life to the full.

She is attending college, taking part in sport and seeking out adventures, all activities that will broaden her horizons and help her to blossom into the person she is meant to be. The only thing that has the potential to derail her plans is a bus.

As you will read in our story on page three, Iona was born with cerebral palsy and relies on local buses to get her to and from college three days a week. But in the past

10 years – not 10 weeks – she has consistently had problems due to the inability of the bus operators to ensure that their buses have working disability access ramps.

We have sent men and women into space, created the internet and artificial intelligence, made giant leaps in medicine and science, yet for some reason these companies are unable to get the ramps on their buses working consistently to allow people with limited mobility the same access to transport everyone else takes for granted.

Come on Stagecoach and Citylink, get your act together and put an end to this nonsense.



Days gone by – 1960s

This week we turn the clock back to the 1960s – though we are unsure of the precise year – and the Oban High School second XI football team, captained by Davie Buchanan, today the long-serving secretary of Oban Saints FC. The full line-up of aspiring young players is, standing, left to right, Alex T Fleming, Ian Donn, Richard A Davidson, Leslie G MacPherson, Charles Millar, Alistair W Douglas and John A Carmichael; sitting, William O'Brien, John Plunkett, Kenneth Campbell, David Buchanan, Sandy Cameron and Nigel J Evans.

MacPhail

ANGUS MACPHAIL

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MY PLAN for a full piece about the launch of the latest addition to the CalMac fleet has been happily thwarted because of the brightest news to appear in the media in many months.

The MV Glen Sannox was blessed and put to sea with great applause last week, but superseding that great event is the news that Billy Irving from Connel and his fellow prisoners have been found not guilty, and will hopefully be home for Christmas.

Accordingly, a full report on the CalMac launch will have to wait till next week.

As mentioned in my last article, the result of a lengthy appeal in the case of the Chennai Six was to be given on Monday this week. With the verdict having been scheduled for announcement at 5pm on Monday it must have been a nerve-wracking wait for Yvonne MacHugh, Billy's fiancée, and all the other family members.

However, around mid-morning the news came that the men had been acquitted and that they would be coming home at last.

On the *Today* programme on BBC Radio 4, with stalwart morning broadcaster John Humphrys, Yvonne was being interviewed around 8am while still waiting for news of the verdict.

As she has done throughout this entire ordeal, she spoke with clarity, dignity and passion about the unjust situation and her hopes for an end to it.

Having been painfully disappointed so many times throughout this awful chapter, it came with overwhelming relief that the men had been found not guilty.

According to reports, there is still a chance that the Indian authorities will appeal against this decision and that must be a terrifying prospect which could potentially lead to many more months of delay and, of course, the dreadful risk of the verdict being overturned again.

I hope every back channel, front channel, official connection, unofficial connection, diplomatic and 'undiplomatic' pressure and any potential means of influence is being used by the British government and its representatives in

India to block the chance of this potential counter-appeal being launched.

However, in the meantime, Yvonne and those others who have spent more than four years of their lives campaigning on behalf of the prisoners, can enjoy this momentous success.

It has been achieved through having the courage, belief and dogged determination to keep fighting the case and all those involved are worthy of great praise for the efforts that have led to this resulting triumph. The men can look forward to the genuine prospect of their first Christmas at home for five long years.

There will be much rebuilding and recovering to be done in the times ahead and even in a best-case scenario, where the men will be home as hoped before Christmas, it will take many years for their lives to return to normal.

Billy Irving has lost four years of his life because of a ridiculous series of events outwith his control, allowed to escalate out of all conceivable proportions.

The scars left from a situation like this will not heal quickly, but at least that process, hopefully, can now begin.



Social media

There was jubilation on Monday when news broke that an Indian appeal court judge had found Billy Irving and the Chennai Six not guilty.

Margaret Blaylock: Wonderful news!!!! What an awesome Christmas present for all of you. God bless every one of you.

Sheila Ogilvie: Just the bestest news! Hope this wee family are reunited really soon

Margaret Shevlin: Great news praying they be home this christmas x
Jack Niall Anderson: Over the moon for them and their families

Andrea Mallon: Great news.....wishing Billy and all the others a speedy return
Tom Curry: About time too!

Barbara MacLean: Thank God- hope he gets home soon

Nikki Warham: Woohooooo
Margaret McPhail: Wonderful news. Praise God,!!

Lynne Davis: Karen you have no idea how good this makes me feel today. To think David jumped off this boat had a chat with Billy & then he boarded it! This has been such an injustice for everyone involved. I just pray all men get Home to their families ASAP. David I know is smiling for his friend Billy. A true gentleman who David was privileged to call his friend x

Emma Telfer: Over the moon for them don't know them but Yvonne has never given up on Billy and so glad it's finally paid off for them! Wish them the best Christmas ever

Marian Milarvie: Fantastic news. Well done to the OT too for consistently keeping this on everyone's radar way before the national newspapers/media took it up.

Janine Calder: I don't know them but squealed with delight for them when I heard the news on the radio .
Linda Battison: Wow. Wow. wow -

wonderful news. What an amazing Christmas present for all the families.

Laura Pagan: Such wonderful news, after many years of suffering for these families. Couldn't be happier for them!!

