

The Oban Times

& WEST HIGHLAND TIMES

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THIRD AND FINAL TOKEN INSIDE **WIN!** worth *including an Asus laptop* **£300!** A Christmas hamper **oban WINTER FESTIVAL** Pages 11-14



The terrace seating area where people can relax and view the bay.

Snagging delays hold up seafront revamp

SNAGGING is holding up the completion of the Stafford Street development along Oban's seafront, the project manager of the Argyll and Bute council scheme told Oban community councillors on Monday night.

Andrew Collins, CHORD manager, said that since he had taken over the public realm works a number of issues had come to light.

He said he hoped these matters could soon be resolved.

Mr Collins, who was attending the meeting on Monday for the first time since his appointment in June, said he had taken over from former manager Linda Houston.

Since then, he told councillors, he had picked up a 'number of issues' with the main CHORD programme and several snagging problems.

He said: 'Some of the granite plinths are loose.

'There are issues with the lighting and we are looking at additional seating in the upper area.'

The pedestrianisation of Stafford Street cost the taxpayer an estimated £600,000 and work ran behind schedule – it was not finished until mid July, when traders had called for it to be finished much earlier in the season.

Family firm secured after sale to major distributor

LOUISE GLEN
lglen@obantimes.co.uk

THE PURCHASE of Oban Express by logistics group Menzies Distribution will secure the future of the Oban family business.

Becoming part of a major company will allow the family firm, which also has a base in Glasgow and employs more than 70 people, to be part of

'transformational e-commerce in remote parts of Scotland', a spokesman for Menzies said.

The Edinburgh-based company took over Oban Express last week.

The delivery firm handles more than 450,000 packages a year.

In a statement to *The Oban Times*, a spokesman for Oban Express Menzies said: 'With regards to the question of redun-

dancies, we are concentrating on a successful peak trading period and there will be no review of the business until next year.

'The directors are being retained to help further grow the business, leveraging off their excellent customer relationships.'

Founded in 1983 by Tommy Owens, with two sons, Oban Express is now supported by a fleet of 45 vehicles.

It operates throughout West-

ern Scotland and the Hebrides.

The Oban Express deal with Menzies Distribution builds on the June acquisition of AJG Parcels of Inverness – the biggest parcel delivery firm in the Highlands – for £7.5million.

Following Mr Owens' death in 2006, the business passed to his children – son Walker and daughters Lorraine and Louise.

The three siblings and their spouses have sold the busi-

ness for an undisclosed sum. Menzies managing director, Forsyth Black, said: 'Menzies Distribution is now perfectly placed to serve carriers working for large mail-order firms by consolidating their parcels into one cost-effective, final-mile delivery, making it easier for customers in Western Scotland and the Hebrides to order online and get their goods quickly, at a reasonable cost.'

Scallywag Sean wins Oban Times name game



Oban's Sean Drummond was all smiles after winning *The Oban Times* competition to name the boat in the new community play park outside Atlantis Leisure Centre. Sean is pictured with Lyndsay Elliot, centre, chairperson of Friends of Oban Community Play Park, and Jade Manning, left, and Nicola Wood of Scottish Sea Farms. See page 5.

TIMESLINE

Climate change campaigners brave storm

IN A twist of fate the Killin march against climate change and global warming took place in heavy snow on Sunday (November 29).

The march was organised by Environment Killin and was timed to coincide with start of the United Nations Climate Change Summit in Paris. The march was part of a global initiative organised by AVAAZ, involving 2,426 events in 150 countries worldwide.

The target is to agree a cap of a two-degree Celsius temperature rise and to urge politicians to try and achieve 100 per cent clean energy by 2050.

George Street plans altered to aid disabled

A SCHEME to improve the look of George Street in Oban had 'forgotten' to include accessibility measures for wheelchairs.

Speaking at Oban Community Council, Andrew Collins, CHORD project manager, said that since he took over the job in June he had added a few items to the list of works for the contractor.

Mr Collins said: 'When we dug into the project we found there were some items that had been missed.

'For example there were no dropped kerbs in the scheme and the width of the working bays were too narrow. We have now remedied that situation.'

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Man taken to hospital after fire breaks out in Oban living room

A MAN was taken to hospital after fire broke out in a house in Oban last Sunday morning.

Two appliances from the town's community fire station were sent to the incident at Glencruittin Rise in response to a 999 call made to the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) around 10.10am. Firefighters reached the scene seven minutes later and a team in breathing apparatus put out a small fire in the living room of the house.

A SFRS spokesman said: 'The casualty received treatment from ambulance personnel before being taken to Lorn

and Islands Hospital for a precautionary check-up, while SFRS crews cleared smoke from the property and confirmed fire had not spread throughout the house.

'Firefighters in every community provide free home fire safety visits to help residents prevent fires and the tragedies they cause.

'During a visit SFRS crews highlight common hazards many people just don't know exist and share advice to help address them.

'They also check the property is protected by working smoke alarms and

if these are found to be needed then firefighters can provide and install them completely free of charge.

'Householders can help protect their homes and everyone in them by also having a heat alarm installed in the kitchen, where the device provides early warning of a fire without being activated due to small amounts of smoke from cooking.'

Free home fire safety visits are available from SFRS by calling the freephone number 0800 073 1999, by texting 'FIRE' to 80800 or by filling in an online form at www.firescotland.gov.uk.

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MULL lines



Sumdog success at Lochdonhead school

PUPILS at Lochdonhead Primary School were celebrating last week after going to the top of the class in the Argyll and Bute Sumdog competition.

The event is all about answering mental maths questions via a computer game, with every pupil having to try to answer 1,000 questions in a week, both at school and at home.

A total of 15 Argyll and Bute classes had qualified for the competition, including Lochdonhead.

The school had two pupils finish in the top 10 – Ewan, who was second and Ella, who was 10th. Pupils won certificates and a year's free subscription to Sumdog.

Ella told *The Oban Times*: 'It was really enjoyable taking part and I feel that my mental maths has improved.'

Catch and release for sustainable Mull

AS THE peak tourist season draws to a close, writes *Sharyn MacAulay Murray*, the people and businesses on Mull are preparing for the winter, including Tobermory's newest attraction, Mull Aquarium.

Run by the Tobermory Harbour Association (THA), a not-for-profit community-owned organisation, the aquarium opened its doors to the public for the first time on April 3, 2015.

It is situated in the Harbour Building at Tobermory's main car park, beside the pontoon berths, making it an easy-to-reach attraction whether people are travelling by car, bus or yacht.

Its prominent location by the sea plays a much more important part in the day-to-day running of this charming little aquarium.

Hailed as Europe's first catch-and-release aquarium, the sea creatures that can be viewed in its 13 marine tanks are all caught locally and released back into the wild after four weeks.

From creel fishermen to divers and even enthusiastic beachgoers, people sustainably collect animals throughout the summer and bring them in to the centre, where they are then cared for by the staff and volunteers until they are returned to the sea.

Not only does this have minimal impact on the marine environment, it also means the displays are constantly changing; guaranteeing that no two visits will be the same.

Like all good things, the fun comes to an end when the aquarium closes for the winter, but not before one final celebration.

The last of this year's sea creatures went back to the wild during the end of season release party, with families from all over the Isle of Mull braving the November chill to lend a hand.

Now all that needs to be done is to scrub down the unoccupied tanks in preparation for Easter 2016, when the will fun start all over again.

MSP backs Clyde fishermen

But marine trust says CFA is misleading industry with claims that are 'not credible'

LOUISE GLEN
lglen@obantimes.co.uk

'CONSTRUCTIVE dialogue' between fishing representatives and an environmental charity pushing to further regulate fisheries in the Firth of Clyde is being called for by Argyll and Bute's MSP.

Fishing representatives claim the Sustainable Inshore Fishing Trust's (SIFT) proposed regulating order on top of new rules governing soon-to-be introduced Marine Protection Areas, including in the Firth of Clyde, will devastate West Coast fishing communities.

Michael Russell MSP has said he is 'completely unconvinced' by the suggested regulating order, further limiting the areas boats can fish, recently published by charity SIFT.

'This is essentially legislation that will affect livelihoods being pushed by a lobbying charity and there needs to be a very strong and robust examination of any such proposal over a lengthy period of time,' he said.

'I could not possibly support it as it is now and I have said several times to the charity that I think bringing it forward during the MPA process is unhelpful and counter productive.'

'MPAs need to be in and there



Fishing boats at Islay prior to a meeting on the island last Thursday night.

needs to be a period of consolidation that restores confidence in the whole issue of designation within fishing communities. I don't think there is a done deal about this within the Scottish Government and I think anyone in the fishing community who is spreading that rumour for their own purposes is being as unhelpful as SIFT.

'We will only make progress in protecting jobs and securing a long-term sustainable future for the fishing industries in Argyll and Bute if we encourage

and take part in constructive dialogue, and that is what I would urge on all sides. The fishing communities and all those involved in the industry in any way have my support as the local MSP on the basis that they are willing to take part in such a process. I will speak up for them against unfair influence in all such circumstances.'

A spokeswoman for Community of Arran Seabed Trust (COAST) on the Firth of Clyde said the Clyde Fishermen's Association was giving misleading

messages to the industry through its series of meetings.

Howard Wood, also of COAST, said: 'Claims by prawn and scallop lobbyists that MPAs will 'decimate' communities are simply not credible.'

'Marine Scotland estimates that at worst, less than three per cent of mobile fishermen's turnover will be affected and most of this can be compensated for by fishing elsewhere.'

'Local creel fishermen who make up the majority of inshore fishermen will also benefit from

less gear conflict and better access to creel grounds. West Coast and island communities are highly reliant on a healthy and biodiverse environment that supports economic development. Scallop dredging has been described as inhibiting economic development on the West Coast in a major economic study commissioned by Marine Scotland.

'MPAs are the first glimmer of hope for our inshore waters in decades. Let's not allow the short-term interest of one fishing sector to override the wider interests of West Coast and island communities.'

Elaine Whyte, secretary of the CFA, said: 'Fishing has contributed a huge amount to our communities over the years and now the industry is under threat of extinction due to unnecessarily ambitious proposed MPAs and a regulating order imposed from outwith. The Clyde fishery is already heavily regulated and controlled to ensure sustainable fishing and additional tiers of management will only spell the death knell of our industry.'

'We fully support marine conservation and the principle of MPAs, but it is vital that such management measures are proportionate and enable the continuation of sustainable fishing.'

Islay in danger of being left in dark

LAMP POSTS on Islay have come under the spotlight by one of the island's postmasters.

Alastair Redman, who runs the Portnahaven Post Office, said: 'Some of our local street lighting on Islay is in desperate need of maintenance.'

'Many of our street lights go without repair leaving (in some cases) whole streets in darkness for weeks if not months at a time.'

'The issue has also been raised at the community council, who have been told by councillors that the matter will be resolved.'

'I have brought up the fact that the public toilets in Bruichladdich have had broken lights for more than two years now at almost every single community council meeting, yet nothing has been done.'



Alastair Redman kneels by one of the broken lamp posts.

The new Argyll Community Housing Association (ACHA) housing in Bowmore is still in darkness, with its street lighting

not yet connected up.

'Some Bowmore residents have joked the the 15-year-old single malt Bowmore Darkest must be named after their street.'

'The names Bruichladdich and Bowmore are well known across the world mainly due to the distilleries and the whiskies they produce in those villages.'

'So too are the names Ardbeg, Bunnahabhain, Caol-Ila, Kilchoman, Lagavulin and Laphroaig.'

'Our distilleries generate hundreds of millions of pounds every year in tax revenue yet what do we get in return?'

'Islay residents who pay their council tax rightfully expect something to return.'

'As ever, we on Islay are still waiting.'

Bid to save Colonsay belfry from act of God

TINY church congregation on a remote West Highland island has launched a worldwide appeal after being hit with an urgent bill for £20,000 to make safe its 200-year-old church belfry.

Parishioners at Colonsay Church of Scotland need to complete the work before winter storms do further damage to the structure.

As a listed building, the birdcage belfry will need to be fully restored at a total cost of £55,000, but the structure has to be made safe immediately, pre-empting the possibility of grant aid during the first phase of the operation.

The islanders have only just finished the renovation of the 1802 Georgian church.

Colonsay has 135 inhabitants, 90 of whom are either pensioners or school children, with the church having barely a dozen regular worshippers.

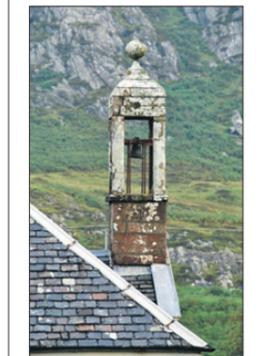
Session Clerk Kevin Byrne said: 'The financial implications for this small congregation are serious.'

'Although our church is Presbyterian it has a completely ecumenical ethos and shares all services with the local Baptist congregation. It relies upon visiting volunteer preachers for pulpit supply and often welcomes ministers from other branches of the Christian family.'

'The building is always open – it is available for suitable secular purposes and provides mortuary facilities regardless of creed.'

'Almost incredibly, there are more than a million people worldwide with one or more ancestors who are connected to our church through a baptism, marriage or funeral, so we are hopeful that well-wishers will assist at this time of crisis and then visit Colonsay to see the result.'

Details of a special appeal are posted on www.colonsay-churches.org and the church is a registered charity SC031271 eligible for Gift Aid.



The birdcage belfry that is in urgent need of repair.

WIN! The Oban Times & WEST HIGHLAND TIMES

A Christmas hamper including an Asus laptop worth £300! Courtesy of Tesco, Oban.

The Oban Times is giving readers the chance to win a fantastic Christmas hamper worth a whopping £300! The hamper will include an Asus laptop*, a Finest turkey, a Finest bouquet of flowers, Finest champagne, Finest wine, a Finest meal deal for two and a selection of Xmas Finest products.

This could be a helping hand towards your Christmas shopping or a present to yourself for being good this year. Just imagine being able to put even more Christmas presents under the tree for your friends and family to enjoy.

HERE IS TOKEN THREE

To enter, simply send us your three tokens that we have printed in The Oban Times, answer this easy question, complete the entry form below and post it all to The Oban Times, Tesco Hamper Comp, PO Box 1, Oban, Argyll, PA34 4HB. Entries must be received by Wednesday, December 9, 2015. The winner must collect the prize in person at Tesco, Oban on an agreed date. OVER 18s ONLY.

Question: Complete the line in this popular Christmas song "I'm dreaming of a _____"

a) Blue Christmas b) Green Christmas c) White Christmas

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Terms and conditions: The prize is as stated. *The prize laptop is an Asus x205ta red 11.6" laptop 2GB, with windows 10 and office 365 notebook. No cash alternative. Photocopied entries will not be accepted. The winner must take part in publicity and may appear in a Wyvex Media publication and website. The competition is not open to Wyvex Media and associated company employees and their families. The winner must be aged over 18 years and provide proof of age. The winner must collect the prize in person at Tesco, Oban on an agreed date provided by The Oban Times. Digital subscribers can enter by printing the pages and cutting out the tokens and submitting their entry with the supplied entry form (printed Dec 3) accompanied by a letter explaining that you are a digital subscriber.



Night on tiles in memory of Finlay

SATURDAY night at the Tigh-an-Truish, Isle of Seil, was a darts and dominoes tournament in memory of Finlay Morrison and it was the kind of night that he would have loved.

A character in the true sense of the word, he was a native of the island and everyone has fond memories of Finlay and the many times he would have helped them out as a joiner

and general handyman. The highlight of the evening was the Aggregates Industries Cup for darts, won by Jeff Bowles.

Robbie MacLarty, organiser of the event, said: 'Finlay was a great man; everyone loved him.'

Money raised during the evening was donated to the Fishermen's Mission and HCPT; the final figure is

around £650 with a further £70 made by the sale of Fishermen's Mission merchandise on the night.

As well as thanking all the volunteers, Robbie also thanked the Tigh-an-Truish, Aggregate Industries, Puffer Bar and Seafari for their support.

Matthew Ramsey, Fishermen's Mission, said: 'The communities of Seil, Easdale

and Luig have always had a special place in their hearts for the Mission, and once again they have been so generous. Thank you.'

Results
Darts: Jeff Bowles; Dougie Robertson, runner-up; Fiona MacLarty, top lady.
Dominoes Champion: John Moore; Shirley MacNeil runner-up.



GP funding inequality hits poorer areas hardest

GENERAL Practice funding systems in Scotland are 'part of the problem' of health inequality and do not match clinical need in deprived areas, according to a new study.

The work, carried out by researchers at the University of Glasgow's Institute of Health and Wellbeing and the University of Dundee, found that while GPs in more deprived areas have more patients who suffer from multiple chronic physical and mental conditions, they do not receive more funding to meet clinical needs.

The research, published in the British Journal of General Practice, found that practices in the most deprived areas had 38 per cent more patients with multi-morbidity compared with the least deprived areas, and double the number of patients with combined mental and physical multi-morbidity.

Multi-morbidity was defined in three ways: two or more chronic health conditions, five or more chronic conditions and combinations of physical and mental conditions.

Evidence from the study also shows that although practices in more deprived areas have younger populations, they also have higher levels of complex multi-morbidity occurring at a much younger age.

Professor Graham Watt, the Norie Miller Professor of General Practice at the University of Glasgow, said: 'On average GPs in more deprived areas have a higher workload, with 20 per cent more consultations with patients who are more likely to be multi-morbid with both physical and mental conditions, but do not receive additional funding to address these complex needs.'

'The average NHS spend per patient per annum in the most deprived general practices is £120, compared with £127 in the most affluent half of the country.'

'When needs are partially met the health service underachieves in reducing the severity and slowing the progression of health and social problems. The consequence is that patients are admitted to hospital and die earlier than they need to.'

'Until allocation formulas in Scotland and the rest of the UK take into account the earlier onset of morbidity in more deprived areas, such funding systems will continue to be part of the problem of health inequalities rather than part of the solution.'

Sports group appeal for help to save tennis courts

LOUISE GLEN
lglen@obantimes.co.uk

TENNIS fans on the West Coast are hoping the community can serve up an ace for courts that are 'at the end of their life' in Oban.

With only six weeks to go before the possibility of funding is lost altogether, sports fans in the town are hoping to raise £40,000 for what they believe are the only courts in the West Highlands.

Neil Mathieson, who is part of the group trying to raise the cash, said: 'We won the Davis Cup at the weekend and that is

“Our tennis courts are at the end of their life”

Neil Mathieson
Oban tennis group

because people were allowed to grow up playing tennis on good practice courts.

'These will be the only practice level tennis courts on the West Coast, apart from the Isle of Harris.'

'After 23 years of service our community's tennis courts are at the end of their life.'

'They are worn out and suffering from subsidence, which renders them unfit for use.'

'Over the last three years, Atlantis Leisure and the Tennis and Squash Club have been working hard to find ways to raise funding, by applying to

both national and local charities and committing their own resources.

'The funding gap must be filled by January 5, 2016 for the project to proceed due to funding restrictions. This is now a major challenge as most funding sources have been exhausted.'

'If successful, the project will create three brand new artificial grass courts to Lawn Tennis Association standards, new fencing and floodlighting plus a multi-use pitch which can be used for additional sports providing a training facility for young people.'

Mr Mathieson explained that three courts were required to host a tennis tournament. 'The West Highland tennis week, held in the town for more than 40 years, is at risk if we do not renew our courts.'

Mr Mathieson called on locals to help with the groups' fundraising efforts, and encouraged anyone interested to organise fundraisers themselves in order to reach the £40,000 target by January.

For more details contact nick.wesley@atlantisleisure.co.uk and join the tennis and squash fundraising page.

Society says very Marie Christmas

CUSTOMERS of the Yorkshire Building Society in Oban have paid for 10 hours of nursing care as part of the Society's Hour of Need campaign.

The campaign was launched in 2014 with the aim of raising £500,000 by December 2016 - enough to support more than 25,000 hours of care by Marie Curie nurses for people with a terminal illness and their families across the UK.

Every £20 raised pays for one hour of care, and customers and staff at the Yorkshire Building Society branch in Oban have contributed £215 to the campaign, the equivalent of 10 hours of Marie Curie nursing care.

To celebrate, the branch on George Street will be hosting a Christmas-themed thank you event on Tuesday December 15 where people can enjoy some festive treats from the society.

Gloria's humour is a real tonic



JANUARY: Gloria's depiction of her brother attempting to have his waist measured in the Mary's Meals' shop.

A BENDERLOCH woman has launched her annual calendar to raise money to help defeat the disease that killed her husband.

For the last four years Gloria Young, 87, has painted and printed 200 calendars a year, which are sold locally, to raise money for Cancer Research.

So far she has raised more than £4,600 through the sale of her calendars and other fundraising events.

Mrs Young said: 'After my husband passed away with cancer, I vowed to do

everything I could to raise money to help. The calendar is made up of pictures I have imagined, seen, heard or had suggested.'

January, right, is an anecdote of when Gloria's brother, Dr Vernon Harris visited from Australia. To save space, he brought a limited supply of clothes with him and planned to buy more when he got to Oban. He went to Mary's Meals charity shop in Stevenson Street to supplement his wardrobe, but when he got there he realised he didn't know his waist measurement.

Mrs Young continued: 'There were a lot

of suggestions to find out his measurement, but the woman in the shop had an electric measurer on the counter and said if he could get himself on the counter they would be able to find out. So my brother did his best to get onto the counter and in the end they found out his waist size.'

Anyone interested in purchasing a calendar can buy one in shops in various villages, including Benderloch, Ledaig, Tainuill, Tralee and Kinlochleven.

Each calendar is £7, with the money going to Cancer Research.

NHS adds one click giving with Virgin

NHS HIGHLAND is to add the Virgin Money giving site on to its donation page, making giving money to the board's endowment funds and other charities a simple one click operation.

The NHS Endowment fund is a registered charity which holds the money in trust for specific hospital wards, centres or departments.

The money can be used to purchase equipment, provide additional comforts and amenities for patients and staff - purchases which were only possible because someone made a gift to the endowment funds.

The online donation page, accessed via the NHS Highland website, already has a link to a site called JustGiving, which allows contributors to raise funds for one charity at a time. However, it is also possible to make a one-off donation on this site to a specific fund or the endowments fund generally.

The board's new endowment support officer, Donald Mackenzie, said: 'JustGiving will pay all money raised to one charity. However, a relative who has previously raised money for us wanted to split donated funds between the one of the funds in the board's endowment fund as well as a couple of other charities. They mentioned that the Virgin site allows the splitting of donations raised on someone's webpage to various registered charities, so we have decided to set it up.'

£120 gift for sensory garden

OBAN Community Sensory Garden (OCSG) has received a month's worth of donations from the Oban Goes it Alone Weight Loss Club.

The sensory garden is a public space located on Corran Esplanade.

The weight loss club, run by Stephen Glen-Lee, meets weekly at the Great Western Hotel, where club members take it in turns to nominate a good cause to benefit from their meeting donation.

The sensory garden group was the choice for October 2015, receiving £120 in total.

Claire Rizos, Trustee of OCSG, said: 'Our organisation is run by a committee with a range of abilities, including those with learning and physical disabilities. We invest a great deal of effort in fundraising to keep our garden looking bright and attractive. So to receive this wonderful phonecall out of the blue was a real boost and will help us to ensure the garden is ready for spring.'

School funding given green light

FUNDING for Oban's new high school has finally been given the go-ahead after European Union guidelines triggered a review of the capital investment in the buildings.

Announcing the work had finally got the green light, Deputy First Minister John Swinney, told parliament: 'While that process [EU review] has been under way, 12 projects in the pipeline have been unable to progress as planned. I have today advised parliament these projects can now proceed as soon as possible.'

Community encouraged to make more of garden

ARDUANE Garden Support Group held a special open meeting on Sunday at Loch Melfort Hotel to share ideas on how to encourage local communities, groups and schools to make more of the garden.

The group was set up five years ago and is chaired by Calum Ross, who, together with his wife Rachel, owns Loch Melfort Hotel.

'The group was initially set up to help raise funds for the garden, but while that is ongoing, we would love more people locally to enjoy the benefits of the garden and think about joining this group to help it thrive.'

'We don't want people to feel they will just be asked to do jobs, so are looking to change the group to a more

social gathering, where people can contribute ideas. One of the benefits of being a member of the group is that you automatically get free entry to the garden.'

Those sentiments were echoed by head gardener and property manager Maurice Wilkins, who after 23 years is retiring at the end of February.

He said: 'I've always wanted everyone in the area to feel it was their garden, so I'm hoping this is the start of the local community getting more involved, as there is so much for the community, including schools and families, to enjoy.'

For more information on how to get involved, call Calum or Rachel Ross on 01852 200233.

Scots forestry a hidden economic success story

A REPORT published on Monday reveals that Scotland's forestry sector is a hidden success story and is contributing nearly £1 billion to the economy through forest management, timber processing and recreation - a substantial increase from the previous figure of £670 million.

The forestry sector, including tourism and recreation, is also a major employer, supporting more than 25,000 jobs across Scotland.

There has been a significant boost to employment levels in the forest management and processing sector, with more than 19,500 people now working in the industry - a jump of 6,500, about 50 per cent, compared to the previous report back in 2008.



Importantly, many of these jobs are located in rural locations, therefore forestry is supporting more fragile economies.

The work of the sector is also vital in enabling other key Scottish industries to grow, such as in the energy, construction, tourism and potentially biotechnology fields.

Vouchers are key to keeping cash in town

LOVE OBAN vouchers have brought an extra £17,000 into the tills of the town's businesses since they were launched 18 months ago.

Praising 'the exceptional' response to the scheme, which ensures profits remain in the businesses, BID4Oban manager Derek Connery says things can only get bigger and better.

The gift voucher scheme can be used at participating businesses in the town - a list that continues to grow. Vouchers can be purchased in £5, £10 or £20 denominations from the BID4Oban office on Stevenson Street, Webster's Oban Photographic Centre and The Sports Shop in Argyll Square.

Derek said: 'More and more businesses are accepting the vouchers. Our aim is to support Oban town centre and by offering a voucher that can be accepted in shops from major stores to unique local businesses it makes sure money stays in the town.'

'We are working with a number of businesses to bring them into the scheme and as these are announced they will be on our website.'

Andy Spence, chairman of Bid4Oban, said: 'This is a great good news story for the BID company - we do all the administration in house - businesses get the value of the gift voucher into their tills, and people use the vouchers in Oban. It is a win/win situation for everyone.'

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LORN lines



Greame Pagan, left, and Lynda Burgin at the gathering last Thursday. 15_149bereavement01

Friendly meeting is a support in time of bereavement

PEOPLE coping with bereavement can receive help and support from a group that meets socially every month in Oban. The gathering is held on the last Thursday of the month at the Rowantree Hotel. Greame Pagan, who is a former solicitor and founding member, said: 'I look forward to it when there's a good crowd here. The first time we met, a man who hadn't left his house and hadn't spoken to anyone since his wife passed away came along and half way through the meeting started to speak.' Founding member Lynda Burgin said: 'It's not a bereavement council, it's a friendly meeting for people to get together and speak about their experiences and help each other. If transport is a problem, lifts are available.' The group has now closed for the festive period, but will start up again next year. To find out more or to arrange transport, phone 01631 563765 or 07900 424645.

Hats off to Dorothy...

WHO would have thought that one little book could lead to so much fun at St Oran's Church Christmas Fair. Dorothy Hitchin volunteers at Oban Oxfam shop and one day she came across a book on how to make balloon models. Ever since then she's been making everything from dragonflies to hats and she is in demand to make balloon models at children's parties, or to hold classes to teach others how to make them.



Dorothy, left, is pictured with Kathie Miller and Sara Hiam at the fair which was held in Connel Village Hall on Saturday. T15_149conn01

Council leader encouraged by Argyll response to refugee crisis

AMANDA CRAWFORD acrawford@obantimes.co.uk

AHEAD of Syrian families travelling to Bute this month, the area's council leader has said he is 'incredibly encouraged' by the local response to the plans to rehomed the refugees on Bute. Some 15 families, including a reported 50 children, are set to arrive on the island from camps in Lebanon before Christmas and members of the local community have warmly extended helping hands to support them as they settle into their new lives. Argyll and Bute Council was one of the first local authorities to show its support in Scotland and welcome Syrian families following an international crisis which has seen thousands queue up at the borders of European countries seeking salvation and respite from war in their own countries. Councillor Dick Walsh said: 'In early September the international media was dominated by the plight of hundreds of thousands of refugees fleeing civil war in Syria. I have personally been incredibly encouraged by the overwhelming response from our local communities who are equally moved by this desperate situation and who have come forward to offer their assistance in a multitude of ways.' Last Friday, the Discovery Centre in Bute hosted a meeting of authorities, including Argyll Community Housing Association (ACHA), Fyne Homes, Argyll and Bute Council and NHS



This letter was attached to a parcel of children's clothes sent to a Bute food bank.

Highland. The meeting went on to Rothesay Joint Campus where Syrian children will attend school. Pupils and teachers at Rothesay Joint Campus have been working hard to prepare for the arrival of the newcomers and have put together a film about the island in a bid to educate the children on their new surroundings. Sixty Bute residents have volunteered their time to support the newcomers with the simplest of tasks, such as shopping and getting to know the area. Island councillor Isobel Strong said: 'There will be professional people such as interpreters travelling with the refugees and they will remain in the area during their settling-in period. We've had lots of people volunteering their time and skills, even just to

help them with the new climate and how to deal with the cold and help them to wrap up. There have also been offers to mentor people when they are here. 'Some also have skills to share, two that I know of also have knowledge of Arabic, which is fantastic. I really was amazed by the amount of people who came forward to offer their help.' One of those who came forward was a four-year-old girl named Jess, who sent a letter with children's clothes, which said: 'To your new Syrian Residents, with love from Jess, aged 4.' The letter and parcel were sent to Bute Oasis food bank, on Argyll Street, Rothesay, where founder Angela Callaghan has been taking in thousands of donations from residents in the area.

Letter from America praises Argyll and Bute

ON HEARING that Argyll and Bute Council will show 'It's a Wonderful Life', the 1946 Christmas film, for Syrians on their arrival, a New York museum has been in touch. Anwei Law, president of the board of trustees at Seneca Falls It's a Wonderful Life Museum and Archives in the American city, read about the council's plans and wrote a letter of support. In the letter to the people of Argyll and Bute, she told how moved she was by the gesture and shared her 'deepest respect' with the council and the people of Bute. Council leader Councillor Dick Walsh said: 'The museum will be ringing the bells of the town in order to recognise people who have made a difference. Their decision to include the people of Bute in this list is very much appreciated. I have written to them to thank them for getting in touch with us and to acknowledge our gratitude and appreciation.'



Clara Govier, Head of Charities and Communications at People's Postcode Lottery; Magnus MacFarlane-Barrow, founder and CEO of Mary's Meals; and Sanjay Singh, Trusts Manager at People's Postcode Lottery at 'the shed' in Dalmally.

Lottery cash for Dalmally charity

ARGYLL-BASED charity Mary's Meals has received a £200,000 cheque from the People's Postcode Lottery. Mary's Meals, which provides one million children every school day with a meal, will use the money to expand its operation. Magnus MacFarlane-Barrow, CEO and founder of Mary's Meals, said: 'We are hugely grateful to be receiving support from players of People's Postcode Lottery. Mary's Meals reached the milestone of feeding more than one million children across 12 countries in spring this year, however, with 59 million children in the world still out of school and hungry, I believe this work has just begun.'

David Chaw, a headteacher at Chambawa Primary School, said: 'If Mary's Meals was not here many children would not eat as there is no food at home and children struggle with hunger. 'Since Mary's Meals came to the school, 315 children have enrolled and more are progressing from Grade 7 to Grade 8 because they are stronger. School completion rates are normally low so this is good news.' Clara Govier, head of charities at People's Postcode Lottery added: 'Mary's Meals does such fantastic work in the countries that it operates and we can't wait to see the impact of the funding on the charity.'

