

The Oban Times

& WEST HIGHLAND TIMES

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MULL MARINE IN AFGHANISTAN

FURY AT FISH FARM ESCAPE



Spotlight on Luing ferrymen

A MEETING on Luing to discuss the island's ferry situation was to take place, as *The Oban Times* went to press this week.

The ferrymen who sail the *Belnahua* to and from the island were on strike last month in protest at new pay and work conditions which were proposed by Argyll and Bute Council.

The crew are particularly angry at having their annual leave cut to 12 days plus public holidays.

Luing Community Council invited representatives of the local authority to a meeting yesterday (Wednesday) to ask them about the island's ferry service. The council received questions from the islanders prior to the meeting.

Community councillor David Ritchie said: 'The ferrymen do a fairly responsible job and do it well. I would say the majority of the island is behind them but when people can't get to work or need medical supplies because of the industrial action; it is not a pleasant situation.'

Death of Oban doctor

MANY people were saddened this week to hear of the death of long-time Oban general practitioner Dr Angus Gordon Murchison, who died peacefully in Glasgow last Friday after a long illness.

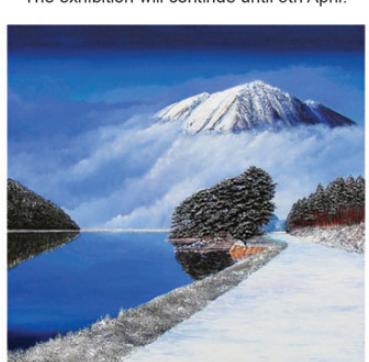
His son Kyle and daughter Gael suggested that memorial donations to Oban Lifeboat would be a fitting tribute to their father.



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Fort William councillor Brian Murphy, Argyll and Bute councillor Duncan MacIntyre, chief inspector John Chisholm, Ally Ferguson and Highland councillor John Laing at the launch of the Demand A82 Upgrade campaign. T11cam14

Demand action — now!

Report by DAVID WALKER
THE A82 must be given priority over the A9.

That was the emphatic message this week at the launch of a campaign to ensure the Scottish government invests £90 million in the A82 in this year's autumn spending review.

The Demand A82 Upgrade campaign was launched at the Drover's Inn, Inveranen, this week with the message that communities across the west Highlands are united in the fight to see the road improved.

They insist the A82 — the UK's second most dangerous trunk road and described as 'not fit for purpose' — should take priority over plans to dual the A9 between Perth and Inverness.

Highland and Argyll and Bute councils, Northern Constabulary and transport partnership Hi-Trans joined campaign head, Ally Ferguson of Ferguson Transport at the launch.

Public urged to add their voice to campaign for £90m A82 upgrade

Mr Ferguson urged the public to sign a Scottish parliament e-petition, which can be accessed on A82.org website, to ensure the issue is looked at by the parliament's petitions committee. He also urged people to write to their local MSP and to the transport minister, Stewart Stevenson.

Oban councillor Roddy McCuish travelled to the launch in an Oban Express lorry to highlight the cam-

paign. The company no longer use the A82 because of the cost of repairs due to accidents on the road.

The A82 sees numerous accidents, including fatalities, every year, and as the main west coast artery, from Glasgow to Fort William and then Inverness, is holding back the area's economy.

Ian Cleaver of Highland Heritage said: 'Our vehicles no longer use the A82 because of the damage it

caused them. It was only a matter of time before we had a catastrophic event.'

Argyll and Bute Council transport spokesman, Councillor Duncan MacIntyre, told the launch that the future economic well-being of the west Highlands 'revolves' around investment in the A82.

He said: 'The road is far from fit for purpose. Hi-Trans has the A82 high up on its programme of work. It would be unthinkable to dual the A9 before tackling the A82.'

'There is a concern about the government's review of transport projects in August and we have to make sure that the £90m investment needed for this road is not going anywhere else. We have to have joined-up thinking.'

'The economic and social future of the west Highlands revolves around improvements to the road. With that money there would be an extra £381m put into the Highland economy and 700 jobs created, and that is vital for our area. It is an opportunity we cannot let pass.'

The launch heard that the cost of upgrading the 17 miles from Tarbet to Criarlarich is £54m - £3m per mile, yet the M74 extension works out at £131m per mile.

'We're not talking huge amounts of money, but the effect that money would have in our communities is proportionately greater than for the M74,' added Mr MacIntyre.

'The government is using road equivalent tariff (RET) to attract tourists to the islands. To get there you have to go through Oban and you have to use the A82. It's unthinkable to double the numbers on that road in the state it is in. We have to have joined-up thinking.'

Teenager caught in avalanche

A TEENAGE climber was swept 200 metres down a mountain near Bridge of Orchy after being caught in an avalanche.

The 19-year-old Glasgow climber, who was with three companions, was near the summit of the Munro, Beinn an Dothaidh, when the avalanche hit on Sunday afternoon.

Police Constable David Paterson, who attended the incident, praised the man's friends who, he said, carried out all the correct procedures after the accident.

He added: 'One of the climbers stayed with the casualty while the other two came down to Achallader Farm to raise the alarm.'

The Royal Air Force mountain rescue team was mobilised and, in difficult conditions, airlifted the casualty to the Southern General Hospital, Glasgow.

'The economic and social future of the west Highlands revolves around improvements to the road'

— Councillor Duncan MacIntyre

Submariner's palace delight



Iain MacKenzie with his wife Sheila, left, and mother-in-law Jessie Stewart, right, on his proud day.

submarines spanning almost 40 years.

Iain added: 'The submarine service is everything to me — how could it not be, it's been my life for nearly four decades. I look forward to giving something back to it in the form of the Submariners Association and the International Submariners Association; I am an active member of both.'

Iain's award was made for an unparalleled service to

Finwhale, Onslaught, Opossum and Odin, Trenchant, Splendid, Vengeance, and Sceptre. He works for Flag Officer Scotland, Northern England and Northern Ireland based at HMNB Clyde, Faslane.

The Strachur-based sailor

Huge wind turbine approved for Tiree

A 200-ft community wind turbine has been approved for Tiree.

Oban, Lorn and the Isles area committee councillors have yet again gone against Argyll and Bute Council's planning officials in permitting the structure to be constructed.

The plan for a single community-owned turbine has divided the island with objectors in the east, where the turbine will be sited, and supporters in the west.

The area committee heard arguments from both sides at a public hearing in An Talla last Thursday, which was attended by one third of the island's population.

The area committee voted unanimously for the turbine, despite the planning authority recommending a refusal on the grounds that it would have an adverse impact on the island's landscape.

Councillors said the economical benefits — the turbine could generate £5million over 20 years — outweighed

the environmental impact.

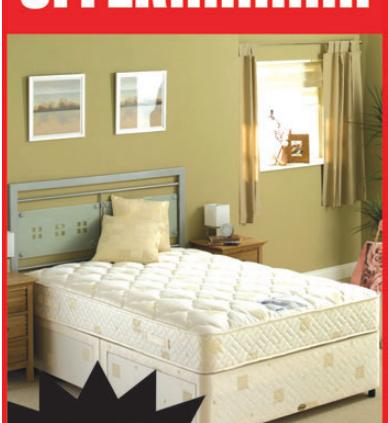
An amendment was put forward Oban South and the Isles councillor Mary Jean Devon and seconded by Councillor Roddy McCuish. He said: 'For the good of the island, the area committee thought it was the right decision and I think the majority of islanders supported it.'

Tish MacKinnon, chairwoman of Tiree Community Development Trust, which spoke for the turbine at the hearing, said: 'This marks the start of a process that will give island residents the opportunity to shape Tiree's future through the development of the trust.'

However, one opponent of the plan, who did not want to be named, said: 'My concern is this plan has divided an island. Now the east side has this gigantic structure.'

There were some ridiculous comments at the meeting. One councillor said that the turbine would be no more than an eyesore than a telegraph pole.'

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Wind farm bid set for public inquiry

A PUBLIC inquiry is to be held into the plans for a wind farm on the Duke of Argyll's land.

The Scottish government has decided that the proposals for a 14-turbine wind farm at Stacain, overlooking Loch Awe, will be the subject of a local inquiry – despite being approved by Argyll and Bute Council last year.

No date has been fixed for the inquiry but a government spokesman said it will be preceded by a 'pre-inquiry meeting' to determine where it would be held and which parties will be invited to submit their case.

The decision by the council's public services and licensing committee last December to back the plans went against advice from its chief planner Angus Gilmour.

Avich and Kilcrenan Community Council, Scottish Natural Heritage and the Royal Scottish Society for the Protection of Birds also objected claiming the turbines could affect the golden eagle population in the area.

Kilcrenan community councillor Marilyn Henderson said: 'I think it will be a lot fairer if there is a public inquiry.'

Ceilidh aimed at migrant workers

A 'TOP quality ceilidh with an international feel' has been organised by Argyll and Bute Council's community education service to try and encourage Oban residents to mix with migrant workers and international students.

Neil Rowan, of community education, is one of the organisers of the International Ceilidh taking place in the Argyllshire Gathering Hall, Oban on Tuesday, March 25.

He said: 'The idea behind this event is to encourage our students studying English as a second language to come along and experience a proper traditional Scottish ceilidh.'

'However, it will be a reciprocal event and the students will be giving presentations about their homelands and cultures.'

It is hoped that Oban residents will go along and mix with people from at least 10 different countries.

This is the first time the event has been held in Oban and organisers are promising a few surprises on the night.

Mr Rowan said: 'It will be a top quality ceilidh with an international feel. Music will be provided by Hector MacFadyen, Oban Gaelic Choir and Oban High School Pipe Band and their will be Polish dancer. I'm sure there will be a few surprises on the night.'

Food from many different countries, including India, China, and Thailand will be served to guests.

Tickets are now on sale at Community Education centre and The Tourist Information Office priced at £6 for adults and £4 for concessions.

Volunteer dies in fall

A TEENAGE volunteer science teacher, working with the Coll-based Project Trust has died following a rock climbing accident in Guyana, South America.

Pamela McCarroll, aged 18, fell during a rock climb with a friend on Sunday.

She was in the country teaching science for a year.

Project Trust director Lavinia MacLean-Bristol said: 'Pamela was an admirable teacher, very conscientious and hard working. She was planning to study medicine.'

Pamela's funeral will be held tomorrow in Kilbirnie.

Mull postman almost four times legal drink limit

A POSTMAN was nearly four times over the legal alcohol limit when delivering his rounds on the Isle of Mull.

Oban Sheriff Court heard last week that Brian Hogg, aged 54, of Raeric Road, Tobermory

drove with 138mcg of alcohol in 100ml of breath at Riverside Court, Tobermory on February 15 this year.

Procurator fiscal Justin Farrell said: 'Police came into information that the accused was in the

habit of drinking while carrying out his employment as a postman. At 4.05pm police observed the accused driving a marked Post Office van. The officer immediately smelled alcohol when he spoke to the accused who was

slurring his words. When he got out of the van he was extremely unsteady on his feet.'

The court heard that Hogg, who had worked for the Post Office for eight and a half years, had since resigned from his job.

Defence agent David MacNeill said: 'He was under a great deal of stress at the time.'

Banning Hogg from driving for 30 months and fining him £350, Sheriff Douglas Small said: 'I can't ignore the high reading.'

- 4,000 rainbows endanger salmon
- Threat of legal action

Awe fury at fish farm escape

SICKENED anglers say Argyll's best salmon river is facing a grim future.

They were catching dozens of massive fish this week — but the wrong kind, following a huge spill of rainbow trout from a nearby fish farm.

Anglers on the River Awe are hooking some of the estimated 4,000 rainbow trout which have escaped from the farm.

The alien fish, which are not native to Scotland, will have a devastating impact on salmon stocks as they eat the young juveniles as well as their food sources.

The trout escaped from cages on Loch Etive belonging to Scot Trout Farming Limited on February 29.

Now the fish farm company may face legal action from wild fish interests over the damage caused.

A spokesman for the Argyll District Salmon Fishery Board said: 'This latest incident comes on the back of four escapes of rainbow trout, involving tens of thousands of non-native fish, affecting the river during a five-month period last year.'

The board's chairman Roger Brook said: 'Thousands and thousands of farmed fish have escaped into the river and I believe it's been going on for 20 years now.'

These continuing escapes are damaging the wild fish populations of the Awe and there is no doubt that large rainbow trout prey on young salmon before and as they migrate to sea.

'It is now imperative that all rainbow trout farms are relocated away from wild salmon systems and contained in tanks on land. Over the years the

Report by HUGH ROSS

fish farmers have proven that they are simply incapable of containing their livestock.

'These 'escapes' happen time and time again. The fish farms will blame it on their equipment or the wind but come on; they know what the winters are like in Scotland.'

'What kind of farmer can't keep his stock? If a sheep farmer lost his animals and they were wandering the streets of Oban we would soon hear about it. So why is this different?'

Around 300 salmon are caught by anglers in River Awe each season which starts in April and runs to September. A voluntary catch and release agreement sees around 80 per cent of that catch returned to the river.

The river's head bailiff Ewan MacLellan said: 'To be fair we got the call from Scot Trout the morning after the escape and then started fishing the trout out on the Tuesday. Yesterday 26 rainbow trout were caught in an hour and the river is absolutely stuffed with them.'

It cost around £1,600 for a week's salmon fishing for four people on the river but Mr Brook says if farmed fish continue to get in then visiting anglers are going to be driven away which will affect the local economy.

'This is the best salmon river in Argyll; it is the only good one left. The anglers are staying in the hotels here, drinking the malt whisky, buying sandwiches and filling up their 4x4s at fillings stations. People used to come to Argyll for fishing but there is no shortage of places for fishing in this day in age. If this escape had happened in the middle of the season anglers would be asking for their money back. They will simply go elsewhere to fish, be it Russia or Iceland.'

Andrew Wallace, managing director of the Association of Salmon Fishery Boards, said: 'The recurring appearance of large numbers of escaped rainbow trout in the Awe system is a further depressing reminder that certain Scottish trout farms are simply not able to meet their basic responsibilities.'

'Given the frequency of these escapes it must be a matter of speculation how



Jim Stephenson, Roger Brook and Ewan MacLellan show the 'flabby' alien rainbow trout which have been pulled out of the River Awe. t11fsh01

these companies make any money.

'We have had years of platitudes and excuses on this issue and it is clear that the only language that these serial offenders will understand is through the use of the law.'

'Wild fish interests are now seeking senior advocates opinion on the escapes affecting the Awe system.'

No one at Scot Trout Farming Limited was available for comment.

the raid. Police confiscated two bags of speed totalling 164.91 grammes, another one gram bag of speed and cannabis resin.

Police also found a set of brass scales, containing a trace of amphetamine, and a total of £345 in cash, £320 of which was found in the accused's wallet.

Under interview MacLachlan told police he would use one gram of speed at weekends, agreeing it would take him four years to consume on his own.

However, under questioning from his defence agent, Duncan Durbin, said he was actually consuming three grammes per night, up to five days a week, but did not tell the police, because he was ashamed.

When asked by police about the scales MacLachlan said he weighed the drugs to make sure he did not overdose. MacLachlan, who was in debt to

his bank, said he took out the £320 over a period of time so the bank did not take it to pay off his debt.

Police also found three rolls of cling-film — commonly used to package drugs — but MacLachlan claimed these were purchased by his grandfather's home helps who used it to wrap his sandwiches, a fact corroborated by a defence witness who worked as his grandfather's home help.

Two drugs crime experts commented on the case. Crown witness DC Paula Convery of Strathclyde Police's Statement of Opinion (STOP) Group said the evidence was conducive to drug dealing, while defence witness William Percy said the lack of important drug paraphernalia made that unlikely.

As *The Oban Times* went to press the case was continuing.

Drug addict denies dealing

A FORMER drug addict who bought £500 worth of speed at a music festival claims it was for his personal use.

Boat painter Lewis MacLachlan, aged 26, of 3A Castle Road, Dunollie, Oban, denied intending to supply amphetamine (speed) during a sheriff and jury trial at Oban Sheriff Court this week.

He did, however, plead guilty to being in possession of amphetamine and cannabis. The jury heard how MacLachlan has purchased the amphetamine at Rockness, Loch Ness, in June 2006 and had become addicted to the drug.

Strathclyde Police Oban conducted a drugs raid on MacLachlan's home address on September 26, 2006 and when asked if there were drugs in the house, he showed police where his drugs were hidden in the house he shared with his grandfather, who died a month after

the raid. Police confiscated two bags of speed totalling 164.91 grammes, another one gram bag of speed and cannabis resin.

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Sweet on new campaign

VISITSCOTLAND chairman Peter Lederer sampled the goods at Oban Chocolate Company on Monday as part of the promotion of some of the country's best cafés.

The Chocolate Company is one of 200 cafés around Scotland featured in the national tourism agency's new Café Days campaign, which encourages cafés and neighbouring tourism businesses to promote each other's services through personal recommendations and information on the website.

Mr Lederer said: 'I'm very pleased to be visiting Oban at the time we're launching our Café Days promotion, as it is a perfect excuse to do a bit of tasting while we talk about tourism issues with the local industry. Visitors from the rest of the UK are our biggest customers and we need to keep surprising them with the range of things to do and see in Scotland.'

Pamela McCarroll, aged 18, fell during a rock climb with a friend on Sunday.

She was in the country teaching science for a year.

Project Trust director Lavinia MacLean-Bristol said: 'Pamela was an admirable teacher, very conscientious and hard working. She was planning to study medicine.'

Pamela's funeral will be held tomorrow in Kilbirnie.

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Teenager assaulted his care worker

A VULNERABLE young adult who assaulted his care worker has had his sentence deferred for nine months for him to be of good behaviour.

Darren Napier, aged 19, admitted assaulting the care worker on October 23 last year at the Loch Etive Hotel, Connel, a building leased by Argyll and Bute Council to house vulnerable young adults.

Procurator fiscal Justin Farrell told Oban Sheriff Court last week: 'There are carers with 24-hour access to all parts of the building. The victim was a 44-year-old male social worker.'

Napier asked to use a lawn-mower as he wanted to cut the grass to pass the time. When told that the mower was unavailable he became agitated, slammed doors and swore at the social workers. The victim followed him in an attempt to reason with him but Napier flew at him, grabbed his left arm and attempted to pull him to the ground. He picked up a chair and held it above his head threatening the care worker.

The social work department felt that the incident was serious and that he should be brought to account for his actions.'

Defence agent Duncan Durbin said: 'What developed was a personality clash which came to a head. Since then Mr Napier's conduct has been very good and his relationship with the care worker has improved. He knows the difference between right and wrong and has been remorseful following this incident.'

Deferring sentence for nine months to allow Napier to be of good behaviour Sheriff Douglas Small said: 'It is unacceptable for you to assault people who are trying to help you. You have committed a criminal offence, I could fine you or I could even send you to a young offenders' institution.'

Woman injured in car crash

A REPORT is to be sent to the procurator fiscal following a car crash near Appin on Sunday night.

The accident on the A828 near the Creagan Inn involved two vehicles at 7.30pm with a woman driver suffering a broken ankle. The road was closed for a short time.

Lorry closes road

A LORRY jack knifing caused the closure of the A85 between Dalmally and Tyndrum last week. The road was closed for around two hours last Friday afternoon.

Tiree story clarification

The Oban Times has been asked to clarify that a distressed man who sparked a safety scare at Tiree High was not discovered outside the school as reported last week but at his home address.

www.infoscotland.com/childprotection



If you are concerned about any child's welfare, call the Child Protection Line: 0800 022 3222.

smarter scotland
SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT

Canine crusader Murdo to the rescue

HIGHLANDS and Islands Enterprise (HIE) has enlisted the help of a canine crusader to capture a bigger slice of the tourism market.

Murdo the West Highland terrier is the star of a new web-based information service for the hospitality industry and tourism sector as part of HIE's drive to further boost business and service excellence.

Murdo's job is to track down news on the very latest in customer care, give advice on how hospitality businesses can stay ahead of the game plus practical tips on how to enhance products and services.

But is HIE barking up the wrong tree by employing a dog?

No, according to senior development manager for tourism Audrey MacLennan.

'The launch of Murdo is all about enabling businesses to raise their game and compete more effectively in what is a fast-changing and competitive market place,' she said.

'This is a unique resource for the hospitality industry in the Highlands and Islands and there's nothing else quite like it in Scotland.'

And Alastair Cunningham of Scottish Clans and Castles Limited is convinced Murdo will be a winner, no bones about it.

He said: 'A wee dog called Murdo seems to be the answer and the concept is brilliant.'



North Ballachulish sewerage plant extension plan blocked

Report By ROY BARFORD

SCOTTISH Water has been sent homeward to think again after a planning committee knocked back a controversial sewerage plant at North Ballachulish.

Ross, Skye and Lochaber planning committee last Tuesday blocked plans to extend existing works on coastal land under Ballachulish Bridge after a site visit and a meeting immediately after in Nether Lochaber Hall.

Residents were furious about proposals to build a further six septic tanks, a sludge holding tank, distribution chamber, pump extension and control kiosk at the site near the old ferry slipway.

They argued the works would be unsightly and in full view from the A82, did not have the capacity for expansion and would be at risk of flooding.

Lochaber councillors backed the locals and slated Scottish Water for failing to keep the community

informed. Councillor Bren Gormley, who lives in view of the proposed works, motioned to have Scottish Water's proposal rejected.

'I'm quite angry at Scottish Water for messing us around for a considerable amount of time,' he said. Their failure to take in local knowledge runs as a consistent thread.'

Speaking about the flood risk, Councillor Gormley said: 'I have sailed these waters and I know what they can behave like.'

Scottish Water's representative said landscaping would be carried out to maintain the scenic beauty of the site, but Councillor Michael Foxley said he had been hearing the same story for 12 years, about work that had not been done.

'I hope Scottish Water and the Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) have learnt some lessons about community involvement,' he said.

A Scottish Water representative said the new works

were needed to alleviate odour and capacity problems at current sites in Glencoe and Ballachulish and to maintain SEPA's shellfish directive, which prevented raw waste from entering Loch Leven.

Scottish Water had explored using various other sites in Ballachulish, he said, but decided the bridge site was best.

Steven MacIntyre from SEPA's Fort William office said: 'We support the preferred option as it addresses concerns we have with current treatment works in Glencoe.'

SEPA insisted no flood risk assessment was needed as the site was outside a 200-year coastal flood plain, but Onich resident Ian Jenner said Caol had flooded in 2005.

He said: 'The region has flooded five times in the last 50 years. The man who grazes his sheep on the site of the proposed new sewerage works has had to move his fence three times in the last 10 years because of rising

water levels. If you put all the sewerage from three villages into one site, and that then floods, you can say goodbye to whatever shellfish directives may exist.'

Nether Lochaber community councillor Nairn MacArthur said a civil engineer had accompanied residents on a visit of the area and identified three sites more suitable for new sewerage treatment works.

He was concerned that archaeological artefacts at the proposed site would be damaged during the digging process.

After consultation with historian Iain Thorner, Mr MacArthur said: 'A pre-build archaeological assessment is totally useless.'

A Scottish Water spokesperson told *The Oban Times* after the decision: 'We are reflecting on the outcome of the meeting and will be reviewing our options.'

'We'll continue to work with the local communities, as the effort to clean up Loch Leven is clearly in their interests.'



World Book Day reading fun at Lochyside

Lochyside Primary School pupils Jody Halpin, primary seven, Katy Russell, primary seven, Rachel Brown, primary one, and their classmates joined thousands of other children across Scotland in reading a book for World Book Day last Thursday - in costume of course! fl1loch01

Rum stag shooting rights up for grabs

SCOTTISH Natural Heritage (SNH) is seeking offers for the shooting rights of around 40 red deer stags on Rum this year.

SNH, which owns and manages Rum as a national nature reserve, would also welcome suggestions as to how the culling of between 50 and 60 hinds could be carried out independently.

SNH will provide equipment for the removal of shot deer from the hill and the use of larders on the island.

SNH's area manager for the

Western Isles and Rum David MacLennan said: 'We recognise there is a viable business opportunity here for qualified stalkers wishing to take shooting clients out for a unique experience, at the same time as contributing to the management of the national nature reserve.'

Anyone interested has until Friday March 21 to submit an offer to SNH at 32 Francis Street, Stornoway, Isle of Lewis, HS1 2ND.

An application pack is available from David MacLennan on 01851 705258.

Live online council meetings on agenda

HIGHLAND Council debates could soon be broadcast live online in a new initiative to bring local democracy closer to the people.

The council is to investigate webcasting council meetings, starting with live transmission of planning, environment and development committee meetings in Inverness. Chairman Drew Hendry said the administration strongly supported webcasting of meetings but legal and operational

issues would have to be explored. 'In an area as large and rural as Highland, the use of technology is sure to benefit those people who are interested in local democracy,' he said. 'We know that the public is particularly interested in planning issues and this seems an appropriate committee to pilot this initiative.'

'People can either watch our meetings live or view an archive of meetings as and when they find it convenient.'

Works starts on new £12 million Raasay ferry terminal

WORK on the £12 million ferry terminal and overnight ferry berth at Churchton Bay, Raasay, which serves the route operated by CalMac between Sconser, Skye and Raasay, began on Friday.

More than 50 islanders and guests gathered at the site of the new terminal to watch Councillor John Laing, chairman of Highland Council's

transport environmental and community services committee, cut the first turf. The new terminal is two kilometres from the existing terminal at Suisnish, which was built at the beginning of the 20th century for the transportation of iron ore from Raasay. Work at Churchton is likely to be completed by the early summer of 2009.

Churchton Bay is overlooked by Raasay House

and is an environmentally sensitive site. A public inquiry into the proposals for the terminal in Churchton Bay was held on Skye in 2005. The result of the inquiry endorsed the selection of Churchton Bay for the terminal location. Tenders were invited and the contractor Balfour Beatty Civil Engineering Ltd was awarded the construction contract.

Skye food links an example to Scotland

LINKS between West Highland fresh produce suppliers and their customers are an example the rest of Scotland would do well to follow.

That was the message from cabinet secretary for rural affairs and the environment Richard Lochhead on a visit to Skye on Monday.

Mr Lochhead toured Loch Eishort Mussel Culture, which farms mussels in natural environment and sells them locally and nationally, and spoke at the Skye and Lochalsh Food Links seminar, Local Food - Quality for Success, alongside local food connoisseur Shirley Spear of the Three Chimneys.

Mr Lochhead said: 'Skye and Lochalsh Food Links is an excellent example of how small producers can access local restaurants, hotels and retailers and meet consumer demands by working together. It is

something the rest of Scotland can learn valuable lessons from.'

'From the ecologically-grown mussels I have seen this morning to the local produce issues I have heard about today, I am aware of the hard work and dedication which goes into these products.'

'The success in Skye also demonstrates the important links of food with tourism. Around £700 million of the annual spend from tourism in Scotland goes on food and drink.'

'The tourism industry is a significant link in both the food supply chain and the overall visitor experience for those coming to Scotland.'

The government is currently inviting comment as part of national food discussion. To have your say go to www.scotland.gov.uk/food.



Lochaber bands' Glasgow gig

LOCHABER bands The Paradox and Dark Matter Social will be looking to take Glasgow by storm next Tuesday.

The bands, who were a big hit at

a recent gig in Fort William's BA Club, are due to take the stage in the 13th Note Café. The Paradox will be launching its new EP 'The Poet versus the Town Crier' at the gig.

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Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator

Worms in supply taken 'too lightly' by Scottish Water

SCOTTISH Water treated an incident in Oban where midge larvae was found in the drinking water of 700 homes 'very lightly', councillors heard last week.

Larvae were found in filters at the Tullich Water Treatment Works in Oban in September last year after Scottish Water had received 67 complaints from residents in the Nant Drive and Soroba areas of the town.

In a report to Argyll and Bute Council's Oban, Lorn and the Isles area committee last week, area environmental health manager Iain MacKinnon told councillors that although the incident did not put the public health at risk, the water company had not recognised the public concern in Oban.