Michelle Gallagher: Amazing news! He might not know everyone in our wee town but we all know Billy now and I'm sure he's gonna get one hell of a welcome home

Susan Barber: Brilliant news. They are neighbours of my mums. They have never given up hope. Congratulations. Have a wonderful family Christmas x

Lauren Files: This is brilliant news! I'm so so happy for you all, best wishes xxx
Sheila Smith: Hope he's home for Xmas. Delighted for everyone

Jane Macrae: Tears of joy and thankfulness for the lads and their loved ones.

Jane Gill: At last!! finally someone has put an end to this madness. an incredible day for the men and their families

Reindeer parade and Christmas lights

Sir,
What a fantastic evening on Saturday November 18 for the BID4Oban (Business Improvement District) reindeer parade and Christmas lights switch-on.

It was great to see so many people out and about for the arrival of Santa with his reindeer.

These events do not just happen without the support of the community and organisations that give up their free time to ensure the safety and enjoyment of the public.

BID4Oban could not put on the parade without the Rotary and Lions clubs of Oban. Along with Oban FM and the various vendors, everyone was well catered for.

Special thanks have to go to the street lighting and amenities teams at Argyll and Bute Council, some of whom travelled up from Lochgilphead and pulled out all the stops to ensure a seamless lights switch on.

BID4Oban acknowledges the support of West Coast Motors and taxi drivers for putting up with the inconvenience of having to move from their normal locations for the early evening. Thanks also to Oban Pipe Band for leading the parade and Police Scotland for ensuring safe passage through the town.

We will be back next year for another memorable parade and anyone who has any suggestions for how to make the event even better should feel free to contact us at the BID4-Oban office.

Andrew Spence,
Chief executive, BID4Oban Ltd.

Campaign needed to shake-up carriers

Sir,
As relative newcomers to Lorn, we have learned to endure the practice of parcel delivery companies that are happy to ship to Glasgow on their standard UK rates but then double or treble these rates to go 50 miles further to Oban.

When I have complained in the past, I have been told it is my fault for living on an island, although our postcode is definitely on the mainland – although we have suffered month-long delays before now while our deliveries toured the islands.

This practice, of largely English companies that profess a desire to keep us in the union, of treating us as foreigners within our own country is bad enough, but this year we are experiencing far worse.

Obviously stung by the loss of business these excessive charges cause to major online retailers, this festive season we no longer find exorbitant shipping charges as soon as the checkout discovers our postcode, but simply get a message 'Does not ship to the UK', often underneath a message saying 'Free delivery in UK'.

This new practice is worst with eBay retailers (many of whom ship further to get to London than to us) but is also gaining favour with many famous high

Beachd Ailein

ALLAN CAMPBELL

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'S FHEÀRR A BHITH A dhìth a' chinn na dhìth an fhasain! Tha mi a' creidsinn gur ann gu sònraichte a' buntainn ri èideadh a tha an seanfhacal seo, ach 's fhiach faighneachd dè th' ann am fasan. Ann am mòran shuidheachaidhean chan eil ann ach cleachdadh, agus math na dona e, aon uair 's gum bheil àireamh àraid ris tha e "fasanta". Ach glè thric cha do dh'fhàg sin ceart neo ciallach e!

Bho chionn greise a-nise tha deasbaidh a' dol a' thoobh a' chroin a dh'fhaodadh luchd-spòrs a bhith a' fulang ri linn bhuillean dhan cuid cheann, gu h-àraid an fheadhainn a tha ri sabaid-dhòrn agus cluicheadairean bhall-coise a bhios a' cur an cinn ris a' bhail.

Ged a tha mòran luchd-eòlais slàinte den bheachd gum bheil buillean den t-seòrsa seo a' dèanamh damaiste air eanchainn nam feadhna a tha ris, chan eil làn-dhearbhadh ann fhathast agus tha cuid a tha an sàs anns na cleasan sin gu proifeiseanta nach eil idir a' gabhail ris.

Le ceangal a-nise ga dhèanamh eadar buaidh leithid seo de bhuillean thar uine agus seargadh-inntinne, tha

street names. We need a campaign to enlighten retailers as to how much business they lose by using these part-time shippers.

A simple expedient is to get goods delivered by the Post Office, which not only knows where we live, but also ships there at the standard UK rate.

We need retailers to choose carriers who will actually deliver to the whole country at competitive prices, or allow us to make that choice for them. Meanwhile, it needs to become clear to the part-time couriers that they will not be able to stay in business by cherry-picking the easy deliveries and ignoring their clients' other customers.

Brian Philpotts,
Kilniver.

Thank you from Lochaber Trust

Sir,
On behalf of all the children and adults who benefit from the activities and work of Lochaber Rural Education Trust, we wish to thank the customers and staff of the Co-op in Corpach for their generation donation of £1,250. This will enable the trust to continue its good work with all ages and abilities. Thank you all.

Isabel and Linda Campbell,
Founder and chairman,
Lochaber Rural Education Trust.

Good Samaritan at Ganavan

Sir,
I would like to express my thanks to whoever the good Samaritan is who has been upgrading and adding drainage channels to the path to the Kissing Gate at Ganavan Beach. What a difference. No more slithering around in the mud. Sincere thanks from a regular user of the path.

Catherine Sunderland,
Ganavan.