Community councillors resign

OBAN Community Council has confirmed two of its members have resigned since its last meeting. Shauna Mackenzie, who was elected into the position, moved out of the area and was therefore unable to serve as an Oban councillor. While Lorne MacDougall resigned citing 'pressures of workload' as his reason. Marri Malloy, chairwoman, thanked them for their service to the community council and wished them well for the future.

Inspiring young people sought

YOUNG Scot has urged people in Argyll and Bute to help it find the most inspiring young people in the area as the charity opens entries for the 2016 awards. The Young Scot Awards is Scotland's biggest celebration of young people and aims to spotlight the outstanding contribution of young people aged 11-26 years who have made a real difference to the lives of others and deserve recognition for their achievements. Three finalists will be chosen in each of the 12 categories. The winners will be announced at a ceremony in Edinburgh on April 27, 2016. Louise Macdonald, of Young Scot, said: 'Young people's hard work deserves to be recognised and everyone can make a nomination.' Vote online at youngscotwards.com before the deadline on February 24, 2016.



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Epilepsy campaign

A CAMPAIGN encouraging individuals with epilepsy to put emergency contact details in their mobile phone has been launched. The initiative will see free wristbands given to anyone with epilepsy, which will identify that the wearer has contact details on their phone in case of emergency (ICE). This means that following a seizure, medical personnel or a concerned passerby will be able to contact the person's friends and family. Speaking about the launch of the initiative, Rhoda Grant, Highlands

and Islands MSP, said: 'In my role as a regional MSP for the Highlands and Islands, I became aware of situations where people were found either unwell or in a distressed state in public and the attending emergency service personnel had difficulty in identifying who to contact as next of kin. 'I was also aware of individuals who ended up in accident and emergency with staff there being unable to identify the individual who was brought in.' For further information, visit: www.epilepsyscotland.org.uk.

Call to save lottery fund

POTENTIAL UK Government cuts to the Big Lottery Fund could have a devastating impact on projects and communities across Scotland, Social Justice Secretary Alex Neil has said. The cabinet secretary has joined third sector organisations, which are united in their opposition to the cuts, and written to the UK Government to call for the Big Lottery Fund to be protected. The Big Lottery Fund in Scotland currently supports more than 2,000 organisations across the country. It uses the good cause funding it

receives from National Lottery ticket sales to provide £75 million-worth of funding every year to projects that tackle a wide range of issues, including poverty, loneliness, and ill-health. Additionally, more than 2,300 jobs are at least partly funded by Big Lottery Fund in Scotland grants. Mr Neil said: 'Any cuts to the Big Lottery Fund in Scotland would have a devastating impact on the people and organisations who rely on the funding that helps more than 3,000 projects.'

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Council in U-turn – but savings still on table

LOUISE GLEN
lglen@obantimes.co.uk

CAMPAIGNERS have accused Argyll and Bute Council of 'stealth cuts' after the authority was forced into a dramatic U-turn over plans to cut services for vulnerable children.

However, the decision means that cuts in other services – to the tune of £1 million – must now be found at short notice.

The local authority had proposed axing 72 additional support needs (ASN) assistant posts, contributing £1.37 million worth of savings to a total cut of £5 million from education.

The suggested saving was just one of 150 measures in the council's service choices consultation – aimed at slashing £18 million from budgets over the next two years.

Last Thursday, councillors bowed to pressure from groups including Argyll and Bute Parents Against Council Cuts (AB-PACC) and agreed to remove the ASN proposal from the 'service choices' list of cuts. But it hasn't disappeared

entirely. The ASN assistant savings proposal came at the same time as a separate review of ASN service delivery.

This review, which will continue into next year, has already identified £280,000 of annual savings, leading to a reduction of 8.4 per cent (551 hours) per week in work for ASN assistants, applied from the start of the present school year.

This equates to the loss of 15 ASN support assistant posts. A spokeswoman for AB-PACC said: 'We were astounded to discover that as part of the ASN review, stealth cuts of 8.4 per cent have already been imposed on ASN support within the education system.'

'This review is ongoing and we envisage that there could be more cuts yet to come. 'We have all been incredibly stressed and upset by this entire experience.'

Cleland Sneddon, executive director of community services, has been instructed by councillors to find other ways of saving £1.09 million as a result of Thursday's council decision.

Parents hit out at community council

PARENTS of vulnerable children have hit out at the way they claim an Oban community councillor is being victimised for helping them, writes Louise Glen.

Alleged votes of no confidence in community councillor Julie McKenzie have led to parents in the Argyll and Bute Parents Against Council Cuts (AB-PACC) publicly voicing their support for her.

The move follows a written complaint made against Ms McKenzie at a meeting held in private last week, a copy of which was leaked to *The Oban Times*. In it Ms McKenzie was accused of not declaring her involvement with the campaign group [AB-PACC] and making decisions that favoured the group.

Jan Roberts, chairwoman of AB-PACC, said: 'As a group we approached Julie to see if she could give us any advice about our campaign. On her advice, we went to the October Oban Community Council meeting to see if OCC as a whole would support us.'

Fiona Cowan, a member of AB-PACC, added: 'Julie has provided invaluable advice to us and there is no question

our campaign could not have achieved the success it has to date without her unerring guidance. I am very upset to feel she may be experiencing bullying as a direct result of offering help to our group.'

This week, Marri Malloy, chairwoman of Oban Community Council, said that while there had been a number of unresolved issues in the community council, the group was seeking the support of the Argyll and Bute Council's governance and law department and had been told not to talk in public about the private meeting that had taken place last week, but added: 'We have always been fully supportive of the AB-PACC parents.'

While praising the way the community council worked, Julie McKenzie told *The Oban Times*: 'In this case I have concerns that the voices of those most affected by the council's budget proposals are being ignored by the organisation that was set up to protect them.'

Argyll and Bute Council said it was not aware of anything happening at the most recent meeting of OCC. 'If the community council contacts us we will advise accordingly.'



Christmas comes early for Scallywag Sean

AN OBAN youngster was celebrating at the weekend after winning a competition to name the boat at the community play park outside Atlantis Leisure Centre in Oban, writes David McPhee.

His suggested name, The Scallywag, went out to the public vote, along with four others, and received 700 votes.

And while the bad weather may have delayed the play park being finished and its official opening, it wasn't enough to delay the planned party to celebrate Friends of Oban Community Play Park's achievements.

On Sunday, winner Sean Drummond, 9, was presented with a mini iPad and goody bag by Jade Manning (both pictured right) and Nicola Wood of Scottish Sea Farms – who had sponsored the competition in conjunction with *The Oban Times* and donated the mini iPad.

Sean had not expected to win, but his delighted Dad, Kenny Drummond, said: 'Christmas has come early for us. Santa has got a lot to live up to.'

The four runner ups were presented with goody bags that included vouchers provided by *The Oban Times*, Phoenix Cinema, Rutherford's Hair and Atlantis Leisure Centre.

Chairwoman of Friends of Oban Community Play Park Lyndsay Elliot said: 'Although the park isn't open, we've still got loads to celebrate.'

When the committee members first set out to raise money for the park, they thought they would only have to raise about £20,000, but after pricing a 'much bigger play park' they were told it would cost

in the region of £400,000. 'There's a lot to be said for blind optimism,' said Lyndsay. 'We set about doing all sorts of fundraising and legal stuff so we could start applying for funding. Almost everyday someone or some business was doing something to raise money.'

'We've now got enough money to start work on the garden area and we've made a head start on the fundraising for the under-fives' area.

'We're always in need of more people to get involved and volunteer.'

Elaine Robertson, councillor for Oban North and Lorn, who attended the party, said: 'What a fantastic play park. I would like to congratulate the committee on providing such a superb facility. I know there is great excitement and anticipation among the children and parents in Oban, and I am sure it will be a major attraction to families visiting the town. It has taken huge commitment and effort by the committee members to bring this to fruition. I understand local support has contributed 40 per cent of the cost, testament to the generosity of this community.'

'I would also like to thank Lyndsay for mentioning the support and advice she and the committee had received from council officers, I know this will be greatly appreciated. I would love to have the opportunity to test the equipment,' she added.

The park is due to be finished as soon as the weather permits. For more information or to get involved with the group, visit: www.atlantisleisure.co.uk/playpark



POLICE FILES with Sergeant Alan Moore

Alleged drug offences

POLICE in Oban have stopped and searched a number of men in the town, allegedly in possession of the class B drug cannabis.

A 30-year-old man was charged with possessing cannabis resin on Corran Esplanade in the early hours of Tuesday morning, December 1.

In the Soroba area at 9pm last Saturday, a 19-year-old man was searched under the Misuse of Drugs act and charged with possessing a quantity of the drug.

And on Wednesday November 25 at Dunollie, near Oban, an 18-year-old was searched at 11.30am and allegedly found with a quantity of drugs. A car driver

was stopped on the A816 near Oban on Saturday November 26 at 5.35pm and a quantity of cannabis resin was discovered. The 25-year-old man was also charged with driving a vehicle without a MOT.

All cases have been passed to the procurator fiscal.

Refuses breath test

AN ALLEGED drink driver has been reported to the procurator fiscal.

The 21-year-old man was stopped by police officers at 12.30pm on November 30 on the A85 near to Loch Awe.

He refused to provide a breath specimen at the roadside and was taken to Oban Police Station.

Nowhere to go

SERGEANT Alan Moore is warning drivers about the consequences of drinking – not only the morning after.

Ahead of the annual festive policing campaign, Sergeant Moore said: 'People should be aware of the risks of drink driving. People shouldn't ever take a risk. Anyone caught and prosecuted for drink driving will lose their licence and risks losing their livelihood.'

He continued: 'This time last year there was a lot of public information about the new lower drink driving limit. We don't want anyone to be complacent and think it is acceptable to drink and drive - we will be out and about and stopping cars.'

Stay safe at Christmas

THIS Christmas season, Sergeant Moore is asking people to stay safe.

He says the crime prevention campaign from Police Scotland is simple – think about home, online, shop and party safety.

Sergeant Moore said: 'Suffering a crime or its effects over the holiday period has the potential to ruin what should be a happy occasion.'

'Crime prevention measures do not have to cost you any money. There is plenty of advice to help you to keep safe this year.'

Leaflets about safety can be picked up at Oban Police Station.

Nicola Wilson take's no chances and dons a dust suit.
15_14848bes-tos01



Specialists called in to deal with asbestos in Soroba homes

RESIDENTS of Soroba were expecting to have their homes insulated for Christmas, not to have workers find a batch of asbestos in their bin rooms, writes David McPhee.

While carrying out work on the Lunga Road houses, workers discovered that the bin cupboards outside the Argyll Community Housing Association (ACHA)-owned properties were contaminated with the substance.

Lunga Road resident Nicola Wilson said: 'Someone from ACHA came to explain that there was asbestos in the cupboard outside and that everything in it will be destroyed.'

'But how am I supposed to itemise what is in the cupboard if I can't open the door?'

'We will receive £25 as a good will payment, but we need to leave the house for a day, while they dispose of the asbestos. If it's a day that I'm

working it will be fine, but what am I supposed to do all day if I'm not at work? You can't get a hotel room for £25.'

ACHA chief executive Alistair MacGregor said that when carrying out the work, asbestos boards were found in the external bin areas of 10 properties.

He continued: 'The suspected asbestos sheets were not disturbed and our contractor made arrangements for samples to be sent for analysis. The test results confirmed that asbestos is within the boards.'

'Steps have been taken to seal the areas where the boards were identified and the association is making arrangements for an appropriate specialist contractor to remove the asbestos.'

'Our tenants have been kept informed of developments.'

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West Highland Housing Association with the support of the Scottish Government and Argyll and Bute Council are building 12 properties for rent. The properties are being built by local company TSL Contractors Ltd.

These properties will be ready for let by early spring 2016 and there is demand for these properties.

We have the opportunity to build additional properties. These properties would be ready by late 2016 – November/December.

We want to test whether there is a demand for properties to buy or for more properties to rent. We would urge people who are interested in either buying or renting to contact us in the weeks before Christmas. By phoning us you are not making any future commitment but it will help us make a judgement of whether we continue to build and whether we build for purchase or rent or a mix.

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Fort William pontoon cash boosts town

PONTOONS will soon be installed in Fort William thanks to a £150,000 grant.

It is hoped the funding by the Town Centre Communities Capital Fund will allow cruise liners to stop in Fort William, boosting the economy and tourism in the town.

Installation will take place in March next year, as long as a marine licence and planning permission are granted.

Sarah Kennedy, secretary of the Fort William Marina and Shoreline Association, said: 'We are absolutely delighted for our project to be selected for this funding. It has been hard work but it's fantastic news.'

Dave Thompson, MSP for Skye, Lochaber and Badenoch, also welcomed the news: 'I hope that the pontoons will bring many more tourists to this wonderful, friendly town. Tourism is essential for the survival of towns like Fort William and I hope these pontoons can give a well-needed boost to the local economy.'

A copy of the association's marine licence application is available for viewing at Fort William library.

Promise on faster mobile internet

FASTER mobile internet will be available in the Western Isles within the next two years, it has been confirmed.

Network provider Vodafone has said it will deliver 4G connectivity to the islands as part of its multi-billion pound investment to improve coverage across the UK.

Angus MacNeil, MP for In Na h-Eileanan an Iar, welcomed the news: 'Having recently met with Vodafone I am encouraged to hear that our islands will benefit from 4G.'

'This is a big step forward. Vodafone tells me that these improvements will be dependent on the roll out and availability of good quality broadband fibre, which is needed to connect mobile masts to Vodafone's core network.'

'I will be writing to BT too to work with Vodafone to ensure both work hand in hand so that the fibre framework is in place to support broadband.'

Dress swap party date in Lochaber

A GROUP aiming to promote recycling in Lochaber has arranged a dress swap for this weekend to help end the 'throwaway society'.

Lochaber Environmental Group has been picked as one of 15 organisations across the country to take part in the project by Zero Waste Scotland and has chosen the 'Party Swish' event on Saturday to pass on ways to reduce waste.

As well as the dress swap, to be held at Lochaber Yacht Club between 2pm and 4pm, 'upcycled jewellery' will be on sale at the event and sustainable hair and make up tips will also be on offer.

To take part, just donate a dress and take another one home.



SEA OF TARTAN: Lochside RC pupils at their St Andrew's assembly. 21_49stand03



ON THEIR TOES: Laura Robertson and Annie MacNeil perform the Highland Fling at Bun-Sgoil Ghàidhlig Loch Abar nursery's St Andrew's Day celebrations. 21_49stand02



Lochaber musicians Robert Nairn, left, and Calum MacColl joined Lundavra school's primary seven choir as they entertained guests at their ceilidh.



CELEBRATION: Banavie pupils sold specially-made tea towels at their ceilidh on Friday afternoon. 21_49stand04

School pupils celebrate St Andrew's Day in fine style

SCHOOLS in Fort William enjoyed all things Scottish to celebrate St Andrew's Day.

The town's young musicians and dancers entertained the audiences at Lochside RC, Banavie and Lundavra schools, as well as Bun-Sgoil Ghàidhlig Loch Abar nursery before cooling off with Irn Bru, shortbread and oatcakes.

Last week also marked the launch of Banavie primary seven pupils' new business venture and tea towels designed by the students were sold at their ceilidh on Friday.

All money raised will go towards the class trip to Edinburgh next June.

Off duty staff willing to help with out of hours emergency medical care on Harris

A DIRECTOR of NHS Western Isles has signed himself up to help with emergency medical cover on Harris following concerns about out of hours cover on the island.

Dr Angus McKellar, a medical director, has appeared on a list of off-duty GPs, paramedics and nurses prepared to be called on by the Scottish Ambulance Service in an emergency.

The announcement was made at a meeting of the

Harris Locality Planning Group, aimed at reassuring the community.

Dr McKellar said: 'A list is being put together of off-duty GPs, paramedics and nurse practitioners who are prepared to be called by the Scottish Ambulance Service in the event of the ambulance being out of area in an emergency.'

'I have put my name on that list, as a GP, not medical director, and so has Anthony Latham [another

Harris GP]. The SAS has also confirmed that all Tarbert-based staff, including technicians as well as paramedics, are willing to be called during off-duty periods.'

'I'm delighted with this development. I think it's a good move. So much of this is about trust and people having confidence in the service we provide. We hope these new developments will help in that regard.'

Highlands lagging behind on digital front

ALMOST one fifth of people in the Highlands and Islands have never been online, statistics show.

A presentation given to Highland Council's resources committee showed 17.9 per cent of people living in the region had never used the internet, the second highest figure in Britain.

It also showed 82 per cent of those who don't go online say they don't see the benefits of digital or how it relates to them.

Jenny Scotstoun, head of digital transformation at the local authority, told the committee it was important to help more people access digital services as they could be more than £1,000 better off every year through online-only savings and improved employability skills.

She added that 72 per cent of employers admitted they would not interview someone who didn't have digital skills, highlighting the importance of helping those looking for work to get online.

Council leader Margaret Davidson said she was 'astonished' at the figures.

She added: 'This is happening day after day and really has to be a key part of our anti-poverty strategy as we bring it forward.'

'It really is costing our citizens substantial amounts of money year on year to be digitally excluded. A big part of this is having lousy broadband and no mobile reception which is what many areas of the Highlands have.'

Highland Council is currently working with Citizens Online to help get more people online.

Ambitious groups share cash boost for projects

THREE island community groups have benefited from a share of £330,000 to buy land and improve local facilities.

Comhairle nan Eilean Siar dished out the cash as part of its Community Capital Grant Fund.

The museum at Kildonan, South Uist was awarded £250,000 to extend gallery space and redesign the shop and reception area. The Great Bernera Community Development Trust received £30,000 to allow the community to buy estate land. It is hoped this will strengthen the island through new business, tourism and social opportunities.

Lastly, Urras Storas An Rubha was given £50,000 to buy the school building at Knock, Point, on Lewis, which has been leased by the council since 2012. The purchase includes a total refurbishment of the building so the community hub can offer more services and resources.

Alasdair Macleod, chairman of the comhairle's sustainable development committee, said: 'Communities continue to develop excellent local projects. The three successful applications were from ambitious community groups aspiring to acquire and own land and develop local facilities. In this funding the comhairle has helped to ensure the development of sustainable community businesses and increase the offer to locals and visitors.'

Strontian gets energy boost as new hydro scheme goes live

MORE than 100 people turned out to mark the opening of an £85,000 hydro scheme in Strontian.

The project by Sunart Community Renewables is now generating electricity and was officially opened by Dave Thompson MSP on Saturday, just a year after the group set out to raise the funds needed.

Profits generated from the hydro scheme, at a previously disused dam, will be used to fund new developments in the Sunart area.

Richard Laybourne, chairman of Sunart Community Renewables, told the crowd: 'We wouldn't be here celebrating today if it hadn't been for all your support and hard work. Now that we have a hydro scheme, we look forward to future generations continuing the work and ensuring it provides opportunities for many new developments for the community of Sunart.'

The gathering was led by piper Chris Ogilvie, who played a specially composed piece for the occasion, before local girls Ishbel Macintyre and Mya Carmichael switched on the turbine. Afterwards a song was sung by local children's choir, Oigridh Shuainart.

When cutting the ribbon, Mr Thompson said: 'This is a wonderful achievement by the community of Sunart and I am delighted to have been asked to participate in this special day. It demonstrates what can be done when a community has the vision to harness local resources for the benefit of everyone.'



ENERGY BOOST: Sunart Community hydro scheme is switched on by Ishbel Macintyre and Mya Carmichael, under the watchful eye of Dave Thompson MSP, left, and Richard Laybourne, chairman of Sunart Community Renewables.

CHRISTMAS GREETINGS

Published on 10th December

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Budget blues deepen as council faces bigger than expected cuts

EMMA CRICHTON
ecrichton@obantimes.co.uk

'DEVASTATING' cuts to Highland Council's budget could leave the local authority struggling to save £41 million in the next year alone.

Council leader Margaret Davidson sent out a stark warning this week, saying she expects the budget to be cut by up to three times more than originally thought. This follows a meeting of the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA) which predicted a cash reduction

of between four and five per cent for 2016-17, but Highland Council's current assumptions for the budget were based on a cut of just 1.6 per cent. This means the council's funding gap has now stretched from around £20 million to £41 million, including the £5 million shortfall already anticipated for next year.

Highland Council and other local authorities will meet with COSLA to make representations to the Scottish Government about the reductions but will not know the final outcome until December 16

at the earliest. In June, every council department was told to make savings of six per cent, although this is expected to rise after the announcement, which stemmed from UK Chancellor George Osborne's Autumn Statement.

Councillor Davidson warned cuts to services and staff were possible: 'The local government settlement appears to be extremely bad. I would emphasise that this is not the final position that the Scottish Government is considering, but based on indications, the cut in our grants will be even

more severe than we anticipated. This would translate into a devastating cut to our budget with a corresponding impact on our services.'

A rise in council tax is one proposal suggested to protect services, although it is thought even a 10 per cent rise (around £10 per month for Band D) wouldn't come close to plugging the gap. And the council wasted no time in asking residents how they would feel about a tax rise, posting a poll on their Facebook page on Tuesday night. After just one



STARK WARNING: council leader Margaret Davidson.

hour of the poll being live, the vast majority of voters (113) said they don't want to pay more, compared to 35 who said they would accept a five per cent rise and 20 who said they would be happy with a 10 per cent rise. Just five people said they would be willing to pay more than 10 per cent.

Closing council buildings, including schools, at lunchtime on a Friday was suggested last week to save on costs, although this was not well received by parents, who raised concerns about childcare costs and the negative impact this could have on education.

TIMESLINE

Two Fort William mill shops closed

EDINBURGH Woollen Mill has announced profits of more than £91 million and plans to open 100 new stores, despite closing two shops in Fort William at the weekend.

The group cited Fort William and Oban as locations with high sales, despite closing three shops between the two towns in the same week as the figures were announced.

A spokesperson for Edinburgh Woollen Mill said: 'The leases on the two stores on High Street, Fort William, are due to expire and, unfortunately, we have been unable to agree commercial terms to renew. Wherever possible, staff will be redeployed to neighbouring stores.'

Winter warning to messy dog owners

DARK nights are no excuse for not picking up dog mess, says Highland Council.

The local authority has warned pet owners they must still clean up after their dogs and will still face a fine even if they claim not to see it.

Allan Henderson, chairman of community services, said: 'People who exercise their dogs in parks, playing fields and along pathways in scenic areas should be aware that they must always pick up after their dog.'

Vandals discharge fire extinguisher

A FIRE extinguisher was taken from a cabinet and discharged in the car park underneath Tweedale Buildings, Middle Street, Fort William.

Anyone with information about this is asked to contact police on 101 or Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800555111.

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Councillor finds it 'difficult' to justify claiming expenses

JUST days before councillor Davidson's chilling budget warning, Fort William and Ardnamurchan councillor Andrew Baxter called on his colleagues to put their hands in their own pockets to contribute to council savings.

The Highland Alliance member said it was 'difficult to justify' expenses such as paid-for meals and generous mileage repayment rates while Highland Council asked residents to accept cuts.

This comes after it was revealed just 17 out of 80 members took part in a voluntary scheme agreed last year to pay for lunches they receive at the Inverness headquarters, currently paid by the council.

Speaking at last week's resources committee meeting, councillor Baxter said: 'I find it very difficult to justify us criticising directors who are not meeting budget savings when we as members decided to make savings that were



CONTRIBUTION CALL: Andrew Baxter.

within our control [paying for lunches] and we are nowhere near meeting that. I realise it's a voluntary contribution and for individual members to decide if they make that contribution but they must do so being prepared

to justify that to electors.' Councillor Baxter also suggested cutting mileage payments from 45 pence per mile to 40 pence per mile, saying it could save £19,000 a year, and called on senior councillors to take a salary cut of six per cent, saving £8,000 per year.

But he added that the biggest saving of £47,000 could be made if councillors' allowances were capped, regardless of rises at a national level.

He went on: 'I can't see why, when we are making hard choices that affect our residents across the Highlands and our staff who work for us, we should not be taking a hard look at this area as well and lead by example.'

Bill Fernie, chairman of the resources committee, said the mileage was a price set by the Inland Revenue and council leader Margaret Davidson added she would look into practical suggestions to make savings.



DEDICATED: retired employees of Invernevis House were thanked for a combined 92 years of service.

Decades of dedicated care

FORMER staff of Fort William care home Invernevis House were brought together for a joint retirement celebration.

The employees, who have more than 92 years of service

between them, retired at different times over the last few months and enjoyed a party at Fort William Golf Club to celebrate at the weekend.

Cook Sandra Kaskonas was the longest serving employee

with 36 years' service, followed by carers Maggie O'Rourke with 18 and a half years, Yvonne Crichton who clocked up 14 years, Fiona Craik with 13 and Mary Campbell, who dedicated 11 years.

HOME NEAT HOME

for Christmas

It's easy to get caught up in the hustle and bustle of Christmas. We all want it to be perfect and that's a lot of pressure! A few simple tidy-up tips will help take the stress out of proceedings and help things run a little more smoothly.

There is no time of year when we love being at home more than Christmas. There is something magical about twinkling Christmas tree lights and sparkly festive décor. It's the perfect time for getting cosy on the couch with a mug of hot chocolate and watching a classic Christmas movie.

But you know yourself – the one thing that completely ruins the chillout feeling and Christmas spirit is a messy house. So, turn on your favourite festive tunes and get stuck in! Stuff the clothes away (but not in the turkey) Your tidy-up to-do list is probably endless. Finding time to clean and deciding what to prioritise is probably not as bad as you think. Begin with keeping things simple and remem-

ber that a tidy home looks cleaner than a cluttered home. Without so much as even looking for the rusting Mr Sheen can, you can make an immediate better impression by taking a few minutes to grab a laundry basket and pick up all that stuff that belongs elsewhere. Great tip...When tackling a room, move from left to right to help you remember everything behind you is now considered a clean, clutter-free zone and everything ahead of you requires attention. When you are ready to start cleaning, if you can, space it out over a few days and start in the most important, or difficult, room in your home. The kitchen is usually the hub of the home so start by cleaning the oven, then the refrigerator ready for the party foods. Create space in the kitchen for entertaining by filling a box with kitchen items you won't be using and moving it

elsewhere. Now you have room for the serving dishes, punch bowl and Granny's vintage cake stand you'll be using during the festive period

Preparing Guest Bathroom for Visitors

- Most importantly, make sure the entire bathroom is squeaky clean.
- Place a basket in the bathroom with little amenities your guests may have forgotten to pack, such as cotton buds, toothpaste, a toothbrush, hairspray, ibuprofen and more. Even the most organised travellers will forget something. Stock shower with shampoo, conditioner, soap and a razor.
- Brighten up the bath with fresh flowers, scented soaps and festive décor.
- If space allows, provide guests with a basket or bin for stashing used towels and linens.

Freshen Up Naturally

Use herbs like lavender and chamomile to

freshen your home. Fill a spray bottle with 20 drops of lavender essential oil, 1 teaspoon vodka and water to create a linen spray. Lavender is known to reduce stress, promote calm and aid in relaxation. Mist bed linens, lamp shades, shower curtains and drapes. Grind up lavender and chamomile with baking soda in a food processor to sprinkle on rugs and carpets to remove odour. Just leave overnight and vacuum the next day.

Cook in Advance

You don't have to get up at the crack of dawn to do all of the cooking and baking on the day of the event. Many vegetable side dishes, casseroles and desserts can be made in advance and kept in the refrigerator or freezer.

Enlist Help

In the run up to Christmas, there are a host of local specialists that you can get in touch with

to help take some of the hard work out of it. Local cleaning companies, carpet cleaners, window cleaners and chimney sweep specialists (yes, Santa needs your help too), are on hand to help. Remember, be flexible in your plans; life happens and unforeseen challenges may arise. With a little planning though, your guests will enjoy your company, your hospitality and your home. Keep the memories not the mess.



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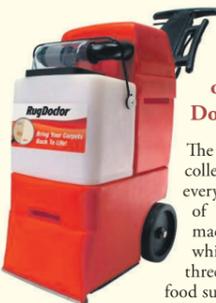
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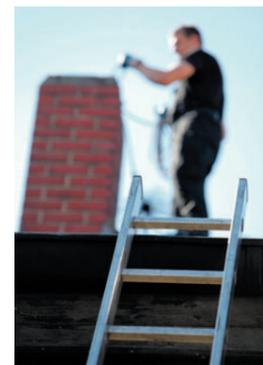
For an optimal clean, remove furniture and ventilate the room. Start cleaning from edge furthest away from door. If this is not possible, move furniture to the centre of the room.

Use a vacuum cleaner on the area you are about to clean. This removes any surface dirt and allows the Rug Doctor to most efficiently get at the really deep down dust and dirt trapped in your carpet. Talk to your local stockist about the best product for the job in hand to hire along with your machine.

Oban Chimney Sweep is owned and operated by local specialist Roddy MacEachen and has been established for 2 years. The company uses the latest power sweep systems to remove the build-up of soot and/or creosote, leaving a very clean, safe flue.

As a fully insured member of The Chimney Sweep Academy, anybody calling and seeking Oban Chimney Sweep's services can be assured that the company meets the high standards set by the Academy. All members are expected to offer advice on many issues concerning the safe operation of all solid fuel burners and Roddy will advise where needed on ventilation requirements, integrity of flue and any risks that he identifies. Roddy covers the Argyll area and customers, both domestic and commercial, can rest assured that they are using a reliable, trustworthy and

knowledgeable company for the cleaning and inspection of solid fuel burners, wood burning and multi fuel stoves. Give Roddy a call today – winter's setting in, the fire will be burning – and Santa certainly doesn't want to get caught short! Tel: 07786 963279 for a home or business visit.



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Arduaine

STAFF and volunteers at Arduaine Garden have been putting the final touches to a new grotto in preparation for Santa's return this Saturday and Sunday.

In between checking wish-lists and sorting presents, Santa is to make a return visit to Arduaine Garden ahead of the big day.

Maurice Wilkins, property manager and head gardener, said: 'Santa's visit to Arduaine is always a very popular event with children, their parents and grandparents.'

'This year we have been busy creating a new grotto in a special corner of the garden. It's a bit more sheltered than last year's location and we had a minor hiccup when the grotto blew away the day before Santa's visit.'

'As well as meeting Santa and receiving their gift, the children will also be able to enjoy a reindeer hunt in the garden. It's a great opportunity to let the little ones burn off some energy and excitement. Unfortunately no real reindeer will be available.'

There will also be mince pies and other snacks and drinks available, including non-alcoholic mulled wine for the grown-ups at the gardens, which are halfway between Oban and Lochgilphead on the A816.

Tickets are priced at £3 per child are available online at www.nts.org.uk/Events/Arduaine-Garden/Santaas-Grotto. For further information, telephone 01852 200 366.

Coll

COLL'S youngsters are being tasked with choosing a special Christmas film for a movie matinee next weekend. It is hoped the matinee, which will be held on Saturday December 12 at the An Cridhe community centre, will become an annual event on the island.

Children should contact Aidan MacKay, for more information and to give their film suggestion, on 01879 230 000. The evening of December 12, a winter warmer in double measure will be held with a whisky and comedy night. A night of classic comedy and marvellous malts is organised, with full details to be confirmed.

For more information about any of the events, telephone An Cridhe on 01879 230 000 or visit www.ancridhe.com

Morar

EIGHT members have been selected for the new Morar Community Council following an election.