MacKinnon said: 'Scottish Water didn't recognise that it was a public concern. It was not a public health risk in that if ingested the worms would not do anyone any damage.'

'When this happened Scottish Water treated it very lightly. People found it in their kitchen taps and they didn't recognise the public concern.'

'While Scottish Water appears to have provided a very good level of consumer care and information to residents in the two areas affected, communication with the wider community could have been better.'

He added that a reoccurrence would now see the public, the council, NHS Highland and the water quality regulator all informed immediately.

Argyll and Bute Council, along with the Drinking Water Quality Regulator (DWQR) act as monitoring authorities and can make representations directly to Scottish Water.

Following the incident an investigation resulted in 15 recommendations, 14 of which have already been adopted by Scottish Water.

These include a review of filter operations, shorter backwash frequencies and regular flushing and sampling set up at the Tullich works.

Mr MacKinnon added: 'One of the most obvious things they did was close all the windows in the building. At night the lights were on and the midges flew in. They are now looking at blocking out the windows.'

Banned for driving without insurance

A FISH processor with three previous road traffic convictions was banned from driving for 18 months at Oban Sheriff Court last week.

Hugo Martinez, aged 35, of 28d McCaig Road, Oban admitted driving a vehicle without insurance and without the consent of the owner on January 10, 2008.

Procurator fiscal Justin Farrel said: 'The car came to the attention of police as it stopped and one of the passengers got out and began urinating.'

'Police went to speak to that passenger and made enquiries about the driver. He told police the car belonged to his cousin who was on holiday and the car was taken without his consent.'

Defence agent David MacNeill said: 'He had taken the car because a relation was visiting and he took him for a run to show him the scenery.'

Martinez was also fined a total of £450.

• Do you have an Oban story? Call our reporters on 01631-568060

Objectors accused of abusing planning system

Councillor hits out at science park critics

AN OBAN councillor has accused a campaign to stop a multi-million pound marine science park in Dunbeg of abusing the planning system and claimed that half of the objectors were unaware of the issues.

Argyll and Bute Council's Oban, Lorn and the Isles area committee agreed to hold a public meeting into a planning application by Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE) for a science park at Dunstaffnage.

Oban South councillor, Donald 'Skye' MacIntosh, said: 'I agree with a hearing but there are only three physical letters of objec-

tion. We have seen pro-formas going around, the picture on it wasn't even the right location, and all people had to do was sign their name on it.'

'There are people sending this back who didn't even know what it was about. These forms were posted through every single door in Dunbeg.'

'All the boxes were already ticked and we are having to go to a hearing because of it. Half the people that filled them in didn't know what they were for.'

The system is being abused by technology.'

Planning officer Ian McIntyre told councillors: 'At the time of writing the planning report there were more than five letters of objection, now there are 106.'

'There is great public interest in the site. We need to be transparent and have a meeting to listen to the public.'

'The council also has an interest in the application. If members do want to grant it, it will have to go to the Scottish government for approval.'

The village is split over the plans for the new park adjacent to the successful Scottish Association for Marine Science (SAMS) laboratory.

'The new development could bring 250 high quality marine science research and development jobs over the next decade.'

SAMS, which supports 140 jobs, has developed a worldwide reputation since it was established in the early 1970s.

Full steam ahead for new sea cadet unit

THE SEA cadet unit in Oban has been fully recognised by the UK core after a visit from their captain, only a year after its formation.

The royal navy's Captain Jonathan Fry, head of the sea cadets in Scotland, came to Oban to meet the cadets, find out about their duties and effectively rubber stamp the unit.

It has been in existence for more than a year but was affiliated to the Lochaber sea cadets until Captain Fry approved the decision to award the Oban unit membership of the UK core.

The unit will now be officially known as TS Pharo.

Captain Morgan took time out to talk to every youngster at the air cadets hall and found out more about their syllabus which includes seamanship and metrology.

The cadets then carried out an inter-unit competition re-enacting a royal navy gun run from the Boer War and also showed Captain Morgan their administrative duties.

TS Pharo commanding officer Ewan McCuish said: 'The cadets have been really enthusiastic since we started and have



Anxious sea cadets in Oban await inspection by Captain Fry. Their unit is now known as TS Pharo. t10cad01

impressed us all. We have had the cadets on the go all the time and whenever we go anywhere it is a full bus and we have a waiting list for new recruits.'

The unit has visited warships, sailed on royal marine boats and

last weekend flew on a rescue helicopter. Commanding officer McCuish said: 'It is a case of trying to keep the cadets' feet on the ground because there is mundane work as well!'

He said cadet headquarters in

Rosyth has been 'gobsmacked' at the progress which the embryonic unit has made.

'We were affiliated to the Lochaber sea cadets which meant all our administration and minutes of meetings had to

be countersigned by them. But we have a very strong committee here and have made a lot of progress,' he added.

Captain Fry told the cadets, officers and audience that the sky is the limit for the new unit.



These pupils from Oban Primary campus dressed up as their favourite characters to celebrate World Book Day. t11boo01

Wizard of a time!

WIZARDS, witches, pirates and fairies appeared out of thin air at an Oban primary school this week, but there is no need to worry.

Oban Primary School Campus was celebrating World Book Day and staff and children dressed up as their favourite characters from the world of literature.

There were more than a few Harry Potters hoping to cast a spell but there were old favourites too like Snow White and Postman Pat.

World Book Day was designated by UNESCO as a worldwide celebration of books and reading, and is marked in more than 100 countries around the globe.

The main aim of World Book Day is to encourage children to explore the pleasures of books and reading by providing them with the opportunity to have a book of their own.

The day was rounded off with a grand parade of the costumes in the school hall during the afternoon.



Andy Harper, Marri Malloy and Jenny Hearn of Soroba Community Enterprise Board with Alastair MacGregor of ACHA around one of the new laptops. t11sor01

'We run passport courses in day afternoons.'

Alastair MacGregor of ACHA said: 'We helped the enterprise company prepare the application for funding and provide the two flats here as a community centre.'

'There is also a computer drop-in session on Wednes-

Assault pair in court

TWO men who admitted detaining another man against his will and assaulting him at Oban High School, Soroba Road have had their sentences deferred.

At Oban Sheriff Court last week Kenneth Livingstone, aged 24, of 28 Kennedy Road, Fort William and

James Haggart, aged 18, of 22 Kenmore Cottages, Bonawe also admitted demanding money, a bank card and pin number and robbing their victim of a quantity of money.

Sentence on both accused was deferred until April 1 for reports to be made available.

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Police files

Laptops stolen from office

OBAN police are investigating the theft of three laptops from an office in Oban.

The laptops were stolen at Argyll and Bute Employability Team's Mill Lane offices after 4pm last Friday and was discovered at 7.45am the next day.

The employability team is a not-for-profit organisation which helps and supports people back into work.

Oban police inspector Neil Wallace said: 'We are looking for any information about these thefts. If anybody was offered a cheap laptop to buy or may have heard anything about it then please get in touch.'

Assault arrest

A MAN has been arrested following a complaint of a serious assault in an Oban pub last Saturday night.

Inquiries are also continuing by police into an unconnected alleged serious assault in a George Street restaurant on the same night.

Cyclists caught

THREE cyclists have been caught by police committing a variety of offences in Oban town centre.

The cyclists have been caught riding on pavements and travelling through one-way streets illegally and failing to have lights on their bikes.

Lifeboat crew will check yacht safety

LIFE-saving equipment on board yachts and boats in the Oban area can be checked by Oban's lifeboat crew at their Flare Fair this Sunday.

The fair has been organised to let sailors dispose of expired flares, see a flare demonstration, practice holding dummy flares and having their lifejackets checked.

But the general public is also invited to have a tour of the lifeboat and enjoy a complementary cup of tea while they browse the Royal National Lifeboat Institute (RNLI) stall.

The Flare Fair will take place at Oban Lifeboat Station on the south pier from noon until 4pm.

Wind ensemble in society's last show

THE LAST concert in Oban Music Society's winter season takes place on Monday, March 17 in St John's Cathedral with a visit from a wind ensemble.

Gliodar – an Irish word meaning joy or glee – perfectly sums up this young ensemble's attitude to music making. The group, comprising flute, oboe, clarinet, bassoon and French horn, first became noticed in the musical world in 2001 when they won a Tunnell Trust prize.

Since then this talented ensemble has maintained a busy performing career delighting audiences all over Scotland. Some of the group are also involved in teaching and coaching wind bands and so this concert should be of particular interest to any players in the area.





Ewen MacQueen of Inverlochy Primary School won the under 10 chanter. f11mus1



Carolyn McKee and Lisa MacInnes of Lochaber High School. f11mus6

Lochaber Music Festival success

THE 2008 annual Lochaber Music Festival concludes tomorrow (Friday) with the awards ceremony and concert in Lochaber High School's main hall at 7pm.

The 34th festival began last Friday and organisers were very pleased with proceedings on the first weekend.

The adjudicators, Donald MacIntyre, piping, Christine Martin, clarsach, and Donald Barr, Scots fiddle, piano, accordion and folk groups, were all impressed with the standard of performance.

This part of the festival culminated in the Premier Scots Traditional Instrumental Award competition, which was won by Robert Robertson of Fort William, playing his own piano arrangements of 'Leaving Stoer' and 'Lochaber Gathering'.

Further details of the festival can be found on the website www.lochabermusicfestival.co.uk and in the programme, available from Fort William Library.



Alasdair Strachan of Lochaber High School on the fiddle. f11mus9



James Rasie from Fort William gets in some practice on the bag pipes. f11mus4



Robert Robertson of Lochaber High School received high praise from adjudicators for his performances on piano and accordion. f11mus3



Laura MacDonald, Victoria MacDonald and Lauren Reid from Lochaber High School. f11mus7



Clarsach players from Fort William, Mallaig and Oban.



Pipe Major D J MacIntyre adjudicated the junior chanter. The top three pupils in the under 10 category were, left to right, Ewen MacQueen, Inverlochy, Laura Patterson, Caol, and Liam Cameron, St Brides. f11mus2



Callum Tregaskis of Lochaber High School. f11mus8

Results

Chanter Singing with Self Accompaniment

Age 10 and under: 1 Ewan MacQueen; – Secondary: 1 Rebecca Hill.

2 Laura Paterson; 3 Liam Cameron. **Other Scots Instrumental and Folk Groups**

Accordion - advanced: 1 Robert Robertson. Scots Piano - Primary: 1 Fergus Munro. Scots Piano - Secondary: 1 Robert Robertson.

Premier Scots Traditional Music Award: Robert Robertson, piano.

Folk Groups - age 13 and Under: 1 Buidhinn Feis Lochaber. Folk Groups - adult: 1 The MacKillops of Loch Treig. Fiddle Groups - under 14 and under - March, Strathspey and Reel: 1 Karla Marshall; 2 Groups: Buidhinn Feis Lochaber and Lauren Reid; 3 Andrew Hepburn. Group Music Making - open: 1 The MacKillops of Loch Treig.

Ages 15 and 16 - March, Strathspey and Reel: 1 Carolyn McKee; 2 Dean Gillies; 3 Laura MacDonald. First Year Piobaireachd: 1 Laura Rosie, Dean Gillies and Ewen MacDonald; 2 Jamie-Lee Logan; Henderson. Clarsach: Rebecca Hill, 3 Kayleigh Graham. Second Year in two classes. Folk and Fiddle Piobaireachd: 1 Karla Marshall; 2 Groups: Buidhinn Feis Lochaber and Jamie Rosie; 3 Andrew Hepburn. Lochaber Music School Traditional Third Year Piobaireachd: 1 Bonnie MacDonald; 2 Gemma Maxwell.

Piping: Carolyn McKee, James Findlay Memorial Trophy: Hannah MacRae and Fiona MacIntyre.

Lochaber Strathspey and Reel Schools' Pipe Band Quartet C; 2 Society Trophy: Lochaber Music School Traditional Group. Lydia

Jackson Trophy: Rebecca Hill.

Lochaber Cup for Chanter: Ewen MacQueen. William MacLeod Trophy: Roslyn Oliver. Kenny

MacDonald. Age 14 and under: 1 Nicholson Memorial Trophy: Leah

Mairi Sandison. Age 17 and under: Philip. David MacGregor Cup: 1 Fiona MacIntyre; 2 Elaine Reid; 3 Pamela Macleod. Archie Kennedy

Memorial Trophy: Karla Marshall. Lochaber Piping Society Trophy:

Beginners: 1 Lisa-Marie Parkinson; Karla Marshall. Evan MacRae

2 Heather McBeth; 3 Solene Cargill Trophy: Laura McDonald. David

and Ida McVarish. Elementary: 1 MacGregor Trophy: Donnie

Neive Henderson. Intermediate: 1 MacDonald. Alexander MacDonald

Catriona Kerr; 2 Pieter Nel Baak; Cup: Carolyn McKee. John

3 Jessica Baker. Advanced: 1 MacCallum Trophy: Carolyn McKee.

Rebecca Hill. Duets - Primary: 1 Lochaber Pipe Band Trophy: James

Kerry Harkins and Isobel Tilling. Rosie. Alec MacDonald Memorial

Duets - Secondary: 1 Catriona Kerr Trophy: Lochaber Schools' Pipe

and Katherine MacCuish. Solo Band Quartet C.



Helena Rose and Ruth Earnshaw of Lochaber High School. f11mus10

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Education trust aims events at the family

NEW EVENTS for all the family are being organised by the Rural Education Trust in An Clachan at Lochaber Rural Complex.

A quiz night will be held on March 22 when well known quiz master Andy Donaldson will set the questions and take charge of the proceedings.

The entry fee is £5 per team of four and prizes have been kindly sponsored by Ben Nevis Distillery. Entry forms are available at the BOSS office.

There will be a raffle and buffet and all funds raised will help the trust to provide extra curriculum activities for less fortunate children in the community.

And whether you are in a wheelchair, a mother with toddler, a walker or a runner you can take part in the new Leanach Challenge for All on May 10. This new challenge is being organised by the trust with help from Forest Enterprise and will be a fun day for all the family.

There will be two starting points but all will finish at Lochaber Rural Complex.

The route will be through picturesque countryside and all ages and abilities will be catered for. Everyone who finishes will receive a medal and there will also be special prizes. Funds raised will go to local charities. Entry forms are available and numbers will be limited.

Contact Isabel on 01397 701039 for more information.

Kinlochleven man ready for London marathon

AN army officer from Kinlochleven has confirmed he will participate in this year's London Marathon as part of the Mr Men and Little Miss team, to raise money for children with Leukaemia.

Nathan Crew, 30, will be one of six runners wearing huge Mr Men and Little Miss costumes at the 26-mile event on April 13.

Mr Crew, who is deployed in Iraq, hopes to raise £800 in his first marathon.

Parade will not lose green space

FORT William Community Council has been assured by Highland Council's TEC services that the proposed work at the Parade Gardens will not be a 'loss to our green space'.

At a recent meeting, the community council proposed to leave the grass area in front of the war memorial as it is and instead have the new garden area at the triangular end of the Parade nearest Belford Road. Community council secretary Mary Bruce will write to TEC with this suggestion.

Dance is a platform for pupils

THE fifth Lochaber Dance Platform will take place in the Nevis Centre tomorrow (Friday) from 7pm.

More than 50 pupils from Lochaber High and another 60 primary aged children will take part.

Started in October 2004 the dance platform has enabled hundreds of pupils to get physically active in an enjoyable and creative way. They choose their own music and choreograph their dances.

New guest performers this year include Lochaber Wheelchair Dancers and Kinlochleven High School.

The Royal Scottish Country Dance Society and Ballet West will also be appearing. Tickets are £5 (£3 concessions) and are available at Lochaber High School Office and the Nevis Centre. Admission is strictly by advanced ticket sales only.

Mary Ann unleashes Gaeldom's young lions

ARDGOUR-based broadcaster-musician Mary Ann Kennedy has unleashed her latest venture, a 'gathering of Gaeldom's young lions', in the form of her new seven-man super-group, Mary Ann Kennedy and Na Seòid.

Na Seòid translates as 'the heroes', and the seven young band members have each won their fair share of traditional music's highest accolades.

Mary Ann is one of just a handful of singers to win both gold medals at the Royal National Mod, along with a prestigious Saltire award at the Scots Traditional Music Awards.

She said: 'What's special about this group is that Gaelic is part of every day life, for every single one of them, and not just a language for the stage. I think that's a powerful element, which in turn has a fundamental impact on the way they perform the music.'

The group recorded their debut album at the Watercolour Music studios in Ardgour, run by Mary Ann and husband Nick Turner.

The couple were backed by HIE in marketing their new base, which boasts top of the range recording and multi-media studio.

HIE creative industries senior development manager, Ian Hamilton said: 'This is a great example of the Scottish Music Futures fund helping small Highland businesses collaborate to create something new and different.'

'It is also shows what can be achieved from helping young musicians and those with technical skills, to achieve their full potential without leaving the country.'

Mary Ann Kennedy and NaSeòid recorded their debut album in Ardgour



Strip raffle will boost school funds

BALLACHULISH Primary School is to raffle a signed Scotland football strip during the Easter break.

All monies raised in the raffle for the strip, which has been signed by the entire squad after being arranged by a past pupil, will go towards school funds. fl1ball3



Lochaber's lovely larder

Food directory will promote local produce

WHY BUY inferior imported food when when quality produce is available right on our doorstep?

That was the message at the launch of a new directory of food producers at an event to promote local produce and crafts in Lochaber College last Wednesday.

Lochaber Larder's first Food Producers and Crafts Showcase was a big hit with the public, who browsed the craft and food stalls in the foyer before enjoying fine fare prepared by young chefs in the adjacent cafeteria.

Front of house duties were carried out by NC hospitality and tourism students from Lochaber College under the watchful eye of Cynthia Buick, lecturer in hospitality and tourism.

Meanwhile in the kitchen, the pressure was on as a team of young assistants learning their trade assisted head chef Brian Gunn and his staff prepare the gourmet buffet of local produce in time for the mid-day rush.

Third year Kinlochleven High pupils Kelly Strachan, John Fleming, Sebastian Bonnet and Vernon Regpala teamed up with full-time SVQ students Jennifer Kane from Upper Achintore, and Shaun MacDonald and Cynthia Van de Capelle from Glenfinnan to cook, prepare and plate up tasty platters of local beef, bread, cheeses, smoked salmon, seafood and venison.

Grabbing a moment to talk to *The Oban Times*, head chef Brian said the quality of produce from local suppliers was second to none.

'All the food for today was do-



Young chefs Jennifer Kane and Shaun MacDonald hard at work on the buffet lunch. fl1che01

nated by local suppliers to raise awareness of the quality we have here.

The whole idea of today is to promote and raise awareness of smaller producers in the area, and the sheer quality of the produce we have around Lochaber.

'It's of benefit to the students as well, because they see what they can lay their hands on locally, and they understand the importance of using local produce when it's in season.'

'All the food for today was do-

The new directory will help people buy locally and make it easier for Lochaber customers to buy from local food suppliers.

With more than 36 entries, the directory lists where to buy organic, home grown, home baked or hand reared produce and includes jams, breads, hampers, meats, game, fruits and veg, and includes contacts and ordering details for the everyday user.

Seventeen food outlets using local produce in their menus also

feature in the directory.

Robert Linton of Fired Art and Lochaber Larder said: 'We all have to eat, but supporting our local food producers as much as we can gives us all a greater chance of eating healthier quality food to help us achieve a fitter and longer life.'

For more information on the directory or Lochaber Larder, contact Kate Campbell at the Ariundle Centre on 01967 402279 or Robert Linton on robert@fired-art.co.uk.



Pupils set sail on a Viking Day

BALLACHULISH Primary School pupils held a Viking Day last Tuesday as part of their school project.

Pupils from Primary 3, 4 and 5 made a large Viking ship out of willow and paper

Council reviews its political arrangements

TWO LOCHABER councillors are to serve on a 15-strong Highland Council working group to review whether political arrangements are working as well as they should.

Fort William and Ardnamurchan councillor Donald Cameron and Caoil and Mallaig councillor Bill Clark along with their colleagues will examine the strategic committee structure, the planning applications and review committees, licensing committees and licensing board.

The operation of wards and ward forums, and using new technology to improve access to the democratic process will also be examined.

The council has seven strategic committees; resources, housing and social work, education culture and sport, planning environment and development, transport environmental and community services, audit and scrutiny and Gaelic. There are three planning application and review committees and three licensing committees/boards covering Caithness Sutherland and Easter Ross, Ross Skye and Lochaber and Inverness, Nairn, Badenoch and Strathspey.

The group will aim to report back to the council meeting of June 26.

Hotel wins award

GLENMARRY Castle Hotel was the recipient of the HotelReviewScotland.com Readers' Award 2008, in the category of most positive feedback over a year.

Owner Robert MacCallum said: 'The MacCallum family are delighted to receive this award as we embark on our 50th trading year.'

'We would like to thank our loyal staff and customers for all their help and support, and look forward to welcoming guests familiar and new in the years to come.'

Muriel's happy to go by boot, boat and bike

SCOTTISH author, broadcaster and businesswoman Muriel Gray was guest of honour at celebrations to mark the completion of a £200,000 public access and interpretation project along the Caledonian Canal and Great Glen Way last Tuesday.

Dignitaries gathered at The Boat House Restaurant, Fort Augustus to see Ms Gray launch the Great Glen Ways Initiative, which encourages people to explore the Glen 'by boot, by boat and by bike'.

Ms Gray, well known for her love of the Scottish outdoors through her book 'The First Fifty' and 'The Munro Show' on TV, joined representatives from Highland Council, British Waterways Scotland, Forestry Commission Scotland and Scottish Natural Heritage for the occasion.

A new DVD on the initiative was also launched. More information is available at www.greatglens.info.



Muriel Gray at the launch of the Great Glen Ways Initiative last Tuesday.

ISLAND OF RUM

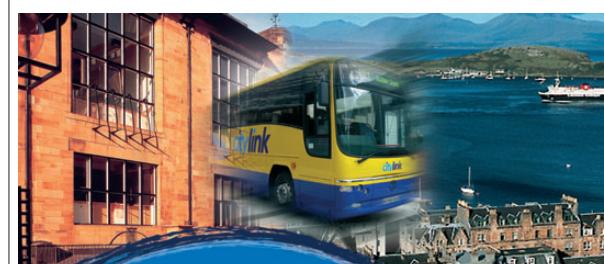
Deer Culling Concession 2008-2009

Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) is offering the right to shoot around 40 red deer stags on the island of Rum from 1 July 2008 to 20 October 2008.

SNH will provide the right to shoot deer, the use of ponies and associated equipment, and the use of SNH's larder facilities.

You will have the DMQ2 qualification, valid firearms certificate, and public liability insurance.

For further information and an application pack, please contact David MacLennan at SNH on 01851 705258



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Islay

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Hail, snow and sunshine

ON MONDAY March 3, Islay had hail and snow showers for much of the afternoon, leaving a white landscape in the fields and the higher ground looking wintry.

The Bridgend area got the most snow, with about two inches lying in the afternoon.

The airport was closed to afternoon and evening flights.

Then Tuesday March 4 was a beautiful sunny day, with lots of people out and about enjoying the spring sunshine.

If Islay weather doesn't suit us, we just wait a minute!

Early lambs

SOME early 'outdoor' lambs have been born and appear to be thriving.

As long as they are strong and well-mothered and the ewes have plenty of milk, there's every hope that the young lambs will do well even in the often unsettled weather of March.

Luckily, when a neighbour and I first saw them, the lambs had their heads towards us, so the signs are good.

Sea eagle returns

A WHITE-TAILED Sea Eagle has visited Islay again, and seeing these huge birds in flight is a superb sight.

They're sometimes nicknamed 'flying barn doors' and it's an amazing experience to see them from a fairly close vantage point. Unlike the Golden Eagle, which usually keeps to the hills and moor ground, the sea eagles can sometimes be seen about farmlands and shores and have even been seen perching on telephone poles and fenceposts.

It is likely that the birds which are occasionally seen in Islay may be some of the younger sea eagles from Mull.

IDEAS group appeal

THE IDEAS group is appealing for handicraft materials such as pieces of cloth for patchwork, ribbons, lace, buttons, threads or knitting wool.

The group will also take unfinished crafts projects, which can be completed and sold at IDEAS fund-raising events.

Readers wishing to donate materials or articles should please contact IDEAS on 01496 810963 or drop them in at the IDEAS centre at Kilarow.

Energy trust annual meeting

ISLAY Energy Trust will hold its annual general meeting on Wednesday April 2 at a time and venue to be announced.

After the meeting, Dr Alan Owen from Robert Gordon University, Aberdeen, will give a talk on 'Tidal Energy in the Sound of Islay'.

**Barcaldine pupils learn about safety in the home**

Barcaldine Primary School pupils pictured with members of the local crime prevention panel. The panel visited the school and spoke to the children about safety in the home. They also demonstrated detective pens and how to use them to protect belongings. They demonstrated the use of door-chains and the importance of not allowing anyone to enter their homes uninvited. The strong message coming through was that by working together everyone can build safer communities. The team is willing to visit schools and can be contacted via Oban Police Station.



Pipe Major Julie Blue and Fiona Mitchell receive their overall first prize of the Dumbarton Pipe Band Shield and set of Wallace Bagpipe Chanter.



Dunoon Grammar School receives its first prize in novice marches from Gaelic entertainer Norman MacLean.

Pipe band leads the way again

DUMBARTON and District Pipe Band has consistently been at the forefront of developing pipe band skills in young people.

The band teaches young pipers, drummers and drum majors locally and has spread the development opportunities through their solo piping, solo drumming and drum major competitions.

Last weekend saw the launch of a new initiative to allow young pipers to experience an event which has not been offered for about 25 years.

Senior quartet competitions were held in the West of Scotland branch up until the 1980s but were discontinued because the cost of hiring large enough indoor premises was too expensive. This meant young pipers of today were unaware of the discipline and had never even seen a quartet contest far less play in one.

The band also decided to offer a contest for novice pipers to play a traditional March, Strathspey and Reel which they don't normally get to play until they move up the grades.

The competition was held in the Pipe Band Hall, Station Street, Renton. Young pipers from all over the West of Scotland branch of the Royal Scottish Pipe Band Association played in the contest and all the children, pipe majors and tutors agreed it was an enlightening experience and something they would like to see happen annually.

Royal Scottish Pipe Band Association adjudicators

for the day David Clark and James Campbell both said the music was performed to an exceptional standard and that the quartet format was the vehicle which had contributed to the personal development of these young pipers.

They were pleased to see the re-emergence of this art form and hoped other competition organisers might follow Dumbarton and District Pipe Band's lead.

Well-known Gaelic personality Norman MacLean, who listened to the competition and presented the prizes, congratulated the young pipers, parents and tutors on a most enjoyable day of exceptional music.

He also made mention of the fact that these children, having mastered the art of bagpipe playing, had achieved a wonderful skill and now had a lifetime of musical pleasure ahead of them.

A total of 49 quartets competed in four events.

Results: Novice Juvenile Selection of Marches, 20 played: 1 Dunoon Grammar School A; 2 Dumbarton and District C; 3 Dunoon Grammar School B.

Novice Juvenile March,

Strathspey and Reel, seven

played: 1 Johnstone B; 2

Kintyre Schools A; 3 Kintyre Schools B.

Juvenile Medley, 11 played:

1 Dunoon Grammar School A; 2 Inveraray and District B;

3 Kintyre Schools B.

Juvenile March, Strathspey

and Reel, 11 played: 1 Kintyre Schools B; 2 Kintyre Schools A; 3 Kintyre Schools C.



Easdale pupils sing during the opening of the new Seil Island village hall.

Pupils on song at hall opening

SEVEN years of hard work and fund-raising finally paid off for islanders on Seil as they officially opened their new village hall.

The new hall, which cost £603,000, was officially opened by Mike Shaw earlier this year.