Tory austerity is causing misery

Sir,
Conservative Councillor Alastair Redman claims 'rural Argyll is being sidelined by the SNP' (Letters, *The Oban Times*, November 23).

Like the Christmas turkey, Councillor Redman has got some neck. The leading independent financial think tank, the Institute for Fiscal Studies, has recently predicted austerity and wage stagnation are set to continue for at least a decade, and perhaps for as long as 20 more years.

Workers will earn less in 2022 than they did in 2008. Public sector workers who have waited seven years for a pay rise will have to wait for at least 10 more, possibly 20.

There are still £12 billion in cuts to welfare to come from the Tory government. George Osborne promised a budget surplus of £10 billion in 2019-2020, but now Philip Hammond has admitted that the deficit will be at

least £35 billion, with most independent commentators believing that that is literally a conservative estimate.

In the meantime, companies and individuals registered in offshore tax havens like the Bahamas make billions but avoid paying a penny in taxes towards the UK budget. And all of this doom and gloom doesn't even begin to factor in the potential additional deficits caused by the Tories' impending shambolic and suicidal stagger over the Brexit cliff.

The reason Islay and other Argyll and Bute communities are struggling to maintain infrastructure and services is not that the SNP government is incompetent, as Councillor Redman claims, but the Westminster Tory (and DUP) government is obsessed with protecting the wealth and power of the privileged few, and is determined to pursue its policy of austerity dogmatically, regardless of how much pain and misery that policy brings to ordinary working families.

Yovann Byghan,
Isle of Seil.

What will councillors do about ferries?

Sir,
Cash-strapped Argyll and Bute Council is about to consider budget options for next year.

We were heartened to read the interim harbour's report produced by Argyll and Bute Council last year which stated that all main harbours had to make money. However, recent clarification from the responsible officer has revealed that the term 'all' is a collective term meaning that all the harbours together must make money but that each individual harbour can still be allowed to lose money.

Our council professes that it wants to see economic regeneration of the town – regeneration that can only occur if we have good transport links. But a reliable ferry service (bigger boats) is being priced out of the market by our council.

In the local elections this year, all successful Dunoon and Cowal candidates confirmed that councillors would run the council and that officers would do as they were told.

So just what are our councillors going to do about setting the tariff for Dunoon Harbour from 2018? Hide behind councillors from Oban and Helensburgh? Answers required on the letters page ASAP.

Susanna Rice,
Convener, Dunoon-Gourock
Ferry Action Group.



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Ailean Caimbeul

agus a' dearbhadh nach eil clogad a' cur casg sam bith air an cuid cluiche.

Ghabh mi iongnadh nuair a chuala mi gum robh riochdairean bho bhuidheann nàiseanta rothaireachd air bruidhinn a-mach an aghaidh beachd gum bu chòir dhan lagh clogadan agus èideadh soilleir iarraidh dha luchd-baidhsagal.

Chan aithne dhomhsa dràibhear nach aontaicheadh gu tur le sin, agus gum feumadh iad solais a bhith aca air an oidheche cuideachd! Nach annasach ma-thà, riochdairean nàiseanta rothaireachd a bhith ag argamaid an aghaidh dìon den t-seòrsa, agus fìù 's ann neach ag ràdh nach eil dearbhadh ann gum bheil clogadan a' dèanamh uimhir sin de dh'fheum dha luchd-cleachdaidh bhaidhsagal! Dith cèille saoilidh mise!

ANY POSSIBILITY of a link between regular blows to the head in some sports and dementia should be enough to encourage change, prevent illness, and save future health service budgets.

Ailean Caimbeul
ailean@obantimes.co.uk

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

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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.

Arena

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

WHAT'S ON

IN OBAN

In partnership with Oban Town Diary
bid4oban.co.uk



Thursday 30th November

St Andrews Day Celebration
St Andrew's Night Ceilidh Dance
Skipinnish Ceilidh House, Oban 7.30
Tickets £8 conc £5 Family Ticket £20 from Oban Music Shop and on the door.

LiveArgyll Libraries Bookweek Scotland Event With Author
Christopher Brookmyre
Corran Halls, Oban 7pm-8.30pm

Oban Health Walks
Start Oban Congregational Church, 10am-12pm

Oban Lorne Strathspey & Reel Society Practice Night
Oban Guide Hall, 7.30pm-9.30pm

Friday 1st December

Toy Cupboard
Glencruitten Church, 10am-12pm

Christmas Tree Festival
St Conan's Kirk, Lochawe 1.30pm-6pm

Boys Brigade
Oban Congregational Church, 6pm-9pm

Saturday 2nd December

Hill Walk Clunes
Clunes, Spean Bridge All day

Ganavan Sands Parkrun
9.30am-11am

Christmas Tree Festival
St Conan's Kirk, Lochawe 10am-6pm

Christmas Fayre
Connell Village Hall 11am-3pm

Saturday 2nd December

Cearcall Còmhraidh (Gaelic Conversation Group)
Furan Gaelic Centre, 12pm-1.30pm

Christmas at Kilbride
Historic site of Kilbride 2pm-5pm

Oban's Got Talent
The Widemouthed Frog 6pm

Winter Festival
Helensburgh
www.helensburghwinterfestival.co.uk

Sunday 3rd December

Christmas Tree Festival
St Conan's Kirk, Lochawe 1.30pm-6pm

Winter Festival
Helensburgh
www.helensburghwinterfestival.co.uk

Tuesday 5th December

Gaelic Toy Cupboard
Undercroft Church Centre, 1.30pm-3.30pm

Irish Dancing Classes
St Columba's Cathedral Hall, 4.15pm-5.45pm

Wednesday 6th December

Toy Cupboard
Undercroft Church Centre, 10am-12pm

Cancer Support Services - Drop in Wednesday
Oban Library, 2.15pm-4.15pm

Spotlight Theatre Group
Rapunzel - A tangled tale
Corran Halls, 7.30pm
Price: £6 - £35