Alistair MacKay, Mairead MacDonald, Stuart Griffin, Gerry MacDonald, Douglas MacKellaig, David Newman, William Cornelius and Tina Heinonen will form the new council, with a chairperson and other roles to be chosen at the next meeting. The result came from 142 returned postal votes, 56 per cent of the electorate.

Plockton

SALES of remembrance poppies in Plockton and the surrounding areas have raised a record amount for charity.

Collectors for the Earl Haig Fund raised £1,091.31 from this year's sales, the highest amount so far and up £83.77 on last year's total. Organiser Charlie MacRae thanked all collectors and donors.

Benderloch

PRIMARY seven pupils at Lochnell Primary School in Benderloch organised a toy sale for Children in Need.

It was a very busy morning with many bargains snapped up by all the nursery and primary school pupils and the magnificent sum of £165.56 was raised.



GREEN FINGERS: Tree planting volunteers in Kyle of Lochalsh take a well-earned break.

Volunteers dig deep with trees

GREEN-FINGERED volunteers braved the wintry weather to take part in a community tree planting day in Kyle of Lochalsh.

The hardy helpers, aged from five to 79, planted more than 400 trees at the Plock of Kyle on November

21 as part of a project of access and environmental improvements between the Kyle and Lochalsh Community Trust and Hamilton Park Trustees.

Stuart Taylor, the community trust's development officer, said: 'A

huge thank you goes to the group of volunteers who, despite the wintry weather, turned out to support the tree planting day with such energy and enthusiasm and to our ranger, Chris Marsh, for organising and guiding people on the day.'

St John's soup lunch and sale a success

A soup lunch and sale in St John's Cathedral Hall, Oban, on Saturday, helped raise cash for the cathedral and the town's branch of the Alzheimer Scotland.

Irene Main, Kathryn Spence, Margaret Syme and Sarah Campbell were amongst those helping run the event. 17_248a201



Appin

APPIN Scottish Women's Institute (SWI) welcomed Sandra Owens from the Multiple Sclerosis (MS) Therapy Centre in Oban for its recent meeting, held in Port Appin Hall.

Sandra gave an interesting insight into the types, causes and symptoms of MS during her talk, on November 19.

She also discussed how the Hyperbaric oxygen therapy chamber used at the centre can minimise the amount of damage caused by the disease and can relieve the symptoms in many cases.

Brenda Macleod, on behalf of the members, gave Sandra a hearty vote of thanks.

President Linda Macleod was also delighted to welcome visitors from Fort William as well as those from closer to home, who braved the wind and rain of storm Biggail to make it along to the institute's annual whist drive on November 13.

Members reported it was an enjoyable evening at the Appin Hall, presided over by card master Alan MacKenzie. The winners from the whist drive were: ladies, joint first, Carol Livingston, Ellen MacCorquodale and Moira Thomson; second, Christine Jackson. Men, first, Donald Stewart. Travelling prizes went to Sarah Campbell and Carol Livingston, and the consolation was won by Margaret Forbes and Ian Macleod.

Competition winners from the November 19 meeting were: peppermint creams; gold, Catriona MacKenzie; silver, Jessie MacKenzie; red, Myra MacDougall. Advent Calendar: gold, Myra MacDougall.

Luing

THE SCOTTISH Islands federation (SIF) will be holding its annual general meeting tomorrow (Friday), between 1pm and 4.30pm, in the Atlantic Islands Centre on Luing.

The meeting will include a report on the completion of the ambitious pan-European Island Sustainable Energy Planning project which the SIF has been involved in for the past three years.

Hosted in the Atlantic Islands Centre, there will also be a workshop on 'circular economy' and how it applies to island life.

A circular economy is different to a traditional, linear economy.

Rather than the 'make, use, dispose' way of using resources, items are kept in use for as long as possible to extract the maximum value from them whilst in use, with material and products recovered and regenerated and materials recycled at the end of each service life.

The federation has invited MSP for the Highlands and Islands, Mike Mackenzie, as a special guest for the event.

Arisaig

MEMBERS of the Arisaig Women's Institute enjoyed an interesting presentation about microbiology at their November meeting.

Henrik Chart from Public Health England spoke about infections, diseases and food poisoning along with a slide show which was described as 'eye opening' by members.

Vera MacDonald was winner of the competition for decorated biscuit, followed by Margaret MacEachan in second and Anne Cameron in third. The second competition for household tips was won by Anne Lamont, with Anne Cameron coming second and Yvonne MacDonald in third.

This month's raffle winner was Anne Cameron.

The next meeting will be held in Astley Hall on December 17. Everyone is welcome.

Nominate your Angel OF THE YEAR

If you know someone who really makes a difference in their community or to someone's life then let us know. You can nominate by post using the form below or online at www.obantimes.co.uk/angel

All nominations will be assessed by a panel of judges including a Wyvex Media director

As well as winning a trophy and the title of ANGEL OF THE YEAR, the winner will also receive £500. Two runners up will each win £100.

The search is on for the The Oban Times Angel of the Year 2015, and we want you to nominate those deserving of the accolade.

The award recognises those who have made a real difference to their community, often with no thanks or reward. The winners receive a special trophy and cash prize of £500, while two runners-up will each receive £100.

Oban's Andy MacDowall was named the 2013 Angel of the Year after being nominated by Senga Cakebread of Argyll Voluntary Action, an award that he dedicated to his late wife, Rena. Andy is well known as one of Oban's favourite volunteers. From helping with the 'Soup Group', to tending flowerbeds at Station Square, to raising money for worthy causes, Andy gives tirelessly of his time and talent.

On receiving the award, Andy said: 'I do enjoy meeting people and it is nice to do something for others. I always say it's for the older people - in fact I'm often older than some of the people I'm helping.'

The 2013 runners up were Roanna Black, a Benderloch teen who is a dedicated fundraiser and volunteer, and Moira Haywood of Barcaldine, a volunteer with Home-Start Lorn.

The deadline to receive nominations will be announced in a future issue.

The deadline to receive nominations by will be announced in a future issue.

Scottish Sea Farms first to gold award

ARGYLL firm Scottish Sea Farms has been awarded the first gold standard within the aquaculture sector in Scotland.

Awarded by Investors in Young People (IYYP), the nationally-recognised award only introduced the gold and silver categories in July 2015.

Scottish Sea Farms, whose headquarters are in South Shian, near Benderloch, on the banks of Loch Creran, is one of only 12 recipients of the gold award in Scotland.

Tracy Bryant-Shaw, head of HR for Scottish Sea Farms, said: 'This is great news for our business as it recognises we are creating real careers within remote areas. Young people in certain parts of Scotland often feel they have to leave home to seek work and we are playing a part in letting them return to their communities.'

'We are proud of developing our young people and excited about what they will contribute to the future of this relatively young industry.'

Peter Russian, chief executive of IYYP said: 'This is a fantastic achievement for Scottish Sea Farms. The benefits of recruiting and developing young people are countless. These include the creation of a talent pool for the future, increased skills in areas such as IT and social media, fresh eyes and mind-sets into business operations, along with enthusiasm and unique talents.'

BRIGHT FUTURE: Scottish Sea Farms staff, from left: Matthew Jackson, Liam Tulloch, Hayley Eccles and Keira Hughson.

Salen

THE SALEN ladies who organise events for Macmillan Cancer Support would like to say some big 'thank-yous'.

The first thanks go to all who supported, donated or came to their three events held in aid of the Macmillan.

The first of two events was a coffee morning with a bingo session in the evening at the Salen Hotel, Isle of Mull. The second 'thank-you' goes to Cameron Whyte, Claire and Gerry Ralston for the use of the hotel.

Then a soup and sandwich day was held in the church, with thanks to Maggie, Marie and Jude for all their hard work.

Finally there are thanks to Sarah Campbell and her friends in Fort William who donate so many of prizes.

All told, the Salen ladies made a grand total of £2,700.

Glencruitten

RESULTS of the Glencruitten Golf Club Whist Drive held on November 10:

Ladies: 1 Marina MacInnes, 2 Isobel Grout. Consolation: Christine Cameron. Travelling Prize: Rebecca Ann McPhee. Gents: 1 Eric Deverill, 2 Jim Grout. Consolation: John Duncan. Travelling Prize: Lorraine Campbell.

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NOMINATION FORM

Nominee's name Nominee's address

My nominee should win because..... (please submit up to 200 words on a separate sheet and attach to this form).

Your name Your address

Daytime telephone number..... Email address

Send to: The Oban Times, Angel of the Year, PO Box 1, Oban, PA34 4HB.

Full terms and conditions at www.obantimes.co.uk/angel

MORVERN lines

Accidents almost a daily occurrence centuries ago

THERE is a gravestone in Kiel cemetery above Lochaline to an Angus Morrison who, according to the inscription, was 'taken suddenly, from time to eternity' on 25 July 1852, aged 30 years.

The cause of death was not recorded but it must surely have been through an accident. Long ago accidents were almost a daily occurrence, especially at work. Systems of prevention and risk assessments were unknown and there was little in the way of training or safety equipment on hand. Self-preservation and common sense prevailed. If a fatality occurred or some form of nursing or medical assistance was required, there was no obligation on the part of the employers to provide it. There was certainly no 'counselling' in these days and what the task-master could not provide, the church, family and friends often did.

By far the most common accidents were marine related, largely because people moved around in boats more than they do today.

Often these craft were small, overloaded, in poor order or under sail and subject to changing weather and extreme tides.

Literally dozens of drownings and mishaps, some involving alcohol, were recorded in the Ardgour Narrows, the Sound of Mull, Loch Sunart and elsewhere around the coasts and inland lochs.

The list is endless but here are a few examples: George, building contractor, aged 33, son of John MacDougall, Dunfraoch, Oban, accidentally drowned in Loch Shiel between Scammadale and Polloch on January 20 1925; Angus McDonald, postman, 45, John Cameron and Colin Connel, off Kilchoan (the seventh drowning there in three years) who were setting out to Tobermory to collect merchandise left there by a steamer in March, 1912; William Yeoman, slater, single, drowned on August 13 1899 at South Lochan, High Blain, Moidart, while bathing, aged 27. William was evidently one of a large party of Oban contractors working on Charles Rudd's new Shielbridge House near Acharacle.

On March 18 1894 Duncan MacPherson, crofter, single, 85, was burnt to death in Salen when the house he was living in caught fire.



MINGARRY PIER: the scene of seven drownings in three years.

In June 1810 the Scotsman recorded the melancholy death of John Joppling, a native of Strontian, on the farm of Mingarry, Ardnamurchan, in circumstances so sudden it created a great sensation throughout the whole peninsula.

It seems Joppling and three other stonemasons, who were working near an old stone dyke which had a lot of hemlock growing in it, mistook the roots of this poisonous herb for that of another and ate a quantity of them at lunchtime.

The effects at first were described as 'exhilarating' but as soon as food was taken Mr Joppling contracted violent pains in his head and stomach and died half an hour later. His two companions who had eaten some of the same plant, but in less quantities, only survived because they took a large dose of oil.

One of the most horrendous accidents I have come across happened at a lime kiln on the shores of Lochaline on May 24 1816. An eye witness account has survived and is worth quoting in full:

"As some of the workmen were employed in the interior of the kiln, the footing of one of them gave way, when he fell perpendicularly into a cavity formed beneath him and was instantly enclosed up to the shoulders with the burning shells. The overseer and his fellow workmen made every exertion to extricate him from his shocking situation, but without effect.

"With much personal risk, they got a cord passed below his arms, which in pulling, broke twice. They, to prevent the body from being consumed, kept continually pouring water on him till life was extinct. He endured, with heroic firmness for upwards of half an hour, the most excruciating pain, arising from the united tortures of the weight and insupportable heat of a vast quantity of the half burnt stones.

"He remained, during the period of his suffering, quite collected and viewed his inevitable fate with the fortitude and calm resignation of a Christian. With wonderful composure he bade the people around him an affecting adieu.

"He continued, while he had life, to pray in the most pious and fervent ejaculations to the Almighty for himself and his afflicted friends, and breathed his last recommending his soul to his Creator, and blessing his wife and child.

"When death had relieved the ill-fated man, the body was soon drawn out, and found to have suffered less external injury than could be expected.

"The heart-rending scene which followed, when his wife, mother, sisters and brothers, were made acquainted with his fate and came to view the lifeless corpse of a person so dear to them all, and who parted with them an hour before in good health and spirits, may be conceived, but cannot be described.

"The name of the unfortunate sufferer was Duncan McMaster, a young man of sober industrious habits, and of good moral character. He has left an old widowed mother, a wife and an infant son, not a month old, to deplore his irreparable loss."

We often complain about the plurality of health and safety rules nowadays but without them accidents would be a great deal more numerous.

Iain Thornber
iain.thornber@btinternet.com



The Fiddler's Group at Oban's Grass Roots Cafe.

Fiddlers celebrate first birthday

A FIDDLERS group run by Oban musician Kathryn Wilkie celebrated its first birthday at the Grass Roots Cafe in Oban last week.

It was set up after the Referendum campaign to channel the energy of many who had taken part and Kathryn teaches two groups of different abilities from all over Argyll

on Monday nights. As part of its first year celebrations, the group gave a special birthday concert to invited guests.

Kathryn said it was great to have a small concert to work towards and everyone had been busy rehearsing.

Guest artist was Marit Falt, who played the Mandola along with the

fiddlers as well as giving a solo recital. Marit plays alongside Kathryn Wilkie's daughter Rona in Turus, which mixes both Highland and Scandinavian music in a fascinating dimension.

The evening finished with coffee and a special anniversary cake baked by one of the fiddlers, Janice Kincaid.



One of the activities for children was going back to school, writing on slate.

Oban memories shared at exhibition

THE ROCKFIELD Centre hosted an exhibition showcasing local history last weekend as part of Oban's Winter Festival.

The exhibition, entitled A Postwar Childhood, was the culmination of the oral history project Memories Matter: A Time to Share Our Stories, which has been coordinated by Oban Communities Trust, with

support from Heritage Lottery Fund.

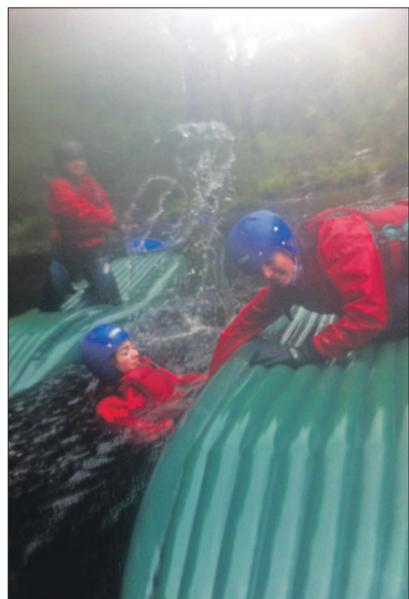
Focusing on children's experiences of growing up in the post-war period, 1945-55, the exhibition featured interviews with local people and further afield.

Objects from the era were also on display, including a collection of shoes courtesy of a volunteer from Dunollie. Old photographs and

film footage were also well received and there were

interactive activities for children, including skipping and marbles and going back to school writing on slates.

Rhona Dougall, who is part of the team working on the exhibition, said: 'We are very grateful to everyone who has contributed and given their time so generously.'



MAKING A SPLASH: Kinlochleven High School pupils enjoy 'funyacking'.

Kinlochleven

KINLOCHLEVEN High School pupils had the chance to enjoy outdoor activities right on their doorstep as part of a project by Active Kids and High Life Highland.

The students kicked off the taster sessions with 'funyacking', navigating their way down a river in two-person inflatable canoes.



TUNED IN: David Vernon, who entertained the crowd in Inveraray with his accordion skills.

Inveraray

CHAIRMAN Niall Iain MacLean welcomed an almost full house at the Inveraray Inn last Wednesday, for the Inveraray Accordion and Fiddle Club's November night.

Supporting players were Fyne Folk, with Nick MacFarlane on accordion, Sally Hall, Jake MacKay and Alex John MacLeod on fiddles and Agnes Liddell on keyboard. Also playing was Charlie Soane on fiddle; Margaret Kemp on accordion; Jake MacKay and Agnes Liddell on 'moothie' and keyboard; Ian Burns and Alex John MacLeod on keyboard and fiddle - and their varied selections were much enjoyed.

The guest artiste was

virtuoso accordionist from Edinburgh, David Vernon, who took the audience on a tour of the world.

Margaret Mather, secretary, said: 'It is hard to describe the talents of this player and he has to be seen and heard to appreciate the incredible dexterity involved with playing tunes on the bass and keyboard alternately.'

This was interspersed with very humorous stories and jokes, which left the everyone in awe of his talent.'

Next week the club welcomes the Ewan Galloway Trio from Musselburgh - winners of the trio/band competition at this year's Newtongrange Accordion and Fiddle Festival.

Glencoe and Duror

ENTERPRISING youngsters at Glencoe and Duror primary schools thought up a novel way to raise money this year.

The children made games out of recycled materials and charged 10 pence a go, a follow up from a class topic on entrepreneurial skills.

Duror primary raised £90 for Children in Need and Glencoe raised £80. Both schools donated £20 each towards bird food to encourage birds to visit the school playgrounds.

Marilyn MacDonald, associate head teacher for both schools, said: 'It was a fun day for all and staff were amazed at the imaginative creations and the confident explanation of instructions by each inventor.'

'The children also organised an alternative tuck shop and a book and toy bric-a-brac.'

'This was a great effort from two small schools and I thank the parents who donated baking and supported this worthwhile event.'

Inveraray

INVERARAY Burns Club hosted its annual St Andrews Dinner in the Inveraray Inn on Saturday evening.

The audience was captivated by the talents of Dunoon Grammar School Pipe Band, Pipe Major Craig Wilson and Alastair McDonald and Len Murray, who presented the history of the Jacobites in the White Cockade.

Events covered included the battle of Killiecrankie in 1689, the slaughter of Culloden in 1746, the escape of Bonnie Prince Charlie to the Western Isles and the Massacre of Glencoe.



Taynuilt

TEA TIME: Above: Muckairn Church held its Christmas fayre and tea in Taynuilt Village Hall on Saturday November 28. The Rev Robert Brookes, right, is seen with some of the people enjoying tea.

The church has a tea club which meets on the last Friday of the month and there is a warm invitation to everyone to attend the next meeting in January. 'We'd especially like to see more young families come along,' said Rev Brookes. 'It's good to get all the generations meeting together.'

15_149tay02



FESTIVE FUN: Katherine Blyth, left, was selling Taynuilt snowballs, knitted by Ann Millar, to raise funds for Muckairn Church at its Christmas fayre and tea. 15_149tay01



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Viewpoint

The Oban Times
& WEST HIGHLAND TIMES

Established 1861 No 8216

While it may have rained on their parade, Friends of Oban Community Playpark had plenty to celebrate at the weekend. The organisation had hoped to officially open the park on Sunday, but as a result of heavy rain all week, workmen had been unable to lay the flooring on the boat play equipment. However, the group decided to go ahead with its

planned party, and guest of honour at the event was nine-year-old Sean Drummond. Sean had entered a competition to name the boat and his suggestion had been the winner following a public vote. The park is a real testament to the community spirit and generosity, not to mention the hard work by all the individuals involved behind the scenes, in getting the project this far.



Days gone by – council and submarine crew exchange plaques, July 1986

This week's flashback photograph comes from the files of *The Oban Times*. It features Willie Hunter, vice chairman of the then Argyll and Bute District Council, exchanging plaques with the crew of HMS Odin during a visit to Oban in July 1986. The submarine's commanding officer, Lieutenant Commander Avery, holds a figure of the god Odin, which once graced the top of the flagstaff on the HMS Odin that was sunk and gives rise to the crew motto 'Despite my blind eye, I see'. Digital versions of flashback photos for *The Oban Times* can be sent to 'editor@obantimes.co.uk' or prints sent to the editor, The Oban Times, PO Box 1, Oban PA34 4HB. Anyone who wishes a print returned should include a stamped-addressed envelope.

A national reputation for good governance

Sir, I seem to have touched a raw nerve in Alan Reid's sensitivities, *The Oban Times* letters, November 19.

Mr Reid is not specific in his criticisms of SNP expenditure.

Does he infer that the 'wrong' SNP spending includes free university tuition fees, free personal care for the elderly, free elderly travel, mitigation of the effect of the unfair 'bedroom tax', or the financing of protection of teacher numbers?

The failed former SNP councillors must answer for themselves, but the SNP itself goes from strength to strength because of a national reputation for good governance and sensible, socially-just policies.

Dorothy Macdonald, Oban.

Outstanding women of Scotland search

Sir, Nominations are open for the Saltire Society's 'Outstanding Women of Scotland' 2016 campaign.

A partnership between the Saltire Society and the Glasgow Women's Library, the awards celebrate everything Scotland's women have achieved and recognise their huge contribution to culture and society.

The campaign will be open for nominations for three months leading up to next year's International Women's day on March 8 2016, when a shortlist will be announced. From this list, 10 women will be chosen in July next year to be inducted into the 'Outstanding Women of Scotland'

community, joining last year's inductees, including Scotland's Makar Liz Lochhead, novelist Jackie Kay and First Minister Nicola Sturgeon.

Nominations can be made via Twitter using the hashtag #saltirewomen or by completing an online form at the Saltire Society website.

Women from any background can be nominated, but they must be living and contemporary examples of Scottish women who have made an exceptional contribution to culture and society.

Sarah Mason, The Saltire Society.

Concise and thorough wind farm answers

Sir, Christine Metcalfe, *The Oban Times*, November 26, answered, concisely and thoroughly, the previous piece by Mike Mackenzie.

Mr Mackenzie, in his eagerness to cut his jigsaw to fit his wind rhetoric, created a piece which was dismissive, condescending and misleading.

'I can find little evidence to support these arguments other than the pseudo-science they routinely present as gospel'. Mr Mackenzie clearly hasn't been looking hard enough. Mrs Metcalfe has provided links.

'Those who object to wind turbines don't think about climate change...' How condescending.

'The Scottish Government unfortunately has very little power over energy. We cannot incentivise what we do want'. Clearly you have had power and evidently your government has incentivised by allowing wind power to continue unabated, leading to a situation where Westminster has had to intervene in an attempt to preserve

the infrastructure and economy of the whole UK to prevent a 'lights out' situation. Mrs Metcalfe, in her conclusion, is spot on. We are entitled to believe our politicians have done due diligence, have conducted proper research, have complied with the law and have at heart the interests of the people they represent. If not, it is, indeed, wilful blindness.

Mary Young, Glasgow.

More needs to be done to help students

Sir, A range of respected organisations within the further and higher education sector have produced submissions which show it is getting more difficult for young people from deprived areas to complete a college or university course.

Colleges Scotland has told MSPs the average grant and bursary pay-out fell from £1,860 to £1,220 between 2013/14 and 2014/15.

The number of students receiving such support also fell by two per cent, despite Scottish Government pledges to get more disadvantaged students into college and university.

Other countries, including England, are making much better progress when it comes to funding grants and bursaries for poorer students. This adds to the problem we have in Scotland with our growing attainment gap between rich and poor children, with some of the worst figures coming from Argyll and Bute. The SNP is failing the poorest in our society and more should be done to help students seeking better education and more opportunities.

Alastair Redman, Islay.

Glasgow Letter

ROBERT ROBERTSON
robert.d.robertson@hotmail.co.uk

Glasgow Skye celebration time

THE MUCH-ANTICIPATED weekend of the Glasgow Skye's 150th annual gathering has arrived.

I can't imagine there has ever been a bigger gathering of Skye Gaelic singers than the one taking place on Friday night in Glasgow University Union.

The concert, which starts at 7.30pm, is unique and unmissable and will be followed, at about 10.30pm, by a dance featuring Trail West.

The line-up at the concert includes Mod Gold Medallists Kenna Campbell, Eilidh Cormack, Catriona Fair, Kirsteen Grant, Mary Ann Kennedy, Wilma Kennedy, Ishbel Lamont, Maggie Macdonald, Barbara Smith, Seumus Campbell, Arthur Cormack, Ruairidh Cormack, Alasdair Gillies, Darren MacLean, Iain G MacLean, Donald Murray and Calum Ross.

Also hitting the high notes will be instrumentalist Shona Masson on fiddle, Glasgow Skye Association Pipe Band and accompanist Alan Kitchen. Guest of honour at the event will be the Right Honourable Brian Wilson and all proceeds from the night will go to association funds.

Calum Ross releases CD at long last

I SEEM to remember a petition online a few years ago called something like 'make Calum Ross release an album before he's 80'.

Calum, one of a select group of people to have won the Novia Scotia Gold Medal, the Oban Times Gold

Medal, the An Comunn Gàidhealach Gold Medal and the Traditional Gold Medal, is now into his 80s, so it is maybe appropriate that his first album, released only a matter of weeks ago, is entitled 'Mu Dheireadh Thall (At Long Last)'. Released by Macmeanma and produced by Ross Wilson, the album has been absolutely worth the wait.

I received a copy last week and I have hardly stopped listening to it since.

It is a wonderful mix of old recordings – many taken from the BBC – and new recordings done in the studio especially for the album.

The incredible thing is that, such is the youthfulness in Calum's voice today, it is often difficult to tell which tracks were done recently and which are of yesteryear.

Indeed, my two favourite tracks were recorded decades apart. His voice really soars throughout an old recording of Tiugainn Leam Thar Saile, with Duncan Findlay's superb guitar backing.

Meanwhile, a powerful, new recording of Sine Chalum Bhàin features Ian Smith's amazingly rich and wholesome accordion chordal accompaniment joining to great effect with Calum's emotive voice.

Calum released a single after he won the Mod Gold Medal in 1968, but it has taken him until now to release an album.

Thank goodness he has released it at long last – the CD collections of Gaelic music enthusiasts the world over are all the richer for it.

Comunn-an-taobh-an-iar Cèilidh

COMUNN-AN-TAOBH-AN-IAR

put on a great Haggis Supper in the Ellangowan Social Club in Milngavie last Thursday November 26, with superb food and entertainment.

It was a pleasure to sing alongside Carissa Swan, a group from the Bearsden Fiddlers, and John Gillies on the pipes.

Peter MacDonald was the chairman for the evening.

What's on

Thursday December 3: The Glasgow Skye Association Annual Dinner, in the Glasgow University Union.

Friday December 4: The Glasgow Skye Association 150th Annual Gathering Concert (7.30pm) and Dance (10.30pm) in the Glasgow University Union.

Thursday December 10: The Glasgow Sutherland Association EGM at 7.30pm in Jordanhill Bowling Clubhouse.

Saturday December 12: The Glasgow Skye Association's Children's Party in the Renfield Centre (Blythswood Hall).

Tuesday December 15: Comann Gàidhlig Ghlaschu meeting in Sgoil Ghàidhlig Ghlaschu.

Thursday December 31: Park Bar Hogmanay Celebrations with Gunna Sound.

Pub scene

Park Bar: Thursday December 3: Session. Friday December 4: Gunna Sound Saturday December 5: Scott Harvey Sunday December 6: Robert Robertson.

Islay Inn: Friday December 4: Crooked Reel Saturday December 5: The Keelies Wednesday December 9: quiz night.

Beachd Ailein

ALLAN CAMPBELL
ailean@obantimes.co.uk

CHAN eil a theisteanas ag Seansalair sam bith ri shireadh oir cha robh duine riabh san dreuchd dam b' urrainn a bhith cho fialaidh 's a dh'iarraidh a' mhòr-shluagh.

Ach tha gnìomh mosach is gnìomh mosach ann, agus nuair a gheàrr riaghaltas Lunnainn iomlanach an taice ionmhais dha BBC Alba bha e ann an da-riabh 'a' cur cùl ri Gàidhlig agus ri pàirt chudromach de dhualchas nàiseanta agus dhùthchasach Bhreatainn.

Ged a tha millèan not air leth chudromach ann am maoin BBC Alba, chan eil ann ach speilgean gu math beag ann an sporan an riaghaltais!

'S dòcha gun do thachair seo gun fhios a' chuid san riaghaltas oir ged nach biodh cus aca mun chànan, thuigeadh mòran an cron poilitigeach a dhèanadh an gearradh suarach seo.

Mar a tha fios againn Tha Seòras Osborne air a bheò-ghlacadh leis an amas gus ionmhas na dùthcha a chothromachadh cho luath 's a ghabhas, agus ann am beachd chuid chan eil cus dragh aige cò dh'fhuilingeas ri linn ghearraidhean a nìhear air buidseatann poblach gus an ceann-uidhe seo a ruigheachd. Air toiseach air an aithris ràitheil a thug e dhan Pharlamaid dh'arr an Seansalair air gach Roinn den Riaghaltas caomhadh a lorg nan cuid bhuidseatann agus bidh e coltach gun do gheàrr an DCMS, Roinn a' Chultair, nam Meadhanan agus an Spòrs, taic dha craoladh sa Chumirris agus ann an Gàidhlig mar phàirt den ghluasad sin.

Ma tha sinn gu bhith coibhneil dha Rùnaire a' Chultair, Iain Whittingdale, faodaidh sinn co-dhùnadh nach tug e 'n aire gun robh DCMS a' cur cùl gu tur ris a' Ghàidhlig, agus ri linn sin gum bheil cothrom aige a-nise cùisean a chur ceart le bhith ag ùrachadh na taice dha BBC Alba gun dàil. Le cuid ag amharas gum bheil ceangal a' cho-dhùnadh seo ri deasbadan àm an reifreinn air neo-eisimeileachd tha cothrom cuideachd aig Whittingdale, is aig an riaghaltas, air a' chasaid sin a chur an dàrna taobh le bhith a' daingneachadh agus ag àrdachadh an cuid taic

dha craoladh Gàidhlig. Dà bhliadhna air ais bha an tè a bha an uairsin na Rùnaire Cultair a' moladh an Gàidhlig mar phàirt chudromach de lion chultarach mheasgaichte na dùthcha, agus cha b' iongnadh daoine a-nise bhith faighneachd dè th' air atharrachadh ann am beachd nan Tòraidhean.

Bheil caraid idir aig Gàidhlig am measg nan Tòraidhean? Tha cuid againn mothachail nach eil iomhaigh 'a' chànan idir cho follaiseach le gin de na pàrtaidhean poilitigeach is a bha beagan bhliadhnaichean air ais, agus tha sin draghail. Seo cothrom dhan Riaghaltas cùisean a dhearbhadh!

IF WE charitably assume abandonment of national Government support for Gaelic through the removal of all DCMS support for BBC Alba was accidental, then this can and should be corrected immediately.

At the same time the Tories could demonstrate their continuing recognition and support for this extremely important element of the UK's living national cultural heritage by increasing and extending DCMS support for Gaelic broadcasting.

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

Le taic bho

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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,

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Your letters

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

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

postal addresses must be supplied, including on emails, to indicate good faith. A daytime telephone number is also required for verification. Anonymous letters or those supplied without a

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

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- The Ferry Shop - Fionnphort, Mull
- The Green Welly Stop - Tyndrum
- Loch Fyne Galleries - Harbour Street, Tarbert

oban WINTER FESTIVAL



Santa leads the reindeer parade

It's a great start to the Winter Festival

WINTER WARMUP



OBAN musicians took to the stage in the Argyllshire Gathering Halls at the start of the winter festival to help raise money for the Scottish Refugee Council. The brainchild of Antics frontman Jack Macgregor and Citizen9 drummer Duncan Monteith-Hodge the Winter Warmup featured six local acts covering genres from rap to rock. Compered for the evening was Pat Steeman with Mike Hogg and Fergie McIver helping with stage and sound. The evening was a great success raising more than £1,000 for the charity.



