

The Oban Times

& WEST HIGHLAND TIMES

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Island SOS first-aiders left without emergency service

LOUISE LEE
llee@obantimes.co.uk

EMERGENCY medical first responders who have been without the use of pagers for three months, say the lack of support from mobile giant Vodafone is putting volunteers under 'house arrest.'

Vodafone said it had 'fixed the complex repair' and the service is now back up and running in the island of Luìng.

But the first responders and ferry staff on call, as the *Oban Times* went to press, said the system was still not working.

First Responders are first aid volunteers working in some of the West Coast's most remote and rural areas. Often they can be on the scene of an incident hours before an ambulance or helicopter ambulance and provide vital care to patients.

Their pager system links directly to the 999 service and is used by many emergency teams in hospitals.

Chairwoman of registered-charity Luìng First Responders, Fiona Cruickshanks, told the *Oban Times*: 'We rely on our Vodafone pager system for emergency call-outs for the Isle of Luìng.'

'Luìng is a small island with some 160 residents but no resident GP, and our nearest hospital is a 45-minute journey away.'

'Our successful first responder



POOR RESPONSE: First responders Simone Van Dijn and Fiona Cruickshanks at the council-run ferry Belnahua

scheme has been running for eight years, providing the first-person-on-scene assistance for the people and visitors of Luìng, and assisting in the fast response times for giving people the support they need.'

Over the years the scheme has been running on the island, many lives have been saved as a direct result of first responder intervention.

Mrs Cruickshanks, herself a volunteer on the service and also a nurse, said: 'Our pager system has been down since December 12, 2014, and despite a weekly phone call to Vodafone - this is still not rectified.'

'We pay £118.96 a year for the pager service, but since the storms in December we have had to make alternative arrangements locally so that we can

provide emergency cover for the people of Luìng.

'These arrangements mean that from the hours of 6 pm - 7.30 am, the responders on call have to sit beside a telephone line under house arrest.'

'As an island community, we rely on the council-run ferry. The operators are also alerted by Vodafone pagers.'

'They rely on the first responders

calling them out should there be a ferry required and an ambulance arrival anticipated.'

'We need this system to be rectified.'

Alan Reid, MP for Argyll and Bute, who received a mayday call from Mrs Cruickshanks immediately called the phone company.

He said: 'This is appalling. Maintaining a link to emergency services like first responders

should always be a top priority.'

Vodafone was unable to comment as the *Oban Times* went to press, but told Mr Reid in an email the problem was solved.

'Service to Luìng is provided by our site on the Isle of Mull', the company told Mr Reid.

'It failed on December 11 due to hardware problems; this was a complex fault which was made more challenging to resolve by bad weather conditions at the time, and the need to order multiple spare parts. The site was restored to service on December 29.'

'It then suffered a further outage in January, and a ticket to resolve the problems affecting local paging services was raised on January 12.'

A catalogue of events then led to three attempts by Vodafone to fix the same problem.

The Vodafone email continued: 'Engineers climbed the site on January 30 to carry out further tests. We reached the conclusion it was necessary to replace an antenna entirely.'

'This was due to take place on March 12, however adverse weather conditions meant that engineers were not permitted to climb the mast that day for safety reasons.'

'Engineers were re-booked and they climbed the site yesterday, March 16. They installed the new antenna and restored the service.'

TIMESLINE

Government sinks Mull ferry plan

A PLAN for a community ferry to serve Mull has seemingly been sunk.

The Isle of Mull Ferry Company had proposed a share offer to buy the island's own ferry.

But on Tuesday a spokesman from Transport Scotland said it had no plans to split up the services on the Clyde and Hebrides ferry services.

Oban tradeshow attracts suppliers

A TRADESHOW opens today (Thursday) in Oban's Corran Halls, featuring more than 100 catering and retail suppliers.

Organiser John Fordeith of Oban's Fordeith Foodservice said: 'We recognise the frustration of businesses in the West Highlands and Islands who have to travel hundreds of miles to attend major national trade shows.'

Driver not at fault for tourist's death

AN OBAN driver was cleared by a jury at Oban sheriff court on Tuesday of causing the death of a tourist.

James Hodge, 32, denied causing the death of a German motorcyclist by careless driving on the A828 near Appin on June 7, 2013.

The jury accepted the incident was a 'tragic accident' and found the case not proven.

Turbine tailback causes traffic jam

A LORRY carrying part of a wind turbine brought traffic to a standstill on Tuesday as it made its way across Connel Bridge.

The lorry then moved onto Barran Culter on the back road between Connel and Kilmore.

Seven year itch over upgrade to A85 bridge



SIGNAL ISSUE: the bridge at Innis Chonain

THERE are still no plans to remove the temporary traffic lights at Innis Chonain, near Loch Awe village on the A85, which have operated there for the past seven years.

The lights were installed to control the flow of traffic over the bridge while it was upgraded but the road surface is now crumbling and pot-

holed. Highlands and Islands MSP Jamie McGrigor argued that the bridge needs to be widened to avoid a disastrous traffic pile-up caused by queuing at the lights. Work to widen the bridge was originally scheduled for 2010, but has not yet started.

Jamie McGrigor said: 'I understand that unless the bridge can be widened,

the traffic lights will remain. Only the Scottish government could bring forward an infrastructure project to alleviate the need for traffic lights at the bridge.'

A spokeswoman for BEAR Scotland, who manage the road on behalf of the Scottish government, said: 'Plans are in place to carry out repairs

to the surfacing of the structure as part of our maintenance programme this year.'

The bridge has passed regular safety inspections.

The traffic signals were installed on the bridge due to the condition of the surface and the alignment of the approach road.

No longer ploughing a lone furrow

EUAN PATERSON
epater@obantimes.co.uk

A PLOUGHING competition that dates back to the 1800s will not go ahead this year in North Lorn because organisers could not find a suitable field.

The North Lorn ploughing match, a major draw for the Argyll agricultural community, was resurrected in 2000 after going into abeyance in 1968.

Organisers admitted the competition, which should have gone ahead this weekend, was cancelled because landowners said most of the suitable fields were under 'conservation schemes'.

However, Ewan Warnock, the

area's National Farmers Union secretary, fears confusion over recently introduced ploughing rules may have caused unnecessary worry and concern.

Gregor MacCormick, chairman of the North Lorn ploughing match committee, said everyone involved in the event was 'sad' at having to cancel the 2015 contest but he vowed to find a venue for next year's contest.

'The 73-year-old crofter, who has been competing in ploughing matches since he was a boy, said: 'When we started up again in 2000, we had 13 entries but now we have 35.'

'I would say its success has also been its death' because

we now need a certain size of field, but they can't all be under a conservation scheme.'

The event, which brings entries from all over Scotland, has raised nearly £10,000 for the heart disease charity Argyll Beats Cardiovascular Disease since 2000.

Mr Warnock said local farmers may have been unnecessarily worried about new rules restricting the ploughing of permanent grassland.

He added: 'There are very few events like the ploughing match that draw people out for the day and from my point of view it is a great place to meet friends and customers from places like Bute and Kintyre.'

Waterfront work September start

OBAN'S waterfront developments will begin in September and will last beyond Easter the following year.

Argyll and Bute council last week published an 'Open Tender Procedure' to award a £2 million contract for work as the second phase of redevelopment works in Oban.

These include Station Square to Queens Park Place and George Street (the A85) to Stafford Street.

The plans given to potential contractors are to include 'pedestrian refuges, bituminous surfacing, paving to parking bays, white lining and street improvements'.

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Lessons take off for high-flying pupils

OBAN schoolchildren have proved they are real high-fliers when it comes to learning their lessons.

Pupils from Park primary's Early Learning and Childcare Centre (ELCC) visited Oban airport recently as part of a project about local community services.

Travel is the topic of study for the children during March and the project really took off when they visited the airport at north Connel.

The children have also taken several bus trips and travelled by train from Oban to Taynuilt as part of the transport section of the project.

Sharon Reid, childcare and education worker at the ELCC, said: 'We would like to thank Network Rail, Oban airport, Taynuilt sports committee, Gordon and Strathern Home Improvements and our parent helpers for their generosity and help, without which the outings would not have been possible.'



Big-hearted gesture for family group

CHILDREN at a pre-school group in Oban are jumping for joy after a south Shian-based business made a grand gesture.

Soroba Young Family Group received a £1,000 grant from Scottish Sea Farms' Heart of the Community Trust.

The money will be used by the Oban group to attend a dance project.

The group received two amounts of £500 to attend a music and movement project to let the youngsters try ballet and hip-hop.

It will also pay for buses to take children to leisure facilities, woodlands, beaches, castles and parks in the area.

Janice Kay, project manager of Soroba Young Family Group, said: 'We rely solely on grant funding to enable the project to continue, so this funding is absolutely vital to us.'

Soroba Young Family Group caters for children aged three months to five years.

Crofter offers to free up land for affordable homes on Coll

STEVEN RAE
srae@obantimes.co.uk

A COLL businessman said he is prepared to donate a piece of land he owns on the island to build affordable housing, if his plan gets the go-ahead from the council.

Colin Kennedy is well-known on the island as vice convener and commissioner of the crofting commission in the south-west Highlands.

He has applied for planning permission in principle from Argyll and Bute council for six affordable houses on land south of 20 Arinagour.

However, he has not indicated if he will build the houses himself or is making the land available for the houses to be constructed by a third party.

He said: 'I'm prepared to donate the land and engage with planning in principle.'

'If it's approved by the council, that will set the wheels in motion. 'In my opinion, the land is per-



fectly located, with easy access to sewerage, water and electricity. It's ideal.'

'It has been noted in the past that there is a shortfall in af-

BUILDING A CASE:
Colin Kennedy has offered to donate land to build affordable housing on Coll

fordable housing on the island.' Roddy McCuish, councillor for Oban, Lorn and the Isles, welcomed Mr Kennedy's plans.

Councillor McCuish said: 'Coll is in desperate need of affordable housing. If any landowner comes forward with the offer of land, free-of-charge, for housing to be built, then of course I will do all I can to make that happen.'

'If we are serious in Argyll and Bute about addressing population decline, especially in our already-fragile island communities, we simply have to provide more affordable housing.'