Santa and his reindeer are stars of Lochaber Winter Festival

SANTA Claus and his team of Cairngorm reindeer proved a popular smash hit at a fantastic winter festival held in Fort William last Friday and Saturday, writes Mark Entwistle.

Organised jointly by the Lochaber Rotary Club and the Fort William Town Team, the event drew large crowds on both days.

Friday evening saw hundreds gather for a lantern parade along the High Street culminating in the Christmas lights switch-on by Santa, and late night shopping.

Elves
Come Saturday morning, and supported by his little elves in the shape of Faolan Hunter from Lundavra Primary and Kayla Duncan from Caol Primary schools, Santa and his reindeer left Cameron Square at 11am and paraded along the High Street led by the pipe band, the Ben Nevis All Stars and a street magician.

The 'elves' were chosen from the Lochaber Times' Christmas Card Message competition that attracted

more than 120 entries from Lochaber's primary schools.

Local business Ferguson Transport and Shipping funded the total cost of bringing the reindeer from Aviemore to Fort William on the day, and the company also had the enjoyable task of reading all 123 Christmas card entries and choosing the winners.

Santa and his entourage ended their trip at the Nevis Centre where the Rotary Club had organised a 70-stall craft and food festival with Santa's Grotto, an original vintage Model T Ford, bouncy castle, buskers' corner and a grand raffle of five luxury Christmas hampers each worth more than £50.

To mark the 10th anniversary of the festival, and thanks to the generosity of an anonymous local donor, all the gifts given out by Santa and his elves Kayla and Faolan were free.

More than 300 local children benefited from this gesture which Rotarian David Robertson, one of the key organisers, described as

'wonderful'. Club President Donald McCorkindale, while stressing that the emphasis is more about a community event than raising money, said that it had been a 'magnificent' two days.

He continued: 'I'm sure the total amount raised will be substantial and in time will support many local charities and causes.'

'But beyond fundraising there was a lot of fun... a great atmosphere with everyone enjoying the occasion. Thank you to you all for a brilliant event.'

Whisky

The festival continued this week with the West Highland Museum's Scavenger Hunt and the Lochaber Environmental Group's Clothes Swap in the Duncansburgh Church Hall both on Monday.

Wednesday (November 29) saw the Ben Nevis whisky tasting and draw for the Rotary Club's collection of Six Classic Malts, and the Songs for the Season Concert by Bruce Davies in the Duncansburgh.



Santa and his little helpers. All photographs: Iain Ferguson, The Write Image.



Tyler and Brayden Smissen-Smith with Santa.



Lochber Rotary president with the elves.

Glasgow Letter

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



It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas...

YOU KNOW the festive period has begun in earnest when the Glasgow Skye Association Annual Gathering weekend comes round.

This year's concert will be held tomorrow (Friday December 1) in the Glasgow University Union (GUU) with guest of honour Alastair P Campbell, The Right Honourable Lord Bracadale, singers Catriona Watt, Sineag MacIntyre, Darren Maclean, and Calum Angus Macdonald - with Eilidh MacFadyen on accordion. The piano accompanist for the evening

will be Alan Kitchen, and the Glasgow Skye Association Pipe Band complete a great line-up. The Dùn Mòr Cèilidh Band will play at the dance following the concert.

Tickets are available from Mrs Karen Campbell on 01786 832278, Iain Scott on 0141 237 3094 or 07761 799 238, or John D Robertson 07768 058139 and members of the committee.

Trad Awards Come to Paisley

WHO can forget, among all this Christmas cheer, the annual MG Alba Scots Trad Music Awards which, this year, will take place in the Lagoon Centre in Paisley

as Paisley bids for the 2021 UK City of Culture. The votes have all been cast so everyone now awaits the results and, more importantly, a good night of craic, celebration, and (dare I say it) perhaps a wee libation here and there.

Beware, the Vatersay Boys!

AND one can hardly look ahead to Christmas time in Glasgow without a mention of the legendary Vatersay Boys gig in the Barrowland Ballroom which will take place this year on Friday December 8. For Highlanders in Glasgow, the Vatersay Boys gig is as much a Christmas staple as mince pies,

mulled wine, and the John Lewis Christmas advert! It is, as always, sold out; and it is bound to be an absolute Christmas cracker.

Glasgow Skye Post Mòd Cèilidh

EARLIER this month, the Glasgow Skye Post Mòd Cèilidh was held in the Crawford Hall, Beith Street. It is always a great opportunity for youngsters to perform their Mòd pieces free from competition nerves and scary adjudicators! There was an excellent turnout of parents and friends - and no less than an incredible 27 acts took to the stage ranging through solos, duets, recitations, story-telling,

dancing, piping, fiddling, and accordion playing - all giving great performances. The evening was compered in her usual friendly style by Eilidh Cormack and was generally agreed to have been a most successful function.