The Antics
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Lush Puppies
Citizen 9
Signal Fires
Chunks
Compered by Pat Steeman



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The Corran Halls was packed on Saturday November 21 when Argyll Animal Aid held its annual craft fair. The charity had its own stalls and invited other charities and organisations in the town to have their own stalls, along with crafts people from around Argyll. Joan Sutherland, who chairs the charity, said how pleased everyone was with the huge turnout of people to support the event.

Twins Zara and Lucas McLeod from Connel were having fun deciding where to spend their pocket money. 17_T48ani05



Ballet West show war



Sue Smith, Jean Sutherland, Catherine Goodbrand and Lynn Amos were amongst the Argyll Animal Aid helpers who were running the refreshments. 17_T48ani01



Isabel Munro, who runs Fyne Crafts, came all the way from St Catherine's, Loch Fyne, to have a stall. 17_T48ani02



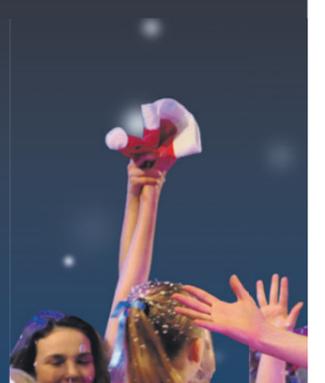
Ruth Ross was helped by her friend Irene Kennedy to run her stall selling painted rocks. Whole families of rocks were up for adoption. 17_T48ani04



Marie Grier and Elizabeth Carson of Home-Start Lorn. The charity is looking for more volunteers to help families with young children. 17_T48ani03



Stephanie Duffy, Kaireen Douglas, Lynn Evans and Jodi Anderson were hard at work helping to run the parents' group stall for Soroba Young Families Group. 17_T48ani06



Scottish Field

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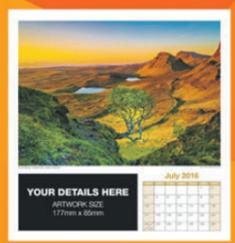
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OBAN Distillery opened the doors of its Cask Room on Saturday to host a Scottish food and craft market as part of the Oban Winter Festival celebrations.

Lauren Williams-Bale and Natalie King from Dolce Vita, Oban, were serving soup, drinks and home-baking.

ms up winter festival



Frances MacMillan from Oban Distillery.



Ghita Craig from Oban Chocolate company.



Some people will remember Huw Service for the geese he supplied from Corranmor Farm, Ardfern, but now he is running a business providing specialist French foods.



Shealagh Reade from Isle of Mull Cheese.



Sally Swinbanks of the Tobermory Fish Company.



Karen MacDonald of Alba Seafood, Kilmore.



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Ladies who lunch gather for charity event



Hair models Erin MacKinnon and Kiera Easton. 17_T48day01

THE LADIES who lunch gathered at the Great Western Hotel on Sunday for a Ladies Day organised by Elaine Smith of Spruce, John Street, Oban, in aid of LUPUS UK.

Elaine has been diagnosed with Lupus, a complex condition that can cause many different symptoms and so the cause is very dear to her heart and she put on a great day of activities for the guests.



The youngest lady who was lunching: baby Willow Felgate with Joan Felgate and Chrissie-Leigh Bell of Dunbeg. 17_T48day05



Madeline Rae and Elaine Smith with Lady Crystal, Argyll's very own drag artiste. 17_T48day03



David Smith with Paul Mitchell brand ambassadors Rhona Deigham and Rachel Todisco. 17_T48day06



Enjoying themselves: Christine Smith, Agnes MacLennan, Joyce Millar, Kathleen Black, Jeanette Morrison and Ann Rowan. 17_T48day04



Samuel Smith and Aiden McLaren were amongst the helpers who made the lunch such a great success. 17_T48day07



Oban cinema talk tells bigger picture

WHAT started as wee rhymes to entertain grandchildren has turned into a whole new career for one of Scotland's former top cops.

Sir Roy Cameron is better known in his previous role as HM Chief Inspector of Constabulary.

He has now joined forces with daughter-in-law, Jessica Stafford Cameron, who illustrates his work and has designed a set of greetings cards.

The pair gave a talk at Oban's Phoenix Cinema as part of the winter festival.

Jessica Stafford Cameron and Sir Roy Cameron. 17_T48pun01



Sweet living prizes on the menu

FOR THE winter festival, Oban restaurant Dolce Vita had a special night where local beautician Nikki Currie gave a demonstration on make-up techniques.

She will be providing a make-over as a raffle prize, along with a prize from Dolce Vita owner Morvern Summers, of a hamper, wine and free coffee for a month. The raffle is being held to raise money for Multiple Sclerosis.

Nikki gives a demonstration of make-up techniques. 7_149dolcevita01



Good clean fun at charity night

PURDIES of Oban held its annual charity night last Thursday in its George Street store, as part of the winter festival.

As well as free demonstrations and samples, bagpipers and food and drink, there was a special 10 per cent discount, and a lucky gift bag for the first 20 customers at the natural body care store. A silver collection went to Oban High School Pipe Band, which provided the pipers for the evening.

Crowds flocked to Purdies on Thursday for its annual charity night. 7_149purdies01

Winter cheer spreads safety message from police and fire

OBAN'S emergency services want everyone to be safe this winter and so they joined in the town's winter festival.

Police and fire and rescue services joined forces under a marquee on Stafford Street during the early evening on

Friday November 20.

For kids there were free flashing safety lights to attach to their clothing and plenty of safety-first colouring-in pictures to help them learn.

The grown-ups were

offered copies of fire-safety briefings, especially on the use of electrical chargers; there has been an increase in the number of fires started by these across the UK. Poorly made or counterfeit chargers have been to blame.



The fire service also used the event to present the prizes for its recent 'Be Bright at Night' poster competition for kids. Congratulations were given to the winners Alyss Macdonald, Alice Needham, right, and Calan McGuigan seen with firefighters Garry MacPherson, Gareth Strang, Matthew Haggerty and Mike Clifford. 17_T48fire 02



Lachie, Caley, Sorley and Ollie D'Arcy and Ollie McNeil with Constable Jade Sutherland and firefighter Gareth Strang. 17_T48fire 02



Alan Reid, former MP for Argyll and Bute and LibDem candidate for next year's Scottish parliamentary elections, was in Oban for the winter festival and met with members of the Oban LibDem branch. 17_T48lib01



FINAL DAY

A HAGGIS and whisky festival took place in Oban Distillery with butchers from across Scotland competing for the coveted Golden Haggis Award. Judges for the occasion were Oban chef and businessman Alex Needham and butcher Alasdair Jackson.

The event was supported by the Scottish Federation of Meat Traders and its chief executive Douglas Scott attended the event.

The judges made their decision at 12.30pm then at 1pm

doors opened to the public to sample the haggis and vote for their favourite in the People's Choice Award. Locals and visitors to town poured into the old cask room to taste the haggis and vote for their favourite.

Outside two young pipers braved the cold to play for the crowds as they flocked into the cask room. Running alongside the event for the first time was West Coast Whisky Festival hosted by Oban Distillery. Sampling was from four distilleries, Oban, Caol Ila, Lagavulin and

Talisker with a special whisky and chocolate sampling also on offer.

The atmosphere was electric as butchers waited for the announcement at 3.30pm by Douglas Scott.

The winner of both the Golden Haggis Award and the People's Choice Award was Mearns T McCaskie Butchers of Wemyss Bay.

Other events were a large food and craft market in the Corran Halls and Victorian Teas with local musicians playing.



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MONEY

Matters

ACCORDING to research by Money Advice Service, the average UK adult will spend over £500 on Christmas. Research also reveals that almost half of Brits will turn to credit cards, store cards and overdrafts to cover the cost of Christmas this year. In addition, the research highlights that 1.4 million UK adults will rely on payday loans. To avoid using credit or loans for Christmas spending, The Oban Times offers these tips for a savvy holiday.

Fix a budget:
List what you expect to spend on Christmas – from presents and decorations to food, clothes, socialising and transport. Be mindful to keep some cash to pay the mid-January bills, plus self-assessment tax returns are due at the end of January, so keep a detailed list of your expenses so you don't blow your budget.

Online or offline?
Shopping online can be cheaper than the high street, but not always. Watch for special offers, and check for discount vouchers online and in newspapers. When comparing costs, always check if delivery charges are included in the total - if not, buying locally is often less expensive.

Tempting treats:
A mouth-watering range of festive food appears in the supermarkets running up to Christmas. Keep an eye out for special offers, such as two-for-one deals, but these only offer true value if the family will actually eat the items on offer. Eat food from the back of the freezer to make room for new purchases.

Get crafty:
Great news for the wallet - home-made items are well and truly in vogue. Making gifts, decorations, and cakes is definitely more fun than battling through crowds, and cheaper than bought items.

New Year's Resolution:
Come January, next Christmas will seem far away, but it's never too early to start a savings plan to fund the festivities in 2016.

Money Matters

with Iain Cairns



Successful long-term investment is not about buying low and selling high
(although that is always a good principle to bear in mind).

Share prices can be susceptible to unpredictable external factors ranging from political news flow to the weather, which can lead to the idea of investing – particularly during times of high uncertainty or volatility – feeling a bit like negotiating a minefield. One way to make sense of a potentially confusing world is to go back to basics. Markets may rise and fall but the principles of sensible investment remain constant.

DIVERSIFY - Spread your risk by diversifying your portfolio across a mixture of asset classes, industry sectors and areas of the world. If you put all your money into a single asset class, sector or company, your portfolio becomes vulnerable and performance is likely to be volatile. However, mixing it up means that, when the value of one asset is falling, another might be rising and so could help to compensate.

INVEST FOR THE LONG TERM It is hard work – and almost certainly pointless – trying to 'time' your investment so you buy right at the bottom and sell right at the top. Similarly, trying to make short-term profits by constantly buying and selling investments is an expensive, high-risk strategy. Instead, look to target your portfolio at quality companies or funds and then allow them the time and space they need to grow.

NEVER BUY WHAT YOU DO NOT UNDERSTAND History is littered with investments that promised a great deal but, when faced with pressure from the market, collapsed with all those promises broken. Some shares or funds might sound very exciting – and perhaps straightforward – but if you do not really understand exactly what the company does or how the fund works, steer clear.

KNOW WHEN TO SAY GOODBYE If a holding has performed particularly badly compared with its peers, you should consider cutting your losses and selling it altogether. It may well be better to sell out and reinvest the proceeds into a better-quality alternative than to sit around hoping to recoup your loss.

REVIEW YOUR PORTFOLIO REGULARLY Your portfolio should have been constructed to meet objectives based on your existing needs and your goals for the future. However, over time, your needs and circumstances can change – as indeed can the markets – and your portfolio may require the odd tweak to make sure it keeps up. Review it regularly – perhaps every one to three years – and make sure it stays on track.

DO NOT BELIEVE EVERYTHING YOU READ OR HEAR Headlines on television, in the newspapers and on the internet and social media can initially be just as misleading with regard to finance and investment as they are in relation to, for example, sport or celebrity gossip. Try not to be distracted by day-to-day 'noise'. Instead, make sure you keep a clear head, remain focused on your objectives and take advice from a qualified professional to ensure you are making the most of your investment portfolio.

Argyll Financial Services Limited help many individuals manage their investment portfolios. Contact us on 01369706198 or info@argyllfinancial.co.uk to help secure your financial future. The purpose of this article is to provide technical and generic guidance and should not be interpreted as a personal recommendation. You are not certain to make a profit - you may lose money. Argyll Financial Services Limited is authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority



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Online heritage information boosts ancestral tourism

THE AVAILABILITY of online genealogical and historical information about the Outer Hebrides is contributing to ancestral tourism, say those involved in the Hebridean Connections digital archiving project.



Mary Fricke and Judy Vander Hook on their recent visit to Lewis; in the background is the sea loch where their ancestors would have fished.

Several recent visitors to the islands have emphasised the role of information found on the Hebridean Connections website in stimulating them to visit in person, it is claimed. This information is derived from the archives of the local historical societies who participate in the project.

'Ancestral tourism has been identified as a huge growth area for Scotland,' said Donnie Morrison, chairman of Hebridean Connections.

'Our recent experience suggests that ancestral tourists are indeed growing in numbers, and for some of them, the discovery of information about their family history on our website is an important contributory factor when planning a visit.'

Mary Fricke and Judy Vander Hook are cousins, both descended from a woman who emigrated from the Isle of Lewis to the

Eastern Townships of Quebec with her parents and siblings in the 1860s. In summer 2015 they came to see for themselves the area where their ancestors lived.

Mary said: 'I was fortunate to discover the Hebridean Connections website. With the information available on this site and the help of some local historians, I identified another generation of my family, as well as the exact locations of their residences on Lewis prior to emigration. This knowledge inspired me to plan a visit.'

Another visitor was Dan Buchanan of Vancouver, the descendant of a family who crossed the Atlantic from the Ujg area of Lewis nearly two centuries ago. Dan contacted the Hebridean Connections team for help in organising a visit after discovering much information about his ancestors on the

website. In discussing the background to his visit, he emphasised the breadth of historical material provided on the Hebridean Connections website, which includes not only genealogical information but also a variety of other records relating to places, historical events, stories and traditions, and many other topics.

'Names and dates don't mean much: I want to know where [my ancestors] lived and how they lived,' he commented. 'There's just a wealth of material [...] I've not found another site like this.'

Like Dan, Bob and Jacqui Munro are residents of Vancouver. Bob is descended from a family who originated on the Isle of Berneray, and a record of a known relative on the Hebridean Connections website was the key to discovering this Berneray connection. During

their recent visit to the island, Bob and Jacqui found out more about the poverty that existed on the island following the collapse of the kelp industry and the subsequent potato famine in the mid-19th century, prompting many people to leave. In turn, members of the historical society learned about the family's later history in Lewis and then Canada.

'We are glad to welcome and support all these visitors, knowing that they will not only contribute to the local economy but also, with their knowledge of family history, enrich our website and the archives of the historical societies that participate in our project,' said Donnie.

Benderloch concert marks new beginning for Hollow Mountain String Band

BENDERLOCH will bounce to the sounds of Americana tomorrow night (Friday) as The Hollow Mountain String Band plays the final of a series of concerts held in the Victory Hall for 2015.

Since its last Victory Hall gig two years ago, the band has gone through a number of changes, but the upbeat set has the same irresistible feel. Nigel Frydman on bass joins John McMahon on vocals, guitar and harmonica, and Rab Woods on vocals, guitar, mandolin, harmonica and dobro.

The band gets its name from Ben Cruachan. Rab said: 'String band implies that only old time hillbilly songs and tunes will be played over the course of an evening, but Hollow Mountain plays a broad range of American music, with elements of old time and bluegrass, plus honkytonk, blues and country in the set. The numbers range from traditional tunes brought to America by Scottish, Irish and English immigrants, right up to recent releases from the Ameri-

cana scene, plus some of our own compositions. Dobro has also been added to the instrumentation, adding a very distinctive sound.'

Rab plays a 1936 National dobro; its sound having matured over nearly 80 years, adding a mellow tone to the band's signature driving, toe-tapping songs.

According to Rab, Friday's gig marks the start of a new chapter in the band's history. 'We will add to our line up soon, and are booked to appear at area festivals in 2016. We are also looking to expand into the wedding dance market, offering set dances instead of the traditional ceilidh.'

The concert will be in the small hall, which is quite an intimate venue. Tickets are already going fast and it looks to be a sell-out. Tickets can be bought at the door for £12, or in advance for £10 by calling 01631 720247.

Visit the Hollow Mountain String Band on its Facebook page, or its web page on argyllacoustic.com.

Book week writers delight



Bookweek Scotland joined in the Oban Winter Festival when crime novelists Eva Dolan, Arne Dahl and Stuart Neville met an audience at the Corran Halls Studio Theatre on Monday November 23. Kevin Baker, standing, library and cultural development officer, chaired the discussion as the three writers discussed their work and answered questions. 17_148book01

Taynuilt ceilidh shows off talent from whole region

TAYNUILT Village Hall on Saturday was the venue for yet another cracking

good ceilidh, organised by An Comunn Gaidhealachd Meur Chruachain.

Ishbel Banks was bean-an-taighe for the evening of talented artists.



Calum Ross, Fiona Ross, Ann Barlow, Morag MacNeil, Aaron Hossain, Ishbel Banks and Hector McFadyen. 17_148tay01

CalMac promises a dram good time with new West Coast Whisky Pass

FERRY operator CalMac has joined with partners across the west coast to offer whisky lovers a chance to make more of their distillery visits.

The company sails to many islands and Highland areas with distilleries and this can now be combined with the new West Coast Whisky Pass, which offers a range of exclusive promotions and discounts.

Maggie Maguire, CalMac's UK tourism development manager, outlined the success of the new initiative at the recent 'Taste for Tourism' summit in Oban.

'Whisky tourism is of growing importance and with our ferry routes covering three of the five main producing areas - Campbeltown, Islay and Highlands - we are ideally placed to help make visits as memorable as possible. 'Our Whisky Hopscotch

Trail opens up some of our best known but remotest distilleries to whisky lovers through ferry travel and combining the whisky pass adds a new dimension to visitors' experience.'

The West Coast Whisky Pass was singled out by judges for its innovative approach recently when CalMac was crowned Best Ferry Operator at The Independent Travel Awards.

According to VisitScotland, 20 per cent of foreign visitors to the country visited a distillery during their trip.

For visitors from Germany, this rises to 43 per cent and overall 1.1 million visits were recorded to distilleries in Scotland during 2013, an increase of more than 10 per cent on the previous year.

'We look forward to getting more partners on board to develop the whisky pass further next year,' said Maggie.

Argyll's folk gene!

SAINTS, sorcerers, haunted caves and bloody battles, fairy mounds and forsaken harpers - Argyll is teeming with folk tales.

The region has played a key part in the history of Scotland since prehistoric times, from the Irish settlers, who established the kingdom of Dál Riata, bringing with them the Gaelic language and the stories of Finn MacCool, to the Lords of the Isles and the warring clans.

Before the invention of radio and television, these tales were at the heart of Argyll's popular entertainment, in evening ceilidhs around the peat fire, as well as in meeting places like the corn-drying kiln and the blacksmith's shop.

Author Bob Pegg uses fresh, contemporary language in his new book Argyll Folk Tales - a collection that roots stories firmly in what he calls, 'one of the most spectacular regions in the whole of Scotland'.

'I wanted to set the stories

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at the Inveraray Inn Wednesday 9th December at 8.00pm
Guest Artists From Musselburgh Ewan Galloway Trio Supporting players most welcome

ROTARY CLUB OF OBAN Charity Carol Concert
Corran Halls Sunday, December 13 @ 3pm
Admission by Donation

OBAN AND LORN LIONS CLUB SANTA
The Royal Hotel Saturday December 5, Saturday December 12 11.00 - 3.00
Entry by Donation
Sale of Festive Goods: Raffle: Games
Event Supported by Oban Express

Oban Art Society
Talk/Demonstration with Val Hamilton on "Her life in Art"
in Friday 4th December 2015 in The Lorn Resource Centre Soroba Road, Oban 7.30pm to 9.30pm
Visitors very welcome

Oban & Lorn District Seniors Club Christmas Lunch
funded by Crerar Hotel Trust & Rotary Club of Oban Monday 14th Decm, 12noon for 1pm
Oban Bay Hotel
Entertainment courtesy of Neil MacKay, Tom Adams & Michael Garvin.
To Book your place, please call Oban 564848 (Office Hours)
Transport HOME will be provided by Rotary Club members

Christmas Tree Festival
St Conan's Kirk Lochawe
Friday 4th & Sunday 6th Dec 1.30-6pm
Saturday 5th Dec 10am-6pm
Over 35 decorated trees!
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- Across**
- Small whirlpool (4)
 - Usually (8)
 - One who has lost a body part (7)
 - Categorize (5)
 - Between (12)
 - Type of tree seed (3)
 - Alpine call (5)
 - Bathroom item (3)
 - Inflammatory condition needing an operation (12)
 - Baking ingredient (5)
 - Make lifeless (7)
 - Do better than (8)
 - Fastener (4)
- Down**
- Avoidances (8)
 - Cache (5)
 - Be in debt (3)
 - Great variety (12)
 - Generous behaviour (7)
 - Canine sound (4)
 - Bringer of trouble (6,6)
 - Broke off (5)
 - Unfortunate squint (4-4)
 - Upper (7)
 - Spiral (5)
 - Curled hairdo (4)
 - de deux (3)

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION

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4	C	L	E	A	V	A
5	K	V	R	R	L	
6	L	A	N	Y	A	R
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11	N	A	E	N	I	E
12	S	C	A	N	D	A
13	E	D	T	E	G	D



Gallery showcases crafts for Christmas exhibition

A FESTIVE favourite with art lovers, the West Coast open exhibition launched last weekend at An Talla Solais in Ullapool with a focus on showcasing crafts from across the Highlands and beyond.

Beautiful works of jewellery, printmaking, ceramics, textiles, woodwork and weaving can be seen alongside painting, drawing and sculpture during this diverse and contemporary show which runs for a month.

Rachel Grant, exhibitions coordinator, said: 'The West Coast Open is always an exciting exhibition with something for everyone.'

'It provides a great opportunity for both local artists and those further afield. Given that we especially asked for craft, I'm delighted at the variety of work submitted. It demonstrates many different skills, techniques and materials to great effect.'

The wealth of craft work includes a huge sycamore turned bowl and a sweater knitted by hand with wool spun by hand from the maker's own sheep.

In addition, three of the featured artists - jewellers Rachel Blair and Merlin Planterose and printmaker Euphrosyne Andrews - will be at the gallery on Saturday (December 5) giving people a chance to drop by, see them at work and try their hand at everything from paper-dyeing and printing to working

with silver. The working demonstrations are funded by Craft Scotland as part of its Meet Your Maker programme.

Rachel added: 'We're hoping people will enjoy the chance to roll up their sleeves and make a pair of earrings or try screenprinting.'

'It's also an opportunity to buy unique gifts for Christmas. We've got a great line-up of festive events from carol singing to workshops for making special presents for loved ones like ceramic spoons.'

'We're really looking forward to celebrating Christmas with the community.'



'Encircled' Round Ripple Brooch, White Metal and Ink Stained Papers, Rachel Blair.

Dalmally show will headline top trad band Skerryvore



CELTIC rock group Skerryvore, who played to sell-out crowds this year at Mossfield Stadium in Oban and the Tiree Music Festival, are playing a gig in Dalmally at the end of the month.

The band, which first formed in 2005, celebrated 10 years together in 2015 with their acclaimed concert, Decade, at Mossfield.

Natives of Tiree, accordionist Daniel Gillespie and his brother, Martin Gillespie, who plays the bagpipes, whistles and accordion, were joined by drummer Fraser West and guitarist and vocalist Alec Dalglish, bringing a mix of musical styles and sounds together for the band's 2005 debut album, West Coast Life.

The band experimented with fusing together their

mix of musical styles evolving their signature sound, and added Craig Espie on fiddle, Alan Scobie on keyboard and Jodie Breaman on the bass to create the seven-piece band it is today.

It was with the release of the self-titled third album, Skerryvore, that the band found itself catapulted into the musical limelight winning a string of prestigious awards, including, in 2011, the Scottish New Music Awards record of the year and Scottish Trad Music Awards live act of the year.

The album also garnered much critical acclaim, with Mick MacNeil of Simple Minds saying: 'Skerryvore is the most promising young band in Scotland today.'

Two further studio albums followed, and the band's 2015

greatest hits, Decade, was released to coincide with the special Oban concert.

When touring the different corners of the globe, the band can still be found contributing to projects by Live Music Now (LMN), The Royal Blind School, Arlink Central and HMP Cornton Vale, as well as special needs and mainstream schools throughout the UK.

It also featured in a recent VisitScotland TV commercial aimed at international audiences.

Discussing the upcoming gig, a band spokesman said: 'For the last few years we've embarked on a winter tour called the Small Halls Tour, which saw us playing at several smaller venues throughout Scotland. The idea was to take the same show that

people might see us play at a larger festival-type gig and bring it to smaller and more remote areas. When we first started as a band we would play a lot of town halls on the West Coast and islands and it was great fun to go back and do a tour in the same way we did when we were younger.

'Dalmally was one of the dates on those tours and it was such good fun that we decided to go back even though we're no longer doing the full Small Halls Tour this year.'

The gig starts at 8pm on December 29 at the Dalmally Community Centre.

Tickets are £15, and can be purchased from shops in the village, the Dalmally Post Office, Oban Music, Loch Awe Stores, Londis (Inveraray) and Brodies in Tyndrum.

Ik tales retold for a ration of readers

in the landscape and the places where they were once so widely enjoyed,' said Bob, who was born in England but moved to Ross and Cromarty in the Highlands, in 1990.

'I also wanted to celebrate the storytellers themselves, together with the great Victorian collectors who meticulously took the stories down by hand; tale-gatherers like John Francis Campbell of Islay, and John Gregorson Campbell of Tiree.

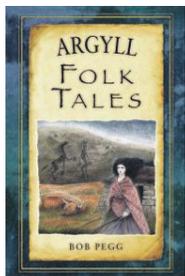
'You can see the direct descendants of their flawed heroes, resourceful girls, doomed lovers and evil villains in everything from The Bridge to Game of Thrones.

'The stories themselves are direct, humane, sometimes raw and wild, and they've lost none of their power to enthrall and entertain.'

As well as a storyteller, Bob Pegg is a musician and writer who has worked in many schools and community venues throughout the

Argyll mainland and islands.

His most recent major project was Sounding Dunadd, with Kilmartin House Museum, a staging of four events throughout the course of a year, involving local singers, storytellers and primary school children, together with amateur and professional musicians.



Bob Pegg's new book, Argyll Folk Tales.

Argyll all set for special Edinburgh fringe event

ALL Argyll and Bute's talented young artists are invited to enter the 2016 Edinburgh Festival Fringe poster competition.

Last year Sara Sinclair from Tarbert Academy was the regional winner, chosen out of 116 entries.

And the overall winner sees their design turned into a poster.

The competition is open to all five-to-16-year-old pupils in Scotland and entry packs and resources can be downloaded at www.edfringe.com/poster.

The closing date is Friday March 4 next year.



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

TUESDAY: 0800 AM on FM, 0810 Breakfast Show, 1000 Ken Hunter, 1200 Memories are Made of This with Ken Hunter, 1330 The Quiz with Danni Hay, 1500 Lesley Blair-Simmonds, 1700 Drivetime with Jim Lynch, 1900 Sounds Scottish with Archie Cameron, 2000 Highest Praise with Stuart, 2100 Elaine Lamb, 2300 Northern Soul with Gordon Covey

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

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

FRIDAY: 0800 Jean Ainsley Breakfast Show, 1000 Teeny and Tiny Show, 1300 CLYDE 2, 1500 Weekend Warmup with Ian Blair-Simmonds, 1700 Drive Show with Jim Lynch, 1845 Sports View, 1900 Country Meets Country with Jackie Craig, 2000 Friday Night with Innes, 2100 TFI Friday with Jim Lawn

SATURDAY: 0900 Swingin' Sixties, 1000 Saturday Morning Live with Linda Crosher, 1330 CLYDE 2, 1800 Sports View with the Dream Team, 1900 Marcus, 2000 Dave Lewis

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



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4th December - 10th December 2015

Bridge of Spies (12A) 161 mins

Fri, Mon, Wed, Thu: 19.15, Sat: 16.30, Sun: 15.00, Tues: 15.45

An American lawyer is recruited by the CIA during the Cold War to help rescue a pilot detained in the Soviet Union.

Brooklyn (12A) 132 mins

Sat: 18.20, Sun: 19.30, Tues, Thu: 16.15

BROOKLYN is a romantic drama set in the 1950s in which a young woman on a visit to her native Ireland from New York must decide in which country and with which man she will spend the rest of her life.

Hotel Transylvania 2 (PG) 109 mins

Sat: 11.00, Sun: 12.15

The Drac pack is back for an all-new monster comedy adventure in Sony Pictures Animation's Hotel Transylvania 2! Everything seems to be changing for the better at Hotel Transylvania... Dracula's rigid monster-only hotel policy has finally relaxed, opening up its doors to human guests. But behind closed coffins, Drac is worried that his adorable half-human, half-vampire grandson, Dennis, isn't showing signs of being a vampire. Watch out, things are going to get batty!

Kids Club: How the Grinch Stole Christmas (PG) 104 mins

Sat: 11am

Children's Classic. Rejected by the Whos as a child and living in spiteful seclusion for most of his life, the Grinch has always hated the citizens of Whoville. That especially goes for Christmas with the Whos noise, phony sentiment and wasteful materialism. When little Cindy Lou Who's attempt to transcend the festivities' empty commercialism by inviting the Grinch ends with his public humiliation, the Grinch hatches upon on his supreme scheme to ruin the holidays.

Kids just £4 - adults FREE!

National Theatre: Jane Eyre (12A)

210mins

Tue: 19.00

Almost 170 years on, Charlotte Brontë's story of the trail-blazing Jane is as inspiring as ever. This bold and dynamic production uncovers one woman's fight for freedom and fulfillment on her own terms. From her beginnings as a destitute orphan, Jane Eyre's spirited heroine faces life's obstacles head-on, surviving poverty, injustice and the discovery of bitter betrayal before taking the ultimate decision to follow her heart. This acclaimed re-imagining of Brontë's masterpiece was first staged by Bristol Old Vic last year.

Sicario (15) 138 mins

Fri: 21.30 Sat: 22.20 Sun: 20.50 Mon, Tues, Wed, Thu: 21.20

An idealistic FBI agent is enlisted by an elected government task force to aid in the escalating war against drugs at the border area between the U.S. and Mexico.

Suffragette (12A) 126 mins

Mon, Wed: 16.30

A drama that tracks the story of the foot soldiers of the early feminist movement, women who were forced underground to pursue a dangerous game of cat and mouse with an increasingly brutal State. These women were not primarily from the genteel educated classes, they were working women who had seen peaceful protest achieve nothing.

Sunset Song (15) 143 mins

Thu, Fri: 18.50, Sat: 20.45, Sun: 21.50, Mon, Tues, Wed, Thu: 18.45

Based on the classic book. The daughter of a Scottish farmer comes of age in the early 1900s.

The Hunger Games: Mockingjay - Part 2 (12A) 160 mins

Fri, Thu: 16.15, Sat: 13.30, 15.30, Sun: 14.20, 18.00

After being symbolized as the "Mockingjay", Katniss Everdeen and District 13 engage in an all-out revolution against the autocratic Capitol.

The Hunger Games: Mockingjay - Part 2 3D (12A) 160 mins

Sat: 19.30, Sun: 12.00, Mon, Wed: 16.15

The Lady in the Van 124 mins (12A)

Fri: 16.30, Sat: 13.15, Sun: 17.15

A man forms an unexpected bond with a transient woman living in her car that's parked in his driveway.

Coming Soon...

Black Mass (15)

11th December

The true story of Whitey Bulger, the brother of a state senator and the most infamous violent criminal in the history of South Boston, who became an FBI informant to take down a Mafia family invading his turf.

Star Wars: Episode VII - The Force Awakens

17th December TBC

A continuation of the saga created by George Lucas set thirty years after Star Wars: Episode VI - Return of the Jedi (1983).

The Good Dinosaur (PG)

18th December TBC

'The Good Dinosaur' asks the question: What if the asteroid that forever changed life on Earth missed the planet completely and giant dinosaurs never became extinct? In this epic journey into the world of dinosaurs, an Apatosaurus named Arlo makes an unlikely human friend. While traveling through a harsh and mysterious landscape, Arlo learns the power of confronting his fears and discovers what he is truly capable of.