At present, Argyll Community Housing Association (ACHA) has 10 houses for rent on Coll and Trust Housing Association

(THA) has six houses for rent. Development Coll, a community company, also has plans for more rentable homes.

In the Argyll and Bute council strategic housing investment plan for 2015 - 2018, ACHA has access to funds for two houses on Coll.

Alistair McGregor, chief executive of ACHA, said: 'ACHA has been working with Development Coll, the local community organisation, which is currently carrying out a housing needs study to clarify demand.'

'When this is complete, ACHA propose to carry out a feasibility study on the sites available that will best meet tenants needs.'

'This could include Mr Kennedy's site, but at this stage no discussions have taken place with him and we are not involved with the planning application.'

Mr Kennedy has also applied this week for planning permission in principle for a single dwelling house and for two chalets on the island.

Agencies to co-ordinate wildlife plan

AGENCIES tackling wildlife crime in the Highlands and islands met last Thursday to draw up a concerted battle plan.

Wildlife crime co-ordinator chief inspector Colin Gough said: 'Investigations into wildlife crime can be complex and prolonged so it is vital we improve our strong partnership working to bring those harming our Scottish wildlife to justice.'

Among the agencies at the meeting, which was held at Police Scotland Highlands and Islands headquarters, were the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, the Scottish Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, Scottish Wildlife Trust, Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) and Highland council.

Keith Duncan, operations officer for SNH, said: 'This level of co-ordinated partnership working is key to successful outcomes and in raising public awareness.'

TIMESLINE

MPs talk the talk more than others

A WESTERN Isles politician has spoken in the House of Commons more than any other Scottish MP.

Loquacious Angus Brendan MacNeil, who lives in Barra, has made 1,263 speeches since May 2012, while a relatively taciturn Charles Kennedy, who represents Ross, Sky and Lochaber, is at the bottom of the list of 59 MPs having only spoken 58 times.

Argyll's MP Alan Reid has made a worthy 412 utterances and was the 15th busiest contributor.

Highland MP and cabinet member Danny Alexander was placed fifth, speaking 795 times, while his fellow Lib Dem and Secretary of State for Scotland Alistair Carmichael made 143 verbal contributions in the house

Network is ferry hard to fathom

FERRY operator CalMac has updated its website following complaints that the island network it operates is difficult for visitors to understand.

As part of a major technology investment programme, CalMac has relaunched www.calmac.co.uk to include an interactive map to better show the scale of the Clyde and Hebridean network.

The website refresh is stage one of the technology programme, which will eventually bring wi-fi to all ships and ports throughout the network.

Islanders salute Oban inspector

MULL community council has praised Oban police inspector Julie McLeish, who is set to take up a new role in Lochgilphead.

At the community council meeting on Monday, members said they were grateful for the support she had provided and the interest she had taken in the island.

She is to be replaced by Sergeant Mark Stephens, who is taking over the inspector's role in Oban.

The community council wished him well.



The diverse range of publications in Scotland is essential

Bill Munro
chairman, Barrhead Travel

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Leading Scottish business figures have joined the campaign to highlight the importance of newsbrands and recognise their increasingly multi-platform readership.

Bill Munro, chairman of Barrhead Travel, said:

'Scottish newspapers remain a key distribution channel for delivering Barrhead Travel's messages to existing and prospective customers.'

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MULL LINES with Louise Lee

Group's plea to halt rising death toll of 'iconic' otters

A DEATH toll of 27 otters on Mull roads in the past two years has led a campaign group to call for action over the plight of the protected animals.

Mull Otter Group (MOG) has carried out inspections at many of the island's culverts to check whether blocked drains were a contributory factor in the high death rate of the creatures.

Most culverts were found to be clear but discarded glass and plastic bottles and bags littered the roadsides, presenting a real hazard to the otters.

Jane Stevens, MOG chairwoman, said: 'The good news for otters is that most of the culverts inspected on the main road from Craignure to Aros Bridge are in a healthy condition.'

'However, the amount of glass and plastic found littering the roadside was very disappointing.'

'Much of this rubbish appears to have been thrown out of passing vehicles. Such litter is not only aesthetically offensive, but can cause serious injury or death to otters and the island's other wildlife.'

'Otters are being killed on the

island's roads at an alarming rate. How many are going unreported? Just how long the island's otter population can continue to incur such a high death toll is unknown, hence the reason that MOG is doing its best to highlight the conservation concerns facing these animals.'

'Otters play an important role in the everyday fabric of Mull life. It is vital we do as much as we can to help these iconic animals.'

Mull Otter Group has called for help from the public to report sightings of otters. It said the information could be important in helping reduce the death toll.

Jane continued: 'If someone sees an otter on the road, please take a mental note of the date, time and location as this will allow us to assess whether there was an available culvert nearby and check if it is clean or blocked.'

'Any sightings will be gratefully acknowledged and should be sent via enquiries@mullottergroup.co.uk.'

Tobermory boys make it a double triumph for school

YOUNG Mull musicians are basking in glory after hitting a high note for the second consecutive year at the Scottish schools pipe band championships.

A staggering 400 pupils from 111 schools from all over Scotland flocked to Broughton high school and Fettes college in Edinburgh to battle it out for the top spot in each category.

Tobermory high school was crowned number one for the second year in a row in the quartet category after impressing the judges with their outstanding performance.

The judges were particularly

impressed with the level of skill displayed by the young Tobermory pipers Walter Douglas and Duncan MacInnes.

Calum MacLean, piping tutor at Tobermory high school, said: 'I was pleased with the effort and commitment the boys made in preparing for this competition and it was nice to see that their efforts paid off.'

Schools took part in a number of different categories including juvenile, novice juvenile, junior, debut and freestyle, before the winners were presented with their trophies by Richard Findlay of Creative Scotland.



CULVERT CLEAN-UP: Mull otter group volunteers during a break in the culvert cleaning operation

Pier too short for second boat, irate islanders are told

A SECOND ferry between the Isle of Mull and Oban is off the cards until the island pier can be extended.

Mull community council heard last week that the second ferry was not due to come into service until summer 2016.

Dismayed islanders at the meeting said they had believed the additional ferry service was due to coincide with the introduction of cut price fares brought about by Road Equivalent Tariff (RET) in October 2015.

Car tickets would be priced at £21 instead of the £57 at present for a return journey from Oban to Mull.

Islanders heard the pier at Craignure was too short for a second boat and work would need to be done to lengthen the pier.

A spokesman for Transport Scotland said: 'We are working with CalMac, Caledonian Maritime Assets Limited and Argyll and Bute council on a joint project aiming to deploy a second vessel during summer 2016 when demand is highest. The project is looking at the short and longer-term infrastructure requirements at both ports.'

Glasgow band to headline festival

THE FRATELLIS will headline this year's Tìre Music Festival taking place from July 17-19.

It will be the Glasgow band's only Scottish festival this summer when they close the event on the Sunday.

Other acts playing the multi-award-winning festival include We Banjo 3, Skerryvore, Manran, Gentlemen of Few, Skipinnish, The Chaplins, Cherry Grove, Trail West and Gunna Sound.

Tickets will go on sale at 5pm on Monday and will be available from the festival website tiremuscifestival.co.uk

Its recent success saw the festival take place over three days in 2014, expanding the capacity to 1,600 revellers - more than three times the population of Tìre.

Passenger figures up for ferry group

FERRY operator Caledonian MacBrayne (CalMac) has seen its annual passenger figures hit a four-year high.

Last year 4,653,958 people travelled with the company, up from 4,594,520 in 2013 - an increase of 1.29 per cent.

The last time passenger numbers topped this figure, at 4,736,552, was in 2010.

Mission possible, says trust

ROCKFIELD GROUP CALLS FOR PUBLIC SUPPORT AS IT LOOKS SET TO BUY OBAN SCHOOL FOR £1000

LOUISE LEE
lee@obantimes.co.uk

TODAY (Thursday) is D-Day for a final decision on the future of former Oban primary school, Rockfield.

It is understood that the private meeting of Argyll and Bute council will recommend that the school should be sold to Oban Communities Trust (OCT).

OCT has mounted a high profile campaign over the past nine months to save the listed building from demolition and turn it into a cultural hub for the town.

The asking price from the council is understood to be £1,000.

But there will be no help from the council to pay for essential repairs to the building, which is riddled with dry rot. The total repairs bill could top £200,000.

At a special public meeting held on Monday night in Oban's Caledonian hotel, the trust outlined its plans for the building.

In an impassioned address, OCT chairman Gordon MacNab said: 'The support from the community has been exceptional. We are on the cusp, hopefully, of achieving what we believed to be impossible.'

'The offer from the council will come with a sting in the tail - it will not pay to have the dry rot treated.'

Mr MacNab explained that OCT



D DAY: Gordon MacNab and Graham MacQueen hope today's council decision will unlock the potential for Rockfield to become a cultural hub for the town

was still not fully aware of the extent of the dry rot, but damage during the recent storms had seen the roof of the extension near to Buchanan Terrace collapse. It was also revealed that the wooden floor in the school hall was now beyond repair.

Mr MacNab continued: 'We need to build a fighting fund of £100,000 to £200,000 over the next three to six months.'

'We need everyone to assist with fundraising. What we need is the money to get the building stabilised. We also need to deal with asbestos in the building.'

He said that local tradesmen had agreed to offer their time free of charge and design a 'plan of attack' to tackle the problems in the building.

OCT amended its constitution during the meeting to define its objects as advancing community development. Mr MacNab continued: 'We don't need the money all at once but we will need to raise a substantial amount from the community to support the project.'

'The state of the building is

down to neglect and very little management by the council. The water is pouring in.'

'We could decide right now to walk away, but that is not what OCT is about. We need to put our hands in our pockets and fund the repair of the building. But we also need to get ourselves into work teams to carry out the work required in the building.'

He said OCT might consider taking on a loan from a social investment bank in order to deal with the problems.

OCT trustee and Oban businessman Graham MacQueen said: 'If the play park people can raise £200,000 in a short period of time then it is possible for us to do the same.'

'It is a big mission - but we can do it.'

The meeting heard that the group had received £20,000 from Highlands and Islands Enterprise to fund a business case and feasibility study.

Commenting on today's meeting, a council spokeswoman said: 'The council will consider a report on Rockfield and recommendations from the Oban, Lorn and the Isles area committee which discussed the matter on February 11.'