What's On

Thursday November 30: Glasgow Skye Association annual dinner at 7pm in the Glasgow University Union.
Friday December 1: Glasgow Skye Association Annual Gathering Concert in the Glasgow University Union at 7.30pm and dance at 10.30pm.
Friday December 8: Clydebank and District Highland Association Ceilidh in the

Napier Hall at 7.30pm.
Friday December 8: The Vatersay Boys Live in the Glasgow Barrowland.
Saturday December 9: Glasgow Skye Association children's party at 2.30pm in the Rensfield Centre, Blythswood Hall.

Pub Scene

Islay Inn
Friday December 1: The Keelies
Saturday December 2: Deep River
Sunday December 3: Calum Macphail
Park Bar
Saturday December 2: Trail West
Sunday December 3: Trail West

Events may charge. Please visit www.obanwhatson.co.uk for more details.

To list your event, please call 01631 568000

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

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

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

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

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

Contact Nadine or Rhona on 01631 568000



Pub & Gig Guide coming soon

Oban and Lorn Lions Club

Visit Santa

Saturday 9th & 16th December

Airds Crescent
Next to TSB Bank, Oban
11am - 4pm
Entry by donation
Table top sale
Seasonal gifts and crafts

Sponsored by Menzies Distribution

In association with Oban Winter Festival

St Andrews Day
scotland.org/winter

Oban High School
Traditional School of Music

ST ANDREW'S NIGHT CEILIDH DANCE

SKIPINNISH CEILIDH HOUSE

THUR 30TH NOV, 7.30PM

£8, Conc £5, Family Ticket £20

Tickets from Oban Music and on the door.

The Winter Festival Committee would like to thank everyone who contributed to the event and helped to make Festival 2017 such a great success

This week's starter is bought to you by Kenny Meldrum, head chef at The Regent Hotel

Cullen Skink Tarts

Watercress & vine tomatoes

Serves 4

Short crust pastry
225g plain flour
150g butter
1 whole egg
25ml water
pinch of salt

Filling
1 fillet smoked Haddock
2 large potatoes (Maris Piper) diced and part boiled
1 leek chopped finely
1 onion finely diced
600 ml cream
3 eggs
2 sprigs of thyme
Salt and pepper to taste

Method
Sift flour with salt. Rub flour & butter to crumb, add egg & water. Mix until a smooth dough. Rest in fridge for 30mins. Rollout into flan ring and blind bake for 12 mins at 165°C.
Lightly grill haddock fillet, flake once cooled. Lightly fry onions, leek & Thyme and allow to cool.
Finely chop boiled potatoes and mix all together, season with salt & pepper to taste and spread evenly in your pastry case. Whisk egg & cream and pour over the mix. Bake for 15mins 170°C. Serve with a little watercress & Vine tomatoes.

Open 7 days a week from 5pm-9pm
Book Now Tel: 01631 562341



Terry Lee and Robbie Robertson.



Ben Nevis All Stars helped lead the parade on Saturday.



Spean Scouts at the food and craft festival organised by the Rotary Club



The food and craft festival was a resounding success.



The choir give it their all at the Duncansburgh Church.

Your local radio listings

OBAN Community Radio - your local radio station
 Tune in to 103.3 or listen live at www.obanfm.com
 For requests, competitions or questions please email: studio@obanfm.org.uk or call us on 01631 570057

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

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

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

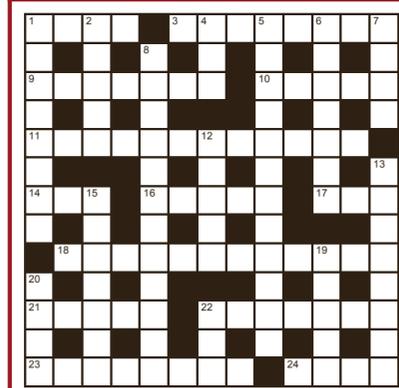
THURSDAY: 08.00 - 11.00 Breakfast with Andy and Sarah, 11.00 Molly's Mix with Molly Black, 13.00 Molly's Mix, 15.00 Drivetime with Stephen, 17.00 Drivetime with Stephen McPhee, 18.00 Drivetime with Stephen McPhee, 19.00 Christines Collection, 20.00 Christine's CD Collection, 21.00 Ann's Ceilidh, 22.00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

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

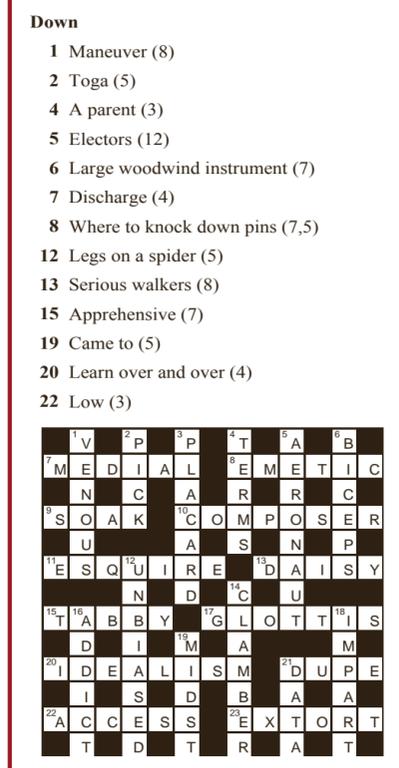
SATURDAY: 08.00 Breakfast Show with Stephen, 10.00 Sat Morning Live, 11.00 Saturday Morning, 12.00 Saturday Morning Live with Linda Crowsher, 12.03 Sat Morning Live, 12.05 Saturday Morning Live, 13.30 Clyde, 18.00 Sports View - Dream Team, 19.00 Sounds Scottish with Archie Darling, 20.00 Dave Lewis,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