Mike was chairman of the hall committee which tirelessly worked to raise more than £180,000 towards the cost of the building, beside the site of the old premises.

The opening began with the Easdale branch of the British Legion bearing their banner, being piped into the hall flanked by two serving members of the armed forces.

Easdale Primary School pupils were then piped in by Donnie MacDougall and they

provided excellent entertainment, including a series of songs for a very appreciative audience. In his speech Mike thanked the project team for all its fine work, the National Lottery, Highlands and Islands Enterprise, Argyll and the Islands Enterprise and Argyll and Bute Council for its financial support.

Mike then unveiled an inscribed plaque of Easdale slate and declared the hall officially open. The hall is already proving very popular and has a busy schedule in the winter with a badminton club, keep fit, natural history club, country dancing, WRI, playgroup, brownies, cubs and carpet bowls. The hall is also suitable for functions and can be booked through Mary Norris or Brian Mitchell.

Around the Rurals**Taynuilt**

THE TAYNUILT branch of the Scottish Women's Rural Institute held its monthly meeting on Wednesday February 13 in Taynuilt Village Hall.

President Jessie Servant welcomed 13 members and 19 visitors including members from Glenorchy, Connel and Oban to an open meeting and sales table.

Business attended to, the president introduced Ken MacDonald, Specsavers, Oban, who gave an interesting talk and film show on Vision Aid Overseas, a charity that goes to remote parts of Africa and other disadvantaged regions to carry out eye tests and supply glasses to people who thought they were blind.

Through the eye tests, sight has been given back to thousands of people who were simply short or long sighted.

Ken has been in Africa with the charity and spent two weeks at various clinics that have been set up, seeing 50-60 people per day.

He said they were very jolly people, bikes being their form of transport.

A collection of old spectacles from members was given to Mr MacDonald for recycling for which he was most grateful.

Marlene Stanners gave the vote of thanks. Proceeds from the sales table, amounting to £60, were given to Mr MacDonald for the charity. Tea was served by committee members and a small raffle was held.

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The Herald

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**Primary pupils busy getting ready for challenges ahead**

PREPARING pupils for the challenges they face as they get older was the objective behind a two-day conference at Taynuilt Primary School.

Primary six and seven pupils from Taynuilt, Dalmally and Kilchrenan primary schools took part in the conference which came about because teachers felt there was a need to deal with issues

facing youngsters. Taynuilt headteacher Don McAllister said: 'It is about dealing with growing up and how the pupils can protect themselves. We have carried out a series of activities and games.

They are moving towards their teenage years and there have been talks on how their bodies are changing, how to deal with the responsibilities

they will be getting and how to keep themselves safe.'

An East Lorn Schools Protection Charter will also be drawn up.

Representatives from Argyll and Bute Council, NHS Highland, Argyll Women's Aid, Strathclyde Police and teachers were all involved.

Edinburgh Argyll Association

EDINBURGH Argyll Association held its ceilidh on Saturday February 16 in St Marks Unitarian Church Hall, Castle Terrace, Edinburgh.

The programme opened with bean an taigh Mabel Munro Rowan, president, welcoming the audience in Gaelic and English. Everyone then sang Suas leis a 'ghaidhlig'. Piper for the evening was Hamish MacPherson, aged 10, of the Edinburgh Academy Pipe Band. He was in good form and gave the audience a selection of tunes. Beataig Morrison, Glasgow/Skye, delighted the company with her traditional Gaelic songs. Clarsach player Mairi MacPherson, aged eight, played interesting arrangements of Highland and Scottish music. Mabel, the president, told amusing stories throughout the evening. A group of singers called 'Linton Adie' added to the varied programme with unusual Scottish ballads along with Robert Burns songs. The Argyll Association accompanist was Elizabeth Stewart. Archie Mackenzie, Oban, editorial director of *Scottish Field* magazine, treated the audience with his beautiful tenor voice. Archie sang good old ceilidh songs and a *Ranrig* composition. Tea and goodies were served at the interval. Thanks were extended to all the artistes, those who donated raffle prizes and to the committee and helpers who made this a splendid ceilidh. The next ceilidh is on March 15 in the same venue.

Local schools rally round to boost Romanian charity



The Romanian villagers with the cheque they received from schools in Oban and Easdale. t11rom01

Oban and Easdale school children raise £5,000 for Smiles

VILLAGERS from Romania have gratefully accepted a cheque for £5,000 after fundraising by schools in Oban and Easdale.

Oban High School, Drummore Learning Centre and Easdale, St Columba's, Rockfield and Park primary schools have been busy raising cash for the Smiles charity.

The pupils and staff raised the money through a variety of Christmas events and a mass Mexican wave.

Kevin Hoy of Smiles said: 'The money raised in Argyll has gone to building a £1million community centre in the Romanian village of Tileagd.'

'It is being built at the moment and should be open in June. We are very grateful to everybody for the effort they have put in to raising the money.'

Ghiuri and Meda Rostas, Maria Cimpoca and pastor Ovidiu Butnaru from the village of Tileagd met a number of the pupils who raised the money at Oban High.

Portree opens new Saturday 'drop-in' centre

TEENAGERS in and around Portree are to have a new 'drop-in' youth service following a consultation with the youngsters themselves.

The service will be open on Saturday afternoons in the Portree community centre in a bid to give youngsters a place to meet and socialise together.

The centre and Highland Council has received funding for the programme and is seeking a youth worker to help run it.

Annie Davidson, council youth officer on Skye, said: 'The drop-in will provide a safe, supervised environment where they can meet their friends. Youth leaders will challenge and discuss anti-social behaviour and the young people will be supported to plan the drop-in provision themselves.'

Knoydart kids win national film award

A quarter of the peninsula's population travel to London

THE OSCARS may be over for another year – but a group of young moviemakers from Knoydart won a UK film award last week.

A quarter of Knoydart's population of 100 made the trip to London for the First Light Films Awards in the 1,600 capacity Odeon in Leicester Square – and shouted in delight when the children's film 'Munchatreeforest' was announced as Best Film in the under 12s category.

‘When we were making the film we had no

Kira Holroyd and Calum Williams gave a speech on behalf of the group after receiving Knoydart's award from 'The Chronicles of Narnia' stars William Moseley and Anna Popplewell, and were praised by host Davina McCall and actor Kevin Spacey.

Knoydart filmmaker Sam Firth told *The Oban Times*: 'It was absolutely amazing, it was wonderful.'

‘When we were making the film we had no

idea that we would end up in London's Leicester Square.'

‘Twenty-five of us went down, 13 children and 12 parents. That's about a quarter of the population, so I think Knoydart was pretty quiet last week.'

‘Villagers put bunting up on the pier for when the children returned.'

‘They had a long journey with a rough crossing at the end, but got home safely.'

Skye dresses-up for world book day



Pupils from Portree Primary School which celebrated world book day by hosting a book fair, book swap and competition where everybody in the school dressed up as characters from books. Organiser Maggie Cowie is also in the picture. t11esh01



A coffee morning was held in Oban's tourist office in aid of the charity Cash for Kids. Children from Soroba Playgroup joined staff from the tourist office and Oban FM had a two-hour outside broadcast which was a precursor to the gala charity bash in Argyllshire Gathering Halls tomorrow (Friday). t11esh01

TOP 20 PETS



Mac, aged 5

Submitted by Mark Reid, Nelson Road, Oban.



Teal, aged 12

Submitted by Vicki Brennan, Drimmin, Morvern.



Sheba, aged 15

Submitted by Lynne Murdoch, Nelson Road, Oban.



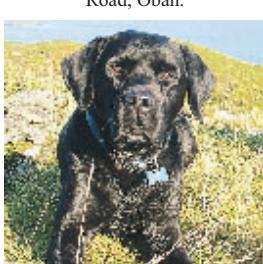
Hamish, aged 10 months

Submitted by Brenda MacLean, Taynuilt.



Fergie, aged 1

Submitted by Eileen MacCachern, Arisaig.



Paddy, aged 8

Submitted by Megan Cruickshanks, Isle of Luing.



Bonnie, aged 4

Submitted by Sheila MacIntyre, Tarbert, Argyll.



Leo, aged 19 months

Submitted by David Black, Hynish Crescent, Oban.



Millie, aged 11 weeks

Submitted by Karen Blair, Davaar Avenue, Campbeltown.



Sandy and Bonny

Submitted by John and Rosalyn Cook, Oban.



Spud, aged 5

Submitted by Darren Clark, Bunessian, Isle of Mull.



Clyde, aged 5

Submitted by Elizabeth McCowan, Biggar, Lanark.



Poppy, aged 5

Submitted by Liz Thompson, Kilmelford.



Scotia, aged 14 months

Submitted by Kenny and Isobel Brown, Carradale.



Lucky, aged 14 weeks

Submitted by Shauna Brown, Carradale.



Cara, Murphy and Isla

Submitted by Gwen Cameron, Oban.



Breagh, aged 3 years

Submitted by Bill MacKie, Lawe Road, Oban.



Loppy, aged 6 months

Submitted by Kieran and Liam Pike, Caol, Fort William.



Gemma, aged 16

Submitted by A Inglis, Corpach, Fort William.



Sweep, aged 2

Submitted by A Inglis, Corpach, Fort William.

Oban High School NEWS



Team Somerled dominated the S2 events at the clan swimming gala.

Swimming galas

CLAN competition has been going strong in the last two weeks with two successful swimming galas being run.

First it was the turn of S1 to demonstrate their ability in a wide range of events including width races, 25 metre and 50 metre events in all the strokes and the grand finale being the team relays. With over 160 participants taking to the pool the competition was fierce but the eventual winners were Diarmid.

Next up it was the turn of the S2s. The programme was exactly the same but this time there were a mere 110 swimmers. Again the competition ran extremely close with Somerled and Ossian exchanging the top two spots frequently throughout the day.

In the end Somerled dominated the team events to run out the worthy winners of a very close competition.

Badminton

OBAN high's badminton players had a successful weekend competing in the regional qualifiers of the Scottish Schools Championship. Carla Cameron beat some strong opposition to take the winners medal in the under 14s girls singles event while Roheel Arshad and Cameron Milne took runner's up spot in the under 14's doubles and Angus Munro was also runner up in the under 18s boys singles.

Gymnastics

FOUR teams from Oban high's gymnastics club represented the school at the Scottish Schools Gymnastics regional heats in Perth. All team members put on a fantastic performance, with three teams qualifying to compete at the Scottish Championships next month.

Oban high also hosted an Argyll and Bute gymnastics competition on Friday and despite a disappointing turnout from other schools in the area Oban high entered 32 participants including one male pupil.

The winning team in the Level 2 category was Katy Simms, Rachael Broadfoot and Jenny Livingstone whilst in Level 1 the winning team included Shonna Elliot, Shannon Reynolds, Lauren Stewart and Michalina Wilinska. The overall individual winner for Level 2 was Rachael Broadfoot and for Level 1, Michalina Wilinska. The award for the most improved gymnast in the competition was awarded to Holly Pallas.

Girls rugby

THE LATEST club to be started in Oban high has got off to a flying start as a group of young female pupils have taken a great interest in rugby.

After training once a week in all sorts of weather the girls were rewarded with victory at their first festival beating Mull by 17 points to 7. Coach Billy Thompson praised all the girls' efforts and attitude both in training and in this festival and is now getting the girls prepared for the next festival on March 16 on Mull. Oban high's rugby squads are going from strength to strength and this is thanks to the assistance with training and the organisation of festivals which is completed by Oban Lorne RFC.



CAST Showcase

HUNDREDS of pupils and staff packed into the assembly hall last Tuesday night to watch two of Oban high's finest rock bands.

No Nightmares and NY Lips entertained the crowds and were battling for the opportunity to represent the school during a visit to Castle Toward where they will spend a weekend being taught the tricks of the music business by professional musicians and will record their own CD.

The winners were No Nightmares who we wish well on their weekend and look forward to hearing the CD.

Mathsfest

OBAN High School hosted its annual Mathsfest recently with around 100 participants being drawn from a mixture of S1 and Primary 7s from the feeder primary schools in the area.

After a challenging morning where pupils were asked to solve both practical and mental maths problems the winning teams included S1 pupils Rebecca Hill, Niamh O'Byrne, Dylan Cooke and Andrew Strange. Primary 7 winners included Rhys Cooke and Sean Bissett of Park Primary, Sarah Hill of Achaleven Primary and Beth MacArthur of Rockfield Primary.

World Book Day

Last Thursday was World Book Day and Oban High celebrated in style.

Throughout the day events were being held and this was kicked off with the early arrival of Donald Duck who spent the day selling raffle tickets and cuddles.

Next on the agenda was a storming performance by the pupil band No Nightmares which was held in a packed assembly hall at break time.

The main event was saved for lunch time when the assembly hall was transformed into a cafe where pupils enjoyed a selection of mouth watering food prepared by the Hospitality Department and served to them by their teachers.

Whilst pupils were enjoying their lunch they were entertained by a selection of staff performances which was kicked off by the male cheerleading squad who were fully kitted out in skirts and pom poms and performed their own unique version of the Vengaboys Boom Boom.

This was followed by a series of musical performances from the staff band and brave soloists.

In addition to all this the library was also transformed into a fun fair with stalls, competitions and face painting on offer.

A great day of fun was had by all and the sum of £750 was raised and will now be spent solely on purchasing a new selection of books for the library.

You can email your school news to
editor@obantimes.co.uk

The Oban Times

& West Highland Times

United down one clear road

ALL of the west of Scotland is heavily dependent, directly or indirectly, on a crumpling roads network that fails to meet the criteria 'fit for purpose'.

This week's launch of the Demand A82 Upgrade campaign comes as a result of a number of people from different walks of life coming together and realising that by speaking with a united voice they can find a much needed and long sought solution to a common problem.

The A82 is without doubt the artery which pumps the economic and social lifeblood into the west and north Highlands and islands. Yet its decay has been largely ignored by central belt dominated government with central belt priorities - a fact highlighted by 30-year-old 'temporary' traffic lights and the number of commercial operators who shy away from dangerously crumbling road edges.

Your voice can make a difference - will you be heard in support now? Or complain quietly for years and be ignored?

Glasgow Letter

Glasgow Islay Association

SOME you win and some you lose - that's certainly how it turned out for me last weekend.

Isn't it amazing how poor health hits you at the end of the week and then you are fit and healthy for work days?

My loss was I was unable to attend the Glasgow Islay Annual Gathering Concert and by all accounts I missed a great night. An excellent programme was put in place and all artistes excelled. Singers for the evening were Mary Catherine MacNeil, James Graham, Paul McCallum and the youngsters from Glasgow Islay Junior Gaelic Choir while the instrumentalists were Fraser Shaw, a former finalist in the BBC Radio Scotland Young Traditional Musician of the Year, playing whistle and uilleann pipes, accompanied by Innes Watson on guitar and fiddler Ryan Young from Helensburgh who was a finalist in the BBC Radio 2 Folk Awards 2006.

The Islay pipers were, as usual, in good form on this their first concert without their stalwart Duncan Heads who sadly passed away since the last gathering. Orchestrating proceedings was Dr Donald McArthur who spoke particularly of the valued community life during his early years on Islay and of the very valuable education he had received in Bowmore. Momentoes of the occasion were presented to Dr MacArthur and his wife by Aimee Clark and Bridget Morrison from the choir and vice president Malcolm Campbell skillfully delivered the vote of thanks at what was one of the best Islay Gathering Concerts for years and certainly one of the longest.

Piping recitals

AS INDICATED previously, the National Piping Centre has organised a recital series and the first of these has now taken place. Billed to appear were Fred Morrison and Finlay MacDonald but unfortunately Fred had to call off at the last moment. His place was taken by Glen Brown who illustrated what an excellent piper he is and then Finlay, accompanied for part of his spot by Kevin MacKenzie on guitar and Mark McGuire on bodhran, showed why he is one of our leading exponents of bagpipe music. The next event is on April 17 when a quartet from the Field Marshall Montgomery Pipe Band will be appearing.

Clydebank Highlander's Association

IT IS never a good idea to have a ceilidh when an annual gathering is taking place but as a result of unavoidable circumstances this is what happened to the 'Bankies'. The crowd was less than usual but the quality of the entertainment was up to the usual standard. It was a night for the ladies to be singing with Janet Campbell, Jane Campbell, Pauline Cochrane and Mairi MacArthur on stage. Andrew Caulfield was the piper, John MacMillan played stirring pipe selections, Anna Cameron was the accompanist and Tommy MacLennan, from Cardross, was in the chair.

Pub scene

GUNNA Sound will play in the Park Bar on Saturday and Sunday with Shindig on Friday. In the Islay Inn it will be Martin Pottinger/Colin MacDonald on Friday, Deoch 'n Dorus on Saturday and John Carmichael/Pat Gillespie on Sunday. Neil Murray Tel: 0141 954 8105. Email: neilmurray@yahoo.co.uk



Family visit to Iona - July 1945

This week's flashback photograph was submitted by Sheila Mitchell of Swindon and shows her husband James as a young boy visiting relatives on Iona in 1945. Christine Doig is kneeling next to the dog and Christina Will is behind her. Sheila is wondering if any readers can identify the other people in the photograph. We would like readers to send in 'Flashback' photographs. Please send prints to The Oban Times, PO Box 1, Oban, Argyll, PA34 4HB, or email editor@obantimes.co.uk. Prints or emails must be accompanied by a caption, name, address and telephone number. Anyone wishing their prints returned must supply a stamped addressed envelope. Each month a photo will win £10.

Letters to the editor

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Unjustified complaint

Sir,
On reading a letter in last week's *Oban Times*, I felt I had to respond to the complaint about the bus service along Glengallan Road.

As a regular bus user, I find Mr Watt's complaints unjustified. I use this service daily and find it to be excellent. We do have to take into consideration the road works at the moment which delay everyone and puts time on journeys including the bus service.

J MacLeod, Oban.

A good bus service in Oban

Sir,
I am writing in response to a letter in last week's edition of *The Oban Times* from Tom Watt, complaining about the bus service in Glengallan Road.

Oban has one of the best bus services in Argyll and Bute and in Glengallan Road alone there are three buses an hour into the town centre during the day.

Bus services in Oban have continually improved over the last few years with the introduction of the half hourly service to Dunbeg, improved Sunday service and the new service introduced last year to Pulpit Hill and Ganavan

sands. The frequency of buses to Longsdale has also increased from hourly to half hourly.

I am disappointed if Mr Watt had to wait more than half an hour for his bus in Glengallan Road. There was obviously something wrong and if this happens again I would urge him to make a complaint at the time so the matter can be investigated.

Councillor Duncan MacIntyre, Transportation and Infrastructure spokesman for Argyll and Bute Council.

Crianlarich by-pass

Sir,
As a Crianlarich resident and local business owner I feel compelled to respond to recent publicity regarding the A82 upgrade.

Of particular concern is the impact the current plan to develop a Crianlarich bypass will have on my local economy if it is taken forward without the southern section of the A82 between Tarbet and Inverarnan being improved first.

As a small fragile community, all local businesses rely on passing traffic for a major part of their income. It is therefore not difficult to see that removing a significant proportion of that traffic is likely to have a considerable impact on the viability of some of these businesses. While

the southern section of road remains unimproved, there is unlikely to be an increase in the overall volume of traffic travelling north, which may have helped to counteract the loss of business caused by the Crianlarich bypass.

In my opinion, the proposed bypass will not deliver any significant improvements to road safety or journey times until the southern section of the A82 is upgraded. The cost of the bypass cannot be justified when the future of my community is put at risk in this way. Why should Crianlarich suffer for the sake of road users being able to cut a few seconds off their journey?

As the government has consistently failed to commit to the significant investment the entire A82 requires, it is my belief that the offer by the government to move forward with a Crianlarich bypass is being put forward as a cheap option. This is purely an attempt to appease certain groups campaigning for the A82 upgrade. As a result, my community is being sacrificed in an attempt to avoid addressing the real issues with the road.

I would urge all groups campaigning for improvements to see this move by the government as the diversionary tactic that it clearly is and reject the current proposals for the road or we all risk the government pushing the real issues back onto the shelf while they smugly sit back claiming to have made improvements.

Many people appear to be of the opinion that the Crianlarich by-pass is a signed deal, however, I can assure you that nothing has been finalised and with the proposal as it is at the moment, it is likely to meet with significant local opposition. The focus must be to divert the money currently earmarked for the Crianlarich bypass to the sections of the A82 which need it most urgently.

Bryan Craig, Station Road, Crianlarich.

Oban bay pontoons

Sir,
It is disappointing that neither John MacGregor or Calum MacLachlainn didn't visit myself or other skippers at Oban pier during recent storms after feigning such concern over our safety.

Nothing has changed. Your pontoons will be useless to all locally-owned trawlers and scallopers.

Perhaps McCaig, who must have considerable knowledge to write so scathingly, can come down from his tower next gale or storm and offer me sound advice on the meaning of 'aspirations'; ours have been ignored for years. Does Oban need two follies?

Jonathan McAllister, skipper/owner, MFV Freedom.

Islay Letter

Round Church re-opens

BOWMORE'S famous Round Church reopened for worship on Sunday March 9 following the lightning strike on January 31 which extensively damaged the 'A' listed building's electrical systems.

Power has been restored thanks to the efforts of local contractors although repairs to the church's lightning conductor have yet to be carried out.

The lightning strike, which was frightening in its intensity, caused widespread damage in the Bowmore area.

Telephone lines were destroyed and a number of computers suffered meltdown. Also affected were Bowmore Distillery and the local high school.

The congregational members of the Round Church are indebted to the island's Baptist worshippers who allowed them to worship in the Bowmore Baptist Church during the enforced closure.

Feis Oigridh

MUSIC and drama were among the offerings that made Feis Oigridh 2008 a popular hit with the youngsters who attended the five-day event in Ionad Chaluim Chille Ile.

The annual feis is now a well established event on the local calendar and a similar festival is taking place in neighbouring Jura in August.

Neil MacNaughton

THE RECENT death of Neil MacNaughton in the local hospital following a short illness was mourned by everyone who knew this Bowmore native who was as much part of the village life as the round church or local distillery.

Neilie was a friendly and helpful person who carried out acts of unbidden kindness and sought no reward.

He spent the majority of his working life with the Hydro Board as a power station engineer, latterly in a supervisory capacity.

The untimely death of his wife Flora 20 years ago was a bitter blow but, despite his private sorrow, he knew that life was for living.

His undoubted popularity was reflected in the large number of mourners from all airts who attended his funeral in Bowmore. Sincere sympathy is extended to his son Michael, daughter-in-law Jeanie and grandchildren Neil and Katherine in their loss.

Islay Mod

SYLLABUSES and entry forms for the local Mod in Islay High School on Saturday June 7 are yours for the asking.

They can be obtained from Mod chairman Neil MacLean on 01496 840618 or from me at the address below. The closing date for entries is

April 30 and no late submissions will be considered or accepted. Competitors are reminded that the prescribed songs 'Tuireadh nan Treun' and 'Caol Muile' cannot be used in any other competition and in the interests of variety, it is not permitted to sing the same song in the same competition two years running.

Meur Ile members are reminded that the next committee meeting takes place in the Bowmore Service Point on Tuesday March 18 at 7.30pm.

Lunch club

LOCAL Baptist minister the Rev George Campbell was guest speaker at the Kilarrow Parish Church Men's Lunch Club in Lochside Hotel on February 28.

The Rev George gave a resume of his career which encompassed banking, Baptist ministries on the east coast of Scotland and Argyll and a part-time Church of Scotland ministry on Jura.

The popular clergyman was inducted to his Baptist charges at Port Ellen and Bowmore in December last year.

Betrothed begorra!

CONGRATULATIONS to Fraser, son of Charlie and the late Margaret Morrison of Bowmore, on his recent engagement to Evelyn, a daughter of Alice and Roger Peters, Tipperary. Good on you both! Hugh Smith, 4 Flora Street, Bowmore, Islay, PA43 7JX. Telephone 01496 810658.

A VIEW FROM THE TOWER

By McCaig



Bad budget

result of Northern Rock debacle

AS YOU work out how much worse off you are following yesterday's tax-raising budget you should remember that between a dithering Prime Minister and an indecisive Chancellor of the Exchequer, who gave an open cheque book to prop up the insolvent Northern Rock bank, we, the tax payers, are now to pay the price for their refusal to act quickly when it became clear that Northern Rock was unable to meet its commitments.

To what extent we will have to hand over more to Inland Revenue and Customs will be found in the small print of the Finance Act that will be debated for as many days as possible next week.

However, it is not just the cash black hole from the busted bank that will force Alistair Darling to increase taxes and duties to control inflation and curb spending. The cost of keeping troops in Iraq and Afghanistan grows so badly by the month that Premier Brown and his Cabinet are asked themselves whether Britain should be in either of these war zones. Since President Bush is currently committed to getting John McCain elected as the next president of the USA now would be the time for a courageous, determined British Prime Minister to warn McCain or his Democrat counterpart that no matter who wins Britain is not going to commit to any more military intervention that will leave our economy poorer and more exposed to being frequently blown off course by external factors over which we have no control.

Many people appear to be of the opinion that the Crianlarich by-pass is a signed deal, however, I can assure you that nothing has been finalised and with the proposal as it is at the moment, it is likely to meet with significant local opposition. The focus must be to divert the money currently earmarked for the Crianlarich bypass to the sections of the A82 which need it most urgently.

Bryan Craig, Station Road, Crianlarich.

Oban bay pontoons

As the government has consistently failed to commit to the significant investment the entire A82 requires, it is my belief that the offer by the government to move forward with a Crianlarich bypass is being put forward as a cheap option. This is purely an attempt to appease certain groups campaigning for the A82 upgrade. As a result, my community is being sacrificed in an attempt to avoid addressing the real issues with the road.

I would urge all groups campaigning for improvements to see this move by the government as the diversionary tactic that it clearly is and reject the current proposals for the road or we all risk the government pushing the real issues back onto the shelf while they smugly sit back claiming to have made improvements.

Many people appear to be of the opinion that the Crianlarich by-pass is a signed deal, however, I can assure you that nothing has been finalised and with the proposal as it is at the moment, it is likely to meet with significant local opposition. The focus must be to divert the money currently earmarked for the Crianlarich bypass to the sections of the A82 which need it most urgently.

And so it goes on. It seems neither government in Westminster or Edinburgh cares a whit for those of us who live in the country and help to keep the rural economy going.

PRESS POLICY

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

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

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

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

Your letters

THE EDITOR welcomes letters of approximately 200 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



Tobermory man AJ MacLeod has taken his camera to the front line in Helmand Province, in war-torn Afghanistan



AJ MacLeod's pictures of life amongst the crossfire has appeared in the national UK media



The dusty wastes of Helmand Province, Afghanistan are a far cry from the green hills and blue seas of AJ MacLeod's native Isle of Mull

Isle of Mull Marine has an image of Afghanistan

'No day is the same. I could be taking pictures of everything from children attending a newly opened school or locals getting medical treatment to Marines patrolling or engaging the Taliban.'

AN ISLE on Mull man has been living and working on the front line in Afghanistan for the past four months but still gets his copy of *The Oban Times* every week.

A J MacLeod, from Tobermory, who is the Unit Photographer for 40 Commando Royal Marines, is coming to the end of his tour in Helmand Province, Afghanistan.

Thirty-two year old AJ, has been visiting Forward Operating Bases throughout the Sangin Valley area and taking part in operations against the Taliban. His photographs have appeared in numerous national UK newspapers.

AJ, who attended Tobermory High school, was a Royal Ma-

rine for seven years, serving in the Gulf and Northern Ireland as well as participating in the disaster relief effort for the Boxing Day Tsunami in Sri Lanka. After transferring to the Royal Navy's Photographic Branch and completing the seven month photography course, he joined 40 Commando Royal Marines in December.

AJ told *The Oban Times*: 'Most of Helmand province is made up of small villages, much like Mull. People rely on agriculture to live and community plays a massive part in people's lives.'