'We will contact the community group in the first instance about the outcome as soon as possible following the meeting.'

Pontoons dead in the water

THE PLAN to install pontoons in Oban Bay by the summer has been blown out of the water.

Councillor Roddy McCuish, chairman of Oban, Lorn and the Isles area committee, had stated unequivocally that the pontoons would be in the water by early summer when two major cruise liners are scheduled to visit Oban.

Councillor McCuish, who would not be drawn on why the project was not going ahead, told the *Oban Times* said: 'I understood the pontoons would be in Oban Bay this summer. Unfortunately that is not now the case.'

'The council is actively pursuing this and has been looking at a temporary and a long-term solution for a marine facility in Oban Bay. These will be coming to the area committee in the very near future.'

'I, and the rest of the area committee, fully recognise the need for a marine facility in Oban Bay and we will be pursuing that, subject to the usual business case approach that the council takes with all major projects.'

'This will include both sides of the pier. Like everyone else, I am disappointed we cannot do



Like everyone else, I am disappointed we cannot do it by this year

Councillor Roddy McCuish (Pictured)

it this year but this encourages us to move even quicker to get the marine facility that Oban so richly deserves.'

Oban-based councillor Iain S MacLean said: 'There has been a real drive and determination to get the pontoons into the water.'

'Every member of the area committee has been behind getting pontoons into the water.'

'This would have been particularly good for the cruise ship market.'

'It is important that everyone remembers that anything is possible with some determination.'

'There is no time to delay - Oban needs pontoons, and we need them. We will continue to pursue the matter with some vigour.'

A spokesman for Oban Bay Marine, which put forward a plan for a short-stay marina in Oban Bay to Argyll and Bute council but was rejected as not being 'viable', said: 'If elected members really want a step-ashore, transit facility in the heart of Oban, they need to invest the money allocated under CHORD for that purpose, by dredging and providing a floating breakwater.'



BRANCHING OUT: members enjoyed the dinner at the Royal hotel

Glasgow belongs to Oban

THERE was a record turnout at the weekend for the 48th Oban high school former pupils association's dinner dance. Held annually by the Glasgow branch, the only one that still exists, it is the first time it has been held in Oban and it attracted more than 150 guests.

Anne Byiers, who now lives in Bearsden, is president of the Glasgow association. She explained: 'Historically there were Oban, Glasgow and Edinburgh branches of the former pupils association, but through time the Glasgow one is the only one which still exists.'

'There are guests here tonight from all over Scotland and even further afield.'

'The associations were used previously to support people

who moved away from the area for work or study, either morally, socially or financially as they settled into new surroundings, but now it is for our annual reunion.'

'Holding it in Oban has given us a tremendous boost in numbers, and I'd like to say a big thanks to everyone for coming along and supporting this fantastic event.'

Oban businessman Graham McQueen, who was a pupil from 1964 to 1969, was invited as guest speaker.

He said: 'It's great holding the event in Oban, and I would hope to continue this on future years as it's seen a rise in numbers. I think this is because it has given people who have left the town a reason to come back.'

Heartfelt plea to cemetery lights thieves

EUAN PATERSON
epaterson@obantimes.co.uk

TWO OBAN widowers have spoken of their devastation after thieves stole solar lamps placed to light up their wives' grave-stones at night.

Pensioners Frank Toman and William Goldie both bought the lamps to light up the grave-stones of their late wives but discovered them missing on Saturday.

Frank, 76, searched the graveyard over the course of three days with the help of staff at Pennyfuir cemetery, near Oban, in the hope his lamp had merely blown away.

But he and William reported the theft to the police on Monday after concluding they had been stolen.

Now the men have appealed to the thieves to return the lamps,

insisting the matter will then be finished, as far as they are concerned.

'I don't understand why someone would do this,' said a devastated Frank, whose wife Mairi died from Parkinson's Disease in September 2013. 'I've got no enemies, I would help anyone and I have even helped other folk keep grave-stones nice and tidy. I just feel terrible that someone would do this.'

William, a former telecoms worker, who lost his wife Morag in June 2010, said he found out about the theft when his son, Scott, phoned him on Saturday to say: 'My mum's light's away.'

William, 75, told the *Oban Times*: 'Whoever did this must have been desperate, because their head is not there if they can do something like this. I feel sorry for them, more than anything

else. I just cannot fathom why this would happen.'

William and Frank became friends after William's grandson, Scott, was buried just yards from Mairi's grave. Both men regularly tend to the grave-stones, with Frank visiting almost every day.

William added: 'We don't feel any malice towards whoever did this. We just want the lights back.'

PC Emma Campbell of Oban police said she had begun 'extensive enquiries' into the theft, adding: 'If anyone puts themselves in that situation, they will realise how upsetting this is for the families involved, because the grave site is so personal to them.'

'I would appeal to the public to pass on any information they may have on this incident. Someone will know who is responsible for this.' Oban police can be contacted by phoning 101.



LOVING CARE: Frank Toman wife's grave at Pennyfuir

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BRING HOME THE BISTO: Alastair Redman, Portnahaven postmaster, is sending Bisto to Basra for the troops

Islay postie serves Bisto to Basra

LOUISE LEE
lle@obantimes.co.uk

WHEN the Islay postmaster got a call to send a very special parcel to Afghanistan he pulled out all the stops to send some truly British items to soldiers serving on the front line.

Alastair Redman, who runs the Portnahaven post office and shop, has been sending parcels to troops abroad for many years – but never before has he had such a quintessentially British request.

After the men and women received their last Islay package, Alastair got a call asking for some Bisto gravy to make their Sunday roast taste like home.

Alastair was keen to help and in record time raised enough money to send parcels to Basra, as well as other places in Afghanistan.

Alastair said: 'We have been getting feedback from our front line troops. They have been writing about items they are missing from back home and the top four products that are constantly mentioned are Bisto, custard, Pot Noodles and Scott's porridge oats. So this time round, our brave fighting men and women are getting a dozen parcels of just that.'

'We are proud to support our troops with another batch of goodies heading for Afghanistan.'

'Thank you to everyone from Islay and across Argyll and Bute who have been helping us out with this request.'

INCREASED PLANE SERVICE WILL EASE PRESSURE ON ISLANDERS LEFT BEHIND IN SUMMER RUSH

Take-off for more flights to Tiree

STEVEN RAE
srae@obantimes.co.uk

A HEBRIDEAN island, which residents claimed faced being cut off from the mainland, has won its battle for an improved air service.

A surge in tourism to Tiree in recent years had made seats on the one flight a day return service to Glasgow so scarce during the peak summer months that islanders said they have been marooned for days at a time.

The limited plane service during busy tourist months has had serious implications for islanders who attend hospital appointments in Glasgow, which includes patients receiving treatment for cancer.

Scottish government minister for transport and islands Derek Mackay announced last Wednesday that two extra weekday return flights between Tiree and Glasgow will start on July 1 this summer.

Tiree community council vice convener John MacCaskill, who also works in air traffic services at the airport, welcomed the news of the extra summer flights. He said: 'We are delighted the



LIFT OFF: John MacCaskill, who works at Tiree airport, is delighted one of the twin Otter planes, pictured above, will be used for extra flights this summer between Glasgow and the island



minister and his colleagues have reacted swiftly and positively to our worries.

'These enhancements to the air service between Glasgow and Tiree will provide a welcome economic boost, as well as badly-needed additional passenger capacity on what had become an overstretched air service.'

Mr Mackay told residents on Tiree that the extra return flights

would ensure that the island would be well connected during the summer.

He added: 'We have listened to the local community. Not only will these additional flights provide a boost to the tourist industry, but will offer residents more options when they travel to the mainland.'

Residents had predicted a transport gridlock this summer,

with ferry travel links from Tiree to Oban under pressure as a result of increased tourist numbers and weather-related cancellations.

The additional services will generally fly in the afternoon, but may operate in the morning in some cases, with flight times to be confirmed by the operator. The Tiree to Glasgow service is a Public Service Obligation

route supported by the Scottish government and operated by Loganair.

The tendering process for the service, which also includes the Barra and Campbeltown routes, will be reviewed next month.

This will decide which operator will provide the service and how many flights it will provide, with the new arrangement beginning in October.

Renovated cinema to be cultural hub for region

A GRADE A listed cinema in Campbeltown has almost reached its £3 million redevelopment target.

Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE) announced last week that it will invest £300,000 in the Campbeltown Picture House project. The funding boost brings the total to just more than £2.7 million.

A delighted Jane Mayo, chairwoman of Campbeltown Community Business (CCB) Limited, which is behind the redevelopment of the cinema, said: 'The community has supported this cinema for more than a century and is looking forward to having its precious building restored and enhanced to give it a bright, sustainable future as a cultural hub for Kintyre.'

'CCB is extremely grateful for the support of HIE and we

are working hard to raise the remainder of the money.'

The main auditorium and unique art nouveau front of the 100-year-old picture house will be restored and the unused annex will be linked to the main building to create a new entrance foyer, box office, kiosk and café. A second smaller auditorium will be created at the rear of the building.

Rachael McCormack, HIE director of strengthening communities, said: 'We recognise the value places such as The Picture House play in making the region a more attractive place to live, work and invest.'

'CCB has done a fantastic job driving forward this ambitious and exciting project.'

The upgraded cinema will act as the main cultural and entertainment venue for south Kintyre.



COLOURFUL: youngsters dressed up as their favourite literary character for World Book Day

Oban pupils plot a successful storyline

ST COLUMBA'S primary school pupils brought their favourite literary characters to life recently for World Book Day.

The pupils dressed up as a favourite character from a book of their choice for the day.

The Oban school also held a book swap, where children were encouraged to bring in books they had read and exchange them for ones they hadn't read. Headteacher Michaelina MacLellan said the day was a

'huge success'. Now in its 18th year and celebrated in more than 100 countries, World Book Day aims to encourage children to explore the pleasures of reading and nurture a lifelong love of literature.

TIMESLINE

Midnight dash to island by lifeboat

OBAN lifeboat once again provided a lifeline to Mull when a man with chest pains had to be taken from the island to hospital in Oban during the night.

Stornoway Coastguard made an emergency call to the Oban crew just after midnight last Friday. The boat sped to the ferry links at Craignure with two paramedics on board.