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

THE OBAN TIMES GENERAL KNOWLEDGE CROSSWORD



- Across**
- 1 Lavish affection on (4)
 - 3 Instructible (8)
 - 9 Years after being teenage male (7)
 - 10 Japanese-American (5)
 - 11 Remembrance (12)
 - 14 Question for method (3)
 - 16 Dusk to dawn (5)
 - 17 Neither (3)
 - 18 Would mean spending more than available (5,3,4)
 - 21 Spin (5)
 - 22 Tiny bug (7)
 - 23 1950s fashion (5,3)
 - 24 Timely piece of information (4)
- Down**
- 1 Maneuver (8)
 - 2 Toga (5)
 - 4 A parent (3)
 - 5 Electors (12)
 - 6 Large woodwind instrument (7)
 - 7 Discharge (4)
 - 8 Where to knock down pins (7,5)
 - 12 Legs on a spider (5)
 - 13 Serious walkers (8)
 - 15 Apprehensive (7)
 - 19 Came to (5)
 - 20 Learn over and over (4)
 - 22 Low (3)



COMMUNITY NOTICEBOARD
 If you would like to advertise in the Oban Times Community Noticeboard please call 01631 568000

Oban Accordion & Fiddle Club
 Thursday 7th December 2017, 7.30pm
 Royal Hotel
 Guest Artist: Graeme MacKay's Band
 Admission £4 All Welcome!

CHRISTMAS TREE FESTIVAL
 St Conan's Kirk, Lochawe
 1st & 3rd Dec 1.30-6pm,
 2nd 10am-6pm
 Over 40 decorated trees!
 Tarbert Ladies Choir 2.30 & 3.30 Sat 2nd.
 Elf hunt, Homebaking & Hot drinks
 Entry free, donations welcome

JOIN US AT THE BIGGEST AND BEST HOGMANAY SHOW IN THE NEVIS CENTRE

Hogmanay at the Nevis Centre is as much a Lochaber tradition as bringing in the New Year with the bells and Auld Lang Syne - except this year it is going to be very much better!

Doors will be open from 8.00pm on December 31st, with entertainment from award winning local band 'Wonderland' starting at 9.00pm. Then at 10.30pm the world-renowned Fergie Macdonald takes the stage to see you through the bells and into 2018 with his own brand of rip-roaring ceilidh music. With "Wonderland" coming back on stage at 12.30am to take us through until the close of the night.

Tickets are £25 each with tables of 8 available. Tickets can be bought over the phone with a card or pop in and see us.

find us on facebook
www.facebook.com/obantimes

Win a £50 M&S Gift Card to spend on your Christmas feast



To celebrate the opening of the brand new M&S Foodhall Fort William and just in time for Christmas, four lucky locals will each win a £50 M&S Gift Card to spend in store on festive treats or foodie gifts for friends and family this Christmas. The new store will open its doors on Thursday 30th November at 10am. Customers will be able to browse more than 4,500 quality M&S food and drink lines including a range of specialty pastries and cakes, freshly baked each day by the in-store Bakery. Customers are also invited to enjoy a hot drink and tasty treat from the store's 24 seat café. Showstopping fish dishes are expected to be a popular addition to the festive menu this Christmas. M&S has been working with expert seafood suppliers across the country to create new twists on firm favourites, such as smoked salmon with a beetroot and vodka marinade. Raw oysters from the Isle of Mull are also on the M&S menu for the first time this year along with Langoustine Tails, and a new Bone-in Scottish Monkfish Tail Wrapped in Pancetta.

Shoppers have until 15th December to place their Christmas food orders in store or online at <https://christmasfood.marksandspencer.com/slots>

Your chance to win one of four £50 gift cards to spend at your new local M&S Foodhall, Fort William

Simply answer the following question and send your answer, with your name, email address and telephone number to: M&S Competition, Wyvex Media, 22 High Street, Fort William, PH33 6AT.

Question: Where does M&S source its oysters for its Christmas menu?
 a) Isle of Arran b) Isle of Mull c) Isle of Harris

Terms and Conditions
 1. Four winners will be selected at random after the closing date of Friday 8th December
 2. Each winner will receive a £50 gift card
 3. Prize not transferable, no whole/part cash alternatives, delivered within 5 days of competition closing date

RED HOT CHILLI PIPERS

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 17TH FEB 2018



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Fort William World Cup crowned best in the world

THE FORT William stage of the UCI Mountain Bike World Cup has won international and domestic acclaim after being named best Downhill Mountain Bike World Cup in the global series and Best Sporting Event in the Highlands and Islands in 2017.