There's no such thing as a bad hair day with the multi-award winning Clare Pearson of



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Festive fun and frolics as Christmas - and snow - arrive in Fort William



Santa, his reindeer and elves prepare for a trip through Fort William on Saturday. 21_f49christmas07

CHRISTMAS arrived in Fort William at the weekend and Santa brought the snow with him. St Nicholas made his first appearance in the town by way of an old Model T Ford car, before setting up his grotto in Costa, as part of Fort William Town Team's Christmas Gathering on Friday night.

Santa returned to Fort William on Saturday morning for the Rotary Club of Lochaber's Christmas Festival, this time with his reindeer and his little helpers, Aiden Cairns from Caol and Ian M Miller from Duror.

The elves were picked as part of a Lochaber-wide poetry competition with more than 80 entries from primary school pupils.

The boys also received a book each as thanks from the rotary for their hard work on the day.

Santa, his elves, reindeer and happy band of followers made their way through the High Street and Parade, before ending the trip at the Nevis Centre where many local craft and food producers were waiting to sell their wares.

Rotary president Terry Lee said: 'What a wonderful day we had. The stallholders were marvellous and a credit to Lochaber.'

'Overall we had a very successful day and, as well as providing a Christmas shopping venue for the locals, we have raised some money for charity.'

'We are indebted to Ferguson Transport and Shipping for fully funding the heavy cost of bringing the Cairngorm reindeer to Lochaber and we are once again delighted with the year-on-year support of the Lochaber public.'



Isla Mackay, nine, told Santa what she would like for Christmas. 21_f49christmas04



Lochaber Schools Pipe Band got into the festive spirit and entertained the crowds with its talented playing. 21_f49christmas06



Terry Lee, Rotary Club of Lochaber president, gave books to this year's elves, Ian M Miller, left, and Aiden Cairns. 21_f49christmas08



Members of Circus Alba performed at the Christmas Gathering. 21_f49christmas02



Snow began to fall as Santa arrived in a Model T Ford. 21_f49christmas03



Raife Uppington of Banavie Primary School and Abbie MacKay of Lochside RC Primary School switch on the Kilmallie Christmas lights.



Members of Fort William and Kinlochleven Salvation Army braved the elements to sing carols on the High Street. 21_f49christmas05



Donald Cameron of Lochiel, Lord Lieutenant of Inverness-shire, switches on the lights of the Cameron Square Christmas tree. 21_f49christmas01

Food bank's appeal to struggling families: come forward for help

EMMA CRICHTON
ecrichton@obantimes.co.uk

A FOOD bank manager is appealing to anyone who needs help during the long winter months to come forward.

Alex McConnachie of Lochaber food bank said he was worried about people who were struggling as the cold set in but didn't want to ask for help.

The Trussell Trust charity in Fort William fed 333 people between May and November this year, including 80 children, but Alex fears there may be more families struggling in silence.

He said: 'The amount we fed is down a bit on last year, but only very slightly. I have been asking the voucher holders such as social services but they said they have been quiet too. We're usually a bit quieter in the summer because a lot of people get seasonal work in hotels and places like that but that will all have died down by now.'

'I would hate to see anybody struggling, especially over Christmas, because they didn't



Food bank volunteers are calling on anyone who needs help to come forward. 21_499foodbank01

want to ask for help or don't think they're entitled to it. You don't have to be completely penniless or unemployed to qualify for vouchers. If anyone wants to ask me a few questions or find out more about what we do all they have to do is pop in.'

The food bank at Airds Crossing, High Street, is open between 12pm and 2pm on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays.

This comes after national figures showed more than 900,000 people in Britain used Trussell Trust food banks last year, compared to almost 350,000 the year before, a rise of 163 per cent.

But Chris Mould, chairman of the Trussell Trust, called this the 'tip of the iceberg'.

He said: 'That 900,000 people have received three days' food from a food bank, close to triple the numbers helped last year, is shocking in 21st century Britain.'

'But perhaps most worrying of all this figure is just the tip of the iceberg of UK food poverty. It doesn't include those helped by other emergency food providers, those living in towns where there is no food

bank, people who are too ashamed to seek help or the large number of people who are only just coping by eating less and buying cheap food.'

'In the last year we've seen things get worse, rather than better, for many people on low incomes. It's been extremely tough for a lot of people, with parents not eating properly in order to feed their children and more people than ever experiencing seemingly unfair and harsh benefits sanctions.'

A collection for Lochaber food bank will be held in Tesco, Fort William, today (Thursday) and Friday for anyone who would like to donate food.

Because what the food bank is short of can change every day, Alex advised to check 'shopping lists' with volunteers, although the charity is grateful for all non-perishable foods.

During December last year, the people of Lochaber displayed what Alex called 'tremendous generosity' with donations including perfume, toiletries and other gifts as well as food, which allowed the food bank to provide some presents alongside the 600 meals dished out during the festive period.

TIMESLINE

Police reminder on lost property

POLICE in Fort William are reminding the public they have a large number of bikes which have been handed in as found property.

Some of the bikes are valuable and relatively new so police are appealing to anyone who has lost one to contact the Fort William station.

A spokesman said: 'Every week numerous items of found property are handed in to the police station, including mobile phones, wallets, cameras and bicycles.'

'If you have lost any property it is always worth checking at the police station to see if it has been handed in.'

Pledge to improve lives of employees

HIGHLAND Council has committed to improving working life for their employees.

Following a survey of staff members, the local authority has pledged to improve areas such as valuing and recognising the work of staff, providing training opportunities and sustaining mental wellbeing.

The council will review progress in these aspects through another survey in two years.

Frank Sweeney junior rescued

IN THE Oban Times' story last week about a woman who travelled from Australia to thank a Fort William man who saved her father's life, an error was made.

We reported that the late Frank Sweeney had been rescued more than 60 years ago which was incorrect.

Frank Sweeney senior passed away many years ago but it was his son, Frank Sweeney junior who was rescued and is alive.

We apologise for this mistake and any confusion caused.

MV Corran due back from refit

THE FERRY connecting the Ardnamurchan peninsula to mainland Lochaber is due to return to the route today (Thursday) following maintenance.

MV Corran was at a boatyard on the Isle of Bute for its annual refit but its return was delayed by poor weather, leaving the smaller MV Maid of Glencoul to convey cars and passengers.

The ferry left Rothesay on Monday and was expected to be back in service today.

Photogenic pooch finds himself in centre of row between owner and pet food firm

A PHOTOGENIC dog found himself at the centre of a row between a Lochaber man and a major pet food company, after it was claimed a picture of the pooch was used without permission.

Stuart Ross from Roy Bridge was astounded when a photo of his five-year-old Labrador, Caley, taken by him in 2012, appeared as a central image in Pedigree's marketing campaign for a new fitness app for dogs. The technology allows owners to track how many calories their dog has burned and in turn how much food to give them based on this.

But Stuart, a self-employed land surveyor, said he never gave permission for the photo to be used, or even knew it had been used.

He said: 'Caley is a fit, healthy and happy dog who is not fed on Pedigree but he fits in perfectly with what Pedigree are trying to sell. I just couldn't

believe it when I saw it. When I phoned the company to complain they said it had been sent in as part of a competition. I post photos on Facebook quite a lot but I have no recollection of entering any competition and I wouldn't have agreed to terms and conditions which said it could be used in this way. When I asked for proof I had entered they couldn't track it down.'

Stuart said he is not a professional photographer and didn't want payment for himself but asked Pedigree to make a donation to Macmillan Cancer Support, as his wife, Mhairi, supports the charity, to which the company offered to pay £50. He said: 'They probably haven't done anything illegal but in the public eye they have

PHOTOGENIC: Labrador Caley, right, found himself at the centre of a Pedigree marketing campaign.



scavenged good quality photos for nothing, made massive commercial gain on them and only offered £50 for it. This is offensive, disproportional and totally unreasonable.'

Pedigree is owned by Mars Petcare, a company with an annual turnover of \$17,000,000,000.

A spokeswoman from the company insisted the image had been submitted. She said: 'Mr Ross sent us the photo as part of a competition in 2013. I think this has been a case of a misreading, or failure to read, terms and conditions which clearly stated photos could be used for marketing purposes.'

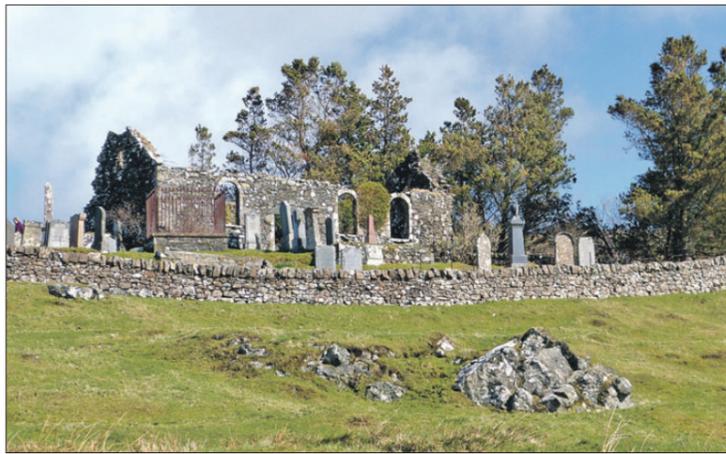
'We thought Mr Ross would like to see his pet's photo used in this way but now that we know that's not the case we have removed the photo from our website and social media. The £50 donation was a gesture of good will which Pedigree didn't have to do.'

Church saved from collapse

A HISTORIC church on the Ardnamurchan peninsula has been saved from 'imminent collapse' thanks to a funding grant.

The 12th century St Comghan's in Kilchoan served worshippers for more than 700 years before it was abandoned in 1831 and risked crumbling to the ground until the money was given from Historic Environment Scotland. The old building is so dangerous that Highland Council prohibited anyone from entering it to prevent accidents. The repairs from the grant will allow the church to re-open to the public.

Architect Francis Shaw, who drew up the drawings to obtain the grant, said: 'This is a beautiful church, an outstanding national historic monument which served the village and its community for more than 700 years. The relatives of many people, both near and far, worshipped in this church and are buried in its peaceful graveyard.'



HISTORIC: St Comghan's in Kilchoan will be repaired thanks to a £4,000 grant.

Bike loads of cash for economy

THE MOUNTAIN Bike World Cup has injected £30 million into the Highland economy since it arrived in the area 13 years ago.

The annual event sees thousands of people arrive at Nevis Range for a weekend in June and figures from organisers, Rare Management, show last year alone it boosted the area by around £2.8 million through increased footfall in Fort William and neighbouring villages.

Thomas MacLennan, leader of

Lochaber area committee, said: 'Our figures show that the World Cup was worth £2.8 million to the area in 2015.'

'However, having such a prestigious competition on our doorstep provides worldwide publicity which money can't buy. Continuing to host this event helps to showcase the scenery, terrain and local enthusiasm that cements Fort William's reputation as a haven for outdoor activities.'

Downpours didn't deter visitors

THIS year's wet summer didn't put a dampener on Highland tourism, as a VisitScotland chief reported positive feedback from visitors.

Scot Armstrong, VisitScotland regional partnership's director, said: '2015 has been a very busy year for tourism in the Highlands and despite the absence of great weather,

feedback is that visitors have still enjoyed a fantastic line-up of events, festivals, shows and Highland games. There has been a big focus on biking and cycling this season, with some great events being held in the Highlands, potentially attracting new visitors, which all helps boost the valuable local visitor economy.'

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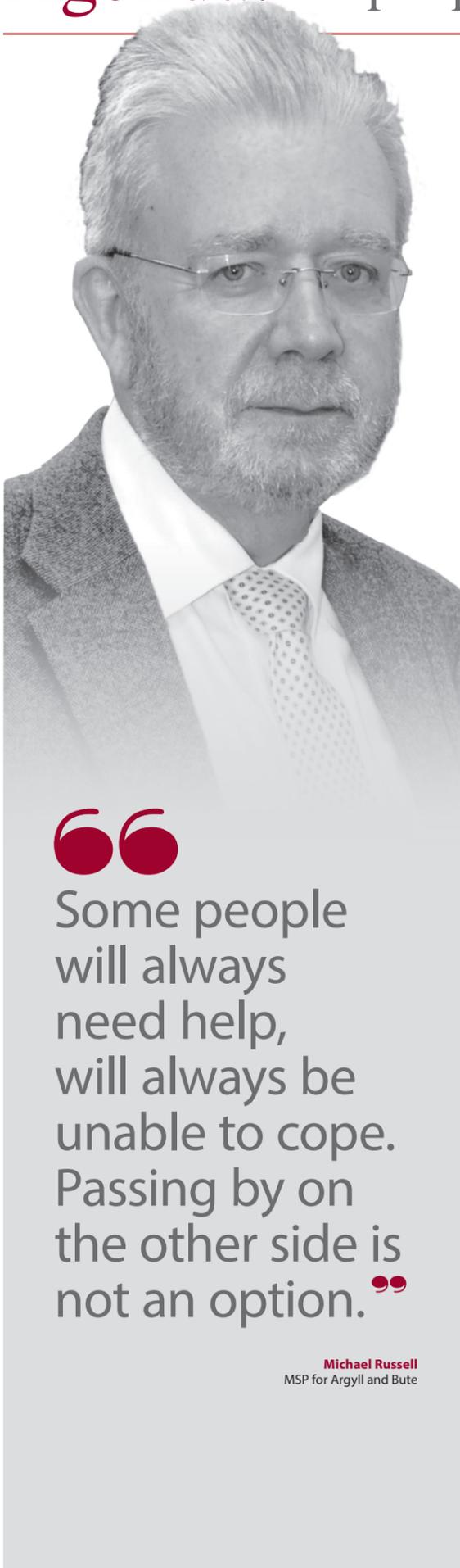
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Agenda: the people ● the issues ● the back story



Some people will always need help, will always be unable to cope. Passing by on the other side is not an option.

Michael Russell
MSP for Argyll and Bute

Food for thought or time for action?

Many people in Oban will be faced with a stark choice this winter – food or fuel. A large number will turn to Hope Kitchen to help. But does Argyll and Bute MSP Michael Russell have a point when he suggests that, while the charity is a practical expression of Obanites' good will, it is an expression of people's collective failure to create the decent, caring state they want, not just for themselves, but for everyone?

A couple of weeks ago I visited Oban's Hope Kitchen, a charitable venture run by local Christian groups, which tries to make sure that no one in the town starves.

That is an extraordinary thing to write in the early years of the 21st century, sitting in one of the wealthiest countries in the world.

For most of my life I have believed – as most people do – that starvation in Scotland is a thing of the distant past. Surely hunger, real, gnawing hunger, must have been eradicated with the advent of the welfare state in the 1940s?

But the truth of the matter is that in the 21st-century streets through which we walk to work or in which we do our shopping, people pass us by who are desperately hungry because they simply do not have enough money to pay for food or because what money they have can't be stretched far enough to feed both them and their children.

Hope Kitchen doesn't refuse anyone, and its open, wonderful attitude and example means that it already needs more space because it is inundated with supplies donated by individuals and by supermarkets.

Those groceries (and some toiletries) are not only given out on the premises but are taken round the town, including to some surprising parts where charity is accepted behind lace curtains. Nobody who helps out in the cafe or with the parcels believes the demand will do anything other than increase in the weeks and months ahead.

December will be a particular busy time, for as we celebrate Christmas many families will experience food poverty in contrast to the nation's food plenty. In December 2014, the Trussell Trust, the leading provider of foodbank support in Scotland, helped 10,500 individuals, a third of them children. There will be more this December – including more children.

The causes of such poverty are many and varied. Research indicates that a third of all foodbank users have jobs but are on low incomes. Others suffer from disability, persistent addiction or mental health



HOPE: MSP Michael Russell with staff and volunteers of the Hope Kitchen last month. 15_146Michael01

problems. But the common thread is this – foodbanks exist because of the abject failure of our society to provide for those who need most help – the low paid, the unemployed, the marginal and the alienated. In other words, the weakest in our town and country.

In fact, it is worse than that, for the state in which we live is currently taking actions that do not just cause hunger and suffering by neglect, they sometimes cause it by deliberate acts of policy, such as sanctioning benefit claimants for the tiniest of infractions and by reducing or eliminating entitlement to state support.

These acts, according to the UK Government, are merely means by which some people can be forced off benefits and into work. Apparently we should all aim to live in a 'high wage, low benefit' society and the way to get it, we are told, is to make sure that benefits do not become, in that hackneyed phrase, 'a

way of life'. The American novelist John Updike once observed that 'those who tell you how to act usually have whisky on their breath'. In other words, the world is full of people who urge others to do as they say, not as they do.

Millionaires in the House of Lords or the House of Commons telling the poorest amongst us that cutting what little they get is the best way to find a better job is a pretty distasteful spectacle. So is the sight of people growing rich on paying poverty wages that force families to seek charity instead of being able to fend for themselves.

Last week, my office dealt with a young mother who had lost her benefits for no obvious or good reason. She had no food at all in her house to feed her baby and she didn't qualify for an emergency grant because she had received two before.

We were reduced to scrabbling around trying to get her some money from social work before the end of a Friday afternoon so that there would be at least the prospect of a meal for her and her children over the weekend.

Some might argue that this was all her own fault – that she was ill prepared for parenthood and was a failure because she could not provide for those depending upon her.

We could have that argument all day but it wouldn't put bread in her

child's mouth or clothes or her baby's back. Some people will always need help, will always be unable to cope, and will always be victims of their own circumstances. Passing by on the other side is not an option. The trouble is that today there are more and more people in need, and the state is doing less and less to help them, leaving a gap that only foodbanks can fill.

Most people I know want to live in a country that has compassion at its core. Though they want to see the governments they elect being efficient and effective in the use of public monies, they also want a system that guarantees no one starves, that ensures all young pays wages sufficient to avoid poverty, and makes certain that the weakest are not abandoned. In short, they want those they trust to run the country to be capable of generosity to those who cannot cope by themselves.

The contribution that foodbanks and emergency help make to those that need them are living, practical expressions of good will from those who donate to them and from those who work so hard in them. I will never criticise such charity.

But they are also, alas, an expression of our collective failure to make the type of decent, caring state that we all, in our hearts, know is the place we want not just for ourselves, but for everyone.

700% rise shows Oban desperately needs Hope

THE USE of Oban's only foodbank has increased by almost 700 per cent in the last four years, the treasurer for Hope Kitchen has revealed.

Speaking at the charity's annual general meeting last Wednesday, when Hope (Help our people eat) celebrated its sixth anniversary, treasurer Tricia Morrison, reported the growing demand and thanked the local community.

She said: 'We are so grateful to stores in town which have given us food supplies over the year, especially Lidl, Tesco, Forteths and Booker, which together give huge amounts of foodstuff.'

'In addition, donations from individuals, churches, schools and other organisations all help keep our cupboards stocked.'

Hope Kitchen's recently appointed service manager, Lorraine King, said that the organisation was

averaging around 400 to 450 people coming to the kitchen every month, with 300 of those being provided with a cooked meal or one to take-away. Meanwhile, food parcels are being delivered to around 30 people per month, with members of Hope Kitchen believing this will increase to 50 over the winter period.

Catering coordinator Jess MacPhee, who along with two others founded Hope Kitchen six years ago, said: 'We ask recipients of food parcels to write down a reason for their need.'

'In recent months the main reasons are: just out of hospital; had benefits cut or sanctioned; school holidays and not enough money to feed the kids; waiting for benefits to get sorted; only had money to pay for electricity and couldn't afford food; working but unable to cope; pensioner.'



CELEBRATION: From left to right, volunteer Tina, service manager Lorraine, chairman Stuart Chalmers, and catering coordinator Jess MacPhee cutting their anniversary cake. 17_146hope1



HOPE SPRINGS: Lyndsey Ross, left, volunteer, Kathleen McArthur and Jess MacPhee with donated food.

Farming

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Market reports

Oban

£70 Ardfern Suffolk lamb tops Oban sale

CALEDONIAN Marts Ltd sold 733 store lambs and feeding ewes, as well as seven store cattle and 11 OTM cattle at the company's Oban sale on Tuesday November 24. Store lambs (432) averaged £41.81, down £3.94 on the year, selling to £70 for a Suffolk from C McLarty, the Homestead, Ardfern.

The sale of 169 feeding ewes saw trade £6.27 back on last year to an average of £31.73. Top price of £70 was for a Texel from R S McColl, Stalker Cottage, Appin. Leading prices:

Lambs:
Suff - £70 The Homestead;
Tex - £55 Inion;
Chev - £54 Ballinmackillchan;
Zwar - £50 The Homestead;
Beltex - £49 Upper Largie;
Cross - £46 Poltalloch;
BF - £41 Leckuary.

Ewes:
Tex - £70 Stalker Cottage;
Chev - £59 Tangasdale;
Cross - £58 Kilbrandon;
Suff - £56 Tyree;
BF - £46 Tyree.

Bullocks (4) to £940 from M MacKinnon, Castlebay. Heifers (3) to £520 from A McLarty, The Homesteads. OTMS (11) to £440 from Glenstrae Farmers.

Fort William

'Weathered, but satisfactory' trade

A TOTAL of 848 store sheep of all classes were sold at Fort William on Friday November 27 by Dingwall and Highland Marts Ltd.

Lambs (433) averaged £28.52 per head and sold to £57 gross for Suffolk crosses from Breakachy, Laggan. Ewes (318) sold to £53 gross for Cheviots from Ardtornish Farms, Oban. Rams (30) sold to £76.00 gross for a Texel cross from Callart Farm, Onich.

Feeding sheep (67) sold to £41 gross (twice) for a cross wedder from 1 Kinsadel, Morar and Blackface gimmers from Carnoch Farm, Ardgour.

'A weathered show in general met a satisfactory trade,' was how the auction firm described the day.

Other leading prices per head:

Store lambs: BF - Keppoch Farms, Roy Bridge, £50; SuffX - East Croft Roy, Newtonmore, £45; Cross - Insh Farm, Spean Bridge and Alcan Estates, £40; Chev - Alcan estates, £40; Zwart - Balgowan, Laggan, £40. Ewes: BF - Fersit, Roy Bridge, £40; Cross - 4 Glebehill, Kilchoan, £39; Chev - Callart Farm, £39; TexX - Kilmornaivaig, Spean Bridge, £32.

Rams: TexX - Drimnin Estate, £70; Chev - Ardnarmurchan Estate, Kilchoan, £50 (twice); BF - 4 Glebehill, £48; Tex - Kilmalieu, Ardgour, £40; Suff - Drimnin Estate, £40.

Feeding sheep: BF wdr - Fersit, Roy Bridge and Alcan Estates, £40; Cross wdr - Alcan Estates, £40; Chev wdr - Kilmornaivaig, £30.

Stirling

CALEDONIAN Marts Ltd sold 317 suckled calves and store cattle at Stirling on Monday November 30.

159 bullocks averaged 205.73p per kg, selling to 268.10p per kg for Simmental from FB and JM Gauld, Standingfauld, Braco and to £1,310 from J Hornall, Fallininch, Stirling.

126 heifers averaged 200.59p per kg, selling to 229.50p per kg for a Charolais from Glenside Farms, Plean and to £1,180 for a Limousin, also from Glenside Farms.

32 black and white bullocks averaged 147p per kg, selling to 164p per kg from Merslaugh Farm, Stranraer. Leading prices:

Bullocks per head:
£1,310 Fallininch; £1,280 Barrochan Cross; £1,230 Bowridge; £1,160 Wester Hassockrigg; £1,120 Parkhouse.

Bullocks per kilo:
268p Standingfauld; 263.5p Easter Jawcraig; 260.9p Murrayhall; 258.8p Murrayhall; 254.2p Easter Jawcraig.

Heifers per head:
£1,180 Glenside Farms; £1,150 Greenhead; £1,120 Eskeschreggan; £1,110 Wester Hassockrigg; £1,060 Bowridge.

Heifers p per kilo:
229.5p Glenside Farms; 221.8p Eskeschreggan; 219.4p Glenside Farms; 217.4p Easter Jawcraig; 216.3p Eskeschreggan.

A CATALOGUE entry of 7,646 store and feeding sheep were forward for sale at United Auctions' Stirling market on Monday November 30.

Averages:
BTexX £58.50 (+£1.30 on the week)
SuffX £54.39 (+£1.25 on the week)
TexX £53.50 (+£1.85 on the week)
CharX £53.13 (+£1.70 on the week)
Mule £52.98 (+£2.50 on the week)
Chev £50.27 (+£2.05 on the week)
BF £44.08 (+£1.20 on the week)

Leading Prices:
Glencairn (ChevX) £66.50; Drumnessie (Mule ewe lambs) £66.00; Carrat (TexX) £64.50; Kippendavie (Tex) £64.00; Finnich Malise (TexX) £63.50; Blackhouse (CharX) £63.00; Belevue (SuffX) £61.00; Drumnaghiner (SuffX) £60.00; Dyke (BTexX) £59.50; Grantsbank (SuffX) £59.00; East Buchanty (BTexX) £58.50; Lude (ChevX) £58.50; Craigharnet Mains (Mule) £58.50; Neilston Cott (Chev) £57.00; Knocknaib (Mule) £57.00; Redburn (Mule) £56.00; Rhodders (BF) £53.50; Drungask (BF) £47.00; Kinpurney (BF) £45.50.

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Campbeltown farmers sprout new produce

THE FARMERS behind Kintyre Eggs have sprouted a timely new delicacy, writes Ben Ramage.

And while the vegetable splits opinions over dinner tables nationwide this month, the High Bellochinty farmers are just glad they have finally been able to grow them.

Hannah and Will Jones moved to Kintyre 10 years ago, and started growing vegetables for their honesty box four years ago, before opening their Farm Stall shop in Bellochinty in June this year.

'They had not managed to get sprouts to take to their high and windy patch of farmland, but this year has seen an upturn in their Brussels fortune.'

Hannah said: 'We have tried growing sprouts for a number of years but the plants have never thrived. Winter vegetables that grow above ground, as opposed to root vegetables, are always going



Charlie, 4, checking the size of the leeks while Will cuts the sprout plants.

to be vulnerable to the weather and wind here.

'This year we tried the sprouts in a different field that has a heavier soil, further from the shore line and covered them in Enviromesh, a thin net that acts as a windbreak

and protects the crop.

'The sprouts are fantastic this year and very tasty. We sell them in bags but also on the stem with the sprout tops still on.'

'The tops are also edible, and in our family are

the favourite part.'

Hannah and Will moved to Kintyre from south west England, and admit it took time to get used to the different landscape and weather. They are glad they have persevered and are now

reaping the tasty benefits.

Hannah said: 'When we saw the farm I loved everything about it, but asked Will if we moved could we have two things; heating in the house and a garden, of which there were neither.'

'Will built a walled garden from beach stones and we began to grow our own vegetables. This was a steep learning curve, as the weather and growing conditions are very different to Gloucestershire where we had moved from.'

'We started selling eggs on our stall and we thought we'd try putting on some carrots and tatties as we had grown too many for ourselves. We soon sold out and realised there was a local demand for local fresh farm vegetables.'

'We grow everything for our farm stall ourselves and pick everything fresh each day, which makes a massive difference to taste and quality of all the vegetables.'

Fewer forms for farmers

THE SCOTTISH Government is heralding a breakthrough in reducing red tape for farmers.

Under EU rules, livestock keepers are required to provide information to the Scottish Government each year, collected through the sheep and goat annual inventory in January as well as the annual December agricultural survey.

In line with Brian Pack's recommendations on reducing red tape, the surveys have been merged - which means 5,700 livestock keepers only have to complete one form instead of two.

For the first time, farmers will also have the option this year of submitting their returns online through the SCOTEID website - although paper forms will continue to be sent out if needed.

Rural affairs secretary Richard Lochhead said: 'The Scottish Government is firmly committed to cutting red tape for farmers and crofters, whose focus should be on producing food for our tables rather than filling in forms. To reduce the bureaucratic burden we already source agricultural census data from the single application form and cattle tracing system.'

'The Scottish Government and our agencies will continue to seek further ways of reducing red tape for Scottish agriculture both here at home and to push for greater action at EU level.'

Fife judge journeys to Kintyre



James Lawrie and an individual heifer at Machriberg Farm in Southend.

AN AYRSHIRE breeder from Fife, who recently won the senior cow category at Agriscot with Miss Blonde Two EX 94 (2), cast his practised eye over Kintyre stock last Tuesday.

James Lawrie from Cuthill Towers, Milnathort visited Clochkeil, Drumlembie, Ormsary, Gartvaigh and Machriberg before making his selections in the annual Kintyre Ayrshire Breeders competition.

The full results are as follows: team: 1 and Parkers Cup; Malcolm Ronald, Ormsary; 2 J and M Barr, Clochkeil and 3 Thos M Ralston and Sons, East Drumlembie; individual heifer: 1 and KF Cup; Malcolm Ronald; 2 J and M Barr and 3 Thos M Ralston and Sons; mother and daughter: 1 and Quaich; Thomas Cameron, Gartvaigh; 2 Malcolm Ronald and 3 James Barbour, Machriberg; milk solids: 1st and John Barr Memorial Tray; Thos M Ralston and sons; 2 Thos M Ralston and Sons and 3 J and M Barr.

FOR SALE
Registered Highland Bull
6 Years Old
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Charities swarm together to ban harming pesticides in Scotland

THE SCOTTISH Wildlife Trust (SWT) and Buglife have joined forces to call on three pesticides to be banned from Scotland forever amidst growing evidence of their adverse affect on bees.

The environmental charities have written to Richard Lochhead, the cabinet secretary for rural affairs, food and environment, calling on the Scottish Government to permanently ban the use of the neonicotinoids on outdoor crops.

The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds Scotland and Butterfly Conservation Scotland have also signed the letter.

The EU introduced a ban in December 2013 restricting the use of three types of neonicotinoid insecticides due to the 'high acute risks' to bees.

There has been considerable research activity since the ban's imposition. A growing body of evidence shows that neonicotinoids damage bee brains, reduce bumble-

bee queen production and reduce wild bee density.

Pollinators provide an essential ecosystem service to farmers and fruit growers, worth at least £43 million per year to Scotland's economy. Dr Maggie Keegan, head of policy for the SWT, said: 'Since the EU ban came into force, restricting the use of certain neonicotinoids because of the high risk to bees, a huge amount of evidence has emerged which shows this was the right decision.'

She said this was why the SWT was asking the Scottish Government to permanently ban those neonicotinoids that do the most harm.

'These toxic chemicals not only harm bees, they also persist in the agricultural landscape and contaminate soils, potentially harming invertebrates such as earthworms. They are picked up by wildflowers, get into the watercourse and are linked to a decline in birds and butterflies in farmed systems.'



A bee at work.

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Campbeltown Ref: CMA00528




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If this sounds like you then we would love to hear from you. We offer full training and support, excellent rates of pay, a pleasant working environment and all the benefits associated with a major employer in the West of Scotland. A full driving licence is essential. **Closing date: Friday 11th December.**

In the first instance, please email your CV to Fiona Bennett, HR Manager at fiona@wyvexmedia.co.uk or call Nicky Murphy, Advertising Director (Designate) 01631 568000



The Oban Times & WEST HIGHLAND TIMES

Qualified Reporter
 Fort William office

Here at the Oban Times, the West Highlands' best-selling weekly newspaper, we pride ourselves on producing quality grassroots journalism.

A vacancy has arisen for an ambitious reporter with plenty of ideas, energy and enthusiasm to be based in our Fort William office; someone who can really get under the skin of our communities to find the stories that will engage readers. Ideally you'll have passed your NCTJ diploma exams, including shorthand. You must have a full current driving licence.

As digital plays an increasingly important part in our news coverage, ideally you will be confident in the use of social media and digital storytelling techniques.

In return, we're offering a fantastic opportunity for a qualified reporter to join one of Scotland's leading independent news publishers, with a salary and conditions that reflect this - private health care, enhanced pension, life assurance and financial assistance with relocation.