The patient was transferred to an ambulance waiting in Oban and taken to Lorn and Islands hospital.

A spokesman for the crew said: 'This is a fairly common service for us but one unique to this area because of the number of islands we cover.'

Sealife talk makes big splash for trust

A TALK on the marine mammals of Scotland made a splash with members of the Scottish Wildlife Trust Argyll and Lochaber group.

The subject of the group's February meeting was a talk by Dr Stephen Benjamins of the Scottish Marine Institute, which was well received by members.

The next talk is at the Scottish Marine Institute, Dunstaffnage, today (March 19) and will be given by Sue Morris of the Great Trossachs forest.

Flares scare was a meteor shower

A METEOR shower over the West Highlands sparked a number of emergency calls to the police and coastguard.

Calls were made over last weekend, mainly last Saturday, to the emergency services from the public believing the spectacle to be emergency flares being set off.

Garden tea party with a difference

ISLAY'S Round church is the setting for a daffodil tea in Bowmore buffet hall tomorrow evening, March 20, at 7pm.

Home baking and entertainment is part of the £4 admission charge. Everyone welcome.

LAST FEW TICKETS REMAINING

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This glamorous evening will feature a champagne reception, a delicious meal and live entertainment. Guests will also receive a luxury goody bag.

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SOMEONE ON EACH TABLE WILL WIN A BOTTLE OF MALT WHISKY!



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LIVE JAZZ MUSIC

ISLAY LETTER

by Hugh Smith

Milda: true to her roots

GLASGOW Ilich and other city Gaels were greatly saddened to learn of the death in her Bearsden home on February 24 of Milda Martin who was a well-known figure in Highland circles in the city.

She was 75 years of age and had been in ill health in recent years.

She was born at Red Houses at Bridgend on February 4 1939, the youngest of five daughters born to Isla and Catherine MacLachlan, both members of well-established local families.

Early schooling took place at nearby Newton primary school where Milda enjoyed a fun-filled life, with a love of the countryside and horse riding being top of the agenda.

She also excelled in athletics, served in the Brownies and the Girl Guides and sang with the church and local junior Gaelic choirs.

Following secondary education at Bowmore, she went on to sit the entry exam for the civil service.

This she passed with merit and gained the fourth highest grade in the UK. Following

this success, she left her native isle and joined the Ministry of Pensions and National Insurance at its office in Rutherglen.

While there, she continued with her equestrian and athletic pursuits and in 1958 became west of Scotland table tennis champion.

Shortly afterwards she met Alex Martin, who has strong Argyll connections, and they were married in July 1960. They went on to have a family of three, daughters Moira and Wendy and son Alan.

Despite a busy family life, Milda was highly supportive of Alex in his joinery business and still found time to be a Sunday school teacher at Killermont church, Bearsden, for 15 years.

Milda decided to train as a primary school teacher in 1971 and following graduation, she taught in a number of Glasgow schools before taking early retirement in 1996.

She was also highly active in Highland circles and was president of the Glasgow Islay Association from 1984 to 1987 and chaired its annual

gathering in 1989. She also led the Argyll Association and Comunn an Taobh an Iar and was active in the Comunn Gaidhealach and the Highlanders' Association.

She was also supportive of events in her community and church and derived great pleasure from the company of her only grand-daughter Mairi. Her retirement years were well spent with overseas travel.

For someone who lived life to the full, it was regrettable that her final years were blighted by an illness which greatly diminished her activities and awareness.

Following services of thanksgiving in Killermont parish church and Islay's Kilmeny parish church, Milda was buried on March 4 in her native isle at Kilnave cemetery on the shores of Loch Gruinart.

Milda served the Gaelic cause and Islay's interests well and will long be remembered by city Gaels.

Condolences are extended to Alex and all the family as they come to terms with their sad loss. Gad chaidh 's gad ionndrainn.

Sibling harmony as brothers steal show

PERFORMERS who appeared at the Glasgow Islay Association's 153rd annual gathering on March 6 received tumultuous applause from an appreciative audience.

Among those on stage were young brothers Kyle and Alan Rowan, right, whose accordion and piano selections had the audience clamouring for more.

The brothers have strong family connections with the Argyll islands as their mother Mairi, nee Stewart, is from Bowmore and their soldier and piper father Gordon hails from Tiree.





FRIENDSHIP FLAG: Don Ken, right, hands over the New Hebrides flag to the 'old Hebrides' in Tobermory

Plea for help after cyclone hits Hebrides

THE GOVERNMENT minister of a South Pacific island devastated by a cyclone has appealed to readers of the *Oban Times* to support the small nation's desperate appeal for emergency aid.

Don Ken, minister for youth and sport for Vanuatu, visited Tobermory in July last year to bring a flag of friendship from the New Hebrides to Mull.

At the time of his visit, which coincided with the Commonwealth Games in Glasgow, Mr Ken said he was delighted to have finally made it to the 'old Hebrides'.

Mr Ken's appeal came after a cyclone struck Vanuatu at the weekend, leaving a trail of death and destruction.

Speaking to the *Oban Times* on a very crackly phone line from the South Pacific island, Mr Ken's assistant said: 'At present there is very little information about the extent of the damage.'

'We will need all the help we can get to get ourselves back up and running as a country.'

NHS chiefs face MSPs

THE THREE top people running Highland health services are to be grilled for a second time by MSPs on their management of NHS Highland's finances in 2013/14.

Chairman Garry Coutts, chief executive Elaine Mead and Nick Kenton, director of finance, have been recalled to the Public Audit Committee at Holyrood.

Committee convener Paul Martin, MSP, said: 'We held a committee meeting in early February to get answers about why NHS Highland needed last minute additional funding of £2.5 million.'

'Having reflected upon the evidence from NHS Highland, a number of key questions remain unanswered.'

'We have taken the very unusual step of recalling the witnesses so they can account for their actions in managing NHS Highland's finances.'

Drink driving law change is pint-sized problem in Argyll

LOUISE LEE
llee@obantimes.co.uk

INDUSTRY experts say pub alcohol sales in Argyll are down by 20 per cent since the new drinking limit came in to force at the end of 2014.

Managers and landlords in Oban and Lorn admitted their businesses were feeling the pinch with the introduction of stricter drink driving legislation in Scotland.

A new report shows Tennent's lager is reporting a 20 per cent drop in pub sales in Argyll. This figure is one of the biggest falls in the country.

Donald Clark, owner of the George Hotel in Inveraray, said while he and many of his industry colleagues were starting to see a difference in the number of people coming in for a drink after work, the restaurant trade was still holding up.

Mr Clark, who has been at the helm of the George for many years, said he was concerned that the appeal of rural pubs would soon diminish because people would not risk falling foul of the law.

The growth in pub food is a factor that has helped grow business.

Brian Livingston who manages a number of premises in the area, said: 'The Lamrig closed because there is simply no trade after work any longer. At one time the trade would be steady - but it has now almost all gone.'

'Our businesses in Oban are thriving because we have never relied on the afternoon trade but there is a changing market for pubs and we all need to make sure we are meeting that market.'



CHANGING HABITS: Declan Curran of Oban pub The Lorne says drivers don't risk drinking at all

Taynuilt Hotel manager David Lapsley said: 'We are following the advice of the Scottish Licensing Board (SLB) who say that instead of trying to make people drink more we should have a range of drinks and sizes on offer for customers.'

'We have never relied on an after work drink trade and our range of drinks reflects this. We offer high quality food with premium quality drinks for a full experience for our visitors.'

'In fact on Valentine's night one couple came for a delicious meal and took a bottle of wine home

with them from our off sales. It was the best of both worlds for them - a delicious meal and a fine bottle of wine.'

A spokesman for the Lord of the Isles pub in Croabh Haven said they were beginning to diversify the business in order to attract new business to the hotel.

He said: 'Everyone says it is because of the new ban but it is probably more about people understanding the law more now than they did before.'

'The police have done a superb job in raising awareness of both the limits people have - and the

penalties for breaking the law. It is absolutely right that this is the case.'

'We are looking at our business to encourage more functions and weddings as well as providing transport from both Lochgilphead and Oban to our pub.'

Declan Curran, of the Lorne Hotel in Oban, says the business is changing, as people are simply not taking the risk of drinking and driving.

Even on days where people are off work, they are thinking about the next day and being much more cautious about what

they are consuming. Mr Curran said: 'A decline in trade has been going on for years. It used to be the case of one pint after work and still feel confident to drive.'

'The new law is important and I would defend it.'

'People are still coming to the pub for our events, but are simply having soft drinks or sharing the driving by coming in one car.'

'I see this at our quiz night on a Wednesday, we are still quite busy but not everyone is drinking.'

'The pub is still the heart of the community.'

Time to feel the love, says Bass

AN OBAN community company is looking to a second year of growth, it was revealed at its AGM on Tuesday night.

Business community improvement group BID4Oban's annual report highlighted many of its successful projects, while looking forward to making the town a first class tourist-friendly destination.

Floral decorations, festive lights, seafront lights as well as business frontage and business expansion schemes are making a difference to the look and feel of the town, delegates at the AGM heard.

BID4Oban has established 'Love Oban' as the marketing slogan for the town and uses this on a number of schemes including its gift vouchers which are being expanded into more outlets.

And it was revealed that BID4Oban town centre 'ambassadors' - who meet and greet visitors to Oban - had talked to more than 20,000 people over the past two years.

This year the group plans to increase the number of floral displays, set up more big tidy-up events, work with the council on street cleaning, embark on phase two of the Black Lynn regeneration and develop designs for welcome signs to the town.

The group also plans to develop a range of BID-led events such as the Skerryvore Decade concert coming to the town in May.

BID4Oban chairman Graeme Bass said: 'BID is making a positive difference to Oban's image for business, residents and visitors alike. Together, we are creating more and more reasons for people to Love Oban.'



BOLD BID: Neil Mackay, Nic Jones and Graeme Bass of BID4Oban.

TIMESLINE

Speedy van man clocked 104mph

A VAN driver travelling at 104mph and a teenage motorist have both been reported for dangerous driving on the Arrivain straights between Dalmally and Tyndrum.

Police officers patrolling the stretch of road on the A85 last weekend recorded a number of speeding offences.

Among them was a 43-year-old Volkswagen Caddy driver who was recorded travelling at 104mph at around 4.30pm on Sunday.