The renowned mountain biking event was voted the Best Downhill World Cup event by teams, riders, media, sponsors and cycling's international governing body, the UCI (Union Cycliste Internationale).

This is the second year in a row the event has been awarded the accolade, a ninth time in total.

The Fort William Mountain Bike World Cup also took home the Best Sporting Event title at this year's Highland and Islands Tourism Awards.

The event won over voters for the scale and spectacle of the event on the slopes of Aonach Mor, its organisation and unique atmosphere.

Regarded as one of the top events on the Scottish sporting calendar, the event at Nevis Range brought in an estimated £2.9 million to the local economy in 2017 and £37 million since 2002.

At this year's World Cup in Fort William, more than 23,000 people over three days watched an exhilarating finish to this year's races as Australia's Tracey Hannah claimed the win in the women's event while South Africa's Greg Minnaar cemented his status as the most successful downhill rider of all time, winning his seventh Fort William title.

World Cup organisers Rare Management are now gearing

Mountain biking

up for next year's event with tickets going on sale in December.

Mike Jardine, from Rare Management, said: 'Being crowned the UCI's Best Downhill Mountain Bike event for a second year is truly fantastic. On top of that, we're delighted to receive recognition at home in the Highlands.'

'These awards are testament to the hard work of all of the fans, volunteers, riders, sponsors and partners who continue to make this event a truly legendary and memorable experience for all the family. It confirms Scotland and the Highlands world-class reputation and status as a bike-friendly destination for visitors from across the globe.'



The high-octane action makes the Fort William World Cup one of the highlights of the Scottish sporting calendar. Photo: phunk.com

10-pin bowling league results

10-pin bowling

AFTER week three of the Lochaber Building Supplies 10-pin bowling leagues at the Nevis Centre in Fort William, The Empire and Council lead the scratch division both with 12 points followed by British Legion Fort William on 10 points.

Council lead the handicap division with 11 points followed by Rotavators and The Fillies Plus Gillie both on 10 points.

Individually, the best scratch games in week two came from Pam Weller (Alleycats) with 190, Brian Stewart (The Empire) with 182, James Porter (British Legion Fort William) with 178 and David Cameron (Council) with 177.

The week's high handicap game went to James Porter with 240 – the season high. The top two-game scratch series went to Pam Weller with 332 and the top two-game handicap series went to Ron Gretton (Rotavators) with 422.

The best team scores of the week came from The Empire with the top scratch game of 623 and the top handicap game of 815 – both season highs. They also had the top two-game scratch series of 1150 whilst The Fillies Plus Gillie had the top two-game handicap series of 1538.

Games called off

Football

FORT William Football Club's home match against Cove Rangers on Saturday was postponed because of an unplayable pitch. The Fort's next fixture is away to Brora Rangers in the Highland League this Saturday, December 2.

The Lochaber side will travel north in search of their first win of the season. They sit at the bottom of the Highland League table with a solitary point, two points behind Strathspey Thistle.

South Lochaber Thistle's home game against Carradale was also called off last Saturday due to an unplayable pitch.

The Jags sit in third place in the Greater Glasgow League Division Three with 12 points from seven games played. This Saturday the Kinlochleven side travel to Dumbarton to take on Westcliff.

Lottery numbers

Lottery

THIS week's Fort William Golf Club lotto numbers were 2, 3 and 16. There was no winner this week. There will now be £200 available for the lotto drawn today (Thursday November 30).

The numbers drawn in the Caol Regeneration lotto were 1, 3 and 4. There were no winning tickets this week. There will now be a jackpot for £600 for next Thursday's draw.

The Caol Community Centre bingo lotto numbers for this week are 7, 15 and 18. There were no winners this week. That means that next week's jackpot is £300.

The Ballachulish Shinty Club lottery numbers for this week were 5, 14 and 15. There were no winners this week. Next week's draw will have a jackpot of £400.

Prikulis sets a high standard

LOCHABER Athletic Club's (LAC) Winter League series got under way this month, with one man in particular setting the benchmark in the opening two races.

Denis Prikulis has set a high standard for the chasing pack to try to match as he won both of the opening races of the LAC series.

Prikulis finished first in both the Braveheart Loop Race and the Druimfada Chase Race this month. Lochaber's John Yells is hot on his heels, however, finishing second in both of the events.

Lisette Walter and Sarah

MacDonald recorded good times in the Braveheart Loop Race, finishing in the top two places, but the pair were pipped to first place in the Druimfada Chase by Keri Wallace.

Braveheart Loop Race

It was a beautiful day in Glen Nevis for the first Lochaber Athletics Club Winter League race of the 2017/18 series. A total of 55 runners took part in the Braveheart Loop Race on Sunday November 19, racing round the Glen Nevis route on a crisp, dry day.

First over the line was Denis

Athletics

Prikulis from Vegan Runners in a time of 21:50, a new record for this race. Second was John Yells, LAC, in 23:18, third Steven Traill, LAC, in 23:34. First MV40 was Manny Gorman, Westies, in 24:30, first MV50 was Geoff Simpson, HBT, in 26:00 and first MV60 was LAC's Mike Connolly in 28:49.