AJ's training as a commando means he is able to take his

place alongside the Marines and take part in patrols and operations, but he also carries his camera to capture images of the men who are engaging in some of the fiercest fighting British forces have seen since the Korean War. 40 Commando have had a successful tour and been able to improve security around Sangin and their other bases, which they have followed up with outreach programmes to reassure locals and ask how the Marines can help improve their towns and villages. AJ has used the chance to take pictures of children going to school for the first time and local people benefiting from medical facilities and other aid.

AJ said: 'No day is the same. I could be taking pictures of everything from children attending a newly opened school or locals getting medical treatment to Marines patrolling or engaging the Taliban.'

In spite of the professional opportunity that a tour in Afghanistan has presented and the coverage his pictures have received, AJ still misses home and has copies of *The Oban Times* sent out to him.

AJ said: 'It's been very hard work and I am looking forward to getting home, hopefully in time for the Mull Music Festival.'

West Highland hotels are among the best in Scotland

HOTELS and guest houses in the west Highlands confirmed their place among the best in Scotland by winning a number of awards in this year's Scottish hospitality industry 'Oscars'.

The five-star retreat near Fort William, Inverlochy Castle, took the Hotel of the Year title in the Scottish Hotel of the Year awards, nominated by over 20,000 consumers and industry members.

The Scottish Guest House of the Year 2008 was won by Dun na Mara Guest House run by Mark McPhillips and Suzanne Pole at Benderloch near Oban.

The couple, who have run the hotel, which has a modern, contemporary feel, for five years, said: 'We are absolutely thrilled to have won, it's our first award and we are over the moon about it.'

Highland Cottage on the Isle of

Mull took the Excellence in Hospitality award, the third year running the hotel and restaurant in Tobermory has picked up a gong at these awards. Highland Cottage was also a finalist in the most excellent hotel and restaurant category in last November's prestigious Johansen's Hotel Guide awards.

This year's Island Hotel of the Year award was won by Coll Hotel in Arinagour on the Isle of Coll

while Isle of Eriska Hotel, Benderloch won the Country House Hotel of the year.

Glengarry Castle Hotel won the readers' award for most positive feedback.

Owner Robert MacCallum said: 'The MacCallum family are delighted to receive this award as we embark on our 50th trading year. We would like to thank our loyal staff and customers for all their help and

support over this time, and look forward to welcoming guests familiar and new in the years to come.'

Depute first minister John Swinney presented the awards at a lavish ceremony at the Prestonfield House Hotel in Edinburgh attended by over 500 guests.

Right: Suzanne Pole and Mark McPhillips outside their award-winning Dun na Mara Guest House.



Letters to the editor

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Nearly fell for it!

Sir,
You nearly got me there! I was just reading about how McCaig has now decided what the people of Dunbeg really want with this science park thing.

He too seems to have missed the entire point of the objections and also assumes that it is only 'white settlers' - we still haven't been told what they are.

I was about to respond then I suddenly remembered no-one takes this guy and his funny comments seriously. Don't rise to it! So I won't.
Iain Moody, Dunbeg.

Significant step forward

Sir,
I refer to McCaig's column in last week's *Oban Times*.

It seems that since the election in May McCaig has become both more political and more provocative. I would commend him for this because it is apathy and complacency which are the enemies of good government.

This is in marked contrast to his erstwhile complacency when two successive Liberal Democrat Transport Ministers failed to implement any significant ferry improvements.

Indeed their sole input to ferries was to preside over a shambolic tendering exercise for Caledonian MacBrayne routes which cost the public more than £15 million.

His apparent acceptance in good faith of the Labour Party's hastily conceived election bribe of a discounted ferry scheme also seems to be a departure from his normal cynicism.

The RET pilot scheme is the most significant step forwards in improving ferry services for a generation. There is much more to be done to revitalise our island communities but this pilot is

surely to be welcomed. As he is fond of quotations I would remind him of one credited to Abraham Lincoln beginning: 'You can please some of the people...'

Mike MacKenzie, Argyll and Bute SNP Prospective Parliamentary Candidate.

Argyll Aero Club

Sir,
Your article last week regarding Oban Airport correctly mentions that Paul Keegan is chairman of Argyll Aero Club.

From then on your story is incorrect and misleading.

Argyll Aero Club (AAC) is a non-profit recreational sporting club and has been recognised as such by the council since it was formed in 1995.

We have the largest membership and the most experienced pilots on Oban airfield.

In 1996 we entered into a 25-year lease with Argyll and Bute Council, which gave the council rental income twice the combined level of all the other clubs at the airport.

On the basis of our lease, the club invested large amounts of members' money to support our flying activities.

The council now wishes to change our lease terms and lease part of our area out to another organisation, but cannot do so by due legal process.

Our expert advice on licencing assures us that the trees screening our hangar are no barrier to airfield licensing. The 'security' fencing at the airfield is a standard perimeter stock fence, 1.2m high with 15 access gates.

The only gate that the council chose to remove, entirely without notice, was the gate to the AAC's caravan clubhouse. None of the other 14 gates, four of which give access to other clubhouses and hangars, was removed. Now there's a sobering thought.

So what are we to do – abandon livestock farming? Well, maybe Mr Gallant

will suggest he check his facts rather than simply jump on the band wagon.

Yes, air travel pumps out a huge amount of greenhouse gases, but if he were to carry out his research properly, he might be shocked to realise that it is not aeroplanes but agriculture which is to blame.

We have many young drivers here who regularly tear around Tobermory at high speed in their vehicles, and at all hours of the day and night, who show no regard for the safety, peace or wellbeing of residents and tourists.

More serious than this are the number of drink drivers we have on Mull. They think nothing of getting behind the wheel of their car having had several alcoholic drinks and clearly being over the legal limit. Some do this on a daily basis and are well known to anyone resident here.

Drink driving on Mull is a real problem but seems to be accepted. It isn't acceptable and it is a serious issue - more worthy of your newspaper's attention than dog excrement. I think Councillor Chalmers will agree.

Gases produced by the world's livestock are the single biggest contributor to global warming than the entire planet's transport industry put together. Now there's a sobering thought.

So what are we to do – abandon livestock farming? Well, maybe Mr Gallant

will suggest he check his facts rather than simply jump on the band wagon.

There are fundamental problems that the council has to clear at Oban before licensing and all are entirely at fault.

However, his comment that it may become an issue of road safety staggered me. It is not that I disagree with him, but I do find that Mull, and particularly the Tobermory area, has many more dangerous issues on our roads than he and his esteemed colleague Councillor Devon should be taking up with our police and writing to newspapers about.

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The Oban Times in far flung places

Oban North and Lorn Councillor Donald Macdonald pictured reading his *Oban Times* outside the Italian Chapel in Orkney. Please keep sending us your photos.



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The Oban Times in far flung places

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The Oban Times in far flung places

Not in this Dunbeg backyard

Sir,
I cannot believe that Alex Cameron is on Dunbeg Community Council.

Has he forgotten that to be a member of a community council he is supposed to be representing the people of the village, not working hand in hand with the council?

I am one of the 'white settlers' whose home is now Dunbeg. Like Iain Moody I have not lived here very long, but I have to say that people like Mr Cameron and the local council are at the moment being rather selfish.

There used to be a lot of green fields and a home for wildfowl behind the hospital in Oban. Now there are lots of houses. There used to be a haven at Ganavan, now there is a building site. There used to be a number of green fields and walks in and around Dunbeg but if the plan that the council has in mind we will have a marine park taking up another of our 'green fields' and a big ugly road, also taking away trees, park, wildflowers and nesting birds. Further on, we have a development underway to again take away green fields, this to build another golf course, more houses, and just in the last few weeks there is talk about taking away the trees which grow on the other side of the road from the village to build more houses.

And others who feel the same way have filled in the form objecting to the marine park.

We are only on this earth for a short time, and we are only the landlords of the land. When we are finished it passes on to the next generation.

To exist, we have to live, work and get on with others. I chose to live here and I am happy.

I hope the council planning committee will have second thoughts about putting a marine park here as there are other more suitable places for it. The 'not in my back yard' saying is appropriate here.

Agnes MacFadyen, Dunbeg.



Here in the West Highlands, an area renowned for beautiful and dramatic landscapes and warm hospitality we also take great pride in the care which we offer within our close community network. This feature highlights various forms of assistance and care available on our doorstep.

Argyll Homecare

Argyll Homecare Ltd is a locally based independent homecare provider, which covers the Mid Argyll and Kintyre area. We provide high quality, friendly and reliable service to individuals requiring extra help/support at home.

Our services are delivered by professional, friendly and reliable staff. All staff are trained and experienced in delivering high quality support and personal care. All staff go through a rigorous recruitment process as recommended by the Care Commission.

Our range of services includes washing and bathing assistance, assistance with dressing, getting up and helping to bed, assistance with toilet needs, pop-in Carers, assistance with medication, holiday relief, companionship, preparation and help with meals. Home and domestic help such as cleaning, shopping, laundry, dog walking and pension and/or prescription collection is also available.

At Argyll Homecare we recognise that everyone is different, we therefore ensure that our packages of care are tailored to suit the individual and their needs. We will complete an initial assessment, which will help to identify your care needs. Once this has been completed a home care worker will be allocated who is most suited to meet your requirements. To ensure all our clients remain happy with the service we provide, regular review meetings will be held to discuss and plan for current and future homecare needs.

We are also able to provide guidance and information on how to access financial support/assistance which you may be entitled to, in order to help meet your care costs, this may include Direct Payments, attendance allowance etc.

Argyll & Bute Citizens Advice Bureau

ABCAB was established in 2002 to deliver a free, confidential and impartial advice and information service to the citizens of Argyll and Bute.

ABCAB is committed to being proactive in reaching all citizens including those in rural communities, the disadvantaged and socially excluded. We offer a holistic approach to clients' issues taking into account all factors, such as income maximisation, tackling injustice and representing clients in an impartial and dignified way that leads to successful outcomes for them.



Fostering..... Rewarding in Other Ways Than One

Argyll and Bute Council have recently reviewed their fostering allowance scheme and are going to pay a substantially increased rate so as we will be able to attract applicants who might otherwise be thinking about working in a caring role in the community.

We are urgently seeking to recruit, respite, shared care, foster and adoptive carers who can provide a home for children on a brief, temporary or long-term basis, thus offering a secure and stable base for a child or children. The majority of these children are over the age of five years and many are in sibling groups.

We need **respite carers** who can take children for brief, time-limited periods to support their full-time carers.

We need **shared carers** who can offer short-term, planned care, usually to a child with special needs, whose families can face extra demands and often find it difficult to arrange babysitting or childcare.

We need **foster carers** who can look after a child or children either for a temporary period while plans are made for their future or for an extended period if they are unable to go back to their families. We are particularly looking for families for sibling groups who need a temporary home where they can live together until a decision is made regarding their future.

We need **adoptive parents and permanent carers** who can offer a child or a sibling group a family to grow up in and to provide support for them for the rest of their lives.


We would be very interested in hearing from you if you think that you could help with any of these types of care. We offer a comprehensive package of support, including competitive allowances, to help you with this task.

Please phone **Toril Frantzen** on **01631 563068**, e-mail her at **toril.frantzen@argyll-bute.gov.uk** or write to her at Argyll and Bute Council, Community Services, Soroba Road, Oban, PA34 4JA.

North Argyll House
Bealach an Righ, Oban
We offer a home for elderly people who are no longer able to stay in their own homes but wish to retain their dignity and independence. We offer each resident their own en-suite room.
We offer care on an individual basis
North Argyll House was established in 1955 by the local community and is still run by local people who care for our elderly relatives needs.
North Argyll House, Bealach-An-Righ, Oban, PA34 5TX 01631 562168

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Friendly & Reliable Care At Home
Personal Care
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Preparation and Assistance with Meals
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Pension / Prescription Collection
Tel No. 01546 600333
Covering Mid Argyll & Kintyre
we are registered with The Care Commission & are Local Authority Approved Providers

Argyll & Bute Citizens Advice Bureau Riverside, Oban Road Lochgilphead

Free, independent, impartial advice on a range of issues including debt, benefits, housing, employment & relationship

Advice line: 08456 123080
email: info@abcab.org.uk
Drop-in: Monday, Wednesday or Thursday
10:00 - 13:00 & 14:00-16:00
CHARITY NO: SC030477

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Community activist and British Legion stalwart Alex Cameron looks back on his life

Dedicated to Dunbeg

DUNBEG'S community activist Alex Cameron may have got some people's backs up recently with his views on the proposed science park at Dunstaffnage. Not one to mince his words, he hit out at the 'white settlers' who opposed the development, and while his remark was undoubtedly antagonistic, he spoke with the best of intentions. He is a man who has a deep-rooted love for his village.

'I know I've annoyed some folk with that remark, but I am not going to apologise for it,' he said this week.

As a member of Dunbeg Community Council for the past 16 years, Alex was thrilled to receive a certificate from the local primary school in 2002 for caring for the village.

Another of his proudest moments came in November 2004 when he set up the Marie Curie Field of Hope in Dunbeg.

It was a cause close to his heart. 'I had friends who had died of cancer and the MacMillan cancer nurses made it so much easier for the families,' he told *The Oban Times*.

'The whole community pulled together — Mums, dads and children — and that is something I will never forget.'

Alex Cameron, aged 76, is a man who loves helping local children with their homework, and can tell a story almost as well as Roald Dahl. He is also kind-hearted and devoted to his wife.

He is also aware that he can be a blunt wee man, and laughingly refers to himself as the 'runt of the litter'.

A British Legion stalwart, Alex is still recovering at home after a heart attack last month. The first one he had in 1985 forced him into early retirement, but there is a lot of life left in him yet.

Born on July 28, 1931 at Saltcoats, Barcaldine, Alex was the second youngest child of a large family born to Jessie and his ex-merchant seaman father, who were both originally from Ardnamurchan.

Alex attended Barcaldine Primary School, and between the ages of 12 and 14 completed a home correspondence

Interview by JACKIE GRANT

course to obtain a school leaving certificate.

'It was a happy childhood. Each October all the schoolchildren were employed to gather potatoes, and during the war years the parents and children would gather brambles in September.'

'The brambles were delivered to the schoolteacher Miss Anderson who was allocated extra sugar to produce jam. We would all take two slices of bread to school each day, lay it out in the palm of our hands and the teacher would spread it with jam.'

'Rationing stopped in the early 1950s, but until then there weren't many overweight people around.'

When he left school at 14, young Alex went straight to work at Alginate Industries Barcaldine Limited, but life changed four years later when he was conscripted into the Royal Armoured Corps in November 1949.

Basic training took place at Catterick with the 17/21st Lancers, and Alex passed his first trade test as a wireless operator soon after.

'I had only been at Catterick for 10 days when we were asked to volunteer to give blood. Nobody would though, so the following Monday morning when we were on parade, five or six three-ton lorries drove up and we were herded into them like cattle.'

'The convoy took off to the camp centre and we were yelled and bawled at to get out the vehicle. We were marched into the medical centre and told we would all be giving blood under orders.'

'We got a cup of tea and a rich tea biscuit afterwards and then we were back square-bashing...left, right, left, right, left, right.'

Early in 1950, Alex was posted to the Royal Scots Greys in Runenburg, Germany. There he passed his armoured fighting vehicle test on tanks and armoured cars.

'Most British soldiers regarded Germany as one of the best postings then. Many of my mates were posted to Korea — and several of them never came back,' he said.

'We had 3,000 potential German offic-



Alex Cameron pictured with his beloved Dunbeg. He has been a member of the village's community council for the past 16 years. t11dun01

ers training with us who went on to make up the nucleus of the new Germany army — the Bundeswehr.'

When he was not on military manoeuvres with other NATO forces, Alex's troop was employed on east/west Germany border patrols, which involved arresting anyone who did not have the correct identity papers.

'I found some of the stories told by the young German women very disturbing,' he recalled.

Another memory he finds disturbing is his visit to Belsen Concentration Camp. 'The tanks used to go there on a firing range. A German mechanic who worked for us drove me around to see it. Barbed wire and buildings were still intact, including the gas chambers — and I could feel a chill in my spine as we moved around.'

There were many happy times though, including having to read the love letters sent to his pals.

'Quite a few guys in my regiment couldn't read or write and when they got letters from their sweethearts I had to

read them out. I sometimes had to write back to the girls, which I found quite hilarious on some occasions,' he laughs.

'There was also lots of inter-regimental rivalry and brawls going on.'

He remembers Christmas Eve 1950 when his regiment had all gone down to 'sort out' an artillery regiment in the NAAFI.

The fight was just about to start when another soldier came over to Alex and said he recognised him.

'We got talking and he told me his name was Cameron Boni and he was from Oban. The lads became the best of friends that night and wished each other a merry Christmas. Cameron now lives in Canada.'

Demobbed in November 1951, Alex served a further three years in the supplementary reserve as a tank crewmember in NATO serving with the 2nd Royal Tank Regiment at Munster in 1952 and the 8th Kings Own Irish Hussars back in Luneburg in 1953. He was also still required to complete two weeks a year further tank training with the Second Royal

Tank Regiment.

Despite being away from Argyll, Alex kept up-to-date on local news by reading *The Oban Times*, sent to him by his mother every week.

Returning home in 1953, Alex was soon back in his old job at Alginate.

A year later when the factory converted to mains electricity, he was seconded to the Forestry Commission felling and planting trees in Barcaldine and maintaining bailey bridges, before a further move back to the factory a year after that.

'The managing director was Lieutenant Colonel Campbell-Preston and I felt that he appreciated ex-service personnel working for him,' said Alex.

He finally left the seaweed factory when he met and married his own sweetheart, Euphemia (Phamie) MacAllister from Dunbeg, in 1961.

Alex and Phamie started married life in North Connel, before settling in Dunbeg in 1964.

Taking up employment as a storekeeper with British Telecom, it was hav-

ing the first of many heart attacks that forced Alex to retire on health grounds in 1985.

As part-owner of a fish farm at Connel for 20 years where he helped to produce salmon and rainbow trout, Alex also rented the salmon fishing rights from Dunstaffnage estate and would spend all hours of the day and night fishing for Atlantic salmon from Ganavan Sands to Connel bridge.

Over the years, Alex has immersed himself in village life and still regularly gives up his own time to provide assistance at various events.

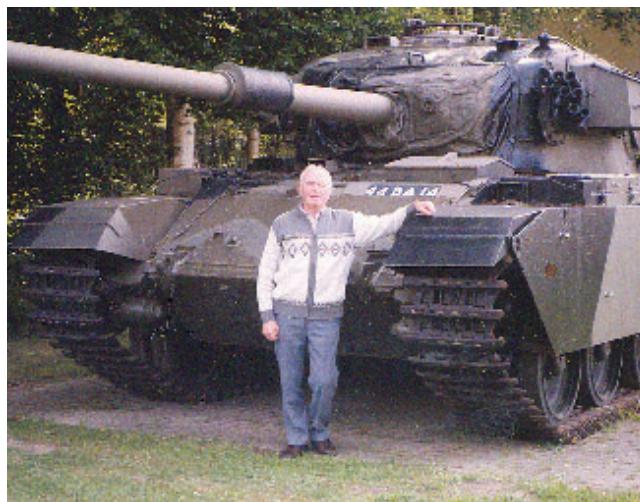
He joined Oban and District Crime Prevention Panel in 1975, a year after he had an outboard motor stolen. It is a role that he takes very seriously.

His loyalty to the British army has never waned. As a member of the Royal British Legion Scotland since 1952, and as vice chairman of the Oban branch, he continues to attend regular meetings with his old pals and comrades.

When he left the army all those years ago, Alex's military testimonial read: 'A good tank driver with a basic knowledge of mechanics and wireless. He is reliable, hard working and conscientious with a quiet nature, but honest and trustworthy, clean and well turned out.'

Words that could still be used to describe Alex Cameron today.

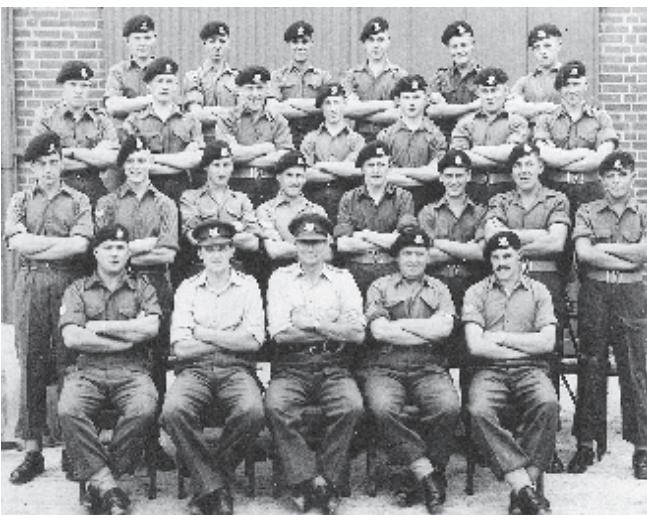
Next week
in your Oban
Times: crippled
by a bad back.
Reporter David
Walker tells of
his painful
experience



Alex pictured with a tank in Fellingbostel when he returned to Germany for a regimental weekend in 1998. t10ale01



Young Alex was conscripted into the Royal Armoured Corps in November 1949.



With a reconnaissance troop of the Royal Scots Greys. Alex, third row and third from the right, enjoyed his years based in Germany.

The Oban Times GENERAL KNOWLEDGE DOUBLE CROSSWORD No. 531



SOLUTIONS TO LAST WEEK

GENERAL KNOWLEDGE — Across: 3 Stevenson; 8 Alan; 9 Hotter; 10 Orkney; 11 Elgar; 14 Pilot; 15 Note; 16 Zebra; 18 Good; 20 Bates; 21 North; 24 Alfred; 25 Workhouse; 26 Dawn; 27 Polyester.
Down: 1 Bay of Fig; 2 Petticoat; 4 Troy; 5 Vital; 6 Nixon; 7 Obse; 9 Hertz; 11 Earth; 12 Rotterdam; 13 President; 17 Abel; 19 Donkey; 22 Trois; 23 Koto; 24 Aslin.
QUICK — Across: 3 Overtures; 8 Item; 9 Pensive; 10 Curlew; 11 Amil; 14 Enter; 15 Lair; 16 Lyric; 18 Neon; 20 Audit; 21 Noble; 24 Milten; 25 Formation; 26 Free; 27 Staleness.
Down: 1 Miscreant; 2 Secretion; 4 View; 5 Risen; 6 Umell; 7 Eam; 9 Pearl; 11 Agree; 12 Laudatory; 13 Pretences; 17 Cabin; 19 Normal; 22 Latin; 23 Jolt; 24 Moss.

QUICK CLUES DOWN

1. Consumes (7)

2. Give name or sight (7)

3. Bird (5)

4. Act of repentence (7)

5. Vessel (5)

6. Guide (5)

9. Insurrection (9)

14. Position (7)

15. Eastern garments (7)

16. Compromises (7)

19. Walk pompously (5)

20. Cash receiptable (5)

21. Coral reef (5)

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Massive trucks look like small toys amid the sheer scale of Europe's largest granite quarry

New investment for Yeoman Glensanda

800 tonne consignment of machinery transported from Staffordshire and Glasgow via Troon and Oban to Glensanda

EUROPE'S largest granite quarry and Scotland's only large coastal quarry, Glensanda Quarry on Loch Linnhe, has agreed a long term deal with Alfred McAlpine Plant Services, to deliver a fleet of twelve new large quarrying machines plus support equipment to load and haul a minimum of seven million tonnes of granite rock each year.

Operated by Aggregate Industries business Yeoman Glensanda, is uniquely positioned in that it has no road access, and all deliveries of both goods and personnel are brought in by sea.

The six-year materials handling contract with Alfred McAlpine Plant Services involves the delivery of two CAT 992 loading shovels and eight CAT 777 dumpers, one new D9 dozer and one

Komatsu pc1250 Hydraulic Excavator replacing Yeoman Glensanda's old fleet for new.

Colin Fergusson, quarry manager at Glensanda said: 'When you are moving the amount of material we do each year at the quarry, it is crucial to choose a partner who is a specialist in providing services that will guarantee maximum productivity at a competitive cost. Alfred McAlpine Plant Services was able to meet this requirement.'

The 800 tonne consignment was transported by low loader

from the Finning distribution centre at Cannock in Staffordshire and the Finning distribution centre at Glasgow to Troon from where it was then taken by P&O ferry to Oban.

Caledonian MacBrayne's port manager at Oban Kenny Boyd assisted with the transport arrangements and the huge units were stored at Oban until they were taken in pairs the 14 nautical miles across Loch Linnhe to the quarry's jetty, using Yeoman Glensanda's own 430 tonne barge, the *Rose of Lorne* - the final stage of the delivery process took four days.

Under the Transfer of Undertakings (TUPE) some 38 Aggregate Industries employees transferred over to Alfred McAlpine, and employees had an opportunity for a one-to-one consultation with their new employer.

During the consultation process it was stated that all efforts would be used to ensure this particular contract would be undertaken by local labour where ever available and would be supported by other functions within Alfred McAlpine Plant Services

where and when needed. Throughout the term of the six year contract Alfred McAlpine will maintain the equipment on site with specialist support from the local Caterpillar dealer Finning. It is Alfred McAlpine's way to use genuine equipment supplier's parts, and so support from Finning's depot at Perth will be integral to the success of this contract.

Materials produced at Glensanda Quarry are transferred from the primary crusher using the 'Glory Hole' method, where stone is dropped down a 300 metres high and four metres in diameter vertical shaft then transferred on an underground conveyor belt by via a 1.8 kilometre tunnel to crushing, screening and storage facilities before loading onto ocean-going ships.

All of the granite material produced leaves the quarry by sea, destined for ports around the UK and Europe, including Liverpool, Glasgow, Leith, Barrow-in-Furness, the Isle of Grain in Kent, Poland, Germany, France, Holland and occasional deliveries to the USA.



The quarry was incorporated into the Overseas Business division of Aggregate Industries in June 2006, when the company, a member of the Holcim group, bought Foster Yeoman, the family company which ran Glensanda from 1986.

Right and below: The new machinery and its operators are dwarfed by the sheer scale of the quarry



The loading shovels and dumpers make their way across Loch Linnhe to Glensanda in an operation that took four days



The Travel Association

worldchoice

Eric Smith Worldchoice Travel • 7-9 Stevenson Street, Oban, Argyll PA34 5NA • Tel: 01631 566818/9



ERIC SMITH has been in travel since 1973, joining one of the most famous pioneers in UK tourism, PICKFORDS TRAVEL SERVICE, where he built up a small travel operation into the most profitable shop in Scotland.

Leaving Pickfords in 1991 he set up ERIC SMITH WORLD TRAVEL, recognising that the Independent travel agent route was the way forward in the UK Travel Industry.

Manager Dianne MacColl started with Eric at Pickfords in Oban in 1987 before serving with AT MAYS and two Scottish independent agents before returning to Oban and joining ERIC SMITH WORLD TRAVEL.

Since opening for business in a tiny shop at 31 Stafford Street in Oban, the business has flourished and now turns over well in excess of one million pounds per annum.



We are a full service independent travel agency, providing business travel, leisure travel, packages, tailor made travel, cruises, late deal bargains from £150.00. Flights uk and overseas, travel insurance at great rates, holiday and business car hire, city breaks, low cost airline bookings with easyjet, ryanair etc., Cruises, uk and overseas, ferry travel, rail passes, hebridean princess and hebridean spirit bookings, swan hellenic agent, voyages of discovery agent, commission free holiday money, airport hotels and parking. Our staff is probably the most experienced in any smaller scottish travel agency, with combined experience of around 70 years. "We know how".

We offer a personal service tailored to your exact requirements, whether you are planning a trip down to Glasgow or to the other side of the world. We can make your trip more pleasant, by arranging things just the way you want. We will add value to your overall travel experience using our unrivalled experience in the Travel Business, to anticipate and overcome any of the myriad pitfalls of modern travel.