And a 17-year-old Ford Fiesta driver was clocked travelling at 93mph in the 60mph limit and allegedly carrying out a number of overtaking manoeuvres at 5.42pm last Friday.

Another driver, a 59-year-old man was caught travelling at 92mph at 6.17pm last Friday. He has also been reported for dangerous driving.

Police on patrol in Bridge of Orchy

ROAD policing officers continue to patrol Bridge of Orchy in an attempt to put the brakes on speeding drivers.

Last Saturday officers were in the village and within the space of an hour caught two drivers breaking the 60mph speed limit.

One of them, a 29-year-old man, was clocked at nearly 80mph.

Drugs found after woman searched

A WOMAN searched by police officers in the North Connel area was found to be in possession of herbal cannabis and diazepam.

The 38-year-old female was searched at around 10.40pm last Saturday and has been the subject of a report to the procurator fiscal for drugs possession charges.

Cash stolen from ferryman's cabin

CASH was stolen after thieves broke into the ferryman's Portakabin at Cuan Ferry.

The theft occurred between Monday afternoon and Tuesday morning last week.

Anyone who has any information that could help police in their enquiries should contact PC Scott MacPhee at Oban police station on 101.

Lifeboat issues its own call for help

THE ROYAL National Lifeboat Institution (RNLI) is issuing its own call for help, appealing for support with 'Mayday', the charity's national fundraising event from May 1 to 4.

Street collections and fundraising events will be taking place within communities supported by a lifeboat.

Practice to trial extended GP service at Dalmally surgery

STEVEN RAE
srae@obantimes.co.uk

DALMALLY surgery will have a GP on site three days a week for a two-month trial, beginning in April, the practice has announced.

At present a doctor is available on a Monday and a Friday, with a nurse at the surgery on a Tuesday morning, and is closed on Wednesdays and Thursdays.

Dalmally is part of Taynuilt Medical Practice, which also incorporates Taynuilt and Connel surgeries.

Patients are being urged to use all three surgeries, as well as looking at whether appointments with other medical staff, such as

prescribing nurses and pharmacists, can make the practice more efficient.

Moirra Newiss, business manager of Taynuilt Medical Practice, said: 'We have completed a community consultation process through which we sought feedback from our patients on a number of issues. The process highlighted to us several areas where we should seek to provide clearer information on our services, such as what conditions a practice nurse can provide advice and care on and when to seek advice from your community pharmacist.'

'We had asked patients for their views on continuity of care - being able to see their preferred GP

for follow up - which was highly valued and whether people were willing and able to travel to other surgeries to be seen for urgent appointments or to see the GP of their choice, and again this met with a positive response although we are aware that we have to be sensitive to the needs of those patients with limited transport options.'

A new rota of opening times and which staff will be available on specific days is to be announced in the coming weeks before it is implemented on April 1, running until the end of June.

It is understood there will be no GP available on a Tuesday or a Thursday, although this has not yet been officially confirmed.

'Outstanding' Gaelic singer is included on prestigious list

A GAELIC writer and singer from Oban has joined First Minister Nicola Sturgeon on a list of 'outstanding' Scottish women.

Former Oban high school pupil Dr Anne Lorne Gillies is one of 10 women on the inaugural 'Outstanding Women of Scotland' list launched by the Saltire Society to coincide with International Women's Day on March 8.

Members of the public were invited to submit nominations for inclusion in the list during 2014, leading up to St Andrew's Day.

Nominees were to be living contemporary examples of Scottish women who have made a significant contribution to Scottish culture and society.

Islanders energised by £1.8m grant to keep their power

A MULL energy project will benefit from £1.8 million to develop off-national grid small scale generators. The innovative project will be one of the first in Scotland to produce and sell energy at a local level rather than going through the national grid.

The Scottish energy minister Fergus Ewing announced the Local Energy Challenge funding on Tuesday.

The project will also allow for properties in rural areas on the island of Mull to get onto the new local grid.

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Alan Reid MP will hold a surgery in Oban on Thursday 26 March 2015 at the Corran Halls between 4.00pm & 5.00pm.
To make an appointment, please phone Alan Reid's office (01369-704840)


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Coll

COLL residents are once again feeling let down by delays with a project providing mobile phone coverage to the island for the first time.

The Isle of Coll mobile phone project will see the island gain Vodafone coverage as well as 4G mobile communications technology.

Unfortunately, work to get the mast live has been delayed again.

A Scottish government spokesman said: 'Vodafone is scheduling another engineer to carry out further re-configuration work at the site next week.'

'If the circuit remains stable, consultant firm Mono will then be instructed to commission it as soon as possible before the site will then go live. Being realistic, it looks like the end of the month now.'

The pioneering £165,000 community project has been developed by the Scottish government's Demonstrating Digital programme, in partnership with the community-run organisation Development Coll, and Vodafone.

Initially, it was hoped the mast would be live by August 2014, but the project has suffered a series of technical setbacks.

A FREE eco enterprise course is going ahead on Coll, with the first of three weekly sessions held on Saturday at An Cridhe.

The course is an introduction to social enterprise, including planning, bookkeeping, costing, pricing, marketing and volunteer value.

The second and third sessions will be held on March 21 and March 28, between 1pm and 5pm at the same venue.

There will also be the opportunity to learn eco craft techniques and upcycling activities using a variety of materials.

For more information, contact Tamara Hedderwick on 07788 956031 or email: tamarahedderwick@hotmail.com.

Taynuilt

SCOTTISH Women's Rural Institute (SWRI) president Jessie Servant welcomed 19 members and two visitors to the meeting held in Taynuilt Village Hall on Wednesday February 11.

Donald Harrison was the speaker for the evening imparting his knowledge on keeping and caring for bees.

He brought along one of his empty bee hives to display the differing functions of each section in the hive during each season, and explained the roles of the queen bee and worker bees.

The evening seemed to be thoroughly enjoyed by everyone. A vote of thanks was given by Mary Morse for a wonderful evening.

Competitions: Beetroot Chutney: 1 Alice Campbell; 2 Ann Sutherland. Child's knitted jumper for 22" - 26" chest: 1 Jessie MacFarlane; 2 Jane Gillies.

Hostesses for the evening were Jessie Servant and Marlene Stanners.

Glencruitten

THE RESULTS of the whist drive held in Glencruitten Golf Club, Oban, on March 3 were:

Ladies: 1 Kirsty MacArthur; 2 Margaret Forbes; booby prize Isobel Grout; travelling prize Kirsty McPhee.

Gents: 1 Ewan MacLeod; 2 Jim Grout; booby prize Alan Jamieson, travelling prize Marion MacDougal.

Achaleven



COCOA DELIGHT: as part of Fairtrade Fortnight, Achaleven primary school celebrated a very important product - cocoa. A visit to the Oban Chocolate Company helped children understand the properties of the product and, of course, pupils enjoyed a little nibble of the chocolates they designed.



LONDON TRIP: Bronagh, her parents, sister Dearbhla and author Steve Backshall (left)

Islay

London trip for prize girl Bronagh

AN ISLAY girl visited the Houses of Parliament recently to collect a prize she won in a World Wildlife Fund (WWF) competition.

Nine-year-old Bronagh Newman of Port Ellen primary school had a fantastic trip to London after drawing a winning illustration in the WWF and Sky Rainforest Rescue competition, which included a prize of £150 to spend on a green project.

The I Love Amazon Schools autumn term competition was linked with WWF UK's forest campaign. Pupils were asked to create a poster and campaign slogan to encourage action to protect forests around the world.

Bronagh collected her prize from Steve Backshall, adventurer, environmentalist and author.



FAIRTRADE: the cake stall does a roaring trade

Kinlochleven

GEOGRAPHY and **S3** hospitality students at Kinlochleven high rolled up their sleeves and got baking and selling to help promote Fairtrade Fortnight at the school.

The pupils were helped by the village's Co-op store which donated Fairtrade ingredients to make the cakes and supply chocolate for a popular chocolate fountain.

A total of £55 was raised, which will be used to buy a donkey, goat and two chickens from the 'Send a Cow' charity, which buys farm animals for those in Africa trying to earn a living from the land.

S3 pupils were thanked for their efforts as were all those who bought the delicious cakes.



THANK YOU: Stewart Borland, chairman of Kinlochleven parent council, presents Gordon Milne and Jill Mills with their gifts

TWO TEACHERS at Kinlochleven high school have been thanked for taking on the roles of acting head and deputy head teacher while a replacement head teacher was sought.

Gordon Milne, acting head, and Jill Mills, acting deputy, ran the school for almost a year after John McGilp moved to North Lanarkshire at Easter last year.

New head teacher Rebecca Machin, previously deputy head teacher at Wick high school took over the reins last month.

She said on behalf of the school: 'We would like to say a huge thank you to Jill Mills and Gordon Milne.'

'The two accepted the huge challenge of running Kinlochleven high school and worked an insane number of hours to succeed.'

'They supported staff and pupils during this challenging time and still found time to have a joke with pupils in the corridor and keep morale high.'

'We are extremely grateful for all they have done for us; it was above and beyond the call of duty.'

The two teachers were given paintings and Highland Titles gifts at a special presentation.



Plockton high pupils hit the slopes

Plockton high school pupils enjoyed a skiing trip to Italy. The 20 teenagers faced a 30-hour coach trip to the Pila resort in Aosta Valley, where they experienced Italian food and culture as well as the snowsports. Three third year pupils, Mairi MacRae, Ciara Turnbull and Joanna Shillaker, wrote a report for the school's newsletter and said a highlight of the trip was eating pizza and pasta overlooking the Matterhorn, an Alpine mountain on the border of Switzerland and Italy.

North Ballachulish



Book day fun at St Bride's

St Bride's infant and nursery class at north Ballachulish brought in a favourite book for World Book Day. The primary school children read to the nursery class which everyone really enjoyed.

MORVERN lines

Court appointment

I WAS pleased to read in a recent court circular that Her Majesty the Queen has appointed the Marquess of Lorne to be one of her Pages of Honour.

Archie Campbell is the son and heir of Torquhil, 13th Duke of Argyll and 28th Chief of Clan Campbell.