Please apply by email with full CV and contact details to ali@wyvexmedia.co.uk

TEAM MANAGER - GAS OPERATIONS



CAMPBELTOWN

We are looking for an enthusiastic individual to become one of our Team Managers within our Operational Team based in Campbeltown.

Our Company
 SGN manage and operate the network that distributes natural and green gas to 5.8 million homes and businesses across Scotland and the south of England. Our pipes deliver gas safely, reliably and efficiently to every one of our customers.

The Role
 The team manager position has become available in one of our Scottish Independent Undertakings (SIUs). Our SIUs are unique in the UK as they are not connected to the National Grid system. This fantastic opportunity will be based in Campbeltown, where Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) is used as a feedstock.

We have a fantastic team in Campbeltown and we want an enthusiastic, hardworking person to join the team who is willing to learn and is prepared to commit to the long term future of SGN. You will already be working in a technical or engineering role but may be looking for a career change or a new challenge. Either way, we want to know what you can offer us.

We recognise that you may not have gas industry experience or experience of working with LNG, so we will be providing you with a bespoke two year training programme to develop your management skills and competences in these areas. This training will provide you with excellent career opportunities within one of the UK's leading gas transportation companies.

This a technical role and you will be involved in the day to day management of field based operational teams who are primarily involved in the installation and maintenance of the local gas network. Much of the role will be field based, involving the planning and supervision of work to ensure the safe transportation of gas. The nature of the role means that you will be required to participate in an out or hours standby rota. For the role and for you to participate fully in the development programme, it is essential that you hold a full driving licence.

Key Skills/Experience
 To join our Team Manager programme you must:

- Have some experience of working in an engineering, construction or technical environment and be able to demonstrate knowledge in this area.
- Hold a further education qualification in an engineering discipline at HNC or higher.

Most importantly, you will be reliable and adaptable, a team player, have the drive and enthusiasm to succeed. Excellent written and verbal communication skills are also important.

Your starting salary will be around £25,000. Following satisfactory completion of the full two year training programme your salary will rise to circa £31,000 plus standby/callout payments and a company car. We also offer an excellent benefits package.

This is a challenging development programme that will set you up for a rewarding career within SGN.

For a more detailed job description and to apply please visit our website www.sgn.co.uk Please quote Vacancy Number: 15118.

Applications must be received by close of business on Thursday 24 December 2015.

west coast recruitment



Applications are invited for the following post: -
DEPOT OPERATOR – CONNELL DEPOT

Gleaner Oils Limited requires an individual to primarily carry out the function of planning and routing fuel deliveries throughout Argyll area. Experience in processing customer orders through to delivery would be advantageous although training will be provided.

Stock control, assisting with general depot maintenance, scheduling vehicle maintenance and, from time to time, undertaking delivery of packed goods locally will also form part of this role's remit therefore a full car driving licence is essential.

Preference will be given to an applicant who has an understanding of Health & Safety, is flexible, adaptable with a can do attitude. The position is full time 40 hours per week with a requirement for flexibility on occasion. Please send your application in writing together with a C.V. (including present salary details) to: -

The HR Dept, Gleaner Oils Ltd, Milnfield, Elgin, Moray, IV30 1UU
 Or By e-mail to: hr@gleaner.co.uk



Finance Assistant, Legal (Temporary – 6 months)
 Lochgilphead

Finance Assistant, Income (Temporary – 6 months)
 Lochgilphead
 35 hours per week

Salary £17,097 - £18,889

To apply visit our website at www.acha.co.uk/recruitment

If you cannot access the website please contact the recruitment team:
 Tel 01546 605917 or email recruitment@acha.co.uk

Closing Date for both posts: 12 noon on Friday 18th December 2015.

Find all of these jobs on
www.westcoastjobs.co.uk

PUBLIC NOTICES

www.highland.gov.uk

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (SCOTLAND) ACT 1997
PLANNING (LISTED BUILDING AND CONSERVATION AREAS) (SCOTLAND) ACT 1997

The applications listed below, along with plans and other documents submitted with them, may be examined between the hours of 8.30 a.m. to 4.30 p.m. Monday to Friday (excluding public holidays) at the SERVICE POINT, LOCHABER HOUSE, HIGH STREET, FORT WILLIAM, PH33 6EL and online at <http://wam.highland.gov.uk>

Written comments should be made to the EPC at the contact details below within the time period indicated from the date of this notice. 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
15/04088/FUL	Land to North East of Brae Cottage, Brecklet Road, Ballachulish		Erection of dwelling house
15/04292/LBC	Church, Fassfern Road, Fort William		Reposition cafe, installation of lift & staff facilities (amendment 15/00400/LBC)
15/04310/FUL	Land 25M NE of Strathnaver Glencoe		Proposed dwelling house

Time period for comments is 14 days
 ePlanning Centre, The Highland Council, Glenurquhart Road, INVERNESS IV3 5NX
 Email: eplanning@highland.gov.uk

To find out more about living and working in Argyll & Bute visit us @ www.argyll-bute.gov.uk

Comhairle Earra-Ghàidheal agus Bhòid

A MEETING OF THE OBAN, LORN AND THE ISLES AREA COMMITTEE WILL BE HELD IN THE CORRAN HALLS, OBAN

AT 10:30AM – WEDNESDAY 9TH DECEMBER 2015

Members of the public are welcome to attend and a public question time will take place during the meeting. Questions can be asked on the day or can be submitted in advance to the Area Committee Manager, Kilmony, Lochgilphead, PA31 8RT. Telephone: 01631 567945.

The Agenda for the meeting will be available to view from Wednesday 2nd December at the Service Point, Municipal Buildings, Albany Street, Oban, PA34 4AW and at www.argyll-bute.gov.uk

Douglas Henry, Executive Director – Customer Services

To find out more about living and working in Argyll & Bute visit us @ www.argyll-bute.gov.uk

Comhairle Earra-Ghàidheal agus Bhòid

PLANNING

These applications listed below together with other related documents may be inspected at Municipal Buildings Albany Street Oban PA34 4AW, Monday to Friday 9am to 12:30pm and 1:30pm to 5pm. On Wednesdays, the Customer Service Points will open at 10am. At the alternative locations detailed below or by logging on to the Council's website at www.argyll-bute.gov.uk. Written comments for the following list of applications should be made to the above address within 21 days of this advert. Please quote the reference number in any correspondence.

Ref No	Proposal	Site Address	Location of Plans
15/03193/PP	Demolition of existing small barn and erection of plant room siting to facilitate biomass boilers and associated fuel store	Portsochanan Hotel Portsochanan Dalmally Argyll And Bute PA33 1BJ	Sub Post Office Dalmally
15/03220/PP	Renewal of planning permission 12/02044/PP - Formation of a play park	Dalavich Village Hall Dalavich Taynuilt Argyll And Bute PA35 1HL	Sub Post Office Taynuilt

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
15/02946/PP	Alterations to dwellinghouse	Tigh Na Traigh Isle Of Iona Argyll And Bute PA76 6SJ	Sub Post Office Isle of Iona

These applications listed below together with other related documents may be inspected between 09:00 - 17:00hrs Monday to Friday at 1A Manse Lochgilphead Brae PA31 8RD, at the alternative locations detailed below during their normal opening times or by logging on to the Council's website at www.argyll-bute.gov.uk. Written comments for the following list of applications should be made to the above address within 21 days of this advert. Please quote the reference number in any correspondence.

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (SCOTLAND) ACT 1997 (AS AMENDED), RELATED PLANNING (LISTED BUILDINGS AND CONSERVATION AREAS) (SCOTLAND) ACT 1997

Ref No	Proposal	Site Address	Location of Plans
15/03024/PP	Installation of 2 replacement windows	19 King Street Portnahaven Isle Of Islay Argyll And Bute PA47 7SP	Sub Post Office Portnahaven

Argyll and Bute council encourages planning applications to be made on-line through The Scottish Government website: <https://eplanning.scotland.gov.uk>

The Council maintain a Register of planning applications which can be viewed during normal office hours at Planning and Regulatory Services, Central Validation Team, 1A Manse Brae, Lochgilphead PA31 8RD.

A weekly list of applications can be viewed at the above address and at all Council Libraries.

Any letter of representation the Council receives is considered a public document and will be published on our website. Anonymous or marked confidential correspondence will not be considered.

COUNCILLOR'S SURGERY
 Councillor Roddy McCuish (E.W. 4 Oban South and the Isles)

Councillor McCuish will not be holding a surgery during the month of December. Instead please contact Members Service by email - MembersServiceTeam@argyll-bute.gov.uk or by telephone - 01546 604209.

Proposed Short Lease of Part of a Croft

Mrs A Catherine MacLaren, Mrs Helen Waller, Mrs Lesley Bhatti, Mr Anthony Palombo, Dr Andrew Palombo, Mr Daniel Palombo are applying to the Crofting Commission for consent to let part of the croft at 19/20 North Ballachulish, Kilmallie, on a short term lease to Mr. Colin D. Campbell, Caolas, Onich, By Fort William, for 5 years.

If you consider you have a relevant interest in this application, you may submit comments on the proposal in writing to the Crofting Commission, Great Glen House, Leachkin Road, Inverness IV3 8NW or email info@crofting.scotland.gov.uk within 28 days from the publication of the advert.

Please note that any comments you provide are part of an open process and will be made available to interested parties. Your comments would also be released under a Freedom of information enquiry.

First Registration of a Croft

Mr Roderick MacLennan has registered the croft 4 Bay, Strachur 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 29 July 2016. Details of the registration can be found at www.crofts.ros.gov.uk/register/home. The croft registration number is C1988.

First Registration of a Croft

Kenneth Stewart has registered their croft 140 Kilmony, Ardnamurchan & Sunart on the Crofting Register held by the Registers of Scotland. Any person who wishes to challenge the registration may apply to the Scottish Land Court by 29 July 2016. Details of the registration can be found at www.crofts.ros.gov.uk/register/home. The croft registration number is C1099.

Proposed Short Lease of a Croft/Part of a Croft

Mary Pollock is applying to the Crofting Commission for consent to let the whole croft at 8, 9 and 11 Port Ellen, Kildalton and On on term lease to John Campbell of 9 Cnoc Na Faira - Port Ellen, Islay PA42 7BU for 10 years. In you have an interest in this application, you may submit comments on the proposal in writing or some other permanent form to the Crofting Commission, Great Glen House, Leachkin Road, Inverness IV3 8NW (e-mail info@crofting.scotland.gov.uk) within 28 days from the date of publication of the advert. Please note that any comments you provide are part of an open process and will be made available to interested parties. Your comments would also be released under a Freedom of Information enquiry.

CROFTING COMMISSION COIMISEAN NA CROITEARACHD

FIRST REGISTRATION OF COMMON GRAZINGS

The Crofting Commission have registered the following Common Grazings on the Crofting Register held by the Registers of Scotland.

Heylipoil Common Grazings, Tiree
 Registration Number: CG199

Balephtrish Special Common Grazings, Tiree
 Registration Number: CG200

Kirkapoll Common Grazings, Tiree
 Registration Number: CG201

Balephuil Common Grazings, Tiree
 Registration Number: CG202

Any person who wishes to challenge the registration may appeal to the Scottish Land Court. The appeal must be brought within 9 months from the date of this advert and should be made directly to the Land Court.

Details of the registration can be found at www.crofts.ros.gov.uk/register/home

CROFTING COMMISSION COIMISEAN NA CROITEARACHD

FIRST REGISTRATION OF COMMON GRAZINGS

The Crofting Commission have registered the following Common Grazings on the Crofting Register held by the Registers of Scotland.

Vaul Common Grazings, Tiree
 Registration Number: CG204

Ruag Common Grazings, Tiree
 Registration Number: CG205

Any person who wishes to challenge the registration may appeal to the Scottish Land Court. The appeal must be brought within 9 months from the date of this advert and should be made directly to the Land Court.

Details of the registration can be found at www.crofts.ros.gov.uk/register/home

CROFTING COMMISSION COIMISEAN NA CROITEARACHD

DECROFTING APPLICATION

C M E Hart
 Port Appin, Lismore & Appin
 0.018 ha - Amenity ground
 4.86.56213

Comments can be made to the Crofting Commission by any member of the crofting community within the locality of the land, within 28 days of the date of this newspaper.

Crofting Commission, Great Glen House, Leachkin Road, Inverness IV3 8NW or info@crofting.scotland.gov.uk

First Registration of a Croft

David Cowan has registered their croft Croftinnuine, Glen Orchy and Innishail 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 5th August 2016. Details of the registration can be found at www.crofts.ros.gov.uk/register/home. The croft registration number is A1375.

First Registration of a Croft

Mrs Helen Catherine McDonnell has registered the croft Earnsaig, Glenelg 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 2 August, 2016.

Details of the registration can be found at www.crofts.ros.gov.uk/register/home. The croft registration number is C1893.

DECROFTING DIRECTIONS ISSUED

A C MacColl
 8/4 Portuairk, Ardnamurchan & Sunart
 0.177 ha - Site for a dwelling house
 4.86.60709

Conditions: 2, 3b, 4 & 8

1 Mackinnon
 2A Kilmoiluaig, Tiree
 0.1 ha - Site for a dwelling house
 4.86.59437

Conditions: 2, 3b, 4 & 8

Conditions
 (2) To provide a site for a dwellinghouse
 (3) Complete enclosure of the land with a stock proof fence within 4 months of:
 (b) the proposed development completion
 (4) That fence shall be maintained in good order and repair by each successive owner or occupier of the land.
 (8) The Direction will expire 3 months from the date of the Direction unless an application for registration of the making of the Direction is submitted before the expiry of that period.

Any person with an interest in the application may appeal against a decision to the Scottish Land Court within 42 days of the date of this advert.

First Registration of a Croft

Mrs Colette Mary Elizabeth Hart has registered the croft Port Appin (also known as Mathesons Croft), 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 18 August, 2016. Details of the registration can be found at www.crofts.ros.gov.uk/register/home. The croft registration number is C2001.

Notice of first registration of croft

Mrs Claire Fletcher has registered their croft known as 15 & 16 Lorgbaw, Kilchoman 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 26th July 2016.

Details of the registration can be found at www.crofts.ros.gov.uk/register/home. The croft registration number is C1854.

Oban Times PUBLIC NOTICES

Oban Times PUBLIC NOTICES

First Registration of a Croft

Dr William Lindsay has registered the croft Achnacroish, Kilbrandon and Kilchattan 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 04/08/2016. Details of the registration can be found at www.crofts.ros.gov.uk/register/home. The croft registration number is C1921.

Oban Times PUBLIC NOTICES

Oban Times PUBLIC NOTICES

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Argyll HomeCare

Argyll Homecare in partnership with NHS Highland & Argyll and Bute Council are launching a new initiative for the Mid Argyll area as part of the Integrated Care Fund. We are currently recruiting highly motivated individuals to join our team for this exciting new project. Working in collaboration with our colleagues in Health and Social Services, you will be able to work on your own and/or as part of a team providing care services across a range of clients. The role will involve being part of a set rota system.

Position: Care at Home (x3)
Area: Lochgilphead/Ardishaig
Full time: 35 hours per week (£8.00 per hour)

Previous care experience is highly desirable accompanied with an aptitude for delivering a high level of service. Extensive training will be offered however a commitment and desire for ongoing training is also essential. Full driving licence essential. Job share opportunities may also be available. All successful applicants will undergo full PVG checks.

Closing date for completed applications
24th December 2015

For further information and an application pack please telephone 01546 600333



Community Support Assistant - 2 posts

(1) Caledonia Court, Ardishaig - 17.5 hours per week, Monday - Friday 9am to 12.30 pm
Salary - £8,548.50 - £9,444.50 per annum

(2) McCracken Court, Lochgilphead - 10 hours per week, Monday - Friday 2 pm - 4 pm
Salary - £4,885 - £5,397 per annum

Closing Date: 12 noon on Friday 11th December 2015

Interviews for these posts will be held on 17th December 2015. This post will be subject to an Enhanced Disclosure Scotland PVG check. To apply visit our website at www.acha.co.uk/recruitment. If you cannot access the website please contact the recruitment team: Tel 01546 605917 or email recruitment@acha.co.uk

Lynn of Lorne CARE HOME

UNIT MANAGER

Required to compliment our existing skilled team. You must have a flexible approach to shift pattern and be able to work weekends. Excellent rate of pay depending on experience.

We also require **NURSES** to enhance our skilled team. Flexible approach to working required. Good rates of pay and a variety of hours. Further skill based training available if required £14.50 - £16.00 per hour.

We also require **CARE ASSISTANTS**, experience not essential.

Please contact the Louise Glasgow Home Manager for application form or further information
Tel: 01631 720278

RETAIL ASSISTANT

Harbro
QUALITY LIVESTOCK NUTRITION

Harbro Limited is one of the U.K's leading animal feed manufacturers. The company's core business is the supply of livestock feed plus a retail division of 18 Country Stores.

We are looking for an enthusiastic and motivated individual to join the team at our Lochgilphead Country Store. Working hours will be a minimum of 30 hours per week from 8.00am to 2.00pm with flexibility to work additional hours as required.

Applicants must be over 18 years of age and have good communication skills and a pleasant manner. An agricultural background would be an advantage.

To apply, please send your C.V. and covering letter for the attention of **Catriona Crawford, Store Manager, Harbro Ltd, 14 Kilmory Industrial Estate, Lochgilphead, PA31 8RR.**
Closing date: 11th December, 2015

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Tel/Fax 01546 600040

Renault Laguna

1.7 petrol, 03 reg, 12 months MOT. 4 door hatch, metallic silver, Alloys, half leather, CD player, power steering, good condition for year, good mechanically, good on fuel. Cheap to insure.
£650 o.n.o.

07554 571070

Land Rover Freelander, 2000 Sport TD

2005, 4 new tyres, 12 months MOT.
£5,000 o.n.o.

Tel 01631 564134/0796 9988837

Renault Clio Extreme 1.2

05 reg, 29,000 miles since new, one owner, 12 months MOT, Alloys, 4 new tyres, Very good condition, good mechanically, cheap to insure, ideal first car.
£1350 o.n.o.

Tel 07928 888128

WANTED

All types of good quality 4 x 4 vehicles, Landrovers, Mitsubishi, Kia, Ford etc and all 4 x 4 pickups, must be good condition and reasonable mileage. Older 4 x 4's and non runners/MOT failures etc considered.

Telephone: 07546 788945

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2 litre petrol, 64,000 miles, full years MOT, 4 new tyres, factory fitted 10 CD multichanger, sports seats and momo steering wheel. Reliable car.
£1,450

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08 Reg 70k diesel, Metallic Flint, Dual air con, sunroof, full leather, sat nav, reversing camera, heated seats, etc 40mpg + full mot and serviced.
£8500 o.n.o.

07889 959500

WANTED

4x4's, all makes and models, also light commercials, vans, pick-ups bought, high miles no problems, MOT or not, instant decision, same day payment.

Telephone: William 07730 130284 or email wlmotorhomes@outlook.com

Orkney Strikelineer

16.5 feet with cuddly and top screen, forward steering position, fitted cockpit cover. Suzuki 25 horsepower 2 stroke outboard. Housed in boathouse when not in use. Very sound sea boat in good condition. Located on Loch Sunart. Trailer included.
£3000

Telephone 01629 732794

Mitsubishi L200 pickup

2008 Single cab. Very good condition. MOT 11 months. New tyres, rear springs, discs & pads.
£4500 o.n.o.

Tel: 01496 300503 / 07748 707816

Toyota Aygo, VVTi

2010, MOT Feb '16, £20 annual road tax, 60+mpg, 46,000 miles, Full Toyota Service History.
£3400 o.n.o.

Telephone 07786 864877

WANTED

All types of 4 x 4 vehicles, Landrovers, Toyotas, Nissan, any 4x4 considered non-runners, failures, single or double cab and accident damaged, MOT failure, genuine people to deal with.

Telephone: 01250 884306 or mobile 07885 203020

WANTED

4x4s, Land Rover, double or single cab pickups, or any type of 4x4, any year or condition, will collect.

Telephone 07767 302294 or 01339 802522

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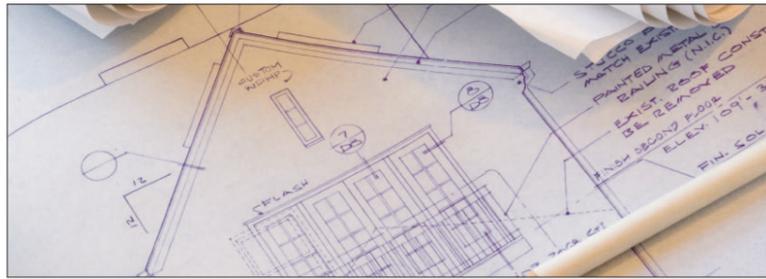
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Quarterly housing statistics for Scotland provide an update on new home starts and completions for the third quarter of 2015 for the social sector and for the second quarter of 2015 for the private sector.

Commenting on the figures, Chartered Institute of Housing Scotland director Annie Mauger said: 'We welcome the rise in affordable and social rented homes built over the 12 months to September 2015. However, these figures also show that the total number of homes built across all tenures has fallen in recent years - and the scale of the challenge we face to build the new housing we need to help the growing number of people who are struggling to access a decent home at a price they can afford. Our research with Shelter Scotland and the Scottish Federation of Housing Associations has shown that we need to build at least 12,000 affordable homes a year for the

next five years - today's figures show that just less than 7,000 were built in the year to the end of September.

'Given current budget constraints, delivering the number of new homes that are needed will require some genuinely bold new thinking. We also need to ensure that we are building homes of all tenures (to buy, to rent and for shared ownership) that are truly affordable for people on all incomes. Ahead of next year's election, we look forward to working with politicians from all parties to share the knowledge and experience of Scotland's housing professionals so we can develop solutions that will work in practice on the ground.'

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Market Analysis

The market as a whole in Argyll and Bute remains relatively static but has seen a slight increase in demand. The Register of Scotland figures now published for September 2015 show 154 transactions with an average value of £156,099 across the area. This compares favourably to figures for September 2014 of 134 transactions with an average value of £148,439 but is not back to the pre-recession levels of September 2007 which saw 192 transactions averaging £178,474.

The changes announced in the Westminster spending review, imposing a premium of 3% in additional Stamp Duty on English holiday homes could well impact the holiday home market in Argyll and Bute for better or worse. The market for holiday property has helped to underpin west coast values through the recession and demand remains relatively good. If the Scottish government decides to follow Westminster's example with a second home premium on top of the existing Land and Buildings Transaction Tax, it could seriously dent demand and values. Conversely, if no change is made in Scotland, Scottish holiday home demand could increase, with value for money comparing very favourably with other parts of the UK. We will keep an eye on developments and keep our clients updated as matters develop!

Picture This!!

Enter our photography competition and raise funds for charity! The long winter nights are drawing in and many people have put their cameras away until the spring, but at Bell Ingram we are always thinking about ways to promote coastal Argyll and the Isles as a place to live, work or relax. If you think you can capture the essence of 'winter on the west coast' why not enter our amateur photography competition this winter?

For every entrant Bell Ingram will donate £1 to Stramash to help make a positive difference in the lives of children, young people and adults through the Scottish outdoors!

The winner in the adult category will win a photography lesson with a professional photographer, the under 16 winner will receive a camera and both will have their picture exhibited in Bell Ingram's office.

For more information on how to enter the adult or under 16 categories, and for full terms and conditions, contact Bell Ingram today.

Entries open on 1st December and close for judging on 31st January.

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A most individual period residence with outstanding views over Loch Etive

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MERRY CHRISTMAS

To my wonderful granddaughter Leah MacCorquodale, hoping you have a lovely Christmas. Love you always Gran

MERRY CHRISTMAS

To my daughter Leah MacCorquodale Merry Christmas from Dad, looking forward to all the Christmases we will spend together.

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BIRTHS

YATES - Elliot and Kerry (née MacLaren) are delighted to announce the birth of their daughter Zoe Anna Elizabeth on Saturday, November 28, 2015, at Lorn and Isles Hospital, Oban. Third grandchild for Richard Yates, Glasgow and Jennifer Macdonald, Crieff and second grandchild for John and Angela MacLaren, Oban. Thanks to Oban midwives.

ENGAGEMENTS

PICKEN - JAMIESON - We are happy to announce the engagement of Vanessa Picken, daughter of Roslyn and Philip Picken, Oban, to Fraser Jamieson, son of Colin and Julie Jamieson, Millport, Isle of Great Cumbrae

GOLDEN WEDDING

PETTINGER - GILFILLAN - At Corrach Free Church on December 3, 1965, by Rev A. Smith assisted by Rev D. MacLeod, Keith Antony to Ann.

DEATHS

MACAULAY - Hector passed peacefully at The Royal Infirmary, Edinburgh on November 26, 2015, son of Katie and Callum, loving father of Catherine and Kirsty. Funeral will take place from Oban Parish Church on Monday, December 7 at 1pm thereafter to Pennyfur Cemetery.

MACCUISH - Peacefully at home on November 24th 2015, Peggy nee Beaton aged 68 years, much loved and cherished mum to Kenneth, Brian and Mary. Devoted granny to Innes, Lee, Kyla and Alanna, loving mother-in-law, sister and Aunt.

MACDONALD - On November 27, 2015, at Mid Argyll Hospital, Lochgilphead, Dr Neil Macdonald (Scourie), in his 80th year, beloved husband of Hilary, much loved by Kirsteen, Jamie and Nikki, and a dearly loved grandpa. Funeral service at Cardross Crematorium, on Friday, December 4 at 10.15am, thereafter to a memorial service at Tarbert Parish Church at 1.30pm, to which all friends are respectfully invited. Family flowers only please, donations if desired to Tarbert Nursing Aid and Tarbert Senior Citizen's Annual Dinner.

MACINTYRE - Peacefully after a short illness, at Lorn and Isles Hospital, Oban on November 27, 2015, aged 70 years, Calum a beloved husband, father, Seanair, brother and uncle.

MACLARTY - On November 25, 2015, at the Lorn and Isles Hospital, Oban, Catherine MacLarty, daughter of the late Hugh and Mary MacLarty, loving sister to Robert and the late Hamish, sister-in-law to Caro, aunt to Carolyn, Robbie and Fiona, much loved great aunt to Innes, Kieran, Aaron, Autumn and Mia. Sadly missed. Service was held at Muckarrn Parish Church, Taynult, on Wednesday, December 2.

McNAIR - Peacefully on Friday, November 27, 2015 in Struan Lodge, James (Jimmy), beloved husband of the late Margaret, loving father to Gordon, Mairi, Jim and Robin and a much loved grandfather and great-grandfather. Sadly missed and dearly loved by all family and friends. The funeral service will be held on Friday, December 4, in Strachur Parish Church at 11 am and thereafter to Strathlachlan Cemetery, to which all are respectfully invited. Family flowers only please but donations, if desired, to Struan Lodge.

NAPIER - Peacefully at home, The Old School House, Clachan, on November 23, 2015, William Melville Napier (Willie), in his 79th year, dearly beloved husband of Anne Miller, much loved father of Lorna and Martin and a dearly loved grandfather.

SINCLAIR - Peacefully, at the Belford Hospital on Sunday, November 29, 2015 in her 94th year, Elizabeth 'Betty' Sinclair, (née Gallagher), (ex MacBrayne's Bus Conductor). Beloved wife of the late Alastair. Loving mum of Fiona MacKellaig also a dearly loved mother-in-law, gran and great-granny. Funeral service will be held tomorrow, (Friday) December 4, 2015 at 1pm in Kilmallie Free Church of Scotland, Caol, thereafter to Kilmallie Cemetery. Family flowers only please. Donations if desired, to Belford Hospital can be given at the church door or forward to John McLellan Funeral Directors, Dudley Road, Fort William. The family would like to thank all relatives, friends and neighbours for their kindness to mum over the years and also thanks to Craig Nevis Surgery, Home Carers and the Belford Hospital for the wonderful care and support they gave to Betty during her latter years.

TURNER - Peacefully at Ranfurly Care Home, Johnstone on November 12, Katie Turner (née MacInnes), Salen, Mull, age 91 years. Beloved wife of the late Terry, loving mother of Mary Anne, Sheena and Fiona and much-loved granny and great granny. Following the cremation held on November 20 there will be an interment of ashes on Mull on Saturday, December 19, at 12 noon at Kilpatrick, followed by a gathering at the Isle of Mull Hotel, to which all family and friends are invited.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

CAMERON - Isobel (Isie) (Bryce) - Hughie, Alan, Astie and families would like to thank all relations, neighbours and friends for their kind words and support over the past weeks. We would also like to thank the Macmillan nurses for their care and attention, the doctors and nurses of the Combined Assessment Unit Belford Hospital and Dr Smith at Craig Nevis Surgery for her unfailing support. We are very grateful to the Rev Morag Muirhead for her visits and moving service in the Duncansburgh MacIntosh Church, Mabel Wallace for the readings and to all who paid their last respects at the church and graveside. We thank Mike McFall and staff for their help and understanding and Paul Jeffery and staff of the Glen Nevis Restaurant for going the extra mile to meet Isie's wishes. We are grateful to all who gave so generously to the collection in Isie's memory and thank you all for the final sum of £1,350.00 for the Macmillan nurses in Lochaber and the Duncansburgh MacIntosh Church fabric fund.

INGRAM - Ivar and family would like to thank all neighbours, relatives and friends for their support in their sudden loss of Betsy and to her local doctors.

MACCALLUM - The family of the late Malcolm MacCallum wish to thank all relatives, friends and neighbours for kind expressions of sympathy. Sincere gratitude to Dr Mark Simpson and all the staff of Lochgilphead Medical Centre for the care and support shown to Malcolm over many years. Special thanks to Collete Morgan, Macmillan nurse, community nurses, extended community care team and Marie Curie nurse for their skill and care, which enabled Malcolm to stay at home during his final illness. Thanks also to Rev David Carruthers for a comforting service, to Fiona and Roddy of D. MacDonald for professional services, to Alistair MacLean for piping tribute, and to the Stag Hotel for fine purvey. Thank you to all who attended at the church and graveside. The retail collection for Erskine amounted to £275. Malcolm was a true gentleman

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who served Lochgilphead in the Army Cadet Force, Fire Brigade and Community Council. He leaves many treasured memories and will be sadly missed.

MEMORIAM

CAIRNS - Treasured memories of our dear sister and aunt Helen, who passed away December 1, 2014. Also remembering my dear parents Marjory and David and my brother David. Time passes, memories stay. Never forgotten especially today.
- Joan, George and family.

GILLIES - In loving memory of Graeme, who died on December 3, 2006. There is always a face before us. A voice we would love to hear. A smile we will always remember. Of a son/brother we loved so dear. - With love Dad, Mam, Scott, Kevin, Sarah and Cameron, Ross, Asha and Sandy.

LAMBERT - In loving memory of my dear wife Joey who died December 6, 2003. Always on my mind. - Jimmy x

DEMPSTER - Precious memories of a much loved husband Archie, who passed away one year ago on the December 5, 2014. Miss you so much. - Anne xxx RIP.

DEMPSTER - In loving memory of a dear father, grandfather and father-in-law who died on December 5, 2014. Miss you dad. - Anne Marie, Ian, Archie, Raymond and their families. xxx RIP.

MACCOLL - John Precious memories of a much loved dad and granddad who died 30 November 2010. Forever in our hearts and thoughts. 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.