First female was Lisette Walter, LAC, in 26:47, second female was LAC Sarah MacDonald in 27:57, hot on her heels was third female Keri Wallace, U/A, in 28:08. First



Denis Prikulis, John Yells and Steven Traill lead the pack at the beginning of the Braveheart Loop Race. Photograph: Abridge Photography.

FV40 was Vikki MacKinnon, LAC, in 29:13, and first FV50 was Nix Forster, LAC, in 32:13.

The club would like to thank marshalls Hughie MacIntosh, Ian Adams, Catriona MacLean, Joanne Mackin, Andrew Cameron and finally to the time team Jim Hamilton, Ellen Morrison, Pamela Hamilton and Aileen Duncan.

Druimfada Chase Race

A good turn-out in snowy and

sometimes icy conditions for the second Winter League race, the Druimfada Chase, on Sunday November 26.

Denis Prikulis continued his winning form with a time of 50:14, followed by Lochaber runners John Yells in second and Tom Smith in third. Tom was also first MV40.

Lochaber ladies had great race with Keri Wallace flying home in a time of 1hr and 42 seconds, with Lisette Walters

taking second and Sarah MacDonald in third. Well done to all the runners and special thanks to all the marshals and helpers who make these races happen, Billy, Darren, Peter, Rodger, Margaret, Rose, June, Jon, Jim, Ian, and Jo.

Full results of all the races can be found at lochaberac.co.uk.

The next race in the Winter League series is the Beinn Bhan Bash Race on Sunday December 3.



Runners set off in the Druimfada Chase Race. Photograph: Anthony MacMillan.

New Lochaber club getting climbers inside and out

LOCHABER'S newest climbing club has been making a big impact in the area, just three weeks after forming.

The recently formed Inside Out Climbing Club was established after huge demand from a growing group of young climbers (and parents) in Lochaber, many of whom have been climbing regularly at 3 Wise Monkeys climbing centre in Fort William.

The club aims to help the many new climbers take their newfound skills out to real crags, with the support of their parents and qualified instructors who

are members of the club. Its first outdoor meets were at Kingussie and Crieff, but last Sunday saw the biggest outing yet when a 45-strong group from the club travelled to the Edinburgh Indoor Climbing Arena in Ratho, near Edinburgh.

An early start on a frosty morning didn't dampen the high spirits of the excited young people and grown-ups. Ages ranged from six to 50-plus, with some of the toughest climbs being achieved by some of the club's youngest members.

Hannah Francis, climbing in-

Climbing

structor at 3 Wise Monkeys and club chairperson, said: 'Sunday's meet at Ratho was fantastic. We had a great turn-out and it is amazing to see how everyone is improving already.'

'My highlights of the day were seeing the proud faces of the parents as they learned new skills and saw their young climbers scaling the impressive walls, and seeing our newest and youngest member, Aaron, at six years old, climbing to an



Climbers from the Inside Out club at the Edinburgh Indoor Climbing Centre.

epic 30-metre height. I am really looking forward to seeing where we can take the club in the years to come.'

For anyone wanting to find out more about the club, email insideoutclimbingclub@gmail.com or find 'Inside Out

Climbing Club' on Facebook. The club encourages anyone to join – young or old, beginner or experienced.

SPONSORS OF THE OBAN TIMES WEATHER AND TIDES



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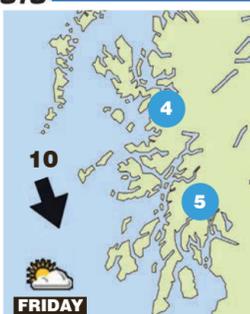
Chain, shackles, buoys all available to purchase in Oban

WEATHER

Thursday Sunny intervals
 Winds light North North Westerly
 Temperatures 0°C to 4°C.

Friday Cloudy
 Winds light North Easterly
 Temperatures 6°C to 7°C.

Weekend Cloudy on Saturday
 Light rain on Sunday
 Winds moderate North Westerly
 Temperatures 7°C to 9°C.



Stop Press: New pontoons at Ulva Ferry and visitor moorings installed at Lochaline by North West Marine Ltd

TIDAL INFORMATION

Tide tables for Oban during the week from Thursday November 30, 2017 are listed below with differences for major ports listed on the right. All times are GMT (add one hour BST)

Date	am	pm	Ardrishaig	-5.35	Mallaig	+0.25						
Thu	02.58	3.3	08.52	1.5	15.24	3.8	21.27	1.3	Campbeltown	-5.30	Portree	+0.55
Fri	03.37	3.6	09.44	1.2	16.05	4.0	22.11	1.0	Crinan	-0.47	Tobermory	+0.16
Sat	04.15	3.8	10.32	1.0	16.45	4.2	22.54	0.8	Islay Port Ellen	2.00	Dover	+5.30
Sun	04.55	4.0	11.19	0.8	17.25	4.3	23.37	0.6	Lochboisdale	+0.30		
Mon	05.35	4.1	12.06	0.6	18.06	4.3	**	**				
Tues	00.21	0.5	06.17	4.2	12.54	0.6	18.49	4.1				
Wed	01.07	0.5	07.01	4.1	13.44	0.7	19.33	3.9				

Tidal Constants: (Add or deduct from High Water at Oban)

Ferry Crossings/Sea States
 Oban to Barra/South Uist Moderate
 Oban to Coll/Tiree Moderate
 Kennacraig to Islay Moderate