The Campbells are an old Morvern landowning family who came into the area in the 1670s. They sold most of their Morvern property in the 1800s except for a few plots dotted around the parish which, until an interest in local history waned 20 or so years ago, were known locally as 'The Duke's Acre'.

The present Duke of Argyll is Hereditary Master of the Queen's Household in Scotland, High Justice of Argyll, Admiral of the Western Isles, High Sheriff of Argyll and Keeper of The Royal Castles of Carrick, Dunoon, Dunstaffnage, Sween and Tarbert.

The duties of Master of the Royal Household are now ceremonial, but the Royal Navy, in particular HMS Argyle, still fires a salute to the Admiral of the Western Isles. One of the Duke's many titles is Lord Morvern.

The duties of Pages of Honour these days are minimal but practical: they carry the Queen's heavy robe at the state opening of parliament, the annual Garter service in St George's Chapel, Windsor, and on other ceremonial occasions.

They hold office for two or three years between the ages of 12 and 15. A Page of Honour wears a knee-length scarlet coat over a white lace jabot and waist-coat, white breeches with buckles, white stockings and black shoes, also with buckles. They also wear a small sword.



NEW ROLE: the son of Torquhil, 13th Duke of Argyll and 28th Chief of Clan Campbell, above, has been appointed a Page of Honour by her Majesty the Queen

A unique Strontian factory

THE TERM 'local enterprise' is usually associated with the present day but it existed in Strontian a century or so ago.

In 1827, Sir James Riddell, the proprietor of Ardnarmurchan and Sunart Estate, built and established a straw hat factory in Scotstoun to improve the financial viability of the local community, especially for the young. Managers were provided for training and soon the enterprise succeeded all expectations. Orders poured in faster than they could be met.

More than 50 females made gentlemen's silk hats and ladies bonnets, leaving a few men to dress and finish them off. The ladies earned from £5-£6 a year - equaling £19,700 today in economic power value - which was particularly beneficial where there were several employees in the same household.

According to a contemporary report, it brought a complete moral change in the village evidenced by the erection of two churches in the area.

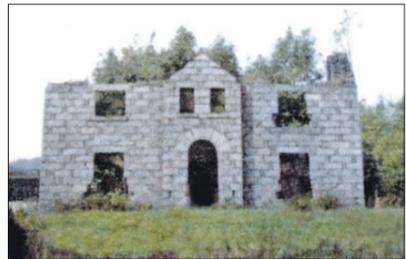
Evidently the making of hats and bonnets must have been more lucrative than that it is today because in 1824 the 9,000-acre Glenmorvern Estate was bought by a Miss Christina Stewart from the proceeds of her London millinery business.

Here, it is recorded, 'she managed to draw from the freaks, the follies and the fashions of the court, sufficient to enable her to purchase this little Highland property, to which she retired, along with her account books, which may even yet be extant. If they have survived they may sometime prove as interesting a relic and tell as strange a tale as any record of the time.'

Unfortunately Miss Stewart, who was a Stewart of Appin, blotted the clan copy book forever when she evicted upwards of 200 people from her Morvern estate in a particularly shameful way.

Her name lives on though on a plaque above the doorway of an ugly, empty and crumbling mausoleum in Cill Dhonnaig graveyard above Bunavullin.

She died of a fever in London in 1829 and was buried there as the authorities of the day would not permit her body to be brought to Morvern to lie in the tomb she ordered to be built before her death.



EARLY ENTERPRISE: The straw hat factory in Strontian shortly before it was demolished

Tree removal

IT IS always a pleasure to see large areas of uniform Sitka spruce plantations being removed from a Highland landscape.

These dense forests are not only unsightly but they acidify the soil and many rivers which, in turn, have an adverse effect on game fishing.

The River Aline which flows from Loch Arriens to Loch Aline, is a prime example. Felling has recently taken place at Tor na Cabar and The White side of Glen Liddesdale - both on Laudale Estate. If the trees are removed altogether on the first, where, incidentally a battle took place long ago between Somerled and the Norwegians, it will make a dangerous road junction safer and more visible to motorists as they approach the Kingairloch turn off.

The other, encompassing a well-known landmark called 'The Devil's Acre', will help restore an otherwise attractive, wild mountain hill-side. Not so very long ago it was home to a large colony of rabbits which, in turn, provided food for many wildcats.

In my youth I had cause to appreciate the rabbits which I had permission to kill by ferreting. So plentiful were they that with the income I received from Gordons, the well-known Fort William fish merchant and game-dealer, I was able to buy my first motor-cycle.

Forestry practice is changing. It is to be hoped that the new proprietor of Laudale Estate will place greater emphasis in replanting Tor na Cabar and Glen Liddesdale with native and deciduous trees.

Iain Thornber
iain.thornber@btinternet.com

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Switch to sea transport the way forward

'REDUCING lorry traffic on the A82 is good for the environment but also for users of the road.'

This is the view of transport minister Derek Mackay, who visited Corpach last week to see how a Scottish government waterborne freight grant of almost £1 million to Boyd Brothers timber haulage company is making a difference.

The grant has been used to set up a shipping freight service to help reduce the number of timber lorries heading south by road.

During his visit, Mr Mackay said: 'The new Boyd Brothers shipping service is an excellent example of how the Scottish government can work in partnership with the private sector to deliver more sustainable freight transport options. It is also pleasing to see a close partnership between a freight operator and its customer, in this case BSW Timber, aimed at achieving greener transport solutions.'

Callum Boyd, director of Boyd Brothers, said: 'The vessel we are using will bring grain up from England to be used in Scottish distilleries and is a good fit to take timber back south to Tilbury. The waterborne freight grant is providing vital funding support in the first three years.'

Tony Hackney, chief executive of BSW Timber, said: 'The new shipping service has allowed us to significantly expand our logistics operation in southern England, linked to our new Essex-based southern distribution centre which opened in 2014. It is helping us feed the demand for the high-quality home-grown Scottish timber produced by our Fort William mill, driven by the upturn in the construction sector in London and the south east.'

The number of HGVs travelling on the A82 and M74 is expected to fall by more than 6,300 journeys over the first three years of transporting the timber by sea.

Hurdle cleared in race to open indoor sports centre



Pipers hit the festival high notes

PIPING HIGH NOTES: the talent of four teenagers was hailed at Lochaber Music Festival this weekend when they were crowned winners of the piping quartet. The Lochaber Pipers, made up of Sandy Cameron, 17, Alistair MacRae, 13, Ally Weir 16, and Finlay Cameron, 13, were marked 'outstanding' for their performance on Saturday. For more on Lochaber Music Festival see page 11.

EMMA CRICHTON
ecrichton@obantimes.co.uk

LOCHABER'S new indoor sports centre has overcome a 'huge hurdle' as it has been approved for planning permission.

Just last week members of Lochaber Sports Association (LSA) worried the £1.47 million training centre could be in jeopardy as Highland Council officials delayed agreeing the £850,000 they have pledged in principle until the summer.

But Jane Blanchard, chairwoman of LSA, was delighted to hear that not only has the multi-use facility received planning permission but the local authority delay will not mean the loss of £500,000 pledged in principle by Sport Scotland, as she originally feared.

Ms Blanchard said: 'Things are looking more positive this week. The past week has been a total rollercoaster.'

'I know there will be more hurdles to overcome but this is a huge hurdle and we're over it. It's a big step forward and now we're working towards the end.'

'This potentially sounded the death-knell on five years of hard work and community commitment, financial and professional, as our Sport Scotland stage one offer was due

to expire at the end of this month.

However, not only have we had assurance from SportScotland that it will wait until Highland Council get the project on to June's agenda, but we have had many pledges of support and encouragement from all quarters.'

The next step for the facility, to be built at Blar Mor on the outskirts of Fort William, is to work out exact costs and find the £100,000 outstanding to reach the estimated total.

One of the messages of support came from Highland Council leader Drew Hendry, which has boosted confidence that the local authority will approve the funding, after Tesco pulling out of developing on the Blar left a further cash gap.

Councillor Hendry said: 'The leadership of the council is committed to supporting the LSA project. We need to find a way to plug the gap left by the decision of Tesco not to proceed, and that poses challenges, but these should not be seen as insurmountable.'

'I personally believe this is a great example of community empowerment and is a great credit to Lochaber Sports Association, which has had to work very hard to get to this stage. It must now be supported through to conclusion.'

Rockfall cleared but more work needed

THE TRUNK road connecting Lochaber to Inverness re-opened this week after four days of closure, but officials have warned there is more work to do.

The A82 was closed from Thursday after rock fell from the hillside between Invermoriston and Drumadrochit and didn't re-open until Monday morning, but a spokesman for Forestry Commission Scotland warned equipment put in place to contain rocks is a temporary measure.

Alex McLeod, the commission's steep ground programme manager, added: 'The immediate issue has been dealt with and made safe.'

'However, during a final inspection, it was clear there are other areas of concern. We were scheduled to come to this site in September but in light of recent events we will liaise with our geo-technical contractors and consultant engineers to review our operations plan.'

TIMESLINE

Disagreement stalls work on new student digs

NEW STUDENT accommodation in Fort William is 'on hold' but still 'top priority', after disagreements between University of the Highlands and Islands (UHI) and contractors.

The planned 40-bed facility near the town's West Highland College campus received planning permission in September last year but building work has been postponed until a new contractor is found.

This is part of a number of new residences planned by UHI, but only the proposals in Fort William and Inverness have planning permission so far.

A spokeswoman for UHI declined to comment on the problems with developers Robertson Group but added: 'Everything is on hold for now but we are determined to move forward and Fort William will be top priority as it has planning permission in place.'

'We're working to find a new bidder as soon as possible but we're in limbo at the moment.'

Village internet not up to speed

A STREET in Kinlochleven has been named the slowest in Scotland for broadband.

Residents of Corrie Road in the village have the misfortune of the worst internet in the country, with an average speed of just 0.985 megabits per second (Mbps), compared to the fastest of 68.53 Mbps in Southhouse Broadway, Edinburgh.

A report by comparison site uSwitch also ranked Corrie Road as number 12 in the slowest 30 across the UK.

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Tiree woman condemns emergency care policy

A THREE cancer patient has asked councillors to re-think Argyll and Bute council's medical assessment policy so people who need emergency care in their own home can receive it.