MACINNES - In loving memory of my dear wife Ina, who passed away on November 28, 2010. No tears, no verse, no words can say. How much we miss you every day. - Love Roddy xx

MACINNES - In loving memory of a dear mum and granny Ina, who passed away on November 28, 2010. The hands of time keep turning and years slip away but memories are the keepsake no-one can take away. Always remembered. - Fiona, Brian and Euan xx Kevan, Claire and Ellie xx Joane x

MACINTOSH - In loving memory of my dear wife, mum and gran, Morag, who died on November 27, 1979. Always remembered. - Inserted by her husband, Ewen and family, Isle of Barra.

MACLEOD - Remembering Campbell a loving husband, dad and father-in-law.

It does not need a special day To bring you to our minds For days without a thought of you. Are very hard to find. Our hearts still ache. Our tears still fall. For the one we loved most of all. Missed and remembered every day. - Margaret, Sandy and Kristeen, Mhairi and Rowatt

We talk about you often, And think about you too. We have so many memories, But we wish we still had you. We miss you Seanair - Fearnie, Fergus, Kaitlynn, Kimberley and partner Matt.

MACLEOD - Campbell 3/12/2014 - Happy memories of a great mum, uncle and great uncle who passed away a year ago today. RIP. Always in our hearts. - Noreen, Donnie and family.

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. - From Phil and families.

McTAGGART - In loving memory of my partner Roseanne McTaggart (née Langan), who died December 8, 2013. Always in our thoughts. -

Donnie, Scott, Fiona, Eilidh and Hannah, Fort William and the rest of the family.

O'BRIEN - Treasured memories of Valerie, a loving wife, mum and grandmother who died on December 4, 2010 Held in our hearts forever xxx - Billy, Louise, Laurence, Olivia, Amelie and Lucia

TIMMS - Treasured thoughts of our dear mum and loving nana Shena, who passed away November 30, 1971. Also remembering all other loved ones. A memory is a keepsake of time That lives forever in the heart. - Love Catherine, Lachie and family.



The five Malaysian students who were successfully selected for the programme are Florence Chuah, Saraphina Lee-Boey, Shao Wen Chew, Jia Yi Seah, and Cheok Lam Woo. t49ballet1no

Malaysian knowledge exchange to Ballet West

Ballet West opened up its doors to its first international student exchange programme as part of its project to provide international exposure for Malaysian students. The five Malaysian students who were successfully selected for the programme are Florence Chuah, Saraphina Lee-Boey, Shao Wen Chew, Jia Yi Seah, and Cheok Lam Woo. The U.K Ballet Student Exchange Programme is a collaboration effort between Direct Academia International (DAI) and Ballet West. This five-day workshop has exposed student to different genres of dance from Classical Ballet to Jazz. Mr Shannon Lee, director of DAI shares that this student exchange programme, is one of DAI's initiative in developing talents to put Malaysians on the international ballet map. 'In Malaysia, students rarely

have the chance to perform with international soloists. Through this programme, students can experience the dance industry alongside professional dancers.' said Mr Shannon Gillian Barton, of Ballet West, a member of Royal Academy of Dance and fellow of the Higher Education Academy UK (FHEA) shares that the Malaysian students get to experience the same training as the professionals through this programme. 'Ballet West also tours internationally with sold-out performances in China and our world-class teachers have worked with names like George Balanchine and Margot Fonteyn. One of the key tutors for the students is emerging principal dancer Natasha Watson, 19. 'Her young age makes her a role model for all young talents.' said Ms Barton. Natasha is a Genée

International Ballet Competition medalist and the only dancer from the UK selected to join the prestigious Prix de Lausanne in 2015. Ms Audrey Kwan Arts and Learning Director states that Malaysian girls has made great progress not only in dance technique but also show the ability to cope physically and mentally throughout their intensive dance training. 'The girls are very lucky to have Natasha as our teacher, her focus on sensations allows the girls to visualise how technically difficult repertoire can be performed in a graceful and effortless way.' said Ms Kwan 'As an ambassador for Ballet West we are proud to work with Ballet West to develop the next generation of Malaysian dancers to be part of the international dance scene,' said Mr Shannon Lee.

LIFE lines

Happy Ever After

I WAS at a party last weekend. The event was planned to celebrate the marriage of two very close friends and was a fabulous evening of music, song and laughter. In fact the couple had been married some weeks ago in a very private ceremony at Greta Green; at once upholding a great matrimonial tradition and avoiding the glare of attention such occasions sometimes engender.

To avoid disappointing their families and many friends, the couple decided to host a party separately and by doing so gave their guests the opportunity to share such a special occasion without necessarily exposing themselves to extra pressure. I have to admire people who are still prepared to make public affirmations of their love for each other, and to make life-long commitments in an age of transience. Both my friends had been married before, and it struck me that people are very good at finding contentment, peace and purpose even if things have not always worked out according to plan in the past.

I am not a religious person, but that does not mean I don't have faith.

Saturday's party confirmed my faith in the endurance of the human spirit, and the indefatigable nature of people intent on having a good time. For a night - or a lifetime - the human race can demonstrate its will to make things right, better, and spread goodwill among friends and between nations. As Syria is threatened by more air strikes, and we mourn those lost in the Paris atrocities, there is much to learn from human kindness.

Johnston Adams

Thought for the week

In Advent we hear a lot about John the Baptist, that strange character whose dress sense and diet were questionable. Apparently he liked to wear clothing made from camel hair and enjoyed eating locusts and honey. He preached a Gospel of

repentance, a challenging Gospel, sometimes a bit scary even, but people flocked to hear him and to be baptised by him. However, John never forgot his mission; to point people to Christ, the Messiah - our gift from God. In this season of gift giving, I

challenge you to heed John's words to share your coats, your food, your money even and help those less fortunate than yourselves to enjoy a Christmas filled with love and joy - which I wish you all.

Nicki McNelly

Luke 3. 11b: 'Whoever has two coats must share with anyone who has none; and whoever has food must do likewise.'

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Kingussie win play-off game to retain their premiership status

'The first goal was always going to be crucial and that's how it turned out'

KINGUSSIE have retained their place in top-flight shinty in what was a 'massive relief' for the club after a 2-0 victory over Kilmallie. A goalless first half tired out the Fort William side, who hadn't played in 10 weeks, leaving themselves open to a 63rd minute goal from Barrie Dallas and another from Ryan Borthwick on 71 minutes to secure Kingussie's place in the Marine Harvest Premiership. Kingussie co-manager Davie Anderson said: 'It was a big relief just to get it over and done with to be honest, although we were obviously delighted to win. It was a long time to wait for both teams, but especially Kilmallie.' However, the team that finishes

second bottom of the premiership next season will not have the luxury of a play-off as the rules have been changed to a two-up, two-down system between the Premiership and the National Division. Anderson said: 'We don't want to be in that position at the end of next season. We will start training in January and look to arrange some friendlies in February. 'We would have preferred not to be in the play-off this year but we've only got ourselves to blame and we've got to roll up our sleeves and make sure we don't end up in the bottom two next year.'



GOAL: Kingussie's Barrie Dallas, No. 12, scores the all-important first goal in his team's play-off win against Kilmallie.

It was not to be for Kilmallie manager Mark MacPherson, who said promotion was his main ambition for the club when he took over last season. He said: 'It was just too much for us. We played really well in

the first half. We had a lot of chances so we should have scored then. In the second half the effect of not playing on grass for 10 weeks started to take its toll. The first goal was always going to be crucial and that's how it turned

out. The boys did themselves and the club proud. They did an amazing job to get this far and worked so hard for it.' MacPherson also hopes the new system will be kinder to his team next season: 'Kilmallie suggested

the two-up, two-down system because it stops the position we found ourselves in when we were waiting for months for a play-off. 'I believe we'll be favourites to win the National Division this year. I'm confident of promotion.'

Oban Camanachd hands out the awards

Shinty

OBAN Camanachd club held its annual buffet dance at Glencruitten Golf Club last Saturday evening where the Player of the Year Awards were presented on the call of MC for the evening, club president Alan Dunning. The following awards were presented to the players by the respective team managers. **Oban Camanachd** - Player of the Year - Garry Lord for his outstanding performances during the campaign; Goal of the Season - Aidan MacIntyre, whose goal against Kingussie ensured that the Oban side would play in the premiership next season. Team manager Ian Hay presented the awards and he had cause for celebration himself as he has reached the 'big 50'. **Lochside Rovers** - Player of the Year was the promising young defender Ross MacMillan. Goal of the Season was won by the evergreen Brian MacCallum, who was top scorer in South Division One and with manager Gareth Evans winning the league's Manager of the Year award it capped a fine season for Camanachd's reserve side who missed out on winning the league title on goal difference. **Under 17s** - Player of the Year - Evan MacLellan, for being such an influence on his team's successful season. Goal of the Season - Daniel MacVicar, who is now a regular in the Camanachd first team. Team manager David McCuish, who made the presentations, said: 'We were disappointed to lose the recent London Shield final 2-0 against Newtonmore but we will retain all but two players at this level for next season and will hope to go one better as we feel this group of youngsters has the potential to go far in the game. 'The management team of Scott Buchanan, George Easton and myself will remain in charge of this squad next season.' **Under 14s** - Player of the Year - Daniel Sloss. The team are still involved in league and cup competitions and team manager Stephen Sloss and coach Brian Logan remain confident of success. The evening was attended by more than 100 players, committee members and parents. Music was provided by Malcom Clark and his band. The club would like to thank Glencruitten Golf Club for the use of the facilities as well as the bar staff, who contributed to a successful evening. The club's AGM will take place at the Rockfield Centre on Tuesday December 1 at 7pm prompt.



Edinburgh Rugby's Magnus Bradbury is one of three new players who could receive their first Scotland 7s cap in Dubai.

Magnus included in Scotland 7s squad for World Series

Rugby sevens

RISING rugby star Magnus Bradbury has been given a place in the Scotland sevens side which will compete in the World HSBC Sevens Series in Dubai this weekend. Magnus, 20, who played for Oban Lorne RFC and is a former pupil of Oban High School, has already tasted international experience playing for Scotland under-17s, under-18s and under-20s, where he has featured as captain of the side. Magnus currently plays for Edinburgh as a flanker, and has been tipped by many rugby commentators to earn a full Scotland cap in the future. Magnus's Edinburgh club-mate Nick McLennan and Scotland under 20 winger Robbie Nairn have also been included in the squad for the first time.

Oban Lorne Rugby Club hold past players dinner

Rugby

A COLLECTION of generations gathered on Saturday evening at Oban Lorne rugby club house for a past players' dinner. The event was organised by the club which is keen to get all former players back involved with the club and back to support the current teams. 'This was an idea that has been in the planning for around a year,' said Murray Hamilton, current vice president of Oban Lorne RFC. 'We wanted to get as many past players, friends and associates of Oban Lorne together as possible. 'I believe that all sports clubs are an extended family. They mean a lot to people and all too often, when players stop playing, they find it difficult to stay involved, so we wanted to have a night just for players and friends and supporters of the club. 'With help from Tommy Sutherland at the Regent Hotel we were able to provide a meal and David Preston and Ted Heath accepted invitations to speak on the night. 'It was an entertaining evening and it was really good to see so many players catching up and reminiscing about past playing glories. **Great event** 'This is something that we hope to do every year. We think it could become a great event in the annual calendar. 'We now have two senior men's teams playing in west leagues, a senior ladies' team as well as many youth teams, none of this would have been possible if it was not for the hard work that all of the former players had put in.'

New development team structure

Shinty

FOLLOWING a comprehensive review and restructuring exercise earlier this year, the Camanachd Association's Development Team has been significantly strengthened in line with the new Strategic Plan for Shinty 2015 - 2017. The revised positions are: Graham Cormack, national development manager; Ronald Ross, regional development manager; Euan McMurdo, regional development officer - West; Paul MacArthur, regional development officer - Central; Katie Drain, regional development officer - North. The restructured development team is now the largest in the Association's history and will considerably enhance the organisation's capacity to work with and on behalf of members in the promotion and development of shinty across Scotland.

BJJ (Brazilian Jiu Jitsu) OBAN BJJ travelled to Edinburgh with eight competitors for the winter leg of the Scotia Cup. The tournament had 18 teams with clubs from all over the UK. Out of the eight competitors Oban BJJ managed two medals - Mateusz Grabiec got gold after four hard matches in the 82kg division and Dawid Loukil got silver in the 88kg division. The whole team showed great improvement in an ever harder competition with Brazilian Jiu Jitsu in Scotland continually growing and the standard of competitors getting stronger each time they compete. Saturday November 28 saw Marcos Nardini holding a seminar and grading test at the Oban Martial Arts Centre the results of which will be in the next column. Classes continue to focus on fundamentals and competition sparring. Club contact: Coogie Potter on

MARTIAL ARTS

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attracts fighters from several different countries. It is hoped to have some local fighters in the mix at this event. Mark Welsh is still recovering from an injury sustained at the British Open but it is hoped he will be recovered in time for the Scottish. Club contact: Iain Rodger on iain@ikku.co.uk **Shukokai Karate** ARGYLL Martial Arts (incorporating Argyll Shukokai) classes continue as normal in Oban, Dalmailly and Inveraray. Anyone wanting details or wishing to join should contact Kenny Gray on kenny.gray@btinternet.com

Kickboxing SENSHI Do Kickboxing is having a grading, starting at noon on Sunday December 6, when members will be striving to pass and earn their new grades. Going for 2nd Dan Black Belt are: Craig MacLachlan, Colin Campbell, Andrzej Dariusz Pytko and Doug Craig. Kaitlyne MacLeod will be testing for 1st Dan Black Belt. The Black Belt gradings are a gruelling three hours of hard pad work, cardio and endurance followed by 30 x one minute fights for 1st Dan and 40 x one minute fights for 2nd Dan. The fights are continuous, full contact bouts with a fresh opponent every round. To pass, those going for the grade need to have excellent endurance and spirit just to be standing at the end of it. Wednesday sessions will continue as normal right through the holiday period. Club contact: Wullie Rodger on shihanwill@gmail.com



Mateusz Grabiec, left, coach Coogie Potter, centre, and Dawid Loukil at the Scotia Cup in Edinburgh. Mateusz returned home with a gold medal and Dawid with silver.



Mateusz Grabiec in action during the Scotia Cup.

Oban Athletic's game falls victim to the weather

Football

OBAN Athletic's West of Scotland League game against Bellaire, due to be played at Glencruitten last Saturday was called off after a pitch inspection found the playing surface to be unplayable due to the heavy rain. The Oban side have no fixture this weekend.

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Donnie's double sees Saints take all three points

'We played some good football in difficult weather conditions'



GOAL: Donnie Campbell, No 11, slots the ball into the bottom corner of the Finnart net for his second goal of the day. 17_149saints04

Oban Saints	2
Finnart	0

SAFL Premier Division

OBAN Saints got back to winning ways last Saturday at Oban Community Pitch, with a 2-0 league victory over Finnart.

This was the result the home side needed to wash the sour taste of last week's 4-4 draw against Goldenhill out of their system.

The game was slow in getting out of the blocks as both teams aimed to find their form and take control of the proceedings.

Finnart's Steven Wilson had the

first opportunity, when he found himself with space to shoot, but in the end his shot wasn't enough to trouble Saint's goalkeeper Thomas McCulloch and it trickled past the post.

Dean Smith came close in the ninth minute, but he just failed to connect properly with a David McArthur cross.

Finnart were proving to be a threat in the air and stocked up the statistics by swinging in a number of crosses and corners, but the home defence dealt with this tactic fairly comfortably.

After some good passing play,

Dougal Graham, starting his first full game after injury, was able to get forward from defence and have a go at goal, but his shot sailed inches wide.

Saints thought they had taken the lead when Donnie Campbell picked out Ross Maitland's run up the right flank which sent the winger through on goal. Maitland calmly slotted the ball home, but referee John Gallagher, from East Kilbride, blew his whistle for offside and the goal was disallowed.

Finnart were awarded a free kick in the 17th minute which Andrew Blair fancied but his effort from 25 yards couldn't find the target and his free kick went past the post.

Saints opened the scoring midway through the half when Thomas McCulloch cleared the ball upfield finding Smith, who played a great pass to Campbell.

He out-muscled his marker and, at full stretch, slotted the ball past Finnart keeper Brian Paton into the bottom corner of the net.

The home side began to take control of the match and were awarded a free kick in a dangerous position when Paul Kerr was brought down on the edge of the opposition's box.

Willie Gemmill stepped up and struck the ball low and hard towards the bottom corner but this time keeper Brian Paton was

able to smother the ball.

Maitland then 'scored' his second goal of the game, after some good link up play from Campbell and Smith but again it was disallowed for offside.

Saints continued to dominate possession, but couldn't find the back of the net again before the half-time break although the home side were good value for their narrow lead at the interval.

The second half started much like the first one ended with the home side on top.

The Saints supporters were getting ready to celebrate when Craig MacEwan got in front of his marker at a corner and headed the ball towards goal but his team mate Smith, standing at the post, couldn't get out of the way and blocked MacEwan's header on the goal-line.

With wind advantage Saints pushed forward and Campbell hit a long-range shot that bounced awkwardly in front of the keeper, resulting in him pushing the ball away from goal into the path of Maitland, but he couldn't convert the rebound.

Although on top, Saints needed a second goal to ease the nerves of the loyal band of supporters who braved the elements to watch the game.

Campbell then had a shot which was saved by the keeper, the ball spinning high in the air and Smith found himself in a

battle with Jamie McGowan.

The ball bounced awkwardly and Smith threw himself at the ball but he wasn't able to connect properly and the chance was missed.

Steven Wilson had a good chance to level the game, when he had a clear sight of goal, but he wasn't able to keep his shot down and it flew harmlessly over the bar.

Saints finally got the much-needed second goal when Smith made progress up the left before cutting the ball back across the edge of the Finnart box, where Campbell fired the ball into the back of the net, with the help of a deflection, to score his second goal of the afternoon.

Finnart then had their best opportunity of the match when the ball fell to the unmarked Martin McCann but the Finnart striker was unable to make contact properly and the ball ran out for a goal kick.

Saints always looked dangerous on the counter attack and caught the away defence sleeping.

Campbell almost completed his hat-trick, but his shot sailed inches over the bar.

With 15 minutes remaining, Saints took off Dougal Graham replacing him with Marc MacCallum and the defender wasted no time in making an impact when he attacked a corner, beating his marker and headed



CONTROL: Dean Smith gets the ball under control. 17_149saints02

Scottish Amateur Football League results and fixtures

LAST Saturday's results: Premier Division - Inverclyde v Campbelltown Pupils, postponed; Oban Saints 2, Finnart 0; Premier Division One - Lochgilphead Red Star v Motherwell Thistle, postponed; Premier Division Two - Tarbert v FC Clydebank, postponed. Division One - Dunoon Athletic v Carlton YM, postponed; Centenary Cup - Dunoon v Ferguslie Star, postponed.

This Saturday's fixtures: Scottish Amateur Cup fourth Round - Kettle United v Campbelltown Pupils; New Cumnock Afton v Dunoon; Postal United v Oban Saints. Premier Division One - Ferguslie Star v Lochgilphead Red Star; Division One - Carlton YM v Dunoon Athletic; Tarbert no game.

Bonus point win for Argyll and Bute at Hyndland

Hyndland	8
Argyll and Bute	27

BT West Division 4

ARGYLL and Bute won their second game of the season against Hyndland at Scotstoun Stadium on Saturday with a bonus point 27-8 victory.

The Argyll team were hoping to build on last week's 42-26 win over Isle of Mull.

With Oban Lorne's West Division 1 game against Cambuslang being postponed, Argyll were fortunate to add some experience to the team with Corrie Louw, Lorne MacLachlan, Andrew MacDougall and Dave McCabe all starting.

There was also a welcome comeback for Plato Moisiadis from long-term injury. Second Row Airidas Savickas and stand off Dom Ma also returned to the team.

Argyll made a good start to the game, despite arriving late, and looked like they had scored within the first few minutes. Roddy Morrison's pass, however, just went forward to Allan Wright

with the teams being taken back for a scrum.

Lorne MacLachlan scored the first try of the day. The back row player touched down from close range in the middle of a ruck to give the visiting team a 7-0 lead after Daz Muller's conversion.

Hyndland hit back with a penalty after 10 minutes to reduce the gap to 7-3.

It was apparent from early in the game that Argyll would dominate in the scrum and were also conceding far fewer penalties at the breakdown.

This gave the Argyll side much more possession than the hosts to launch attacks from.

An excellent Dom Ma kick was chased up field by Steven Parr, who managed to tackle the Hyndland winger out of play on his own five-metre line. Lorne MacLachlan was on hand again to score from the resulting driving maul to extend the lead to 12-3.

Argyll added to the scoreline with a try from Andy MacDougall to give a 19-3 half time lead.

Both sides played out a scrappy error-strewn second half. Argyll

had chances to score but were undone with the final pass not going to hand.

A spirited and hard working Hyndland side scored their only try of the game with 10 minutes to go.

This proved only to be a consolation as 17-year-old Ryan Prosser, making his senior rugby debut, crashed over in the dying seconds of the game for the final score of the game.

Argyll ran out bonus point 27-8 winners to lift the team up to fifth place in the table.

There is no league game for Argyll and Bute this Saturday but the team have a friendly fixture arranged with Kintyre RFC.

Weather permitting, this game will go ahead at noon with the venue being Glencruitten or North Connel.

The next league game is away to Glasgow East on December 12.

BT Women's National League 1

Broughton P v P Oban Lorne

OBAN Lorne Women's fixture was postponed on Sunday due to the weather.

This weekend the team travel to Edinburgh to take on Watsonians. Women's training continues every Wednesday from 6pm at Glencruitten.

U18 West Club Conference Oban P v P Cumbernauld

OBAN'S U18 fixture at home to Cumbernauld was called off on Saturday due to the weather.

The Oban U18 side were looking for their third consecutive win to top the U18 table. Next up is an away to trip to league leaders Strathaven this Saturday.

U16 West Club Conference Hillhead P v P Oban

Oban U16s season was again disrupted last weekend with unplayable pitches at Hillhead RFC.

After a great start to the season, the U16 have only played one fixture in the past six weeks.

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WEATHER

Thursday Sunny intervals
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Friday Light rain
 Winds strong south south westerly
 Temperatures 7°C to 10°C.

Weekend Heavy rain on Saturday
 Light rain showers on Sunday
 Winds strong south westerly
 Temperatures 5°C to 9°C.

Stop Press: New pontoons recently installed by North West Marine at Kyle Lochboisdale for visiting yachts

TIDAL INFORMATION

Tide tables for Oban during the week from **Thursday December 3, 2015** are listed below with differences for major ports listed on the right. All times are GMT (add one hour) BST)

Date	am	pm	Ardrihaig	Mallaig
Thur	04.40 1.6 10.28 3.2 17.43 2.0 23.25 2.9		-5.35	+0.25
Fri	05.37 1.8 11.46 3.1 19.02 2.0 ** ** *		-5.30	+0.55
Sat	01.20 3.0 06.40 1.8 13.28 3.1 20.21 2.0		-0.47	+0.16
Sun	02.19 3.1 07.47 1.8 14.28 3.3 21.14 1.8		2.00	+5.30
Mon	03.02 3.3 08.49 1.7 15.11 3.4 21.52 1.7			
Tues	03.41 3.5 09.39 1.6 15.51 3.6 22.25 1.5			
Wed	04.19 3.6 10.21 1.4 16.29 3.8 22.57 1.3			

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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Fort William Team's Christmas Gathering

Budget blues deepen as council faces bigger than expected cuts

EMMA CRICHTON
ecrichton@obantimes.co.uk

'DEVASTATING' cuts to Highland Council's budget could leave the local authority struggling to save £41 million in the next year alone. Council leader Margaret Davidson sent out a stark warning this week, saying she expects the budget to be cut by up to three times more than originally thought. This follows a meeting of the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA) which predicted a cash reduction

of between four and five per cent for 2016-17, but Highland Council's current assumptions for the budget were based on a cut of just 1.6 per cent. This means the council's funding gap has now stretched from around £20 million to £41 million, including the £5 million shortfall already anticipated for next year. Highland Council and other local authorities will meet with COSLA to make representations to the Scottish Government about the reductions but will not know the final outcome until December 16

at the earliest. In June, every council department was told to make savings of six per cent, although this is expected to rise after the announcement, which stemmed from UK Chancellor George Osborne's Autumn Statement. Councillor Davidson warned cuts to services and staff were possible: 'The local government settlement appears to be extremely bad. I would emphasise that this is not the final position that the Scottish Government is considering, but based on indications, the cut in our grants will be even

more severe than we anticipated. This would translate into a devastating cut to our budget with a corresponding impact on our services.' A rise in council tax is one proposal suggested to protect services, although it is thought even a 10 per cent rise (around £10 per month for Band D) wouldn't come close to plugging the gap. And the council wasted no time in asking residents how they would feel about a tax rise, posting a poll on their Facebook page on Tuesday night. After just one hour of the poll being live, the



STARK WARNING: council leader Margaret Davidson.

vast majority of voters (113) said they don't want to pay more, compared to 35 who said they would accept a five per cent rise and 20 who said they would be happy with a 10 per cent rise. Just five people said they were willing to pay more than 10 per cent. Closing council buildings, including schools, at lunchtime on a Friday was suggested last week to save on costs, although this was not well received by parents, who raised concerns about childcare costs and the negative impact this could have on education.

TIMESLINE

Two Fort William mill shops closed

EDINBURGH Woollen Mill has announced profits of more than £91 million and plans to open 100 new stores, despite closing two shops in Fort William at the weekend. The group cited Fort William and Oban as locations with high sales, despite closing three shops between the two towns in the same week as the figures were announced. A spokesperson for Edinburgh Woollen Mill said: 'The leases on the two stores on High Street, Fort William, are due to expire and, unfortunately, we have been unable to agree commercial terms to renew. Wherever possible, staff will be redeployed to neighbouring stores.'

Winter warning to messy dog owners

DARK nights are no excuse for not picking up dog mess, says Highland Council. The local authority has warned pet owners they must still clean up after their dogs and will still face a fine even if they claim not to see it. Allan Henderson, chairman of community services, said: 'People who exercise their dogs in parks, playing fields and along pathways in scenic areas should be aware that they must always pick up after their dog.'

Vandals discharge fire extinguisher

A FIRE extinguisher was taken from a cabinet and discharged in the car park underneath Tweedale Buildings, Middle Street, Fort William. Anyone with information about this is asked to contact police on 101 or Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800555111.



DEDICATED: retired employees of Invernevis House were thanked for a combined 92 years of service.

Decades of dedicated care

FORMER staff of Fort William care home Invernevis House were brought together for a joint retirement celebration. The employees, who have more than 92 years of service

between them, retired at different times over the last few months and enjoyed a party at Fort William Golf Club to celebrate at the weekend. Cook Sandra Kaskonas was the longest serving employee

with 36 years' service, followed by carers Maggie O'Rourke with 18 and a half years, Yvonne Crighton who clocked up 14 years, Fiona Craik with 13 and Mary Campbell, who dedicated 11 years.

Councillor finds it 'difficult' to justify claiming expenses

JUST days before councillor Davidson's chilling budget warning, Fort William and Ardnamurchan councillor Andrew Baxter called on his colleagues to put their hands in their own pockets to contribute to council savings. The Highland Alliance member said it was 'difficult to justify' expenses such as paid-for meals and generous mileage repayment rates while Highland Council asked residents to accept cuts. This comes after it was revealed just 17 out of 80 members took part in a voluntary scheme agreed last year to pay for lunches they receive at the Inverness headquarters, currently paid by the council.



CONTRIBUTION CALL: Andrew Baxter.

Speaking at last week's resources committee meeting, councillor Baxter said: 'I find it very difficult to justify my criticising directors who are not meeting budget savings when we as members decided to make savings that were

within our control [paying for lunches] and we are nowhere near meeting that. I realise it's a voluntary contribution and for individual members to decide if they make that contribution but they must do so being prepared

to justify that to electors.' Councillor Baxter also suggested cutting mileage payments from 45 pence per mile to 40 pence per mile, saying it could save £19,000 a year, and called on senior councillors to take a salary cut of six per cent, saving £8,000 per year. But he added that the biggest saving of £47,000 could be made if councillors' allowances were capped, regardless of rises at a national level. He went on: 'I can't see why, when we are making hard choices that affect our residents across the Highlands and our staff who work for us, we should not be taking a hard look at this area as well and lead by example.' Bill Fernie, chairman of the resources committee, said the mileage was a price set by the Inland Revenue and council leader Margaret Davidson added she would look into practical suggestions to make savings.

Fort rower ready to tackle the Atlantic

A FORT William man has packed his bags and left the country in preparation for a mammoth 3,000-mile row across the Atlantic Ocean. Liam Browning, 30, and his three friends from his days in Newcastle University Boat Club are undergoing final training in the Canary Islands, before setting off on the journey of a lifetime on December 15 - a journey completed by just 500 people. The team of four, rowing under the name All Beans No Monkeys, have allocated 50 days for the trip as part of the Talisker Whisky Atlantic Challenge but hope to arrive in Antigua in 39 days to beat the current record. They also hope to raise £30,000 for the Cystic Fibrosis Trust and Royal National Lifeboat Institution through donations for their efforts, which includes rowing in pairs for two hours on and two off, 24 hours a day. To track Liam's journey or donate see www.allbeansnomonkeys.com



ALL BEANS NO MONKEYS: from left: Stuart Markland, Liam Browning, James Kendall and James Timbs-Harrison prepare for a 3,000-mile row across the Atlantic.

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Food bank's appeal to struggling families: come forward for help

EMMA CRICHTON
ecrichton@obantimes.co.uk

A FOOD bank manager is appealing to anyone who needs help during the long winter months to come forward.

Alex McConnachie of Lochaber food bank said he was worried about people who were struggling as the cold set in but didn't want to ask for help.

The Trussell Trust charity in Fort William fed 333 people between May and November this year, including 80 children, but Alex fears there may be more families struggling in silence.

He said: 'The amount we fed is down a bit on last year, but only very slightly. I have been asking the voucher holders such as social services but they said they have been quiet too. We're usually a bit quieter in the summer because a lot of people get seasonal work in hotels and places like that but that will all have died down by now.'

'I would hate to see anybody struggling, especially over Christmas, because they didn't



Food bank volunteers are calling on anyone who needs help to come forward. 21_499foodbank01

want to ask for help or don't think they're entitled to it. You don't have to be completely penniless or unemployed to qualify for vouchers. If anyone wants to ask me a few questions or find out more about what we do all they have to do is pop in.'

The food bank at Airds Crossing, High Street, is open between 12pm and 2pm on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays.

This comes after national figures showed more than 900,000 people in Britain used Trussell Trust food banks last year, compared to almost 350,000 the year before, a rise of 163 per cent.

But Chris Mould, chairman of the Trussell Trust, called this the 'tip of the iceberg'.

He said: 'That 900,000 people have received three days' food from a food bank, close to triple the numbers helped last year, is shocking in 21st century Britain.'

'But perhaps most worrying of all this figure is just the tip of the iceberg of UK food poverty. It doesn't include those helped by other emergency food providers, those living in towns where there is no food

bank, people who are too ashamed to seek help or the large number of people who are only just coping by eating less and buying cheap food.'

'In the last year we've seen things get worse, rather than better, for many people on low incomes. It's been extremely tough for a lot of people, with parents not eating properly in order to feed their children and more people than ever experiencing seemingly unfair and harsh benefits sanctions.'

A collection for Lochaber food bank will be held in Tesco, Fort William, today (Thursday) and Friday for anyone who would like to donate food.

Because what the food bank is short of can change every day, Alex advised to check 'shopping lists' with volunteers, although the charity is grateful for all non-perishable foods.

During December last year, the people of Lochaber displayed what Alex called 'tremendous generosity' with donations including perfume, toiletries and other gifts as well as food, which allowed the food bank to provide some presents alongside the 600 meals dished out during the festive period.