Eric Smith has been in the travel business in Oban for 30 years and has built up a reputation for attention to detail which ensures you have a trouble free holiday or journey, at competitive prices. Remember, if you're not with us you're on your own!!!

What is an independent travel agent?

Eric Smith Worldchoice Travel is your local independent travel agent. Eric Smith F.Inst.TT, owner of ERIC SMITH WORLD TRAVEL says "members of the public are often unsure what the difference is between an independent travel agent and any other high street agency, we tell them the difference is simple, we're here to sell the holiday that's right for our clients, other agencies are there to sell the holidays provided by their parent company"

In just one visit or phone call to the agency you can arrange the holiday, competitive travel insurance, commission free travel money, car hire, up to date visa and health advice and get unbiased impartial advice on your hotel and resort from our continually updated online systems.

Another new and exciting service offered by the agency is help and advice on overseas property sales, with property for example in Southern Italy still available for between £40,000 to £50,000 pounds, with 5 star inspection trips for 3 or 4 days often available for under £100. Spain, Greece, Turkey and Cyprus are also amongst other available destinations.

Booking your holidays on line? Beware of the pitfalls!

We've all done it, been persuaded by a neighbour that you can save a fortune by putting together your own holidays on the internet! What they don't tell you is that by trying to save a few pounds you could end up losing all your money.

"Say you book a low cost flight" said Mr. Smith, "you turn up at the airport and your flight is cancelled until the next day. When you arrive in resort your taxi driver, who was waiting for you yesterday, is nowhere to be seen! So you've lost that money – you accept it, find yourself a local taxi and get yourself to the hotel. The hotel however, has given away your room as you failed to turn up yesterday. It is usually non refundable" Sound extreme? You'd be amazed how many people we have come in to book their holidays having sworn they would never go alone again" said Mr. Smith

"When you book a holiday through ERIC SMITH WORLD TRAVEL, we take care of everything, we know where you are if someone needs you, what to do if your flights delayed, how to call and how to make sure you are protected every step of the way."

Q Who has the biggest selection of holidays to choose from?

A Independent Travel Agents, as they have no ties with tour operators, unlike the High Street Multiples, who channel up to 70% of bookings to their own in house operators.

Q Who has the best technology in the travel business?

A Many independents have full internet access with state of the art search facilities to find you a holiday within minutes. ERIC SMITH WORLD TRAVEL has invested in such technology to ensure our clients get the very best deals available.

Q Who has the most experienced staff?

A ERIC SMITH WORLD TRAVEL is a typical independent in that the staff is highly experienced, three of whom have managed travel agencies, with a combined total of almost 70 years of solid travel experience for our clients to draw on. We are probably one of the most experienced travel agencies in Scotland.

Dear Eric,

We have recently returned from our holiday in Salou which was very well organised by your staff. Our every need was catered for prior to us heading out.

Whilst there we met a few families like ourselves, who had worked hard and wanted the best for their money. Unfortunately they were not as well advised as we were.

People were paying daily for the theme park, did not know about late departure facilities and also from our point of view were wrongly advised by their travel firm about various things.

Our hotel was lovely there was nothing that we did not feel unhappy about at all.

We just wanted to take this opportunity to thank your staff for providing us with the most excellent and the most professional customer care we could have asked for.

We are saving now for Florida in October 2007 and will most definitely be back for a warm, friendly service. We will also continue to highly recommend yourselves to friends, family and whoever will listen!!!

Once again thank you very much for everything your staff have done for us, making our holiday one to remember.

David and Ann Martin
Oban, Argyll, United Kingdom - 15 November 2005

Oban's Worldchoice staff: Joan Reynolds, Eric Smith, Dianne MacColl, Margaret Turner.

Forteith's show delight

FORTEITH Foodserve is delighted with the success of its recent West Highland and Island Trade Show held in Oban's Corran Halls.

Despite inclement weather, the show attracted a record of more than 600 visitors and 275 businesses represented on 60 stands.

John Forteith, senior partner with Oban-based Forteith Foodserve, told *The Oban Times*: 'The West Highland and Island Trades Show over two days is the biggest of its kind in the Highlands, and it was a great opportunity for us to showcase local trading partnerships such as Crannog Seafoods of Fort William and Easdale-based Argyll Venison.

'It was an opportunity to let the area's restaurants and retail outlets and businesses know that they can source excellent, local products.

'We also showcased national trading partnerships such as 3663, Delice de France, Cuisine de France and new-to-the-area Landmark and its Hot House Retail Development programme.

'We also reckon that the show brings more than 200 people to the town over three days when trading is at its quietest period of the year.'

Mr Forteith added that planning was already under way for a February 2009 show which will see a record number of 90 stands.



Just some of the many stands at the Corran Halls, above left; Forteith's retail sales representative Gabriella McKenzie, centre; and, right, firms promote their products.

Jobs hope for former RAF base

A MOVE to buy the former RAF base at Machrihanish on behalf of Kintyre communities was proposed at the latest meeting of the Kintyre Initiative Working Group (KIWG).

Councillor John Semple, chairman of KIWG, has described it as a 'Claim of Right' over the Ministry of Defence (MOD) Base at Machrihanish after Defence Estates which runs the site for the MOD, said they want to dispose of the old Cold War base.

Councillor Semple said: 'I would seek to form a group of community stakeholders representing Kintyre communities and interested parties, to work with Defence Estates, the Scottish government and its potential agencies, potential developers and investors, in support of this.'

The move could see the use of the base changed to benefit the area and see jobs created if it was to be successful.

Minister for enterprise, tourism and energy Jim Mather MSP said: 'More people here want sustainable, rewarding work.'

Alan Reid MP thinks that the outcome that would probably bring most jobs to Kintyre would be for the MOD to re-open Machrihanish as an RAF base. He said: 'However, should they sell it, then a community group which had already registered its interest would be entitled to buy the base at the market price.'

'If a community group puts forward a business plan that has the support of the wider community in Kintyre, then I would support them and would urge Highlands and Islands Enterprise and Argyll and Bute Council to support the bid with funding.'

Firms told how they can grow

ONE of the world's leading experts on entrepreneurship visited Fort William last weekend to help Highland companies grow their businesses.

Ken Morse, managing director of the entrepreneurship center at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), Boston advised around 40 local managing directors and chief executives through a series of seminars and workshops at the two-day event over Friday and Saturday.

Mr Morse, with 30 years experience in global sales and successful launches of a number of high tech companies behind him, gave delegates valuable insights into how to present themselves in the global marketplace while learning what it takes to be a successful entrepreneur.

Topics covered included maintaining customer focus, practising sales pitches and managing a global sales organisation in tough times.

Senior development manager at HIE, Laura Dingwall said: 'If you want to improve your strategic sales skills, two days with Ken Morse will put you right on top.'

'HIE has a great working relationship with MIT and a programme of activity is being delivered in the Highlands and Islands.'

The two-day event was organised by Fusion, whose role is to stimulate interest in innovation and entrepreneurship in the region.

Islay company spots niche for safe and low maintenance craft Taking boat building by storm

Report by JENNY LYON

AN ISLAY boatbuilding company that has supplied craft to customers all over Britain has become the largest manufacturer of glass reinforced plastic (GRP) boats in Scotland.

StormCats is based in Lagavulin and has sent Catamaran GRP and monohull boats to many places including Cornwall, Southern Ireland and County Durham.

Managing director, Gus Newman, aged 39, had considerable experience of the sea before establishing the ship building company StormCats in 1999.

He has owned a boat since he was 12 years old, was a fisherman for nine years and a commercial diver for 10 years.

He told *The Oban Times* that while the 2x9m rigid inflatable boats he used previously were adequate for dive charters in the summer, they offered no protection against the elements in the wintry weather.

He said: 'During the winter there was no shelter on these boats, so we decided to look at purchasing a Catamaran. What we discovered though was that these boats were not strong enough to compete with the elements of the west coast. The only answer seemed to be to design and build our own.'

With his father Iain, Gus built a mould and approached architects Murray Cormack Associates who used computer technology to calculate the exact dimensions needed for the conditions off the west coast, north channels and Irish Sea waters.

'It took us about a year and a half to get the first Cat, the Braveheart, finished,' he said. 'She was launched in May 1999 and was a much sturdier design to cope with the weather here. She was sold to someone from Brighton.'

This launch paved the way for four further Cats of the same design and then Gus spotted a gap in the market.



Islay-based StormCats can produce around 20 boats each year despite only employing eight local people, seven of whom are pictured, with specific skills. Company owner Gus Newman is pictured on the upper deck.

'There was a lack of affordable, low maintenance but tough 5.9m monohulls for sea angling and family fun boats that fitted the same safety and durability criteria enjoyed by the Cat.'

Today the company can produce around 20 boats of four different designs each year despite only employing eight local people with specific skills.

Gus explained: 'We are moving in a new direction that will see us using no wood at all in our boats. Wood rots and it is costly to maintain. Our boats will need minimal maintenance and they will be much more durable which means they will last longer.'

This launch paved the way for four further Cats of the same design and then Gus spotted a gap in the market.

To survive in such a competitive market

place StormCats knew they had to offer added value to their products and one way is through safety, bearing in mind the tough conditions the boats are used in.

June McAfee, marketing manager, explained: 'In order to conform to the Recreational Craft Directive it is imperative to provide a failsafe buoyancy system so that in the event of the hull being inadvertently damaged the boat will continue to float and support the crew on board.'

This system is a unique one designed by the company and uses recycled plastic bottles.

Gus explained how it works. 'We used to use polyurethane foam but it had its

faults. What we do now is fill each hull with up to 600 plastic bottles which act like individual watertight compartments. As they are located below the deck away from sunlight there is little, if any, degradation even over a long period of time.'

As a member of the local Coastguard, Gus uses one of his own boats, StormBreaker 710, for rapid response because of its safe and reliable design.

Now the company aims to build up its reputation locally. 'It's really quite ironic,' said Gus. 'We've sold boats all over Britain but on the west coast we are still not that well known. We hope people here will recognise the merits of our designs that are built on site here in Islay.'



Self-employed Claire Evans, centre, with pupils attending the workshop at Oban's Caledonian Hotel and Donald Melville and Stewart Miller. (11emp01)

Pupils learn about becoming their own boss

OBAN pupils who are on the verge of leaving school this summer have been learning about the 'Third Option' – starting up their own business.

The sixth years from Oban High took part in a workshop about self-employment. Claire Evans, who has recently set up her own massage therapies and fitness training business in the town, spoke to the pupils about her experiences.

The annual event is called the third option because the first option for pupils is perceived to be for them to continue into further education or secondly seek employment with a company.

It is organised by HIE Argyll and the Islands and Stewart Miller Associates (Scotland) with similar workshops in Tarbert, Lochgilphead, Islay and Dunoon. HIE's Donald Melville said: 'The seminars are about taking the students out of the school environment and teaching them the pros and cons of self-employment, using theory, practical and interactive exercises and case studies.' Stewart Miller said: 'Small businesses are the lifeblood of the Scottish economy and in Argyll our business start-up rate is lower than in other parts of the UK. In Argyll many pupils leave the area to attend university and/or seek careers and never return. We want to provide the basic information for pupils so they can make informed decisions about considering self employment as a possible career option in their local area.'

Bio-fuel pioneer is nominated for award

AN OBAN-based bio-fuel pioneer has been nominated for Forward Scotland's first Champions for Sustainable Communities awards.

Bob McIlwraith, aged 64, a biomass development officer with the Argyll, Lomond and the Isles Energy Agency (ALIenergy) is one of seven finalists from across Scotland in the Public/Third Sector category and has been recognised for his efforts to establish a number of renewable and sustainable woodfuel projects in Argyll and beyond.

The awards ceremony itself will be held in Edinburgh's Apex International Hotel on Tuesday, March 18. The event has been organised to recognise and reward individuals across society who have led the way in making their neighbourhoods and towns more sustainable by achieving social, economic and environmental improvements.

The winners will be presented with the first-ever Forward Scotland Champions awards made from recycled wood and glass and all finalists will receive a well-earned certificate

for their efforts. Winners will also get the chance to visit another sustainable community project or similar experience to give them further inspiration for their own locality.

Bob, who lives in Kilmichael of Inverlussa, Achnamara and enjoys cycling and swimming in the Mid-Argyll Pool which is heated by ALIenergy's 200kw wood-fuel boiler, said: 'I am delighted to receive a Forward Scotland Champions nomination and see it as a recognition of the contribution biomass fuel can make to sustainable communities.'

Forward Scotland, a registered charity, is the country's leading independent non-governmental organisation that works to make Scotland a sustainable nation in ways that create economic benefits, improve health and address issues of social justice to help change people's lives for the better.

Forward Scotland's Frazer Scott said: 'It's the power of individuals such as Bob that can make a real difference, and we hope the Awards will inspire others to make positive changes in their own communities.'



Bob MacIlwraith is working on sustainable woodfuel projects.

Five laid off hope to set up as stevedores

MORE jobs have been lost at the Vestas Celtic factory in Kintyre.

The wind turbine tower manufacturer has laid off five men from its transport department; their work saw them supervise the unloading of raw materials and the loading of the finished tower sections onto ships.

This work took them not just to Campbeltown harbour, but also to ports all over the UK and Ireland.

Now some of the men are planning to set themselves up in business as stevedores, in Campbeltown and elsewhere they can get work.

'If we don't load or unload the ships it is going to cost Vestas double or treble the money to hire people in to do the job,' said one of the men.

Jim Mather MSP for Argyll and Bute is also the minister for enterprise, energy and tourism.

He said: 'Given that I am involved in politics to increase economic growth it is depressing to see more people facing redundancy; especially in Campbeltown where so many jobs have been lost in the recent past.'

'Whilst, I will be contacting HIE to ensure that they do all they can to help the people involved find new employment, I will also continue to work to improve local prospects and the potential for the renewable energy sector.'

He added: 'I would hope that the recent move to eliminate business rates from smaller businesses will also help the likes of Opportunity Kintyre to get more local businesses up and running and I stand ready to help that and other local initiatives.'

Danes call for safety check on turbines

MONTHS after a Vestas V47 wind turbine bent double at Beinn an Tuirc wind farm in Kintyre, another two collapsed violently in Denmark within a week of one another.

According to a report published in *The Copenhagen Post* on February 25 an investigation has been urged by the country's climate minister, Connie Hedegaard.

A recording of one of the wind turbines near the city of Århus is now featured on YouTube after it began spinning out of control during high winds.

It shows an explosion-like disintegration with one of the blades breaking off, casting debris into the other blades and shearing the 60-metre tower nearly in half.

Vestas is now conducting an internal investigation to determine the cause of the wind turbines breaking down.

Vesta's spokesman, Peter Wenzel Kruse, told *The Copenhagen Post*, an English language news service: 'We've still got about 35,000 wind turbines across the globe that are operating fine.'

'But they're not infallible. We're doing what we can and learning from our mistakes.'



Euan with Alan Ross, chief executive of the Scottish Electrical Charitable Training Trust.

Euan has spark

A YOUNG Oban man, Euan Dewar, aged 20, showed real spark recently to make the final of Scotland's Best Apprentice Electrician.

He was one of eight chosen for the Electrotechnical Modern Apprenticeship competition, organised by the Scottish Electrical Charitable Training Trust, the electrotechnical industry training body.

The finalists were given a complex task over three days which they completed in full view of thousands of visitors to Scotland's Careers & Jobs Fair 2008 at the SECC in Glasgow.

Euan works with Oban Electrical Services Ltd which has 30 employees and works throughout the Highlands and islands and parts of the central belt. Euan was one of three young electrical apprentices with OES who completed a lean sweep of awards recently for the respective stages of their training at Reid Kerr College, Paisley.

www.highlandtheatre.co.uk for full listings and future presentations

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Mon-Thur 6.15 & 8.30

HORTON HEARS A WHO

PREVIEW SCREENINGS Cert U 86 mins
Fri 6.15 Sat & Sun 1.45 & 6.15

SEMI-PRO

Cert 15 89 mins 1 WEEK ONLY
6.15 Daily 1.30 Sat & Sun Matinees

THERE WILL BE BLOOD

Cert 15 158 mins 1 WEEK ONLY
8.15 Daily 3.30 Sat & Sun Matinees

FROM FRIDAY 21st March

UNTRACEABLE '18' RAMBO '18'

BE KIND REWIND '12A'

PROGRAMME SUBJECT TO CHANGE. PLEASE CONSULT WITH BOX OFFICE 1 WEEK IN ADVANCE OF ADVERTISED SHOW.



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TODAY!



Your Stars with
Patrick Arundell

ARIES

If you were a builder, you'd choose this week to prepare plans to build your show house. Anything that requires patience, a sure hand and common sense will come naturally to you. However, if you are more gregarious, you can surprise friends with the need to find a little more 'you time'. If so, don't feel guilty about this. Privacy can be essential. Call me for your romantic forecast in full...

TAURUS

Teamwork can take you far. Even if you're a lone wolf, it's good to have a friend to go along with you. Psychology, having fun and the soul and fun. If you belong to clubs of any type these too can be a rewarding area. In romance, the friendship element of a current relationship can shine through, or will it be a pal's attraction for you? Call to hear which zodiac signs can be fun...

GEMINI

You've needed to be more independent and someone may have found this hard to understand. This person could have a traditional mindset and believe your responsibilities should always come first. Now however, you can talk this through and find that you have more in common than you thought. Job-hunting? The signs are promising Gemini. Call for more on Saturn's link with fleshy Mars...

CANCER

A super time for a vacation. Fresh air, brisk walks and extra sleep can all be perfect. If this is not on your schedule, firm up plans for later in the year. Psychologically, having fun and the soul and fun. If you belong to clubs of any type these too can be a rewarding area. In romance, the friendship element of a current relationship can shine through, or will it be a pal's attraction for you? Call to hear which zodiac signs can be fun...

LEO

A sultry time ensues. Seems unlikely? Where's your faith? Let's face it, the stars do change quite radically by the months end, and this can come from your own growing ease with being close. Dialogue is important, but it is intimacy - if a situation feels right - that can help to bond you and your amour, or bring someone new to your world. Call to hear how someone can be so generous...

VIRGO

If one relationship has drained you, is it because you've been obsessing with the areas that make you different? If so, this week's healing and diplomatic moves of Mercury and Venus can see an improvement. If you shift a little and the other person does too, you can both soon close the gap. Harmony is definitely something to aspire to. Call your Virgo Prediction Line for more details...

LIBRA

If you've been enjoying yourself, it's time to get your mindset back on life's nitty-gritty issues. A few early nights may neither be amiss. And the more you concentrate on the things you care about, the more the sense of satisfaction you'll develop. If you work behind the scenes, great strides can be made - even if this is not commented upon. Call me for more advice and insights...

SCORPIO

Both short and long term hopes start to shape positively. Travel plans can be finalised, but also you can feel a good deal more sociable. If you've been feeling a bit flat, it's time to let someone know that you're attracted to them, you'll have the added confidence and charisma to do so now. Your sense of humour can help to beguile them. Call to hear who can be very alluring now...

SAGITTARIUS

As happy in your home as you could be? Even if your abode is comfortable, you can be minded to play host. Yet if you have been thinking of a new decorative scheme, now you can find the spark to do something about it. Family relationships can also benefit from a more nurturing vibe. Old memories can be happily shared between you and loved ones. Call me for your cash scope...

CAPRICORN

Your ruler Saturn forges a link to the go-getting Mars and on this occasion, the union can be productive. If you need to get an expert opinion, this guidance can prove invaluable. The pace of life can also zip along this week and there can be lots of happy chatter to enjoy. Take on mental challenges and quizzes - you can truly shine. Call to hear why ideas are so important now...

AQUARIUS

Attention to detail can have positive implications. Your ideas have been fastighed, but it's how you apply them that counts from now, and if you're thorough, your finances will start to pick-up. Indeed before March comes in, there can be a pure piece of luck. Even if you're not farsighted, a turning point can be reached. Call me if you are in the mood for a sultry time...

PISCES

Astrology is like the seasons. Everything goes in cycles and this week can be an encouraging time. The self-starters, anxieties and hidden agendas that you have planned will now take away. Expect your popularity to pick-up too. Pisces, a new Spring romance can soon be in the air or a tie that has bumped along the bottom can begin to revive. Call to hear why this can be a time of new starts...

For your detailed forecast call your number above.
Calls cost 60p per minute at all times

Visit - www.patrickarundell.com

At the Cinema

10,000 BC

CERT '12A'

With the end of the Ice Age dooming the Yagahl mammoth hunters' way of life, the mountain tribe await a prophesied warrior saviour. Uncertain youth D'Leh (Strait) steps up when slave raiders capture the young men and D'Leh's beloved Evoie (Belle), embarking on a perilous journey across the world to save his people.

The mammoths aren't all that is wild and woolly in this innocent, old-fashioned, amusingly self-important, entertainingly mad, rip-snorting throwback to vintage Saturday matinee fare, with all the fantastic set pieces, thrills state-of-the-art technology can throw at it, sit back and enjoy the spectacle. Roland ("THE DAY AFTER TOMORROW") Emmerich directs.

HORTON HEARS A WHO

CERT 'U'

An imaginative elephant named Horton (Jim Carrey) hears a faint cry for help coming from a tiny speck of dust floating through the air.

Although Horton doesn't know it yet, that speck houses an entire city named Who-ville, inhabited by the microscopic Whos, led by the Mayor (Steve Carell).

Despite being ridiculed and threatened by his neighbours who think he has lost his mind, Horton is determined to save the particle... because "a person's a person no matter how small." This CGI Animated film from the makers of the "Ice Age" films is based on the beloved children's book, first published in 1954, by Ted Geisel, who wrote under the pen name Dr Seuss. Special pre-release previews this weekend.

How he goes from rugged individualist to rotting, soulless millionaire, and what that says about the dark heart of America's capitalistic obsessions is the meat of Paul Thomas Anderson's film, and the stunningly intense performance by Lewis quite rightly won him the Best Actor Oscar in what has been hailed as a modern American masterpiece.

Last Saturday

ANNUAL AUCTION
to be held on Saturday 29th March 2008
at Oban Livestock Centre - 10.30am
All Proceeds to Local Good Causes
Donations of saleable furniture and all household items now being taken
Please contact any Rotarian or call Oban 564848

The Gliondar Ensemble

(flute, oboe, clarinet, bassoon, french horn)

A varied programme of music for wind ensemble

Monday 17th March 2008

at 7.30pm

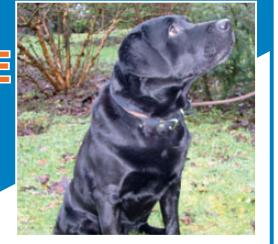
St John's Cathedral, Oban

Tickets £8, £7 Concession, £2 Students, under 18 free

Part of an Argyll and Bute concert tour subsidised by Enterprise Music Scotland

PET OF THE WEEK

CALI



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aaraescueteam@btconnect.com

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SEMI-PRO

CERT '15'

Will Ferrell plays Jackie Moon, a one-hit wonder who uses the profits from the success of his chart-topping song "Love Me Sexy" to achieve his dream of owning a basketball team.

But Moon's franchise, the Flint Michigan Tropics, is the worst team in the league and in danger of folding when the ABA announces its plans to merge with the NBA. If they want to survive, Jackie and the Tropics must now do the seemingly impossible - win.

Making the most of its 70's setting, this is another chunk of likeable stupidity from Ferrell with an eclectic supporting cast including Woody Harrelson and Andre Benjamin.

THERE WILL BE BLOOD

CERT '15'

A sprawling epic of family, faith, power and oil, set on the incendiary frontier of California's turn of the century petroleum boom.

The story chronicles the life of Daniel Plainview (Daniel Day-Lewis), who transforms himself from a down and out, raising a son on his own, into a self-made oil tycoon. When we meet Plainview, he's a silver miner in search of his fortune, using only the sparks from a pickax to light his way.

By the time we leave the character, he's sequestered in a mansion, a bitter robber baron raging at the heavens.

How he goes from rugged individualist to rotting, soulless millionaire, and what that says about the dark heart of America's capitalistic obsessions is the meat of Paul Thomas Anderson's film, and the stunningly intense performance by Lewis quite rightly won him the Best Actor Oscar in what has been hailed as a modern American masterpiece.

joined by Billy Anderson on accordion and Raymond Gathery on drums. Supporting the group was the Iain Angus MacLeod Band with United Auctions Donald Morrison compering the auction which raised £200 towards funds for the Royal National Mod which comes to Oban next year.

One of the organisers Margaret McLellan said: 'Na h-Oganaich were superb and just as good as when they first started out. Donnie MacLeod had us in stitches with his comedy act. We are very grateful to everybody who came along especially those from Glasgow, Sutherland and Skye.'

Na h-Oganaich back in Oban

THE REFORMING of 1970s Gaelic folk group Na h-Oganaich saw a big crowd turn up for their concert in Oban.

The trio, made up of Margaret MacLeod, Donnie MacLeod and Noel Eadie, played the town's Argyllshire Gathering Halls before a Scotland-wide audience.

The Gaelic folk group were

joined by Billy Anderson on accordion and Raymond Gathery on drums. Supporting the group was the Iain Angus MacLeod Band with United Auctions Donald Morrison compering the auction which raised £200 towards funds for the Royal National Mod which comes to Oban next year.

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Drama club bring the curtain down

BENDERLOCH and North Connel Drama Club have brought down the curtain on their latest successful production called 'Mixed Broth' in the Corran Halls, Oban.

The two-night stage show took place last Thursday and Friday to an enthusiastic audience.

The club performed a selection of five short plays and two small sketches demonstrating the acting skills of the cast, both young and old. The three main plays from the evening will compete in the forthcoming drama festivals in Oban and Appin.

t11dra01

The Oban Times & WEST HIGHLAND TIMES

What's On Guide

Tuesday 11th - Saturday 15th March

F W Holroyd Art Gallery March Exhibition - Original Paintings of Local Landscapes by David Mitchell, 10-5pm

Monday 17th March

The Gliondar Ensemble - a varied programme of music for wind ensemble, St John's Cathedral, Oban at 7.30pm

Tuesday 18th - Thursday 20th March

North Lorn Drama Festival, Appin Village Hall, 7.30pm

Friday 21st March

Red Hot Chilli Pipers, Corran Halls, Oban, 8pm

Saturday 22nd March

Annual Auction, Oban Livestock Centre, 10.30am. Contact any Rotarian or call 01631 564848

Sunday 23rd March

Oban Drama Festival, Corran Halls, Oban, 7.30pm prompt

Tuesday 1st April - Friday 4th April

Lorn Drama Festival, Corran Halls, Oban, 7.30pm prompt

Sunday 4th May

ABCD 10k Rave

WHAT'S ON GUIDE

CONTACT - 01631 568000

Thursday 13 March, 2008 - www.obantimes.co.uk

The Oban Times

Lochaber hears of beaver introduction



MEMBERS of Lochaber Natural History Society heard about proposals for the re-introduction of the European beaver Castor fiber to Scotland from Martin Gaywood of Scottish Natural Heritage at their February meeting.

The speaker explained that this beaver is a 'keystone species' that plays an important role in wetland habitats, to the benefit of biodiversity more widely. Beavers are large, semi-aquatic rodents with characteristic curved incisors, webbed hind feet, a flattened tail and a waterproof pelt. They live in family groups and may have 2-3 pairs of kits per year. The main predator is wolf, but white tailed eagle and mink have been known to take kits. In captivity the animals live to 13-14 years.

Based on availability of suitable habitat, studies have shown that Scotland could support up to 5000 beavers. Knapdale in Argyll was identified for a 'trial' release site for 3-4 families of beaver. The site was chosen as the suitable habitat is well contained and there is a good infrastructure already in place for wildlife watching.