Due to a family bereavement Fiona MacKinnon, of Kirkcubbin, has had to leave the island to attend a funeral in Aberdeen.

Fiona, who has cancer and dystonia - a neurological condition affecting muscles that can cause epileptic-type seizures - was then faced with no-one to check her condition.

She claims a social worker in Oban refused to allow her to employ a carer to provide the support that was needed for her in that situation.

Fiona, 51, says she was told an emergency alarm system, that she considers faulty, was to be her only means of sup-

port while her carers were off the island.

She said: 'I want to raise this issue of assessments before care is provided so that people who cannot stick up from themselves know what the real situation is.'

'I had an assessment for care for my original condition and I was provided with carers to help me deal with it. I was then diagnosed with cancer.'

'When my carers were going away for the week, I was going to be left without care. I can cope with things most of the time, but as my illness gets progressively worse, so does my night-time condition. I have something like an epileptic fit, but unlike epilepsy sufferers I remember every moment of the episode.'

'I took my concerns to my doctor and because I had taken ill, in part due to the stress

of the situation, I was moved into the old folk's home on the island.'

An Argyll and Bute council spokeswoman said: 'We are committed to providing the best quality service possible to people who have identified assessed needs.'

'After assessment of need some individuals choose to employ their own carers via the direct payment route.'

'If an individual has a change in circumstances then further review/assessment is undertaken and any change in identified needs is reflected in the level of care.'

'In an emergency situation the council will arrange care appropriate for the circumstances and duration of the emergency.'

'Any person may self-refer to a nursing home if they intend providing the funding them-

selves. If not, and funding is being sought from the council, then an assessment would need to be made to ensure the authorities criteria for residential care is met'.



Fiona MacKinnon

Tourism delegates focus on how others see Argyll area

THE FOURTH Argyll and the Isles tourism summit, held on Tuesday, was hailed a 'major success' by organisers.

The event, delivered by Argyll and the Isles Tourism Co-operative (AITC) with support from VisitScotland, was held at the Lochs and Glens Ardgartan Hotel just outside Arrochar.

AITC chairman Gavin Dick said the theme, 'to see ourselves as others see us', focused delegates' minds on the demands of today's actual and potential visitors and how these can best be met.

Visit Scotland director David Adams McGilp said: 'It has been a very constructive event which

has enabled extremely productive discussions and idea-sharing to take place on how local businesses can join forces and work in partnership more effectively - not only to their mutual benefit but to the considerable benefit of the region's economy - to attract more visitors and deliver an outstanding visitor experience.'



VISITORS: Delegates at the Argyll and the Isles annual tourism summit

Sportsman's dinner declared a winner



THE ANNUAL Ryan MacPhail Memorial Fund sportsman's dinner was a sell-out success once again, raising thousands of pounds for the Oban charity.

Held in the Argyllshire Gathering Halls in the town last Saturday, the top table, pictured, from left, included Independent councillor Roddy McCuish,

speaker and ex-footballer John Geoghan, Alan MacPhail, speaker George McNeill and chairman John Horne. The popular event is the main

fundraiser for the memorial fund, which aims to support young people and sports teams throughout the Oban and Lorn area.

Wooden gangplank not a way forward

A WOODEN gangway is the solution to ongoing problems at Craignure pier, Mull community council heard last week.

The retrograde step would be 'quite impossible' for people with disabilities to use, claimed councillor Mary-Jean Devon, who said

she wasn't aware that a long-term solution for a faulty passenger access system had been found.

After discussing the problems of people getting on and off the ferry, one community councillor said: 'We should go back to having a wooden gangplank - it

doesn't have a huge price tag and it would be up within the week.'

Councillor Devon, who is a wheelchair user, said: 'People with any sort of disability would not be able to use it. I don't think that's a viable plan it would be quite impossible to use.'

Producers interested in Scottish King Arthur

A BOOK revealing King Arthur and his connections to Argyll may be made into a film.

Finding Arthur argues that the legendary king was not an Englishman but a Scot who is hiding in plain sight in Mid Argyll.

Author Adam Ardrey told the *Oban Times*, that following talks

with American film producers, they will be coming to the region to look at the possibility of making a screenplay of the book.

Mr Ardrey was delighted with the news and said tourism operators should consider using Arthur in their own promotion and advertising.

New Dalmally PC

A NEW police constable has been found for the community police officer post in Dalmally, which is being vacated by PC Iain Young.

PC Darren Miller, who currently lives in Glasgow, will begin the position next month. PC Young is taking up a position as rural police officer in Fort William.

The Dalmally position will involve covering a large geographical patch, including Oban and Lorn, and engaging with the community and community councils in the area.

A warm welcome at dram-tastic distillery

A WELCOME as warm as the whisky it produces has ensured that Islay's Laphroaig Distillery has been named best visitor attraction in Scotland.

It was a fitting birthday present for the 200-year-old distillery to receive the accolade at the Scottish Thistle Awards, held last Thursday in Glasgow.

Emma Boyle, assistant visitor centre manager, said: "The team at Laphroaig Distillery endeavours to give every visitor an interactive experience and a sincere Scottish welcome to the heritage centre."

"We are very proud to present the best of what Scotland has to offer and delighted to accept this thistle award in recognition."

"We are looking forward to a busy year in 2015, with the celebration of Laphroaig Distillery's 200 year anniversary."

"This will undoubtedly bring more visitors to the island of Islay to celebrate with us, and to commemorate our visitor program will include more special events for our birthday year."

Laphroaig Distillery has continually reinvested to improve its visitors' experience.

Laphroaig saw off competition from Blair Castle in Highland

Perthshire, Bo'ness and Kinneil Railway and the iconic Eilean Donan Castle in Kyle of Lochalsh.

The J Thomson Colour Printers-sponsored award was one of 13 awards given out this year with a particular focus in

customer service, with members of the public being invited to nominate their favourites and judges making the final decision.

The Auchrannie Resort on the Isle of Arran won the Creative Ambition category.



BEST: Emma Boyle and David Adams of Laphroaig Distillery collect best visitor attraction award from Kenny Dick and Kevin Creechan of J Thomson Colour Printers and event host Edith Bowman

Scottish Rural 'Oscars' showcase the quality of west Highland produce

A RURAL awards ceremony shows that the West Highlands are performing highly in the outstanding quality of life in Scotland.

The Countryside Alliance Awards, or Rural 'Oscars', have long been the ultimate benchmark of excellence in the countryside and such is the strength of the Scottish countryside's identity, that Scotland has always had its own awards competition.

The Scottish Countryside Alliance Awards have gained such a huge following and respect that, in celebration of the Awards success

of the last decade, the Scottish Countryside Alliance has joined forces with magazine Scottish Field, opening up a truly magnificent set of award categories to which businesses, organisations and individuals can aspire.

Judged by a panel of industry leaders and experts, the awards is a rigorous multi-stage process including pre-scoring by the awards administration team where entries are discussed and evaluated in detail to decide a shortlist of six finalists in each category with judges then visiting and reviewing the finalists

before further evaluation to decide the winning entries.

Prior to the awards ceremony on March 26 at Dynamic Earth in Edinburgh, The Oban Times can reveal a list of the nominations.

In Aquaculture Gigha Halibut makes the grade while Charles Macleod Butchers - Stornoway are on the list for Artisan foods.

In the conservation and the environment The Ethical Shellfish Company from the Isle of Mull joins an illustrious list of potential winners.

Oban and Lorn Tourism Asso-

ciation and the Ardnamurchan Estate in Acharacle made it into the hospitality award finalists

Three education establishments are showing outstanding endeavour from the West Highlands including Ballet West in Taynuilt, Lochaber Rural Education Trust in Fort William and Lochdonhead Primary School on Mull.

In rural tourism both Tobermory Harbour Marine Exhibition on the Isle of Mull and Dunollie Projects in Oban are in line for an award while MDivide Ltd on the Isle of Mull also make the grade.

Camera club wins annual challenge

OBAN camera club won the annual photo challenge between the club and Christian youth group H2O.

A substantial audience comprising members of Oban camera club and H2O gathered in the Regent Hotel, Oban on February 23 to hear the result from judge Stephen Lawson, a semi-professional photographer from Ganavan.

Mr Lawson commented on each of the 50 images and awarded top marks to Oban camera club's David Williams.

The prize for best image went to H2O's Dionne Gilbride.

Eric Shaw, president of the camera club handed over a gift cheque to Ewen Munro H2O team leader, to further the good work of the group.



WINNERS: Eric Shaw, left, president of Oban camera club with judge Stephen Lawson Dionne Gilbride of H2O. t10camera1no

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LOCHABER - The Outdoor Capital of the UK - offers visitors and locals alike a wide variety of activities for all ages on your doorstep.

Spectacular landscapes

The area features some of Scotland's most spectacular and recognisable landscapes for those who want to explore the great outdoors. The highest peak in the UK, Ben Nevis, towers over Fort William and Loch Linnhe and offers a challenging but achievable experience for keen hill walkers.

Tranquility

For those who prefer a more sedate but equally spectacular journey, the tranquillity of Glen Nevis and the historic and atmospheric Glencoe are nearby whilst Mallaig and Morar offer some fantastic sea views.

Amenities

But Lochaber also offers all of the services, shops and other amenities one might expect in the central belt.

Services

Local workmen and companies offer first-class services at reasonable rates, whether you are looking to improve your home inside or out.

Local food

Numerous cafes, bars and restaurants serve everything from international cuisine to locally-caught fish and home baking from across Lochaber.

Sight-seeing

Glenfinnan is home to one of the country's finest and most famous railway viaducts as well as the monument which marks the spot where Bonnie Prince Charlie raised the standard before the 1745 Jacobite revolution.