TIMESLINE

Police reminder on lost property

POLICE in Fort William are reminding the public they have a large number of bikes which have been handed in as found property.

Some of the bikes are valuable and relatively new so police are appealing to anyone who has lost one to contact the Fort William station.

A spokesman said: 'Every week numerous items of found property are handed in to the police station, including mobile phones, wallets, cameras and bicycles.'

'If you have lost any property it is always worth checking at the police station to see if it has been handed in.'

Pledge to improve lives of employees

HIGHLAND Council has committed to improving working life for their employees.

Following a survey of staff members, the local authority has pledged to improve areas such as valuing and recognising the work of staff, providing training opportunities and sustaining mental wellbeing.

The council will review progress in these aspects through another survey in two years.

Frank Sweeney junior rescued

IN THE Oban Times' story last week about a woman who travelled from Australia to thank a Fort William man who saved her father's life, an error was made.

We reported that the late Frank Sweeney had been rescued more than 60 years ago which was incorrect.

Frank Sweeney senior passed away many years ago but it was his son, Frank Sweeney junior who was rescued and is alive.

We apologise for this mistake and any confusion caused.

MV Corran due back from refit

THE FERRY connecting the Ardnamurchan peninsula to mainland Lochaber is due to return to the route today (Thursday) following maintenance.

MV Corran was at a boatyard on the Isle of Bute for its annual refit but its return was delayed by poor weather, leaving the smaller MV Maid of Glencoul to convey cars and passengers.

The ferry left Rothesay on Monday and was expected to be back in service today.

Photogenic pooch finds himself in centre of row between owner and pet food firm

A PHOTOGENIC dog found himself at the centre of a row between a Lochaber man and a major pet food company, after it was claimed a picture of the pooch was used without permission.

Stuart Ross from Roy Bridge was astounded when a photo of his five-year-old Labrador, Caley, taken by him in 2012, appeared as a central image in Pedigree's marketing campaign for a new fitness app for dogs. The technology allows owners to track how many calories their dog has burned and in turn how much food to give them based on this.

But Stuart, a self-employed land surveyor, said he never gave permission for the photo to be used, or even knew it had been used.

He said: 'Caley is a fit, healthy and happy dog who is not fed on Pedigree but he fits in perfectly with what Pedigree are trying to sell. I just couldn't

believe it when I saw it. When I phoned the company to complain they said it had been sent in as part of a competition. I post photos on Facebook quite a lot but I have no recollection of entering any competition and I wouldn't have agreed to terms and conditions which said it could be used in this way. When I asked for proof I had entered they couldn't track it down.'

Stuart said he is not a professional photographer and didn't want payment for himself but asked Pedigree to make a donation to Macmillan Cancer Support, as his wife, Mhairi, supports the charity, to which the company offered to pay £50. He said: 'They probably haven't done anything illegal but in the public eye they have

PHOTOGENIC: Labrador Caley, right, found himself at the centre of a Pedigree marketing campaign.



scavenged good quality photos for nothing, made massive commercial gain on them and only offered £50 for it. This is offensive, disproportional and totally unreasonable.'

Pedigree is owned by Mars Petcare, a company with an annual turnover of \$17,000,000,000.

A spokeswoman from the company insisted the image had been submitted. She said: 'Mr Ross sent us the photo as part of a competition in 2013. I think this has been a case of a misreading, or failure to read, terms and conditions which clearly stated photos could be used for marketing purposes.'

'We thought Mr Ross would like to see his pet's photo used in this way but now that we know that's not the case we have removed the photo from our website and social media. The £50 donation was a gesture of good will which Pedigree didn't have to do.'

Church saved from collapse

A HISTORIC church on the Ardnamurchan peninsula has been saved from 'imminent collapse' thanks to a funding grant.

The 12th century St Comghan's in Kilchoan served worshippers for more than 700 years before it was abandoned in 1831 and risked crumbling to the ground until the money was given from Historic Environment Scotland. The old building is so dangerous that Highland Council prohibited anyone from entering it to prevent accidents. The repairs from the grant will allow the church to re-open to the public.

Architect Francis Shaw, who drew up the drawings to obtain the grant, said: 'This is a beautiful church, an outstanding national historic monument which served the village and its community for more than 700 years. The relatives of many people, both near and far, worshipped in this church and are buried in its peaceful graveyard.'



HISTORIC: St Comghan's in Kilchoan will be repaired thanks to a £4,000 grant.

Bike loads of cash for economy

THE MOUNTAIN Bike World Cup has injected £30 million into the Highland economy since it arrived in the area 13 years ago.

The annual event sees thousands of people arrive at Nevis Range for a weekend in June and figures from organisers, Rare Management, show last year alone it boosted the area by around £2.8 million through increased footfall in Fort William and neighbouring villages.

Thomas MacLennan, leader of

Lochaber area committee, said: 'Our figures show that the World Cup was worth £2.8 million to the area in 2015.'

'However, having such a prestigious competition on our doorstep provides worldwide publicity which money can't buy. Continuing to host this event helps to showcase the scenery, terrain and local enthusiasm that cements Fort William's reputation as a haven for outdoor activities.'

Downpours didn't deter visitors

THIS year's wet summer didn't put a dampener on Highland tourism, as a VisitScotland chief reported positive feedback from visitors.

Scot Armstrong, VisitScotland regional partnership's director, said: '2015 has been a very busy year for tourism in the Highlands and despite the absence of great weather,

feedback is that visitors have still enjoyed a fantastic line-up of events, festivals, shows and Highland games. There has been a big focus on biking and cycling this season, with some great events being held in the Highlands, potentially attracting new visitors, which all helps boost the valuable local visitor economy.'

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The terrace seating area where people can relax and view the bay.

Snagging delays hold up seafront revamp

SNAGGING is holding up the completion of the Stafford Street development along Oban's seafront, the project manager of the Argyll and Bute council scheme told Oban community councillors on Monday night.

Andrew Collins, CHORD manager, said that since he had taken over the public realm works a number of issues had come to light.

He said he hoped these matters could soon be resolved.

Mr Collins, who was attending the meeting on Monday for the first time since his appointment in June, said he had taken over from former manager Linda Houston.

Since then, he told councillors, he had picked up a 'number of issues' with the main CHORD programme and several snagging problems.

He said: 'Some of the granite plinths are loose.'

'There are issues with the lighting and we are looking at additional seating in the upper area.'

The pedestrianisation of Stafford Street cost the taxpayer an estimated £600,000 and work ran behind schedule - it was not finished until mid July, when traders had called for it to be finished much earlier in the season.

Family firm secured after sale to major distributor

LOUISE GLEN
lglen@obantimes.co.uk

THE PURCHASE of Oban Express by logistics group Menzies Distribution will secure the future of the Oban family business.

Becoming part of a major company will allow the family firm, which also has a base in Glasgow and employs more than 70 people, to be part of

'transformational e-commerce in remote parts of Scotland', a spokesman for Menzies said.

The Edinburgh-based company took over Oban Express last week.

The delivery firm handles more than 450,000 packages a year.

In a statement to *The Oban Times*, a spokesman for Oban Express Menzies said: 'With regards to the question of redun-

dancies, we are concentrating on a successful peak trading period and there will be no review of the business until next year.

'The directors are being retained to help further grow the business, leveraging off their excellent customer relationships.'

Founded in 1983 by Tommy Owens, with two vans, Oban Express is now supported by a fleet of 45 vehicles.

It operates throughout West-

ern Scotland and the Hebrides.

The Oban Express deal with Menzies Distribution builds on the June acquisition of AJG Parcels of Inverness - the biggest parcel delivery firm in the Highlands - for £7.5million.

Following Mr Owens' death in 2006, the business passed to his children - son Walker and daughters Lorraine and Louise.

The three siblings and their spouses have sold the busi-

ness for an undisclosed sum.

Menzies managing director, Forsyth Black, said: 'Menzies Distribution is now perfectly placed to serve carriers working for large mail-order firms by consolidating their parcels into one cost-effective, final-mile delivery, making it easier for customers in Western Scotland and the Hebrides to order online and get their goods quickly, at a reasonable cost.'

Scallywag Sean wins Oban Times name game



Oban's Sean Drummond was all smiles after winning *The Oban Times* competition to name the boat in the new community play park outside Atlantis Leisure Centre. Sean is pictured with Lyndsay Elliot, centre, chairperson of Friends of Oban Community Play Park, and Jade Manning, left, and Nicola Wood of Scottish Sea Farms. See page 5.

TIMESLINE

Climate change campaigners brave storm

IN A twist of fate the Killin march against climate change and global warming took place in heavy snow on Sunday (November 29).

The march was organised by Environment Killin and was timed to coincide with start of the United Nations Climate Change Summit in Paris. The march was part of a global initiative organised by AVAAZ, involving 2,426 events in 150 countries worldwide.

The target is to agree a cap of a two-degree Celsius temperature rise and to urge politicians to try and achieve 100 per cent clean energy by 2050.

George Street plans altered to aid disabled

A SCHEME to improve the look of George Street in Oban had 'forgotten' to include accessibility measures for wheelchairs.

Speaking at Oban Community Council, Andrew Collins, CHORD project manager, said that since he took over the job in June he had added a few items to the list of works for the contractor.

Mr Collins said: 'When we dug into the project we found there were some items that had been missed.'

'For example there were no dropped kerbs in the scheme and the width of the working bays were too narrow. We have now remedied that situation.'

Oban Times
newsdesk
01631 568000

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HOME NEAT HOME for Christmas

It's easy to get caught up in the hustle and bustle of Christmas. We all want it to be perfect and that's a lot of pressure! A few simple tidy-up tips will help take the stress out of proceedings and help things run a little more smoothly.

There is no time of year when we love being at home more than Christmas. There is something magical about twinkling Christmas tree lights and sparkly festive décor. It's the perfect time for getting cosy on the couch with a mug of hot chocolate and watching a classic Christmas movie.

But you know yourself - the one thing that completely ruins the chillout feeling and Christmas spirit is a messy house. So, turn on your favourite festive tunes and get stuck in! Stuff the clothes away (but not in the turkey) Your tidy-up to-do list is probably endless. Finding time to clean and deciding what to prioritise is probably not as bad as you think. Begin with keeping things simple and remem-

ber that a tidy home looks cleaner than a cluttered home. Without so much as even looking for the rusting Mr Sheen can, you can make an immediate better impression by taking a few minutes to grab a laundry basket and pick up all that stuff that belongs elsewhere. Great tip...When tackling a room, move from left to right to help you remember everything behind you is now considered a clean, clutter-free zone and everything ahead of you requires attention. When you are ready to start cleaning, if you can, space it out over a few days and start in the most important, or difficult, room in your home. Prioritising your work ensures you get the most meaningful rooms done first - so if you run out of time, you'll still be ok.

The kitchen is usually the hub of the home so start by cleaning the oven, then the refrigerator ready for the party foods. Create space in the kitchen for entertaining by filling a box with kitchen items you won't be using and moving it

elsewhere. Now you have room for the serving dishes, punch bowl and Granny's vintage cake stand you'll be using during the festive period

Preparing Guest Bathroom for Visitors

- Most importantly, make sure the entire bathroom is squeaky clean.
- Place a basket in the bathroom with little amenities your guests may have forgotten to pack, such as cotton buds, toothpaste, a toothbrush, hairspray, ibuprofen and more. Even the most organised travellers will forget something. Stock shower with shampoo, conditioner, soap and a razor.
- Brighten up the bath with fresh flowers, scented soaps and festive décor.
- If space allows, provide guests with a basket or bin for stashing used towels and linens.

Freshen Up Naturally

Use herbs like lavender and chamomile to

freshen your home. Fill a spray bottle with 20 drops of lavender essential oil, 1 teaspoon vodka and water to create a linen spray. Lavender is known to reduce stress, promote calm and aid in relaxation. Mist bed linens, lamp shades, shower curtains and drapes. Grind up lavender and chamomile with baking soda in a food processor to sprinkle on rugs and carpets to remove odour. Just leave overnight and vacuum the next day.

Cook in Advance

You don't have to get up at the crack of dawn to do all of the cooking and baking on the day of the event. Many vegetable side dishes, casseroles and desserts can be made in advance and kept in the refrigerator or freezer.

Enlist Help

In the run up to Christmas, there are a host of local specialists that you can get in touch with

to help take some of the hard work out of it. Local cleaning companies, carpet cleaners, window cleaners and chimney sweep specialists (yes, Santa needs your help too), are on hand to help. Remember, be flexible in your plans; life happens and unforeseen challenges may arise. With a little planning though, your guests will enjoy your company, your hospitality and your home. Keep the memories not the mess.



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knowledgeable company for the cleaning and inspection of solid fuel burners, wood burning and multi fuel stoves. Give Roddy a call today - winter's setting in, the fire will be burning - and Santa certainly doesn't want to get caught short! Tel: 07786 963279 for a home or business visit.



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GP funding inequality hits poorer areas hardest

GENERAL Practice funding systems in Scotland are 'part of the problem' of health inequality and do not match clinical need in deprived areas, according to a new study.

The work, carried out by researchers at the University of Glasgow's Institute of Health and Wellbeing and the University of Dundee, found that while GPs in more deprived areas have more patients who suffer from multiple chronic physical and mental conditions, they do not receive more funding to meet clinical needs.

The research, published in the British Journal of General Practice, found that practices in the most deprived areas had 38 per cent more patients with multi-morbidity compared with the least deprived areas, and double the number of patients with combined mental and physical multi-morbidity.

Multi-morbidity was defined in three ways: two or more chronic health conditions, five or more chronic conditions and combinations of physical and mental conditions.

Evidence from the study also shows that although practices in more deprived areas have younger populations, they also have higher levels of complex multi-morbidity occurring at a much younger age.

Professor Graham Watt, the Norie Miller Professor of General Practice at the University of Glasgow, said: 'On average GPs in more deprived areas have a higher workload, with 20 per cent more consultations with patients who are more likely to be multi-morbid with both physical and mental conditions, but do not receive additional funding to address these complex needs.'

'The average NHS spend per patient per annum in the most deprived general practices is £120, compared with £127 in the most affluent half of the country.'

'When needs are partially met the health service underachieves in reducing the severity and slowing the progression of health and social problems. The consequence is that patients are admitted to hospital and die earlier than they need to.'

'Until allocation formulas in Scotland and the rest of the UK take into account the earlier onset of morbidity in more deprived areas, such funding systems will continue to be part of the problem of health inequalities rather than part of the solution.'

Oban group appeal for help to save tennis courts

LOUISE GLEN
lglen@obantimes.co.uk

TENNIS fans on the West Coast are hoping the community can serve up an ace for courts that are 'at the end of their life' in Oban.

With only six weeks to go before the possibility of funding is lost altogether, sports fans in the town are hoping to raise £40,000 for what they believe are the only courts in the West Highlands.

Neil Mathieson, who is part of the group trying to raise the cash, said: 'We won the Davis Cup at the weekend and that is



Our tennis courts are at the end of their life

Neil Mathieson
Oban tennis group

because people were allowed to grow up playing tennis on good practice courts.

'These will be the only practice level tennis courts on the West Coast, apart from the Isle of Harris.'

'After 23 years of service our community's tennis courts are at the end of their life.'

'They are worn out and suffering from subsidence, which renders them unfit for use.'

'Over the last three years, Atlantis Leisure and the Tennis and Squash Club have been working hard to find ways to raise funding, by applying to

both national and local charities and committing their own resources.'

'The funding gap must be filled by January 5, 2016 for the project to proceed due to funding restrictions. This is now a major challenge as most funding sources have been exhausted.'

'If successful, the project will create three brand new artificial grass courts to Lawn Tennis Association standards, new fencing and floodlighting plus a multi-use pitch which can be used for additional sports providing a training facility for young people.'

Mr Mathieson explained that three courts were required to host a tennis tournament. 'The West Highland tennis week, held in the town for more than 40 years, is at risk if we do not renew our courts.'

Mr Mathieson called on locals to help with the groups' fundraising efforts, and encouraged anyone interested to organise fundraisers themselves in order to reach the £40,000 target by January.

For more details contact nick.wesley@atlantisleisure.co.uk and join the tennis and squash fundraising page.

Society says very Marie Christmas

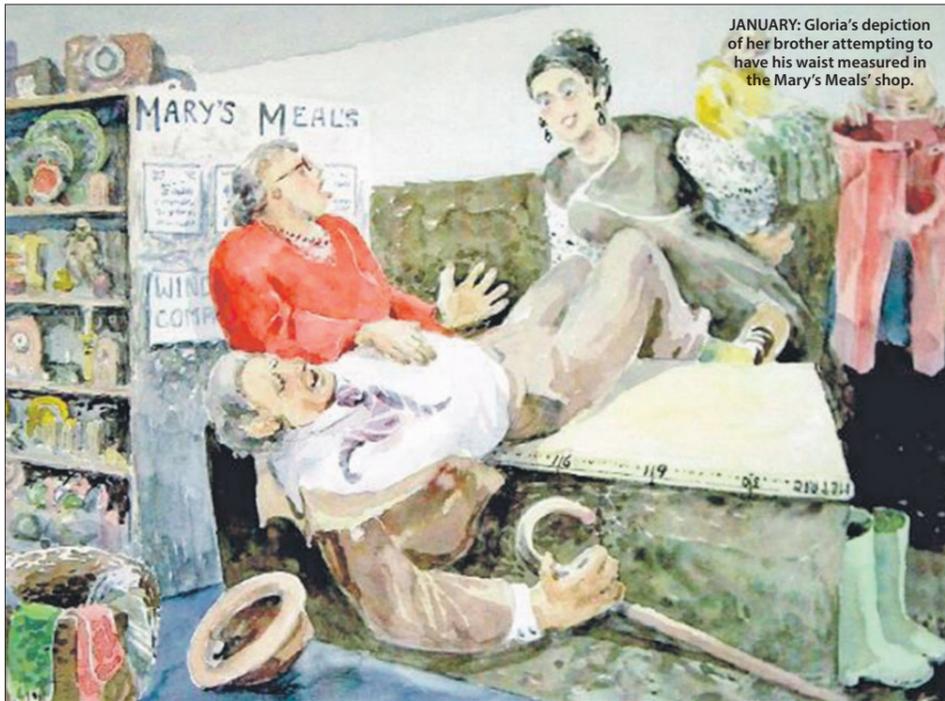
CUSTOMERS of the Yorkshire Building Society in Oban have paid for 10 hours of nursing care as part of the Society's Hour of Need campaign.

The campaign was launched in 2014 with the aim of raising £500,000 by December 2016 - enough to support more than 25,000 hours of care by Marie Curie nurses for people with a terminal illness and their families across the UK.

Every £20 raised pays for one hour of care, and customers and staff at the Yorkshire Building Society branch in Oban have contributed £215 to the campaign, the equivalent of 10 hours of Marie Curie nursing care.

To celebrate, the branch on George Street will be hosting a Christmas-themed thank you event on Tuesday December 15 where people can enjoy some festive treats from the society.

Gloria's humour is a real tonic



JANUARY: Gloria's depiction of her brother attempting to have his waist measured in the Mary's Meals' shop.

A BENDERLOCH woman has launched her annual calendar to raise money to help defeat the disease that killed her husband.

For the last four years Gloria Young, 87, has painted and printed 200 calendars a year, which are sold locally, to raise money for Cancer Research.

So far she has raised more than £4,600 through the sale of her calendars and other fundraising events.

Mrs Young said: 'After my husband passed away with cancer, I vowed to do

everything I could to raise money to help. The calendar is made up of pictures I have imagined, seen, heard or had suggested.'

January, right, is an anecdote of when Gloria's brother, Dr Vernon Harris visited from Australia. To save space, he brought a limited supply of clothes with him and planned to buy more when he got to Oban. He went to Mary's Meals charity shop in Stevenson Street to supplement his wardrobe, but when he got there he realised he didn't know his waist measurement.

Mrs Young continued: 'There were a lot

of suggestions to find out his measurement, but the woman in the shop had an electric measurer on the counter and said if he could get himself on the counter they would be able to find out. So my brother did his best to get onto the counter and in the end they found out his waist size.'

Anyone interested in purchasing a calendar can buy one in shops in various villages, including Benderloch, Ledaig, Taynuilt, Tralee and Kinlochleven.

Each calendar is £7, with the money going to Cancer Research.

NHS adds one click giving with Virgin

NHS HIGHLAND is to add the Virgin Money giving site on to its donation page, making giving money to the board's endowment funds and other charities a simple one click operation.

The NHS Endowment fund is a registered charity which holds the money in trust for specific hospital wards, centres or departments.

The money can be used to purchase equipment, provide additional comforts and amenities for patients and staff - purchases which were only possible because someone made a gift to the endowment funds.

The online donation page, accessed via the NHS Highland website, already has a link to a site called JustGiving, which allows contributors to raise funds for one charity at a time. However, it is also possible to make a one-off donation on this site to a specific fund or the endowments fund generally.

The board's new endowment support officer, Donald Mackenzie, said: 'JustGiving will pay all money raised to one charity. However, a relative who has previously raised money for us wanted to split donated funds between the one of the funds in the board's endowment fund as well as a couple of other charities. They mentioned that the Virgin site allows the splitting of donations raised on someone's webpage to various registered charities, so we have decided to set it up.'

£120 gift for sensory garden

OBAN Community Sensory Garden (OCSG) has received a month's worth of donations from the Oban Goes it Alone Weight Loss Club.

The sensory garden is a public space located on Corran Esplanade.

The weight loss club, run by Stephen Glen-Lee, meets weekly at the Great Western Hotel, where club members take it in turns to nominate a good cause to benefit from their meeting donation.

The sensory garden group was the choice for October 2015, receiving £120 in total.

Claire Rizos, Trustee of OCSG, said: 'Our organisation is run by a committee with a range of abilities, including those with learning and physical disabilities. We invest a great deal of effort in fundraising to keep our garden looking bright and attractive. So to receive this wonderful phonecall out of the blue was a real boost and will help us to ensure the garden is ready for spring.'

School funding given green light

FUNDING for Oban's new high school has finally been given the go-ahead after European Union guidelines triggered a review of the capital investment in the buildings.

Announcing the work had finally got the green light, Deputy First Minister John Swinney, told parliament: 'While that process [EU review] has been under way, 12 projects in the pipeline have been unable to progress as planned. I have today advised parliament these projects can now proceed as soon as possible.'

Community encouraged to make more of garden

ARDUANE Garden Support Group held a special open meeting on Sunday at Loch Melfort Hotel to share ideas on how to encourage local communities, groups and schools to make more of the garden.

The group was set up five years ago and is chaired by Calum Ross, who, together with his wife Rachel, owns Loch Melfort Hotel.

'The group was initially set up to help raise funds for the garden, but while that is ongoing, we would love more people locally to enjoy the benefits of the garden and think about joining this group to help it thrive.'

'We don't want people to feel they will just be asked to do jobs, so are looking to change the group to a more

social gathering, where people can contribute ideas. One of the benefits of being a member of the group is that you automatically get free entry to the garden.'

Those sentiments were echoed by head gardener and property manager Maurice Wilkins, who after 23 years is retiring at the end of February.

He said: 'I've always wanted everyone in the area to feel it was their garden, so I'm hoping this is the start of the local community getting more involved, as there is so much for the community, including schools and families, to enjoy.'

For more information on how to get involved, call Calum or Rachel Ross on 01852 200233.

Scots forestry a hidden economic success story

A REPORT published on Monday reveals that Scotland's forestry sector is a hidden success story and is contributing nearly £1 billion to the economy through forest management, timber processing and recreation - a substantial increase from the previous figure of £670 million.

The forestry sector, including tourism and recreation, is also a major employer, supporting more than 25,000 jobs across Scotland.

There has been a significant boost to employment levels in the forest management and processing sector, with more than 19,500 people now working in the industry - a jump of 6,500, about 50 per cent, compared to the previous report back in 2008.



Importantly, many of these jobs are located in rural locations, therefore forestry is supporting more fragile economies.

The work of the sector is also vital in enabling other key Scottish industries to grow, such as in the energy, construction, tourism and potentially biotechnology fields.

Vouchers are key to keeping cash in town

LOVE OBAN vouchers have brought an extra £17,000 into the tills of the town's businesses since they were launched 18 months ago.

Praising 'the exceptional' response to the scheme, which ensures profits remain in the businesses, BID4Oban manager Derek Connery says things can only get bigger and better.

The gift voucher scheme can be used at participating businesses in the town - a list that continues to grow. Vouchers can be purchased in £5, £10 or £20 denominations from the BID4Oban office on Stevenson Street, Webster's Oban Photographic Centre and The Sports Shop in Argyll Square.

Derek said: 'More and more busi-

ness are accepting the vouchers. Our aim is to support Oban town centre and by offering a voucher that can be accepted in shops from major stores to unique local businesses it makes sure money stays in the town.'

'We are working with a number of businesses to bring them into the scheme and as these are announced they will be on our website.'

Andy Spence, chairman of Bid4Oban, said: 'This is a great good news story for the BID company - we do all the administration in house - businesses get the value of the gift voucher into their tills, and people use the vouchers in Oban. It is a win/win situation for everyone.'

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SILVERWARE: Award winners at Kilmallie shinty club's dinner dance with manager, Mark MacPherson (second right), and captain, Liam MacDonald (middle).

Ben Weller rolls impressive 200 and creeps ahead Ten pin bowling

ALLEYCATS continue to storm ahead in the scratch division of the Lochaber Building Supplies ten pin bowling league with 33 points after week seven.

They are followed by the Creeps on 29 points and Ardtoe and Co have moved into third place with 20 points.

In the handicap division, the Rotavators are in the lead with 25 points, followed by the Creeps with 23 and British Legion Fort William with 21.

There was a spate of good individual games this week, the best coming from Ben Weller of the Creeps who rolled 200, the season's best so far.

Other notable scores came from Tony Whitelocke of Alleycats with 189, John Weller, also of Alleycats, with 179, Tim Attack (Ardtoe and Co) with 178, Dave Cameron (Council) with 175 and Gus Fraser, also of Council, with 172.

Ben Weller also had the top handicap game with 243 while Dave Cameron had the best two-game scratch series with 342 and the best two-game handicap series of 468.

The top team scores of the week came from Alleycats with a season high scratch game of 637 and the top two-game scratch series of 1232. Council had both the top handicap game with 832 and the top two-game handicap series of 1651, another two season highs.

Claggan Park falls victim to weather - again

CLAGGAN Park fell foul to poor weather again at the weekend, forcing Fort William FC to postpone their planned clash against Keith.

This is the second delay in a week as the Fort's home game scheduled for this Saturday has also been postponed as opponents Wick have a Scottish Cup fixture.

The Fort were due to travel to the Haughs to take on Turriff United last night (Wednesday) ahead of their next home game against second-top Cove Rangers on Tuesday December 8.

Key outcomes from Camanachd Association AGM

THE CAMANACHD Association's 2015 annual general meeting took place at the West End Hotel in Fort William last Friday evening.

Key outcomes from the meeting were: Members approved the proposal from Newtonmore Camanachd Club that named players (player pool) would not be eligible to play in reserve team league fixtures.

Members approved the proposal from Kilmallie Shinty Club that the bottom two teams in the Premiership should be relegated and the top two teams in the National Division should be promoted at the end of each season.

Members approved the increase in match fee and mileage rate for match officials.

Play-off disappointment fails to dampen Kilmallie party spirit

AFTER a disappointing 2-0 defeat in their premiership play-off, Kilmallie returned to Fort William to celebrate an otherwise successful season with their awards night.

son thanked players of all ages for their hard work and dedication, saying they have done the club proud.

Donald MacRae for the second team, Innes Blackhall for under 17s and Dan Nixon, who was unable to attend, for under 14s.

Awards

At the event in Caol Community Centre, manager Mark MacPherson

Player of the year awards went to Liam Cameron for the first team,

Wild weather blows Finlay to first in Nevis Range race

WINTER arrived in Fort William on Sunday, just in time for Lochaber Athletic Club's new race at Nevis Range on Sunday.

Finlay Wild was first of the 39-strong field to finish the 13-mile, two-lap course, which included an ascent of the North Face climbers' path.

Wild finished in one hour, 31 minutes and 48 seconds, followed by Andrew Barrington in one hour, 34 minutes and eight seconds. Stephen Burns took third place a minute later in one hour, 35 minutes and 39 seconds.

The top eight finishers were all Lochaber Athletic Club (LAC) members and first visitor home

was David Gallie of Highland Hill runners, who took ninth place in one hour, 49 minutes and 36 seconds.

First lady home was Amanda Blackhall of LAC, who was 14th overall in one hour, 57 minutes and one second, followed by fellow club member Suzy Devey who finished in two hours, 14 minutes and 27 seconds.

The next race will be the Beinn Bhan Bash on December 13. Registration from 10am at Erracht.

Top 20 finishers (LAC unless otherwise stated): 1 Finlay Wild 1:31:48; 2 Andrew Barrington 1:34:08; 3 Stephen Burns 1:39:39;

Athletics

4 Jon Gay 1:42:27; 5 Tim Brand 1:45:33; 6 Mark Shaw 1:47:18; 7 Mark Willets 1:47:52; 8 Aidan Donnelly 1:48:15; 9 David Gallie (Highland Hill Runners) 1:49:36; 10 Andy Craig 1:51:24; 11 Gavin MacMillan 1:51:48; 12 Ali Kennedy 1:54:24; 13 Barrie MacKinnon 1:56:30; 14 Amanda Blackhall 1:57:01; 15 Gordie Taylor (Highland Hill Runners) 1:58:00; 16 Jonathan Weir (unattached) 2:03:22; 17 Ronnie Turner 2:03:35; 18 Robert MacLean 2:03:58; 19 Allan MacLeod (unattached) 2:04:37; 20 Michael Connolly 2:04:59.



WINTER WONDERLAND: The field set off in wintry conditions. 21_649athletics01



TOP COACH: Fort William youth coach Jimmy Clark was presented with a volunteer of the year award by Bridget Thomas of High Life Highland. 21_649fort01

Jimmy wins High Life Highland volunteer of the year award

A YOUTH coach has been recognised for his commitment to training Fort William Shinty Club's juniors with a Highland-wide award.

Jimmy Clark, chairman of the club's junior division, won the volunteer of the year award as part of this year's High Life Highland's coaching award.

Jimmy has led the youth teams to win numerous trophies this year, at both under 14 and under 17 level.

Youth shinty

He said: 'The success hasn't been down to me but down to the players, management and supporters.

Future looks bright

'It's a pleasure to do what I do and, looking at these young boys, the future of Fort William Shinty Club looks very bright.'

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WEATHER

Thursday Sunny intervals
Winds light southerly
Temperatures 4°C to 6°C.

Friday Light rain
Winds strong south south westerly
Temperatures 7°C to 10°C.

Weekend Outlook Heavy rain on Saturday
Light rain showers on Sunday
Winds strong south westerly
Temperatures 5°C to 9°C.

FRIDAY

TIDAL INFORMATION

Tide tables for Oban during the week from **Thursday December 3, 2015** are listed below with differences for major ports listed on the right. All times are GMT (add one hour) BST)

Date	am			pm		
Thur	04.40	1.6	10.28	3.2	17.43	2.0
Fri	05.37	1.8	11.46	3.1	19.02	2.0
Sat	01.20	3.0	06.40	1.8	13.28	3.1
Sun	02.19	3.1	07.47	1.8	14.28	3.3
Mon	03.02	3.3	08.49	1.7	15.11	3.4
Tues	03.41	3.5	09.39	1.6	15.51	3.6
Wed	04.19	3.6	10.21	1.4	16.29	3.8

Tidal Constants: (Add or deduct from High Water at Oban)

Ardrisaig	-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