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Or Email: property@obantimes.co.uk

West Coast Property Guide

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Substantial family home on the sought-after Ross of Mull



Cnoc Mor on the picturesque Ross of Mull

FROM its slightly elevated position in Ardtun, a scattered crofting settlement just a stone's throw from the amenities at Bunessan, Cnoc Mor enjoys expansive views across the enchanting landscape of the Ross.

The local coastline, a mixture of breathtaking geology and luxuriant white sands, is only a short distance away, but it is possible to enjoy far-reaching vistas of Loch na Laithach, the Wilderness and distant mountains without leaving the house.

Whilst eminently suited as a family home, being excellently situated for exploring the south of Mull, Cnoc Mor may also lend itself to providing island bed and breakfast accommodation for the island's many visitors.

Approached by a sweeping driveway, the house itself is a substantial detached villa offering exceptionally generous and flexible accommodation replete with integrated storage solutions.

Presented in a contemporary yet homely style with attractive wood finishes, the accommodation is thoughtfully arranged over two levels and consists of a vestibule, reception hall, lounge, dining kitchen, dining room, four bedrooms, a bathroom, shower room, office and rear porch. Fully double glazed, with an attractive mixture of laminate, fitted carpets and tiled floors, the property has an oil-fired central heating.

On the ground floor, the useful vestibule opens to a welcoming inner hall which gives access to the lounge, kitchen, bedroom one, the bathroom and office, and also has a large under-stair storage cupboard.

The generously sized lounge has a focal-point fireplace set into a marble hearth, and a large bay window with integral seating to make the most of the views across the surrounding croft-

land to Loch na Laithach. French doors open to the dining room, which also enjoys delightful views over the surrounding countryside.

The kitchen has an extensive range of Shaker-style fitted units under high-gloss worktops with tiled splashbacks and an integrated double oven and grill. A central island unit houses a five-ring gas hob with an extractor hood, and demarcates the kitchen from a breakfasting area where patio doors open to the rear of the property.

The ground floor bedroom also enjoys views towards the loch, and has a fitted wardrobe whilst the office has a handily integrated computer workstation. The family bathroom, extensively tiled, features a three piece suite in white.

A carpeted staircase with attractive pine wall panelling curves to the upper landing to form a gallery with access to the remaining three bedrooms and shower room.

Bedrooms two and three both enjoy views through twin dormer windows towards Loch na Laithach and benefit from fitted wardrobes. The fourth bedroom enjoys lovely views to distant mountains and the shower room has a WC, wash hand basin and Respatex coated shower cabinet with an electric shower.

Outside, timber decking to three sides of the house allows plenty of scope for enjoyment of the long summer evenings. A fenced area of well-tended garden accompanies the property, and there is also a garage or workshop complete with light and power.

To complement the property, a considerable area of croft land, and a nearby barn, currently the subject of an outline planning application, may also be available by separate negotiation. Offers over £275,000 are invited for Cnoc Mor by the selling agents, DM MacKinnon Estates.

PROPERTY TO LET

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FOR SALE

15 SEALAND PENINVER BY CAMPBELTOWN

This semi-detached dwelling house is situated in the popular holiday location of Peninver about 5 miles from Campbeltown. The property is in a particularly quiet corner location with views to farmland. The accommodation comprises living room/dining room, kitchen, three bedrooms and bathroom. There is an attractive, good sized garden to the front and a back garden with outlook to hills and woodland beyond.

Castlehill, Campbeltown,
Argyll, PA28 6AR
Telephone: (01586) 552317
Fax: (01586) 554719
(24-Hour Answering Service)

57 Lochnell Street, Lochgilphead,
Argyll, PA31 8JN
Telephone: (01546) 602581
E-mail:
mail@cdm-law.co.uk

Situated on a prominent location on the main thoroughfare of the Town, the subjects comprise retail premises over the ground and basement floors of a mid terraced three storey property.

The ground floor has been fitted out to provide sales accommodation with attractive window frontage and the basement is used for storage/staff purposes. The property is suitable for general retail use and the sales space at ground floor level is attractively finished.

Price Region: £185,000

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For Sale: An impressive and extensively refurbished Victorian Villa commanding superb sea and island views from its elevated position in an exclusive small group of individual homes within wooded grounds high above the town. Set in its own mature garden ground extending to approximately three-quarters of an acre, the generously proportioned and elegant accommodation is arranged over three floors and provides: Ground Floor—Vestibule, Hall, Boot Room, Lounge, Kitchen/Dining Room, Family/TV Room, Study, Utility Room, Cloakroom. First Floor—2 En-Suite Bedrooms with Dressing Areas, Further En-Suite Bedroom, Upper Floor—3 Bedrooms, Bathroom. Gas central heating and double glazing. External Workshop and Store. Sea-facing lawns and terrace, ample parking. Offers over £550,000.

I GEORGE STREET, OBAN, ARGYLL PA34 5RU
www.alexanderdawson.co.uk
Tel: 01631 563901 Fax: 01631 566778

Alexander DAWSON
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For Sale: A well presented, upgraded Detached House with fine open views to the front over Polvinister Pond in this sought after residential area on the fringe of the town. The spacious accommodation provides Vestibule, Hall, Lounge, Dining Room, Kitchen, Snug, Study, 4 Bedrooms (1 En-Suite), Bathroom. Double glazing, electric heating system. Situated in a sizeable mature garden with driveway. Timber sheds, basement store. Offers over £265,000.

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For Sale: An attractively presented modern Semi Detached House offering well proportioned family accommodation in a popular residential area on the fringe of the town comprising: Vestibule, Hall, Lounge, Kitchen, Dining Room, Cloakroom, 3 Bed-Rooms (1 With En-Suite Shower Room), Bathroom. Double glazing and Total Control electric heating. Good sized garden with driveway/parking and Shed. Offers over £175,000.

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For Sale: A most comfortable, well proportioned Ground Floor Flat situated in an established residential area convenient to local amenities. Comprises Hall, Lounge, Kitchen, 2 Bed-Rooms, Bathroom, 2 Stores. Double glazing, effective electric heating system. Attractive private garden with Shed. Communal drying green. Offers over £95,000.

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For Sale: A compact, well presented First Floor Flat, suitable for letting or as a starter home, conveniently situated within walking distance of the town centre. Electric heating, double glazing. Easily maintained accommodation comprising Hall, Lounge, Kitchen, Bedroom, Bath-Room, 2 Stores. Double glazing, effective electric heating system. Attractive private garden with Shed. Bath-Room. Offers over £75,000.

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<p>To find out more about living and working in Argyll & Bute visit us @ www.argyll-bute.gov.uk</p> <h2>Gardener/Gravedigger</h2> <p>£15,549 - £17,015</p> <p>You will undertake all duties involved in the burial of the dead and the maintenance of cemeteries and grass areas throughout the Lorn area. A current driving licence is essential with C.I.T.B. for mini excavator, PA1 & PAGA pesticide certificates and driving licence category C1+E being desirable. You must have general work experience in ground maintenance and the ability to use safely all ground maintenance tools and machinery is essential. You must be capable of working as part of a team and be able to deal with the public in a friendly and understanding manner. Manual Handling Training and an awareness of Health & Safety would be preferred. This post is NOT suitable for Jobshare. OSR00544/R2</p> <p>Recruitment packs from 01546 604620. Closing date 28th March 2008.</p> <p><i>The Council welcomes applications from New Deal Applicants.</i></p>	 <p>We are an Equal Opportunities Employer A 'no smoking' facility is operated</p> 
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S IS FOR SMART MOVE

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Health Manager

We are currently seeking an enthusiastic, self motivated individual to undertake the role of Area Health Manager within the Company's Health Department providing support to our Seawater Production areas across the West Coast of Scotland.

The main responsibilities of the post will be to provide a diagnostic service to designated farms for the rapid detection of disease, to provide advice to farms on best practice and to supervise the use of medicines and treatment methods in collaboration with pharmaceutical companies. In addition the successful candidate will be expected to supervise the use of medicines to ensure optimum efficiency, to collate data on fish health and to provide support to farm staff through training and advice on fish health and welfare.

Potential candidates should possess at least two years practical experience in a health monitoring position and have a sound knowledge of fish farming. In addition excellent computer skills with experience of Microsoft packages, a full clean driving licence and the willingness to undertake regular travel are also required for this post.

In return the successful candidate will benefit from an attractive salary package commensurate with experience.

If you are interested in applying for this vacancy, please apply in writing, no later than Friday 28th March 2008 to: **Vicky Ferguson, Human Resources Manager, Marine Harvest (Scotland) Ltd, Business Resource Centre, Blair Mhor Industrial Estate, Fort William, PH33 7PT.**

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Ref: 186-5B

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Reporting to the Port Manager, you will need a flexible approach to your day-to-day responsibilities. Your duties will include customer enquiries, sales of passenger/vehicle tickets, ticket collection, cash handling and control of passengers and vehicles embarking and disembarking from vessels.

You must be computer literate, with excellent verbal and written communication skills. You are expected to have a flexible approach to working as shift and weekend work will be involved. Please note a driving licence is preferable.

You must be customer focused, have a clear understanding of the customer interface and have a proactive approach to customer care.

If you are interested in this position, please respond by sending your CV quoting reference number 186-5B no later than Friday 21 March 2008 to:

David MacBrayne HR (UK) Limited
Ferry Terminal, Gourock, PA19 1QP
t: 01475 650100 f: 01475 650268

CalMac Ferries Limited is an equal opportunities employer.

The ARK hairdressing co ltd

Qualified Hair Stylist.

NVQ Level 3 or 3 years experience
This is a full time permanent position with
a great opportunity to be an employee or
work on a self employed basis
Wage negotiable

Please telephone 01631 566998 and ask for
Kate or Andrea
THE ARK, 15 Airds Crescent, Oban

Registered Nurse

Full Time. Must hold NMC Registration in Nursing,
experience in elderly care preferable
£11.10 - £12.10 per hour to work day/night shift pattern

Care Assistant

Full time, experience in elderly care preferred but not
essential as training will be given
Rates of pay available on application.

For further information please contact
Jean MacLeod 01631 710322
Ossians Care Home, North Connel, Argyll

The image features a large, bold headline 'IT PAYS TO ADVERTISE IN' in a sans-serif font. Below it is the newspaper's name, 'The Oban Times & WEST HIGHLAND TIMES', in a decorative, serif font. Underneath the name is the slogan 'Be seen by over 40,000 readers'. Further down, the contact details 'Tel: 01631 568000' and 'www.obantimes.co.uk' are listed. At the very bottom, a fan of £20 banknotes is displayed, partially overlapping the bottom edge of the page.

**Finance
Finance Assistant**

Fort William, £15,201 - £16,932

You will be part of the Council Tax and Housing and Council Tax Benefits Team. This is a busy team which provides a wide range of services to the public. You will have considerable contact with the public and should be able to maintain confidentiality at all times. Office experience and computer literacy including Word and Excel will be an advantage. You will be committed to providing excellent customer care and have a sound understanding of council tax and housing and council tax benefits. You should have the ability to work in a changing environment and work well on your own initiative and as part of a team. The ability to deal with confidential information is essential.

Informal enquiries to Mairi McCallum, tel (01397) 707242.

Application packs, quoting ref: L/19/08 are available from our website or by telephoning (01397) 707220.**Closing date: 28 March 2008**www.highland.gov.uk
**Service Operative
WEST COAST LOOS**

Clean driving licence essential, organised, flexible working and customer orientated approach.

Please apply with a current CV to

Susan MacLachlan:

Email:susan@maclachlanguro.co.uk

Or in writing to:

West Coast Loos (John MacLachlan Group)
Torran Gorm Industrial Estate,
Oban, Argyll, PA34 4PL, Tel: 01631 566370**MELFORT VILLAGE, KILMELFORD****PART-TIME SATURDAY CLEANERS**

We would welcome mature responsible cleaners to join our Saturday cleaner over team.

Hours 10 am - 4 pm every Saturday (all year round) with break for lunch. Training given.

£7.70/hour gross (over 18 years).

Assistance given with transport expenses.

Please telephone Rosie McAllister on 01852 200257

**Scot Trout Farming Ltd**

Scot Trout Farming Limited is a progressive company producing Rainbow Trout at 18 farms throughout Scotland. Fish are grown, primarily for the UK multiple retail market and are processed at the company's factory at Bellshill.

An opportunity has arisen for a FISH FARM ASSISTANT to join our small teams based at Caledonian Trout and Tervine farm on Loch Awe in Argyll. Although previous fish farming experience would be an advantage, it is not essential as training would be given on site. Candidates should hold a clean driving licence and be able to work well in a small team. A progressive wage structure is on offer to the right candidate along with the opportunity for personal progression within the company.

Please contact Ian McAdam on 07733 007598 for further details.

**ACHA - Putting Tenants First.**

ACHA wishes to recruit customer focussed individuals, seeking a rewarding and challenging career in a forward thinking housing organisation. These posts are key to delivering the quality of services our customers deserve. In return, we will reward the successful applicants with a generous remuneration package, modern work practices, family friendly "people policies" and the opportunity for personal development and training.

IT Support Assistant - Lochgilphead
Salary Grade 7
**(£14,529 - £16,144 - pro rata:
pay award pending)**
17.5 hours per week

The job purpose is to deliver high levels of administrative and clerical support to the IT team within the Association and assist with providing technical support in the operation of its IT systems and equipment. The post-holder will have regular contact with internal customers and staff as well as external suppliers and therefore a degree of organisational, administrative and communication skills are necessary. The successful candidate will need to be a team player but equally capable of self motivation and working unsupervised at times in such a small team. As the Association is widely geographically dispersed and the nature of the work does involve site visits, travel may occur across Argyll and therefore a full driving licence is essential.

It will be essential for the successful candidate for this post to hold a minimum of 3 Standard grades or equivalent along with relevant work experience and aptitude. It would be desirable if the successful candidate holds ECDL passport or a similar recognised IT qualification.

Closing Date: 12 noon on Friday 28th March 2008**Interviews for these posts will be held in April 2008**For recruitment pack please contact the HR & Corporate Services Department, 63/65 Chalmers Street, Ardrosshaig, PA30 8DX, Tel No 01546 604098 or email marina.mcarthur@acha.co.uk, or visit the Recruitment section on the Association's website at www.acha.co.uk where recruitment packs can be downloaded.

ACHA welcomes applications from all sections of the community and is committed to promoting equal opportunities.

All posts will be subject to an Enhanced Disclosure Scotland check.


**Argyll and Bute
Volunteer Centre
Oban Office**
Requires Finance / Administration Assistant
(experienced Sage accounting or similar software)
16 hours per week, £8.85 p.w.
Further information and application forms:
Argyll and Bute Volunteer Centre,
Office 1 Dunollie Halls, Dunollie Road,
Oban, PA34 5PH
Phone: 01631 569545
Email: adminoban.abvc@tiscali.co.uk
Final date for applications 27/03/2008
**Farms Secretary**

Job Share (20 Hours Per Week)

We are currently seeking to identify an enthusiastic and experienced Administrator to work within Marine Harvest (Scotland) Ltd's Farms Office at the Blair Mhor Industrial Estate.

Key responsibilities will be to provide full administrative support to all Managers and staff within the Farms Office including typing, collation of information, filing, petty cash, updating databases and other general duties required in the office. Applicants should possess a friendly disposition and be able to work well under pressure with minimum supervision. An excellent working knowledge of Microsoft systems and good organisational skills are essential.

If you are interested in this role, please apply in writing to: **Vicky Ferguson, Human Resources Manager, Business Resource Centre, Blair Mhor Industrial Estate, Fort William, PH33 7PT.**The closing date for the receipt of applications is **Friday 28th March 2008**.**Human Resources Assistant**Job ref: D27/07/1C
Clerical Grade 3, Salary £15,487 - £17,756

Fixed Term Appointment - 9 months

Are you an effective administrator looking to develop your career in an HR environment?

We're looking for someone to join a small HR team and assist with a variety of activities within the HR office, including the maintenance of records, recruitment programmes, general correspondence and occasional cover for Reception.

The successful candidate will be expected to have excellent IT, communication and people skills. Training will be provided for the human resources database. A knowledge of human resources related work would be an advantage, as would experience in academic administration.

Further Particulars and Application Form are available online at www.sams.ac.uk. Alternatively, please write to: The Human Resources Officer, The Scottish Association for Marine Science, Dunstaffnage Marine Laboratory, Oban, Argyll, PA37 1QA, or by e-mail to recruitment@sams.ac.uk

Please quote Job reference when applying

The closing date for all applications is Friday 28th March 2008Interviews will be held on 11th April 2008.
SAMS has an equal opportunities policy and welcomes applicants from all sections of the community**Oban Times RECRUITMENT****"WATER ENVIRONMENT AND WATER SERVICES (SCOTLAND) ACT 2003"****THE WATER ENVIRONMENT (CONTROLLED ACTIVITIES) (SCOTLAND) REGULATIONS 2005 ("the 2005 regulations")**

Notice is hereby given, in accordance with Regulation 13 of the 2005 Regulations, that an application has been made to the Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) by Scottish Water for authorisation to carry out a controlled activity, namely:-

- Discharge of 371 m3 per day of treated effluent to the River Fillan at NGR NN 3455 2883 from 27th August 2008.

Any person affected or likely to be affected by, or having an interest in, the application may make representations about the application to SEPA in writing within 28 days beginning with the date of this advertisement at the following address: The Registry, SEPA, Strathearn House, Broxden Business Park, Lamberkine Drive, Perth, PH1 1RX, quoting reference number CAR/L/1008726.

A copy of the application may be inspected free of charge, at the above address, between 9.30am and 4.30pm Monday to Friday (except local and national holidays) by prior arrangement at the SEPA, Strathearn House, Broxden Business Park, Lamberkine Drive, Perth, PH1 1RX telephone 01738 627989.

Written representations received within 28 days of this advertisement will be taken into consideration in determining the application. Any such representations will be placed in a public register unless the person making them requests that they should not be. Where such a request is made there will be included in the register a statement indicating that representations have been made which have been the subject of such a request.



CROFTERS COMMISSION

UIGHARRAS NAN CROITEARAN

This advertisement superseded the advertisement which appeared on week ending 7 March 2008.

NOTIFICATION OF COMMISSION DECISION ON APPLICATION TO CREATE NEW CROFT

The application by Mrs Lyndesay A MacKinnon,

owner of Eilean Loain Estate, Achnamara, by

Lochgilphead, Argyll

to create a new croft

extending to 1.62 ha has

been approved.

Case Number:

5.01.8393

Parties with an interest

in the above application

may appeal our decision

to the Scottish Land Court, within 42

days from the date of

this advert. Information

on how to appeal is

available from the Crofters

Commission.

The granting of these

Directions may be appealed

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Market reports

OBAN - Caledonian Marts

Bullocks: £520 South Ardnacalach, £510 Upper Largie, £500 Fidden, £460 Strongorm, £440 Turnault, £430 Tayreagan and High Ballantyre, £410 Ach-nacone.

Heifers: Up to 250kgs Brackenhurst £410, 169.4p; 251-300kgs Glenehervie £500, 169.1p; 301-350kgs Cretlevane £830, 245.60p; 351-400kgs Caircurran £635, Ashfield 171.8p; 401-450kgs Middle Ballat £680, Killocraw 160p; 451-500kgs Auchenbrae £775, 167p; 501-550kgs Torbrex £955, 173.6p;

Breeding cattle: £920 Laganalva, Mull; £800 Invernahyle; £750 Lag-anula.

Sheep - Hoggets: SuffolkX: £55 Ardally; Suffolk: £48 Barcalding Home Farm; SuffolkX: £47 Ardally; Cross: £37 Dairy House; Black-face £35 Crossiebeg; Mule £36 Tiragholi. Feeding ewes: Black-face £33 Turnault; Cross £32 Ach-naconegbeg; Cheviot £31 Tiragholi; CheviotX: £28 Shenavallie; Swale £22 Glengorm.

Rams: Cheviot £39 Rhuliois; Suffolk £45 Barcalding Home Farm; Blackface £25 Turnault and Crossiebeg.

STIRLING United Auctions

Bullocks

Up to 250kgs West Croft £340, Whitehills 175.8p; 251-300kgs Low Dunasherry £545, Glenehervie 190.1p; 301-350kgs Cretlevane £620, Glenmore 190p; 351-400kgs Cretlevane £670, 9 Killeonan 183.7p; 401-450kgs Ostfield £730, Killocraw 176.8p; 451-500kgs Townhead of Arngibbon £775, 9 Killeonan 166.3p; 501-550kgs West Mains £805, Blaeochhead 152.80p; 551-600kgs Cretlevane £875, 158.5p;

Belgian Blue X Highland heifer
(blue-grass)
born June 2007.
Quiet and friendly.

Also black (rising two year old) Pure Highland Heifer, halter trained and very quiet, make good show heifer.

For more info please phone
01688 302941 or
07768 383 574.

HAY AND STRAW FOR SALE
in lorry loads, round bales and small bales of hay, round and also hestons of straw.
Telephone 01764 654267

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Scotland's No. 1 WIRE, STOCK FENCING, BARBED, HIGHLAND-X, TENSILE, MILD STEEL - BEST PRICES

TIMBER DIRECT FROM OUR SAWMILL
Depots throughout Scotland
Delivery available
For a competitive quote
please call 01631 566866

Tractors Wanted
MF 590, 290, 690, 390
Zetor 5245, 6245, 7245, 745.
And all other Zetor, JD, MF, Ford Fiat & Case IH 1970 to date.

Also wanted for breaking:
Most tractors, balers, diggers and heavy plant 1960 to date. Any condition, worn out or accident damaged.

Contact John Craig,
Easter Clevage Farm,
Dunning, Perth.
Tel: 01764 684265
Mob: 07774 629123



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Mobile: 07702 985180

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Landini 85 Tractors
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Benderloch, Oban

NEW A.T.V'S

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Can deliver Connel/Oban/Tarbert Weekly

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Appin farmer turns to pigs

Success is on a plate for local fresh pork producer

'I want to sell local food to local people'

ALASDAIR Colhart is creating a whole new pig flavour and is now urging people in the west Highlands to put a fork in their 'supermarket mentality.'

For Alasdair's young pigs roam the fields of his Appin farm, are slaughtered on Mull and eaten by his neighbours and visitors to the area.

Alasdair, aged 39, rears cattle and sheep at Kinlochlaich Farm.

Like many farmers and crofters on the west coast he has experienced a harrowing few years as foot and mouth outbreaks and poor market prices have conspired to bring the industry to its knees.

But in 2003 Alasdair decided to breed pigs and sell them.

Nothing out of the ordinary in that you might think - but Alasdair cuts out the middleman. He rears the pigs for eight months, transports them to Mull Slaughterhouse where they are killed before being delivered to local hotels or sold directly to private customers in the Lorn area, via Oban courier firm Waltons.

'Keeping everything local' cuts down on travelling for the pigs and means the animals are relatively de-stressed when they are slaughtered.

That all adds up to fresh, fresh pork - and with a unique Appin taste.

The pigs were a bit of a novelty when I first got them,' Alasdair recalls. 'There wasn't any great knowledge about them here. My father used to buy one each year and fatten it up for the family. It was a steep learning curve for me, especially when I found out how quickly they could breed so I had to separate the males and females early on.'

The pigs roam his farm's fields and are essentially organic in everything but the label. They get a standard concentrate but feed on grass, rushes, worms, beetles and roots.

Television chef and animal welfare crusader Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall would be at home at Kinlochlaich you feel.

Alasdair is speaking to *The Oban Times* on the *MV Isle of Mull* sailing to the island with six pigs for the slaughterhouse.

'The pigs I'm taking today are all eight months old. The sows give birth indoors and then depending on the time of year she is outside in the fields with the piglets within days. I let the sow naturally wean their offspring at 12 weeks. It would be easier for me to have them inside and much quicker to fatten them up for slaughter. But I want them to have a real quality of life and develop a unique flavour.'

Shaun Straid, the slaughterman on Mull, has 25 years experience but feels the Appin pigs have a dignified demise.

'In the big abattoirs you have got to have so many animals slaughtered in an hour,' he said. 'I was on piece work down south meaning I was paid by how many animals were killed.'

'But the difference here is that the animals come in small lots like Alasdair's pigs. They are not being run through a market, auction ring and having to travel so many miles before they get to the slaughterhouse.'

Nature Times

The curlew must be one of our oddest looking birds, with its extraordinary, curved beak - typically 15 cm long. This distinctive bill gives the curlew its Gaelic name of guil-be-neach.

The curlew's most frequent call is what usually attracts attention, and gives this bird its common name - a loud, rather wiseful 'coorlee', rising at the end. It has a varied repertoire of calls, and its bubbling song is one of my favourite sounds in the hills.

The curlew is Europe's largest wading bird, with a body length of 50-60 cm, and a wingspan of 80-100 cm. A handsome bird, from a distance it appears dark brown, but close up you will find that the plumage is beautifully patterned with streaks and chevron markings. In flight it shows a white rump and 'V' on its back.

On the coast, curlews probe mud and sand for marine life. The curlew has the longest beak of all shorebirds, enabling it to reach worms and shellfish which others cannot reach! The beak is strong but very thin and has a sensitive, flexible tip, able to detect movement of its prey deep in the sediment. On rocky shores, curlews also feed on crabs and small fish.

Inland, curlews tend to feed on wet grasslands, which they probe for earthworms and other soil animals. They usually nest on grassy or boggy moorland, preferring areas with pasture nearby for feeding. Breeding occurs in many places in the west of Scotland, head north.

Highland Darter

particularly the Argyll islands, but in Britain is perhaps most frequent in the north-east of Scotland, the Southern Uplands and northern England.

The curlew's most frequent call is what usually attracts attention, and gives this bird its common name - a loud, rather wiseful 'coorlee', rising at the end. It has a varied repertoire of calls, and its bubbling song is one of my favourite sounds in the hills.

One bird which could be mistaken for the curlew is its smaller cousin the whimbrel. This species is most often spotted because of its distinctive call, made in flight - a rapidly repeated note, for which the whimbrel is aptly called the 'seven whistler'. It has darker plumage and a less elongated beak than the curlew, but the best distinction is the patterning on its head: above each eye is a dark band, with a central white stripe running back over the head from the beak.

Small numbers of whimbrel breed in the far north of Scotland, mostly in Shetland, with much larger numbers in Iceland, Scandinavia and northern Russia. They are long-distance migrants, wintering in the tropics, but regularly visit our coasts on their travels. Late April to early May is the best time to see them, or more likely hear them, as they head north.

Heifers averaged 139.1p and sold to 159p per kg for two 185kg Limousins from Ach-nacone, Appin and to £525 for a 450kg Belgian Blue from Homestead, Ardfern.

Breeding cattle sold to £920 for a Limousin cow with calf at foot from Lagganulva, Mull.

Rams sold to £40 for Suffolks from Tiragholi, Isle of Mull.

Pen of eight bullocks: 1st Mr Lines, Killocraw (Lim) £730

Pen of eight heifers: 1st Mr Hamilton, Palachill £475



Airds Hotel owner Shaun McKivragan tucks into a leg of Kinlochlaich pork cooked by head chef Paul Burns. [10pig02](#)

Islay hosts local food seminar

WITH the imminent opening of the new Avonvogie Abattoir, the Islay branch of the National Farmers Union Scotland (NFUS) and the Argyll and Bute Agricultural Forum have organised a one day Meat Marketing and Processing Seminar on Thursday March 20 at the Machrie Hotel, Islay.

Alasdair said: 'I wanted to produce a particular flavour but the problem is that people are so used to bland meat it will take them a while to appreciate a more natural flavour. I want to encourage people to get out of this supermarket mentality where they can buy meat from anywhere in the world. We can produce as much good meat as we can but how can we tell the public how good it tastes?'

A

laisdair says farming in the west Highlands is at a critical point and feels cutting out the middleman is the way forward.

'In this part of the world you can no longer rely on selling livestock in the hope you get a reasonable price and you have to accept what you get at the market which is still not very good. Next year I hope to sell some bullocks and sheep; I want to sell local food to local people and ultimately build up a market.'

Following on from learning about the use of branding will be Paul Macglaughlin, chief executive of the new body Scotland Food and Drink. There will also be detail on the processing and marketing support of the new Scottish Rural Development Programme which should launch in the next few months.

The seminar will end with an evening dinner using locally produced food and drink.

The cost for participating is £10 for the day seminar or £30 for the day + evening dinner. For mainland visitors the full package will be £50.

If you are a local producer or want to be involved in any aspect of marketing, selling, processing or purchasing locally produced food and wish to attend the seminar please contact Gill Johnstone at Balaclava on 01493 602005, e-mail: gill.johnstone@nfusmutual.co.uk or Fergus Younger on 01586 552502, e-mail: fergus.younger@sac.co.uk.

Following the Shetland experience, Jim Fairlie will provide a more small scale farmers perspective on selling home produced meat on the internet, to farmers markets and local businesses.

After a lunch break the success story of Bruichladdich Distillery's global marketing and use of Islay branding will

Further details are also available on the Agricultural Forum website at www.arylgalgriculturalforum.com

United Auctions' Islay Spring sale attracts brisk

UNITED Auctions held their annual early Spring sale of all classes cattle at Islay Auction Mart.

All classes of livestock met with a brisk trade recording a considerable rise in values on the corresponding sale last year.

The 287 head were sold to regular buyers normally attending this sale and more could have been sold to advantage.

Bullocks

Aberdeen AngusX: £602 (9)
Aoradl £552 Lossit £500 (2)
and £470 (2) Aoradl
Belgian BlueX: £638
Blackrock £598 Kilchiaran
CharolaisX: £608 (4) Aoradl
£592 (2) Dunlossit Estate
£558 (3) Aoradl £548 (10)
Dunlossit Estate £542 and
£500 (2) Aoradl.
LimousinX: £608 Eorrabus
£592 (4) Sunderland £588
(3) Lossit £555 (5) Eorrabus
£542 (4) Aoradl £532 (10)
Eorrabus £498 (2) Aoradl.

Cows with calf at foot: £1050, £1000 and £950 Sunderland

Eorrabus £648 Lossit £642

Strong entry of Kintyre cattle at Stirling sale

UNITED Auctions sold 2211 store cattle and 1170 store sheep at Stirling last Wednesday when there was strong entry of stock from Kintyre.

Bullocks averaged 152.19p (+7.19p) and sold to 190.10p per kg for a 284kg Charolais cross from Glenehervie and £1015 for a 742kg Charolais from 8 Killeonan.

Heifers averaged 148.27p (+10.58p) and sold to 245.60p per kg for a 338kg Charolais from Cretlevane and £955 for a 550kg Simmental cross from Torbex.

Cast cows averaged 97.80p to 122.80p for a Belgian Blue cross from South Hill of Dripps and £1050 for a Charolais cross from West Croft.

There was also a show of cattle: Bullocks: 1st Mr More, Townhead (ChaX) £775

Heifers: 1st Mr Logan, Auchentrae (ChaX) £780

Pen of four bullocks: 1st Carmichael Estate (Lim) £850

Pen of four heifers: 1st Mr Brewster, Wester Lorland (ChaX) £750

Pen of eight bullocks: 1st Mr Lines, Killocraw (Lim) £730

Pen of eight heifers: 1st Mr Hamilton, Palachill £475

You can email your farming news to agri@obantimes.co.uk

Alasdair Colhart feeding his pigs on his Appin farm. <a href

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5 YEARS OR UP TO 50,000 MILES COMPLIMENTARY SERVICING

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& Sun 12 Noon-5pm



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**SAAB 9000**

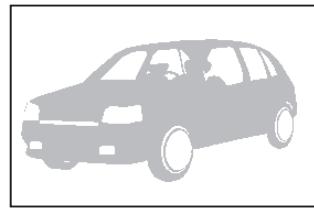
3L V6 petrol automatic. M reg - 5 door hatch. 85K miles.
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Tel: 01631 710516

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FORD FUSION TDCI

£3900 o.n.o.

Reg Jan 2004 58000 miles Tax Mar '08 MOT May '08

Tel: 01546 510541/510292
or 07831 569000

WANTED

4 X 4 VEHICLES, LAND ROVER, TOYOTA ETC. OR DIESEL CARS
MOT OR HIGH MILEAGE NOT IMPORTANT, ANY CONDITION
IMMEDIATE CASH PAYMENT

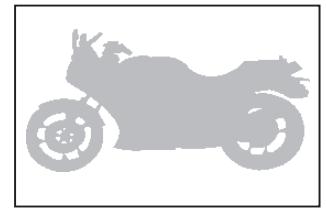
Tel: 07703490572

MITSUBISHI L200 4 LIFE 4 X 4

£7950 o.n.o.

2004, double cab, red over silver 2477cc, stock & towing hook mileage 40,300

Tel: 01499 302744 (after 6pm)

YAMAHA DIVERSION

£1100 o.n.o.

600cc, 1995, Tax and Mot,
2 suits of gear (Very good condition)
available

Tel: 01546 606301

RENAULT CLIO SPORT 1.7

£5,400 o.n.o.

2002, 41,740 miles, tax April 08, MOT Oct 08, air con, e/w, em, pas, 6 CD changer, Magnex exhaust, Pipercross induction kit, Koni adjustable suspension

Tel: 07786193996

2001 VAUXHALL ZAFIRA COMFORT 1.8

£3,850

16v, excellent condition, MOT Jan 09, tax June 08, 87,500 miles

Tel: 07748504405

VAUXHALL ASTRA 1.6 SXI

16 valve, 51 registration, Silver, 5 door, 1 years Mot, 4 mths tax, 87K miles, Imrsh exhaust, electric pack. Excellent condition. Any inspection welcome.

Telephone:
07818 417569

£2100 o.n.o.

MERCEDES E220

Pillarless Coupe, 1994 89% Tax end MOT, VGC Full leather. Electric seats and windows, Any inspection

Telephone:
01770 860277
(Arran)

£3,200

BMW 318 CI COUPE 2003 (53)

£8500

Topaz Blue, Manual 5 Gear, 53k. Full BMW service history, Techno Grey Cloth Tax 2000 Interior Multi Function Steering Wheel, Driver and Passenger Front and Side Airbags, Cruise control, Park Distance Control (PDC), BMW 6 Disc Multichanger In Boot, 7 Star J 16" Alloy Wheels, Rear Headrests, Air Recirculation AC, Cornering Brake Control (ESP) (PAS), Front and Centre Armrests. Recently had all brake discs replaced by BMW. The car is in Excellent condition, taxed and tested March 2009

Tel: 07879 041 032 Oban

BMW 318I SE

£3995 o.v.n.o.

99 V Reg, 76k miles, Mot'd and Taxed, CD multi, Climate Control, Cruise Control, ABS, PAS, all usual BMW refinements, excellent condition.

Tel: 01700 504826 / 07773 066818

SUBARU FORESTER

Gls 4x4, 2000 w reg. Manual, abs pos, sunroof etc. Drives well, excellent condition, 2 new tyres, Metallic red, 11 months mot, 5months tax

Telephone:
07836 743944 or
01770 850516

£2,500 ovno

2004 MONDEO TDCI

£7000 o.n.o.

130 Zetec S, 6 speed, 37,000 miles, a/c, e/w, climate control, 18 inch alloys

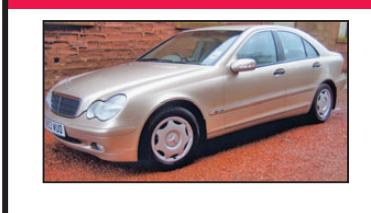
Tel: 01586 553824 or 07725 866255

1997 ISUZU TROOPER 3.1TD LWB DUTY

£3950 o.n.o.

Green, 1 owner from new, maintained regardless of cost, 129,000 miles, in very good condition for year, recent service, Towbar, 6 months tax and MOT. Excellent reliable vehicle.

Phone Alan on 01631 562071 (Office Hours)

MERCEDES C200 CDI CLASSIC

Offers

December 2003
40,000 miles.

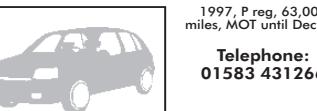
Tel: 01586 820258

TOYOTA COROLLA 1.4

£5200

04 2004, 5 door hatchback, dark green, taxed and MOTd, 46,000 miles

Tel: 01631 740206 or 07909 740677

VOLKSWAGEN GOLF GTI

£1100 o.n.o.

1997 P reg, 63,000 miles, MOT until Dec '08

Telephone:
01583 431266

FORD RANGER PICK UP 4X4

£1900 + VAT o.n.o.

51 plate, taxed August, 08, MOT August, 08, 89,000 miles

Tel: 01397 701682

NISSAN TERRANO 2

£3500 o.n.o.

2.7 Diesel, 1999 T Reg, 1 years full MOT, Clean condition

Tel: 07979 923498

ROVER 75 CONNOISSEUR SE

£4200 o.n.o.

53plate, first Reg Feb 04, Hi-Spec silver, f.s.h. all electrics, 48,000miles, full mot, taxed end March, full leather, heated electric memory seats, parking sensors, dual climate, good condition.

Tel: 01546 605 324

VOLKSWAGEN SHARAN, 2.1

£2200 o.n.o.

Petrol, 7 seater, 77,000 miles, tax July 08, MOT Aug 08, CD player, Very Good Condition.

Telephone:
01855 811228

WANTED ANY 4X4 VEHICLE

Landrover 90 or 110, Toyota, Mitsubishi etc, or double cab pick up, anything considered, will travel

Telephone:
07864035750

RENAULT KANGOO DIESEL CAR

£3300 o.n.o.

Mot'd to 24/08/08 licenced to 30/09/08 First Reg 16/02/01 mileage 35,500 Green, Excellent wee car.

Tel: 01688 400 251

NISSAN PRIMERA, 1.8

£1,500

W Reg, Green Metallic, 75,000miles, Taxed and MOT July 2008, Fine example

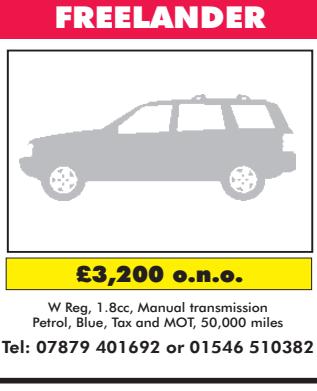
Telephone:
01397 703289

5 SERIES BMW

£2950

T reg, dark blue, well maintained car

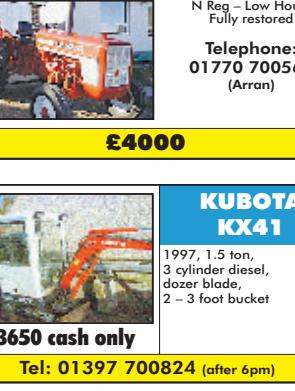
Tel: 01880 820076 (after 6pm)

LANDROVER FREELANDER

£3,200 o.n.o.

W Reg, 1.8cc, Manual transmission Petrol, Blue, Tax and MOT, 50,000 miles

Tel: 07879 401692 or 01546 510382

INTERNATIONAL 444 TRACTOR

£4000

N Reg - Low Hours Fully restored

Telephone:
01770 700566

(Arran)

KUBOTA KX41

£3650 cash only

1997, 1.5 ton, 3 cylinder diesel, dozer blade, 2 - 3 foot bucket

Tel: 01397 700824 (after 6pm)

Buyers should note where standardised silhouettes are used they do not accurately represent the vehicle being sold

For Sailing Times
please turn to
page 26

To advertise your car in Drive Times telephone 01631 568000</p

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FOR YOUR
PAID FOR
ADVERT TO
RUN FOR A
SECOND
WEEK**

BABY EQUIPMENT

BEBECAR (STYLE AT) 3 in 1 pram/pushchair, neutral colour, with suspension and pneumatic tyres, complete with rain cover, very good condition, £49.99. Telephone 01631 562930.

CREAM MOSES

basket stand and baby bath set, good condition, £30. Telephone 01838 200452.

LOVELY NURSERY curtains, w39", d48", £25. Telephone 01631 730437.

BICYCLES

MOUNTAINBIKE, needs work, £15. Telephone 01631 563935.

BOOKS

HARDBACKED book "A Summer in Skye", very fair copy, £28. Telephone 01515 693470.

DOMESTIC APPLIANCES

DIGITAL SLOW cooker, 4.5ltr capacity, as new - unused. Instructions and recipes, £25. Telephone 01880 820096.

ELECTRIC COOKER (Creda), white, very good condition, 50cmw, 4 rings, grill, oven, £49.99. Telephone 01631 710569.

ELECTRIC COOKER (Creda), white, very good condition, 50cmw, 4 rings, grill, oven, £40. Telephone 01631 710569.

W H I R L P O O L FREEZER, four drawers, free to uplift, perfect working order. Telephone 01631 563317.

ZANUSSI TUMBLE dryer in good working order, £20. Telephone 01546 602184.

DOMESTIC PETS

A U S T R A L I A N SHEPHERD puppies, £400, excellent pedigree, beautiful markings, one black tri dog, 2 red tri bitches. Ready April. Telephone 01499 600379 or 07767 844005.

BABY GUINEA-PIGS for sale, boys and girls, various colours and coats, £20 a pair. Telephone 01680 814234.

TWO LOVELY natured Collie bitch pups, 12 weeks old, farm reared, of good working parents. Telephone 01688 500245.

CONCERTS

2 TICKETS for "The Enemy", Glasgow, March 24, cost price £18.50 each. Telephone 07887 513286, Barcaldine.

EQUESTRIAN

HOSE BIT for sale, pinchless half check French link, very good condition, size 5½ cost £25 sell for £15. Telephone 01546 606992.

HOSE BLIZZARD outdoor rug and detachable neck cover, size 6'6, very good condition, 320gsm polyfill, surcings, leg straps and tail guard, £40. Telephone 01546 606992.

HOSE COOLER rug, keeps horse warm when wet, ideal for stable, travel, wash down, size 6'6, burgundy, very good condition, sell for £10. Telephone 01546 606992.

HOSE LEATHER tendon boots with removable sheepskin liner and elasticated straps, brand new still boxed, size - full, sell for £25. Telephone 01546 606992.

HOSE OUTDOOR high neck rug, purple size 6'6, very good condition, 350gsm polyfill, £25. Telephone 01546 606992.

HOSE OUTDOOR rug, size 6'6, red, has been mended at front, green rug, won't fit my new horse, £10. Telephone 01546 606992.

HOSE STABLE rug (full neck), green and blue check, 300gsm polyfill insulation, very good condition, size 6'6, cost £45 sell for £25. Telephone 01546 606992.

HOSE SUMMER sheet, size 6'6, burgundy sell for £5. Telephone 01546 606992.

LOVELY NATURED 4 year old Eriskay pony, 12.2hh, excellent first pony. Telephone Katha 07768 534431.

WINTEC 500 / 2000 gulet - easy change gulet system size - narrow (yellow) cost £15 sell for £10. Telephone 01546 606992.

WINTER 500 / 2000 gulet - easy change gulet system size - medium (Black) cost £15 sell for £10. Telephone 01546 606992.

TWO LOVELY natured Collie bitch pups, 12 weeks old, farm reared, of good working parents. Telephone 01688 500245.

EXERCISE EQUIPMENT

GET FIT, V-fit stepper with monitor, £25. Telephone 01546 606719 evenings and weekends.

STEP MACHINE exerciser, £10. Telephone 01631 563935.

FURNITURE

COFFEE TABLE craftsman made from Argyll grown yew, 115cm x 54cm x 40cm high, £200. Telephone Martin Scott 01866 822634.²

COTTAGE STYLE chairs, (two), in good condition, £20 each. Telephone 01631 563832.

COTTAGE STYLE 2 seater settee, in good condition, £35. Telephone 01631 563832.

DARK WOOD display unit, 6' h x 6' w, bargain, £30. Telephone 01688 302154.

DOUBLE, METAL framed futon, navy, mattress, good condition, £45. Telephone 01838 200452.

ERCOL SUITE 2+1+1, excellent condition, must be seen, £49.99. Telephone 01546 602601/07979 943971.

HIGH SLEEPER with fold-out futon, metal frame, very good condition, £49.99. Telephone 01631 562746.

THREE 15KG Calor butane gas cylinders, one full, free to collect. Telephone 01880 770281.

HEATING

CENTRAL HEATING radiators, good condition, £30. Telephone 01866 824444.

DIMPLEX, SLIMLINE, wall mounted heaters, electric, good condition, various sizes from £5. Telephone 01631 562746.

HIGH SLEEPER with fold-out futon, metal frame, very good condition, £49.99. Telephone 01631 562746.

LARGE ARMCHAIR, dusky pink leather, very comfortable, £49. Telephone 07766 110747.

LARGE OUTDOOR table, £15. Telephone 01631 563935.

MAHOGANY EFFECT 3 door display cabinet, similar to Argos p231 item 7, £49.99. Telephone 01546 510381.

HOME ENTERTAINMENT

PHILIPS MIDI hi-fi, 3 CD changer, twin cassette decks, am/fm radio, separate speakers, excellent condition, £30. Telephone 01546 510381.

IN CAR ENTERTAINMENT

BOOM BOX, carpeted with neonlight and 2x10" subs, never used, £49.99. Telephone 07881 770820.

BOOM BOX, carpeted with neonlight and 2x10" subs, never used, £49.99. Telephone 07881 770820.

MULTI-MEDIA DVD

player for in-car entertainment. DVD, VCD, mp3, Dolby digital sound, with remote, brand new, never used, still in box, £49.99. Telephone 07881 770820.

IN CAR ENTERTAINMENT

WINKLES WANTED, £8 per stone. Telephone Malcolm McMillan, 01586 553062.

OBAN TIMES PRIVATE CLASSIFIED

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OBAN TIMES PRIVATE CLASSIFIED

METAL ACTION sofa bed, double, green, very good condition, £49.99. Telephone 01631 562859.

PINE 'HIGH' single bed. Plenty of space for furniture underneath, £49.99. Telephone 01546 602461.

2 SINGLE wardrobes, teak, with hanging rails, vanity with 3 drawers section, £150 approx. Excellent condition, £49. Telephone 01631 564966.

SINGLE BED with box base and headboard, free to good home. Telephone 01852 300218.

HOME FURNISHINGS

B E C H W O O D FIREPLACE surround with electric flame-effect fire. Very good condition. Arrange own collection, £80 Telephone 01631 571273.

CARPET UNDERLAY, felt, 1" thick, £30, buyer uplifts. Telephone 01631 720369.

SMALL FOLDING wooden tray table, £10. Telephone 01631 571273.

DIMPLEX ELECTRIC towel rail, new, never been used, brass finish, 860 x 530 approx. Telephone 01631 720322 after 6pm.

FIRE SURROUND, wood effect, in good condition, 50" w, 32" h, 13" d, £15. Telephone 01631 720369.

GARDEN LYNTON lift and Rise recliner chair, excellent condition, £350. Telephone 01631 563507.²

GREYHOUNDS

The Retired Greyhound Trust have beautiful dogs and bitches suitable for adoption.

These dogs are fully vaccinated and spayed/neutered. If you feel you could offer one of these ex-racers a home please contact Northern Division on 01470 511705 or 01463 235696. The RGT is a registered charity No 269668. A donation is required. Look forward to hearing from you.

PRINTING AND STATIONERY

C H A N G E D ADDRESS? - Self adhesive labels to inform your family and friends of your new address. Contact Krisp Printing and Stationery, Burnbank, Campbeltown. 01586 554975.

BUSINESS CARDS, compliment slips and headed paper - every professional business should have them. Contact Krisp Printing and Stationery, Burnbank, Campbeltown. 01586 554975.

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BOOM BOX, carpeted with neonlight and 2x10" subs, never used, £49.99. Telephone 07881 770820.

BOOM BOX, carpeted with neonlight and 2x10" subs, never used, £49.99. Telephone 07881 770820.

SPORTS CLOTHING

TAE KWON-DO karate suit, fit 12-14yrs, as new, £20. Telephone 01631 565143.

WANTED

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&
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Fax (01586) 553006

BIRTHS

BROWNE - Sinclair and Caroline (née Magee) are delighted to announce the birth of their daughter, Natasha Anne, at The Queen Mother's Hospital, Glasgow on February 29, 2008. A grand-daughter for John and Moyra Magee and Moira and the late Capt. Cameron Browne.

FERGUSON - Jean Ferguson is delighted to announce the birth of her first grandchild, Rachel Helen, born to proud parents Donald and Helen at Ulster Hospital, Belfast, on January 31, 2008.

HENDERSON - Duncan and Karen are delighted to announce the birth of their son, Alexander James. Grandson for Jim and May McDowell, Glasgow, and Heekin and Belle Henderson, Fort William.

HOLLOWAY - Carol and Matthew (née Stewart) are delighted to announce the arrival of Isabelle Ruby on February 20, 2008. First grandchild for Lottie and Jim, Duror and Anne and Bill, Oban.

ENGAGEMENTS



HARVEY - MACGILLIVRAY
Both families are pleased to announce the engagement of Alison, youngest daughter of Bill and Irene to Graeme, son of Catherine and Dougie.

SHAW - MULLAH
- The Rt. Revd Martin and Mrs Elspeth Shaw are delighted to announce the engagement of their daughter, Madeleine, to Eamonn Mullah of Co. Wexford.

RUBY WEDDING



STEWART - McDougall
At St John's Church, Port Ellen, on March 19, 1968, by Rev F S Gibson, James to Belle. 96 Flora Street, Bowmore, Islay.

DEATHS

BURNS - Margaret (Isa). Suddenly, at Lillyburn Care Home, Glasgow, on February 26, 2008, Isa, our beloved Aunt and wife of the late John. Funeral service at Buinessan Church, Isle of Mull, on Saturday, March 15, 2008, at 12noon to which all friends are respectfully invited.

CLYDESDALE - Peacefully, at the Belford Hospital, on March 7, 2008, Isabella Clydesdale (Bel), aged 66, loving mother of Stephen, dear sister of Fanny and loving aunt of Bonnie and Alison. Sadly missed.

GRAHAM - Peacefully at the Lynn of Lorne Nursing Home, Benderloch, on March 7, 2008, Dugald (Douie)

Graham, aged 91 years, of Oakcliffe, Kildusland Road, Ardriishaig. Much loved and loving husband of Mary Hamilton Kelly. Treasured father of Douglas and Duncan and dear father-in-law of Elizabeth and Isobel. Proud grandfather of Alison, Ailsa, Susan and Fiona and great-grandfather of Rhianna, Rowan, Rory and Lewis. A caring neighbour and friend to many. Funeral service was held in Ardriishaig Parish Church on Wednesday, March 12, 2008, followed by interment at Achnabreac Cemetery. Forever in our thoughts.

LOGAN - Peacefully at Islay Hospital on Friday, February 22, 2008, Cathie, 95 years, beloved wife of the late Duncan (Donda) Logan, a loving mother, ha and great-grandmother. Funeral took place on Monday, February 25, 2008, at Bowmore, Islay.

MCDougall - Suddenly but peacefully on February 26, 2008, at Lorn and Islands District General Hospital, Netta MacDougall of Tobermory, Isle of Mull. Devoted wife of Willie, loving mum and granny. Sadly missed by all the family. Funeral service was held at Tobermory Parish Church on Thursday, March 6, 2008, at 12.30pm.

McLENNAN - Peacefully at St Margaret's Hospice, Auchterarder, on Friday, March 7, 2008, Margaret (Maggie) (née Paterson) in her 74th year, of Auchterarder, much loved wife of the late Donald, loving mother of Andrew and Neil, much loved sister to all the family. Funeral service, to which all friends are respectfully invited, at Perth Crematorium on Friday, March 14, 2008, at 2pm. Family flowers only please. Donations in lieu may be given, if so desired, in aid of the Macmillan nurses, at the Crematorium.

McMORRIS - Peacefully and bravely on Sunday, March 9, 2008, in the tender care of his family, James (Jimmy), aged 79 years, formerly of Lynn Court, Oban, beloved husband of the late Margaret, perfect father to Billy and Mary, admired father-in-law to Tommy, very proud papa to Kirsty, Innes, David and Tommy and special great-papa to Karen and Iona. Funeral service will be held on Monday, March 17, 2008, at Oban Congregational Church at 12noon, thereafter to Pennyfuir Cemetery for 1pm. Family flowers only please, but donations if desired in aid of the British Heart Foundation.

MCNAUGHTON - Suddenly, at home on Monday, March 10, 2008, Donald, beloved husband of Irene, much loved father of Andy, Fiona and Jimmy, dear father-in-law of Julie, Ian and the late Maria and loving grandfather to Ryan, Euan, Nadia, Kyle, Finlay and Isobel. For funeral arrangements please contact Co-operative Funeralcare on 01369 706607. Family flowers only.

MCNELLAN - Peacefully, at Ninewells Hospital, Dundee, on Sunday, March 9, 2008, Margaret (née MacLean) from Newport-on-Tay, formerly of Inveraray, Argyll, beloved wife of the late George, dear mother of Alasdair, Fiona and Gina, a much loved grandmother and great-grandmother. Funeral service in Dundee Crematorium on Monday, March 17, 2008, at 11am, to which all friends are respectfully invited. Family flowers only please but donations in lieu of Alzheimer's Scotland can be made at the crematorium entrance.

MURCHISON - It is with deep sorrow that Gael and Kyle announce the death of their father, Dr Angus Gordon Murchison, who died peacefully in Glasgow on March 7, 2008. The family would prefer no flowers, however, donations to the Oban Lifeboat funds would be appreciated.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

LOGAN - Duncan, Ann, John, Colin and all the family of the late Cathie Logan, 3 Beech Avenue, Bowmore, Islay, would like to thank all friends and neighbours who attended the service at Bowmore Village Hall, thereafter to her place of rest at Bowmore Cemetery, all those who braved the elements from Oban, Tarbert and Campbeltown.

We would like to thank all the carers who looked after our mother in the last few weeks of her life. Thanks to Linda, Carolyn and Margaret and to the Medico team, Normal, Margaret and Christine. To Dr Abel and staff at Islay Hospital, Iain and Wilma, the paramedics who saw to all our mothers needs with great care and attention. A thank you to Rev George Campbell for his lovely and uplifting service, Mrs Gallimore for playing the organ. Thanks to the undertakers, Jean, Craig and Donald who took care of all the arrangements that had to be done. The Lochside Hotel (Duffie and Roberta) for the beautiful purvey afterwards, it was very much appreciated.

SUTHERLAND - Helen, Joan, David and family of the late Marjory (Maisie), wish to thank most sincerely all relatives, friends and neighbours for all their kind expressions of sympathy, cards and flowers received during their recent sad loss. Special thanks to Rev James Carmichael for his most comforting service, thanks also to all who helped in many ways at church, also to the Argyll Hotel for lovely catering. Sincere thanks to Andrew Anderson and Son for professional help and care with funeral arrangements.

McLENNAN - In loving memory of my dear mother and sister, Phemie McCullum, who died on March 17, 1979.

LOGAN - Peacefully at Islay Hospital on Friday, February 22, 2008, Cathie, 95 years, beloved wife of the late Duncan (Donda) Logan, a loving mother, ha and great-grandmother. Funeral took place on Monday, February 25, 2008, at Bowmore, Islay.

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We would like to thank all the carers who looked after our mother in the last few weeks of her life. Thanks to Linda, Carolyn and Margaret and to the Medico team, Normal, Margaret and Christine. To Dr Abel and staff at Islay Hospital, Iain and Wilma, the paramedics who saw to all our mothers needs with great care and attention. A thank you to Rev George Campbell for his lovely and uplifting service, Mrs Gallimore for playing the organ. Thanks to the undertakers, Jean, Craig and Donald who took care of all the arrangements that had to be done. The Lochside Hotel (Duffie and Roberta) for the beautiful purvey afterwards, it was very much appreciated.

SUTHERLAND - Helen, Joan, David and family of the late Marjory (Maisie), wish to thank most sincerely all relatives, friends and neighbours for all their kind expressions of sympathy, cards and flowers received during their recent sad loss. Special thanks to Rev James Carmichael for his most comforting service, thanks also to all who helped in many ways at church, also to the Argyll Hotel for lovely catering. Sincere thanks to Andrew Anderson and Son for professional help and care with funeral arrangements.

McLENNAN - In loving memory of my dear mother and sister, Phemie McCullum, who died on March 17, 1979.

LOGAN - Peacefully at Islay Hospital on Friday, February 22, 2008, Cathie, 95 years, beloved wife of the late Duncan (Donda) Logan, a loving mother, ha and great-grandmother. Funeral took place on Monday, February 25, 2008, at Bowmore, Islay.

MCDougall - Suddenly but peacefully on February 26, 2008, at Lorn and Islands District General Hospital, Netta MacDougall of Tobermory, Isle of Mull.

McLennan - Peacefully and bravely on Sunday, March 9, 2008, in the tender care of his family, James (Jimmy), aged 79 years, formerly of Lynn Court, Oban, beloved husband of the late Margaret, perfect father to Billy and Mary, admired father-in-law to Tommy, very proud papa to Kirsty, Innes, David and Tommy and special great-papa to Karen and Iona. Funeral service will be held on Monday, March 17, 2008, at Oban Congregational Church at 12noon, thereafter to Pennyfuir Cemetery for 1pm. Family flowers only please, but donations if desired in aid of the British Heart Foundation.

McNaughton - Suddenly, at home on Monday, March 10, 2008, Donald, beloved husband of Irene, much loved father of Andy, Fiona and Jimmy, dear father-in-law of Julie, Ian and the late Maria and loving grandfather to Ryan, Euan, Nadia, Kyle, Finlay and Isobel. For funeral arrangements please contact Co-operative Funeralcare on 01369 706607. Family flowers only.

McNellan - Peacefully, at Ninewells Hospital, Dundee, on Sunday, March 9, 2008, Margaret (née MacLean) from Newport-on-Tay, formerly of Inveraray, Argyll, beloved wife of the late George, dear mother of Alasdair, Fiona and Gina, a much loved grandmother and great-grandmother. Funeral service in Dundee Crematorium on Monday, March 17, 2008, at 11am, to which all friends are respectfully invited. Family flowers only please but donations in lieu of Alzheimer's Scotland can be made at the crematorium entrance.

Murchison - It is with deep sorrow that Gael and Kyle announce the death of their father, Dr Angus Gordon Murchison, who died peacefully in Glasgow on March 7, 2008. The family would prefer no flowers, however, donations to the Oban Lifeboat funds would be appreciated.

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Time passes, memories stay
Loved and remembered every day.
- Love Dad and Lotta
No words, no verse Mum
Can ever say
How much we miss
You every day.
- Love Natalie and Carrie-Anne.
No need for words
We'll never forget.
- Love Marilyn, Matthew and Aileen.
Love and miss you always
Your memory will always last.
Miss you every day dad.
- Audrey and Brian.
They say there is a reason
They say that time will heal.
But neither time nor reason
Will change the way we feel.

GARNER - In loving memory of the heartache
That lies behind our smiles.
No-one knows how many times
We have broken down and cried.
We want to tell you something
So there won't be any doubt.

You're so wonderful to think of
But so hard to be without.

Miss you granda.

- Paul, Jillian and Kari.
Two little hearts still love you

Two little hearts still care

Two little hearts still wonder
Why wee granda isn't there.

Watching over us every day.

- Tegan and Ellie xxx.

RENNIE - In grateful
cherished memory of
dear mum Mary Elizabeth Rennie (née Robertson), one time of Oban, passed on March 15, 2005.

LAFFERTY - In loving
memory of our Da, John
Joseph, who passed away
March 15, 2005.

HAY - Precious
memories of Jimmy, a
loving husband, father and
grandfather, who died March 18, 2006.

GILLIES - Fond
memories of

WHEELERS test new Roy Bridge course

Barnes commands natural terrain to win

THE WHEELERS tried out a new course venue at Achaderoy House Estate, Roy Bridge at the weekend.

Forged from the natural contours and terrain, Jamie Maxwell had set an old-style route that tested all the competitors during the short 2.5 mile lap.

Natural features predominated, suiting Joe Barnes who took a commanding lead to win the event.

Title favourite, Tom Smith came in second with his close rival Jamie Maxwell in third. Just 15 points separate these

Mountain biking

ries and close to the historic house built in 1869, proved to be a winner for most of those present.

Over half of the top dozen or so riders were under 20 years old, showing that a T-shirt, some shorts and a healthy dose of attitude were all that were needed to attack the course.

Many thanks to Dominic Dobson for hosting the event, to Maggie for helping with the timing and to Jamie and Jim Maxwell for all their hard work and sausage rolls.

Results

- Joe Barnes 38:25
- Tom Smith 39:59
- Jamie Maxwell 42:25
- Gavin Blainey 43:00
- Gregor Muir 43:28
- Fergus Lamb 43:59
- John Shirley 45:02
- Jesse Wigman 45:03
- Mike Thouless 46:47
- Graham Brookes 47:47
- Gavin Shirley 51:23
- Rory MacLennan 51:33
- Jamie Bailey 51:52
- Graham Anderson 54:46
- Gavin Linfield 55:50
- Andy Rogers 55:53
- Colleen Foggo 56:09
- Hannah Barnes 56:38
- John O'Kane 59:48
- Nix Forster 62:46
- Helen Karlsson 62:48
- Corina Macdonald 62:55
- Tom MacMahon 42:56 1 lap
- Andrew Foggo DNF
- Allan Macpherson DNF
- Keith Maclure DNF
- Ross Robertson DNF
- Nigel Bailey DNF

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Fraser MacKenzie, Innes Blackhall, Keir Kennedy and Ruairidh MacKenzie show off their medals

Young runners do well at regional cross country

Cross country

FOLLOWING the annual Lochaber Primary Schools Cross Country event held in Leanachan Forest in February, 15 children were chosen to represent their schools at the North of Scotland final held in Dornoch earlier this month.

In a field of 155 runners, both Innes Blackhall and Fraser MacKenzie from Caol Primary finished in the top 20, in 14th and 16th places respectively.

These results, along with those of their

team mates Ruairidh MacKenzie and Kier Kennedy, gave Caol Primary a well deserved third place overall in the team event.

In the girls' race, 116 entrants battled it out. The Lochaber team managed to secure four top 20 places, with the best placed runner being Rhinannan Melrose from Lochside finishing ninth.

Jessika McLaren from Inverlochy was 12th, Kayla Murdoch from Upper Achintore 17th, and Mairi MacRae from Caol took 18th place.

Congratulations go to all the runners for a great performance against tough opposition, to all the parents who went along to support and to Active Schools Co-ordinators, Pam MacDonald and Emma Walters who drove the team minibus and looked after the runners on the day.

Rodgers look to new season

Shinty

DUNCAN Rodgers, Fort William Shinty Club's player of the year in 2007, has big ambitions for this season.

The 20-year-old defender hopes to not only retain the Camanachd Cup with his club, but also earn selection for Scotland's senior team this year, following success with the national Under 21 side last year.

'A lot of guys from the under-21's don't make that step up to senior level, but it's an achievement I am really working towards,' he said.

The former St Mary's High School pupil has been involved in Fort William's first team since he was 16 and his recent award underlined his importance to the club.

He prefers not to hog the limelight however.

'It obviously feels great to win the award, especially at such a young age, but I have to say it was the rest of the boys that helped me look so good.'

'I think any of the team members deserved the award as much as I did.'

He began playing at age 10, and said most of his life now revolved around the game.

'My family have always been shinty mad so I was always going to get into the game, my parents and grand-



Duncan Rodgers, Fort William Shinty Club Player of the year 2007.

parents were involved with shinty and I'm carrying on the tradition,' he said.

His shinty hero is Victor Smith, who he played alongside for several years in the first team, before Victor decided to move to the second team for a spell, with one eye on retiring.

Duncan said he, and many other young members of the squad, owed a great deal of

gratitude to Jock Sneddon, coach of the Fort William juvenile team.

'He really showed me the ropes and taught me so much about the game.'

A young lad who strives for perfection and seems determined not to let success go to his head, Fort William and Scotland shinty fans should be seeing a lot more of Duncan Rodgers in seasons to come.



Fort William Rangers Supporters Club held a successful annual dinner dance in the Ben Nevis Hotel on Saturday. Pictured are the committee members and their partners

Young Fort go for record

Shinty

FORT William Shinty Club's under-14 side are hoping to equal the record of four successive national title this season.

Last year's under-14's won every game they played, claiming five trophies in the process, including the national Kenneth McMaster Cup.

Under the guidance of Jock Sneddon, the team also won the North of Scotland League, Ferguson Shield, Lochaber League and the indoor five-a-side trophy.

Mr Sneddon said all the trophies were special to the club and was especially pleased that the team remained unbeaten throughout the year.

'If we can retain the McMaster Cup this year we will equal the record set by Skye, so we're really working hard at it.'

'It's very difficult at under-14 level, because you get a new set of players each year, but we believe we can do it,' he said.

Last year's under-14 side received recognition for their efforts at the club's recent awards evening.

Lochaber miss out at Beauly

Shinty

LOCHABER lost out in the final of shinty's WJ Cameron Under 17's Cup against Beauly at Braeview Park on Sunday.

Both teams did well to play on a heavy and difficult surface but Beauly made the most of having home advantage to run out comfortable 5-1 winners.

Beauly's Jack MacDonald netted a hat-trick, with Oran MacPherson and Paul Brindle also on the scoresheet.

Stewart Collison scored what was to prove a late consolation for Lochaber.

On Saturday, only Ardnamurchan's pitch proved playable allowing Inverness to start their season with a 5-0 win away.

Weller leads ten-pin bowling league

10-pin bowling

AFTER week three and a pasta and wine meal in between games courtesy of LBS & D McDonald Slatters, leaders in the LBS singles league (scratch) are Pam Weller in first, Colin Pinkett second and Alan Donald third.

In the handicap section, only three pins separate the top three - Scott Brown leads Alan Donald by one, with John Weller only two pins further back.

	Sch	Hcap
Pam Weller	956	1132
Colin Pinkett	858	1144
Alan Donald	849	1151
Paul Macdonald	838	1064
John Weller	829	1149
Sean Mcpherson	821	1137
Cal Brown	800	1114
Alan Macphail	784	1068
Stewart Duncan	775	1123
Laura Brown	765	1049
Tommy McKnight	758	1083
David Cartledge	743	1087
Scott Brown	662	1152
Gail Anderson	630	1056
Ann Lovatt	614	1128
Thomas Reid	613	1097
Joan Barker	575	1109
Kay Jerram	525	1041
Dunc Carmichael	517	745
Alan Simpson	494	686
Gordon Anderson	455	707
David McDonald	447	763
Angus Macdonald	411	707
Helen Brian	308	692

Funky Five go ahead

Indoor football

FUNKY Five are out on their own at the top of the Ali Young Spring League after they edged out fellow leaders Claggan 1-0.

Goon Squad squeezed out a 1-0 win over a plucky Caol Utd by the same margin, while Mallalig continued their drive for the title with a 3-1 victory over Russells Rangers.

Al Young Five-a-side Spring League

P	Pts
Funky Five	7
Goon Squad	7
Mallalig	7
Claggan	7
Mean Machine	7
Livercaol	7
Young Ones	7
Caley Jags	7
Caol Utd	7
Alcan	7
Russells Rangers	7
Ardnamuchan	7
	0

Results:

Mallalig 3 Russells Rangers 1
Funky Five 1 Claggan 0
Ardnamuchan 2 Alcan 4
Livercaol 5 Caley Jags 4
Goon Squad 1 Caol Utd 0
Mean Machine 6 Young Ones 1

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Women's cup dates drawn

Women's shinty

A RE-RUN of the 2007 women's shinty cup finals became a possibility when the draws for this year's two knockout competitions were made last Thursday.

Valerie Fraser Camanachd Cup holders Forth begin their defence of the trophy away to newcomers Lochaber.

Meanwhile, beaten finalists last time Glasgow Mid-Argyll drew a first round bye and will await the winners of the Glengarry v Glenorchy tie in the semi-finals.

An increased total of 11 Division Two sides will contest the newly-sponsored Caledonian Canal Challenge Cup, which will require an extra round this season.

Holders Strathglass start their campaign at home to Aberdeen University. The Cannich-based side are in the opposite half of the draw to Glasgow Mid-Arkyll, the team they pipped 6-5 after extra time in last year's dramatic final.

Full draws made at the Women's Camanachd Association meeting in Bell's Sports Centre, Perth, are as follows:

Valerie Fraser Camanachd Cup – First Round (May 11): Glengarry v Glenorchy

Lochaber v Forth.

Semi-Finals June 15 - Kingussie Glengarry or Glenorchy v Glasgow Mid-Arkyll

Lochaber or Forth v Tir Conaill Harps.

Final - September 20 Caledonian Canal Challenge Cup

First Round (May 11): Strathglass v Aberdeen Uni

Tir Conaill Harps v Lochaber

Badenoch & Strathspey v Kin-

tyre.

2nd Round June 15 Kingussie

Strathglass or Aberdeen Uni v Cowal & Bute;

Tir Conaill Harps or Lochaber v Dunadd

Badenoch & Strathspey or Kin-

tyre v Linlithgow

Inveraray v GMA

Semi-Finals

August 31 at neutral venue:

Strathglass/Aberdeen Uni or

Cowal & Bute v Tir Conaill

Harps/Lochaber or Dunadd;

Badenoch & Strathspey/ Kin-

tyre or Linlithgow v Inveraray or

Glasgow Mid-Arkyll.

Final September 20

Islay golf's March medal

Golf

1 K Wylie 99 -28 71bih
2 J Ferguson 86 -15 71
3 A Macaulay 89 -16 73bih

Club members should note that the closing date for the Middleton Matchplay has been extended to Sunday, March 30.

See notice in clubhouse for further details.

Appin and Dunbeg enjoy primary football success

Primary football

APPIN and Lochness ex-
celled during their first round

matches in this season's Oban

Express Senior UEFA Cup,

played in brilliant winter

sunshine at Oban community

pitch last Sunday.

Drawn in a tough three-team Section 3, along with close rivals Cobras and Dunbeg, Appin finished the day as the only team in the competition to amass full points from their early matches. Two hard-fought 1 - 0 victories, with Douglas Tyrell grabbing both goals, ensure that Appin are well-placed to reach the semi-finals when the competition resumes on April 27.

Lochness hit the heights in Section 1 with impressive performances against Kilniver, Lochgilphead and Spartans to edge into top spot.

Match of the Day proved to be the Ledaig-based team's game against the much-fancied boys from Mid-Arkyll, with Lochness scoring once in each half, through Daniel MacMillan and Alan Bucha-

n, to secure a well-merited 2 - 0 success.

It's still all-to-play-for in Section 2, where a determined Hawks performance prevented previously free-scoring Keyline from hitting the back of the net. Thomas Cummins made several super saves in the Hawks' goal, but could only watch as a tremendous Cameron Gibson drive cracked off his left-hand post at Atlantis Leisure.

OBAN EXPRESS PRIMARY FOOTBALL LEAGUE SENIOR UEFA CUP COMPETITION 1ST ROUND

SECTION 1

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
LOCHNESS	3	2	1	0	4	1	7
LOCHGILPHEAD	3	2	0	1	4	2	6
SPARTANS	3	1	1	1	2	4	4
KILNIVER	3	0	0	3	0	5	0

SECTION 2

KEYLINE	3	2	1	0	12	0	7
HAWKS	3	2	1	0	3	0	7
ROVERS	3	1	0	2	1	7	3
STODDARTS	3	0	0	3	0	9	0

SECTION 3

APPIN	2	2	0	0	2	0	6
COBRAS	2	0	1	1	0	1	1
DUNBEG	2	0	1	1	0	1	1



Kilniver and Lochgilphead battle it out in their Sunday cup tie

Mid Argyll build for the future

Sailing

WORK is progressing on a new slipway at Ardrishaig for Mid Argyll Sailing Club. This is adjacent to the old community pier and will give dinghy sailors ideal launching facilities at all states of the tide.

The project has been helped by a grant of £5000 from the Marine Communities Fund of The Crown Estate and local contractors have offered to provide materials and machinery. The 300 tonnes of rock and stone needed to construct the slipway have come from a quarry owned by M & K MacLeod Construction Limited and D A MacDonald Contractors Limited of Lochgilphead are undertaking the building work.

Dinghy sailing is now back in strength at Ardrishaig with the re-kindling of the sailing club now known as Mid Argyll Sailing Club. It's been 20 years since the local sailing club ceased operating. But two years ago, Ardrishaig man Donald McMillan felt there was a great opportunity to provide sailing facilities for local youngsters and enlisted the help of fellow sailors Donnie McLeod and Peter Hogbin to instigate the setting up of a new club.

Now over 40 members of the Mid Argyll Sailing Club are once more able to enjoy dinghy sailing on Loch Gilp. Grants from Argyll and the Islands Enterprise and the Lottery Fund helped to equip the Club with some Picos and a 6.5m RIB. The equipment is housed in a building owned by Argyll and Bute Council, strategically placed by the sea wall. Members' boats include Toppers, 420s, 505s, a GP14 and various Lasers.

The Club has been active in training instructors to RYA standards in dinghy sailing and power boating.

'We have concentrated on taking youngsters with a wide range of experience and ability to provide the basis for a strong Club in the future,' said Donald McMillan, MASC Commodore.

"As the slipway will benefit the children of Mid Argyll, we are pleased to be able to support it," said Donald Mac-

Donald, Managing Director of D A MacDonald Ltd who

is also a water sports enthusiast.

Construction will be com-

pleted by the end of March in

time for the start of this year's sailing season.

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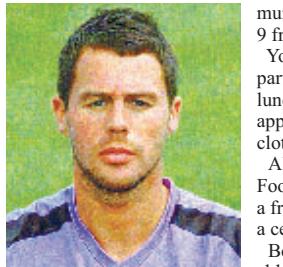
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Killie keeper comes to Oban football festival

Football



is open to children from 5-16, being held at Oban Community Pitch on April 7, 8 and 9 from 10am till 2pm.

Young footballers taking part should bring a packed lunch and a drink as well as appropriate indoor/outdoor clothing and footwear.

All participants in the Oban Football Festival will receive a free t-shirt, baseball cap and a certificate.

Booking forms are available from all schools, leisure centres, active schools co-ordinators and Oban Football Development Group.

Chairman of the football development group David Buchanan said it was great news that a top class goalkeeper was coming to the festival. He said: 'Goalkeepers are inclined to be forgotten about as far as coaching is concerned and he hopes that as many as possible will attend for top class coaching'.

The three-day festival, which

Kilmarnock goalkeeper Alan Combe

KILMARNOCK goalkeeper

Alan Combe will be attending the Oban Easter Football Festival run by the Scottish Football Association and Argyll and Bute Council.

Football Development officer Dylan Kerr confirmed that Alan would be at the Oban Easter Football Festival on Wednesday, April 9.

The three-day festival, which

Tides

Tide tables for Oban during the week from

Thursday, March 13, 2008

are listed below with differences for major ports listed beneath.

All times are GMT (add one hour BST)

Date	am	pm
Thur	03.21	0.9 09.14 3.3 15.44 1.1 21.22 3.3
Fri	04.22	1.3 10.12 3.0 16.48 1.4 22.24 3.0
Sat	05.43	1.6 12.25 2.7 18.08 1.6 *** 2.7 **
Sun	06.37	2.8 07.31 1.7 14.35 2.8 19.37 1.6
Mon	02.53	3.0 09.26 1.5 15.44 3.0 21.00 1.4
Tues	03.53	3.3 10.21 1.2 16.27 3.3 21.59 1.1
Wed	04.27	3.5 11.00 1.0 16.57 3.5 22.44 0.8

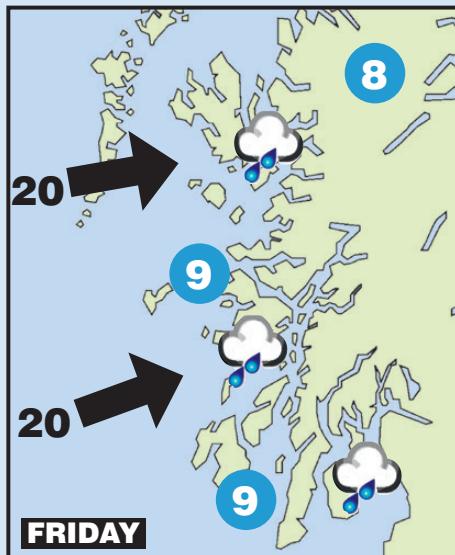
Tidal Constants: (Add or deduct from High Water at Oban)

Ardrishaig	-5.35	Lochboisdale	+0.30
Campbeltown	-5.30	Mallaig	+0.25
Crinan	-0.47	Portree	+0.55
Islay Port Ellen	2.00	Tobermory	+0.16
		Dover	+5.30

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the weather

Sponsored by

NANCY BLACK Ships' Chandler

Thursday

Cloudy with sunny spells and showers at times. Winds moderate to fresh westerly. Temperatures 5°C to 9°C

Friday

Again cloudy with showers at times. Winds moderate to fresh westerly. Temperatures 5°C to 9°C

Weekend Outlook

Both days expected to be cloudy with sunny spells and isolated showers. Winds moderate westerly. Temperatures 5°C to 9°C

Ferry Crossings/Sea States

Oban to Barra/South Uist - Moderate to fresh
Oban to Coll/Tiree - As above
Kennacraig to Islay - As above

Weather wipes out football fixtures

Football

NOT for the first time this season the weather played havoc with fixtures in the Scottish Amateur League last Saturday.

Mr Levein said: 'It's a well organised tournament, and it gives us the chance to have a good look at the match fitness of all our first team squad. As we play five games on the one day it means we can field five different line-ups and formations, which you can't really do in one-off pre-season friendly matches'.

Saints were due to travel to Ballerup Recreation Centre in East Kilbride to take on Duncarrig but the game was called off when the pitch failed a Saturday morning pitch inspection.

The Oban lads will be hoping that the weather improves this week to allow their Premier Division league game away to Kings Park Rangers to take place.

The game is scheduled for Glasgow Green Football Centre with a 2pm kick-off. Referee is John Gallagher.

Dundee United manager Craig Levein has confirmed that United will again be

sending their first team squad to Oban to take part in the Keyline Cup Tournament on Saturday 12th July.

Mr Levein said: 'It's a well organised tournament, and it gives us the chance to have a good look at the match fitness of all our first team squad. As we play five games on the one day it means we can field five different line-ups and formations, which you can't really do in one-off pre-season friendly matches'.

Youth results: Torrance Thistle 1, Under 13s 2 - Scorer for Saints was Ciaran Jackson (2); Giffnock 3, Under 15s 4 - Saints goalscorers were Angus MacCallum, Steven Delabue and David Jackson (2); Under 16s 3, East End United 1 - Saints scorers were Lewis Cameron (2) and Marc Beaton. The Gleniffer Thistle v Under 17s game was postponed.

This weekend's youth fixtures: Kilpatrick v Under 13s; Meadowpark v Under 15s; Under 16s v Dunoon; Under 17s v West Park

SCOTTISH AMATEUR LEAGUE - PREMIER DIVISION

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Inverclyde	10	6	3	1	20	12	21
Duncarrig	10	5	3	2	15	14	18
Pollok	9	5	2	2	24	14	17
Greenock	7	5	0	2	14	5	15
Oban Saints	10	4	2	4	14	16	14
Cambria	14	4	2	8	19	24	14
Kings Park Rangers	11	3	3	5	20	24	12
St Patrick's	6	3	2	1	10	6	11
Busby	13	3	2	8	24	36	11
Postal United	10	2	1	7	12	21	7

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Mid Argyll Sailing Club build for the future



Mid Argyll Sailing Club members Owen Duff, Hamish Nicol and Donald McMillan (Commodore) with youngsters Callum Nicol and Rhianna Duff doing a pre-season check of the dinghies. The club are looking to the future - See Page 27

Runners tackle Irvine in the rain

BEACH Park Irvine was the venue for the 30th ScottishPower Secondary Cross Country Championships last weekend.

Thousands of secondary school-aged pupils took to the starting line in the high-profile outdoor event, with four races for both boys and girls of distances between 2400 and 6000m.

Young athletes from Campbeltown Grammar, Hermitage Academy and Lomond School in Argyll and Bute took to the tracks, despite the wet weather.

Campbeltown's Gary Turner ran to 30th position in a field of 80 in the Boys 15-17 age group while Donna MacMillan, Ruth Semple, Eilidh Macalister and Nicola Paterson took part in the Girls 14-15 group.

The cross country championships has been held at Irvine's scenic Beach Park for more

Cross country

than 20 years and has seen some of the country's top runners including Liz McColgan and Yvonne Murray take part.

Now in its fourth year of sponsoring the grassroots element of athletics, ScottishPower, the environmentally-friendly energy company, is proud to be associated with this event.

Jim Paterson, sales and marketing director of ScottishPower, said: 'Beach Park in Irvine is always a fantastic venue for the Secondary Cross Country Championships, even with the cold and wet weather we seem to get every year without fail'

'Despite this, there was a great turnout, with plenty of talent emerging on the day.'

Oban Lorne aim for National Plate quarter final

Rugby

THIS WEEKEND sees the biggest match of the season so far for Oban Lorne RFC when the team has the opportunity to progress into the quarter finals of the Scottish Hydro Electric National Plate competition.

Saturday's cup match, which sees the west coast team away to Cumnock in Ayrshire - who have already beaten Oban at Glencruitten this season and, with home advantage are strong favourites to go through, will be the first of an Ayrshire double for Oban.

By a quirk of scheduling Oban Lorne are actually due to travel to Cumnock two weeks in a row to fulfil the club's league fixtures.

Oban's request to make this match a double header with the result to stand for both competitions has been turned down by Cumnock resulting in Darrell Williams. Kick off in the long, eight hour round

trip having to be made twice.

It has been a really frustrating start to 2008 for Oban Lorne with only two matches being played so far due to the wet weather conditions.

The club now look certain to be playing league fixtures into the middle of April which will overlap with the traditional 7's rugby season.

It is hoped that Scotland's courageous performance in winning the Calcutta Cup last weekend will give all the players a boost after so little game time for their efforts in training.

Oban Lorne should be at full strength on Saturday and it will take a totally committed effort for 80 minutes from the whole squad if a result in the National Plate is to be achieved.

The club are taking a coach to Cumnock and any supporters wishing to travel should contact team manager Darrell Williams. Kick off in Cumnock is at 3pm.

Mini rugby test at Oban

Rugby

OBAN Lorne RFC are hosting a mini rugby competition this Sunday March 16 from 11am.

Teams confirmed so far include Oban, Mull, Loch Lomond and Arrochar.

Each club is expected to field teams at P4/5 and P6/P7 levels.

Pool

Synapse Electronics Oban Pool League

P	Pts
Atlantis	11
Carpet Fitters	8
Fos. Yeoman	10
Hydro Board	10
Hotels	11
RM/GE Builders	9
Forfeiths	10
Oban Times	9
Burnside Joiners	10
Cellar	19

Results:

Oban High 2 Fost/Yeoman 4; Oban Times 4 Forfeiths 0; Carpet Fitters 5 Atlantis 4; Hotels 5 Hydro Board 9; Burnside Joiners 3 RM/GE 7

Runners get under starter's orders for Sports Relief

Athletics

THE COUNTDOWN to the Oban and Lorn Sport Relief Mile on Sunday March 16 has begun.

Places are filling up fast and Oban residents should sign up now to guarantee a place for them and their family at www.sportrelief.com.