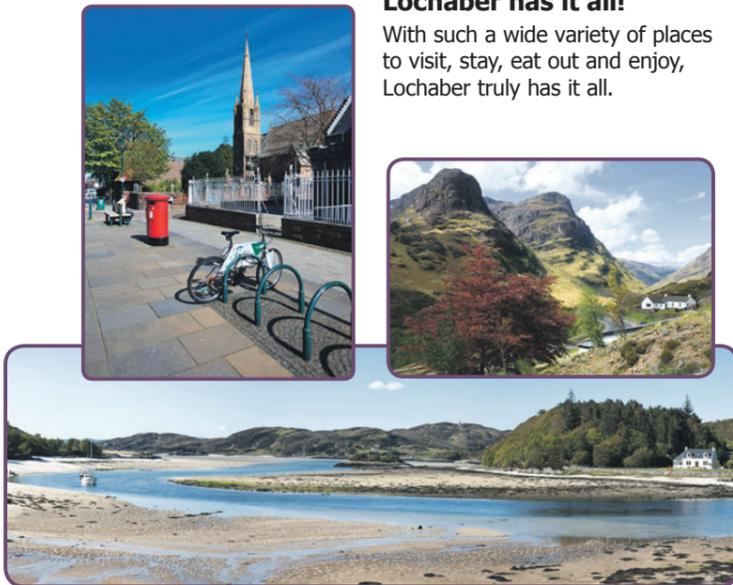
Meanwhile, one of modern Scotland's greatest engineering feats, the Caledonian Canal, starts at Neptune's Staircase at Banavie and meanders up the Great Glen through Loch Lochy and Ness.

Sports

Anyone looking for a bit of sporting fun will not be at a loss in Lochaber, with mountain biking, golf, snow sports, bowling, angling and a range of water sports all readily available.

Lochaber has it all!

With such a wide variety of places to visit, stay, eat out and enjoy, Lochaber truly has it all.



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Four Skye schools to be merged

A NEW school in north west Skye has been approved by Highland Council, amalgamating four rural schools into one.

The proposal to replace Dunvegan, Edinbane, Knockbreck and Struan primary schools with a new building in Dunvegan was recommended by the local authority's education, children and adult services committee in January and approved at the full council meeting on Thursday March 12.

It was also confirmed a new consultation will be held for families who previously expressed interest in sending their children to Carbost, MacDiarmid or Portree primaries, instead of the new school, which is as far as 40 minutes away for some pupils of the current schools.

Councillor Alasdair Christie, chairman of the education, children and adult services committee, said: 'I welcome the support for a new school in Dunvegan, which will provide educational benefit for children across north west Skye and will be a tremendous new development for these communities.'

'I am also keen to start early discussion with those families who are directly affected by these changes, where continuity in their children's education might be achieved by them attending other local schools. I am appreciative of council staff and local people and groups who contributed to this extensive consultation.'

Be aware of bogus traders

HOUSEHOLDERS are being warned to be vigilant of bogus traders following the recent stormy weather.

Highlands and islands police said bogus workmen would be seeking to convince people who have suffered damage to their homes to let them carry out repairs.

They often ask for money up front and then carry out substandard work or fail to complete the job.

Trading Standards at Highland Council advises people to get several quotes from reputable companies and not to rush into a decision.

Where any damage is covered by an insurance policy, the insurance company involved will be able to provide advice on how repairs should be carried out.

Pupils boost charity funds with Fairtrade coffee morning

KIND-HEARTED pupils of Lochside RC primary school held a Fairtrade coffee morning and raised more than £500 for charity.

The Fort William children brought in home-baking and invited relatives to the event on March 6, to raise awareness about Fairtrade products and raised £560 for Dalmally-based children's charity Mary's Meals.

FUNDRAISER: Lochside's Fairtrade committee show off the Fairtrade home-baking on offer



Action plan to improve town centre is unveiled

EMMA CRICHTON
ecrichton@obantimes.co.uk

AN ACTION plan to improve Fort William town centre has been revealed by Highland Council.

The proposals include building a promenade and marina at Loch Linnhe and filling empty units on High Street. This comes as a result of a public consultation event held in the town in May last year.

The grand plans are outlined in a report by Highland Council and stem from the main issues highlighted by residents and business owners at the gathering last year. Similar workshops were also held in Tain and Nairn.

But the report is clear that

funding is not yet available for any of the ideas, although it states having a clear plan in place puts Fort William in a 'strong position to compete for any available funding.'

The most ambitious of the proposals is a suggestion to build a new waterfront promenade, pier and marina at Loch Linnhe, as well as improving access from High Street to the water. This sparked controversy when it was discussed at last year's workshop as part of the A82 dual carriageway would need to be removed to build the facility but the report states trial lane closures would be carried out before a decision is made.

Other topics include how best to make use of empty units such as the old police station at the

west end of town and the Fort William R C primary school building once pupils move to the new school in August this year.

Highland councillor Thomas MacLennan, leader of Lochaber area committee, said: 'The Fort William process was about drawing the community together, young and old to explore ways to move Fort William forward and rejuvenate this town - how we interact with Loch Linnhe, how we release the potential in some of the towns derelict and underused buildings and how we improve the visitor experience.'

'One of the surprise parts of the process was the formulation of Fort William Town Team which is driving forward the town's appearance and are already making a big difference. We now have

already been involved up to this stage for their time and effort. 'No doubt everyone will have different views and ideas on what they'd like to see and what they feel the priorities are which is why we want as many people as possible to not only come along to the drop-in events but use the online form to let us know their views.'

The action plan and online form can be found on the Highland Council website, Fort William service point and library or the Nevis Centre.

Responses can also be sent to devplans@highland.gov.uk or Town Centre Action Plans, Development and Infrastructure Service, The Highland Council, Glenurquhart Road, Inverness, IV3 5NX.

Thomas Prag, chairman of the council's planning, development and infrastructure committee, said: 'From the initial meetings we've made real progress and I'd like to thank everyone who has

already been involved up to this stage for their time and effort. 'No doubt everyone will have different views and ideas on what they'd like to see and what they feel the priorities are which is why we want as many people as possible to not only come along to the drop-in events but use the online form to let us know their views.'

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DAMAGE: the weir after the breach

Major breach closes Caledonian Canal

THE CALEDONIAN Canal is to remain closed to sea-to-sea traffic until the end of April, following a major breach of a weir six miles south of Fort Augustus.

Heavy rains and snow-melt last week partially washed away a weir near Culloch causing a major breach of an embankment.

While there was no risk to life or property, there has been an impact on the flow of water between the canal and the local system of lochs.

Loch Oich, which usually sits at an average depth of 1.2m, is now at 0.4m, although the water level is higher than normal because of excessive rainfall.

Josie Saunders, head of corporate affairs for Scottish Canals, said: 'We are keenly aware of the importance of the Caledonian Canal to the local economy and are treating the incident as a top priority. However, it will mean the Caledonian Canal, which was due to open for the season

on March 23, will be closed to sea-to-sea navigation until the end of April.

'We are doing all we can to minimise the impact on tourism in the local area and will manage further works from the end of April onwards around boat movements. While it is too early to say what the repair costs will be for Culloch Weir, our current estimate is between two and three hundred thousand pounds - although we won't know the

costs until the design works on site have been carried out.'

Contractors were on site last week to stabilise the towpath side of the weir and create access points next to Aberchalder Bridge. This has enabled excavators to start getting close to the canal to unload the rock into the water, which will then allow the necessary repairs to the weir itself.

Once complete, the dam will be removed.

Lochaber chef tastes top three success

JUST two points separated a Lochaber high school student from the top place in a cookery competition run by Rotary International in Great Britain and Ireland.

Gregor Mews won the Rotary Club of Lochaber Young Chef competition last October and earlier this month went on to represent the area at the Scotland and north east England final.

Gregor was beaten by only one point by the second-placed contestant, who herself was beaten by only one point by the winner, Heather Nisbet from Stonehaven.

The head judge made special mention of Gregor's starter of caramelised red onion and goat's cheese tartlet with hazelnut dressing and caramelised hazelnuts and his dessert of chocolate and raspberry fondant with raspberry

coulis. Gregor hopes to pursue a career in catering, specialising in cakes and pastry.

Gerald MacIntyre, of the Lochaber club's youth activities committee, accompanied Gregor, his parents Paul and Elizabeth and his grandmother to the regional round in Dundee and Angus College.

He said: 'Gregor was delighted with his award, although naturally disappointed he was beaten by such a small margin.'

This was the sixth year Scottish Rotary clubs have participated in this competition. By the time of the grand final, 1,100 clubs will have taken part, involving 6,500 schoolchildren from throughout GB and Ireland.

The grand final of Great Britain and Ireland is to be held in Wrexham in April.



CHEF: Gregor Mews with his starter, main and dessert courses he cooked for the competition



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Viewpoint

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The Oban Times & WEST HIGHLAND TIMES

Established 1861 No 8216

Three months without an emergency pager service in 2015 is inexplicable and inexcusable. The volunteers on the island of Luing described their situation as something akin to a form of 'house arrest' as they had to sit by a landline telephone waiting anxiously for any SOS calls.

Mobile giant Vodafone clearly doesn't grasp the vital

lifeline these highly skilled and dedicated volunteers provide in the absence of resident doctors and paramedics on Luing. It can, in extreme cases, be a matter of life and death.

Yet the apparent complacency of Vodafone is breathtaking and, as Argyll MP Alan Reid rightly said, its response has been 'appalling'.



Days gone by: King George berthed in Oban

This week's flashback photograph features Oban by night and the *King George*, once the jewel in Oban's summer season crown. The ship lies in its night time berth where it would be re-stocked and refuelled for its day cruise to Iona then its evening dinner cruise to Fort William. The photograph was submitted by Tom Loughray of Edinburgh. Digital versions of flashback photos for *The Oban Times* can be sent to editor@obantimes.co.uk or prints sent in to Editor, The Oban Times, PO Box 1, Oban PA34 4HB. Anyone who wishes a print returned should include a stamped, addressed envelope.

Years of frustration for Oban Bay Marine

Sir, The directors of Oban Bay marine (OBM) have read recent articles in *The Oban Times* with interest and wish to make the following comments.

We have no plug to pull and haven't used that expression.

Argyll and Bute council's aspiration to install temporary pontoons this summer has run into understandable difficulties of timing, cost, water depth and wave climate.

Indeed, testing the market with an inadequate facility is likely to be counterproductive and compromise any future provision.

Testing the market is not required. The market is well-known to exist and Oban has already lost £4 million of economic growth in the last five years as a result of dithering.

The most recently prepared business plan, which has not yet reached elected members, was commissioned by council officials and Highlands and Islands Enterprise and its basis, including its first draft, was agreed in advance by them.

When pressed for a decision, the business plan was rejected as not being viable. But the reasons given for its rejection were not based on the actual business plan, but on an earlier offer of £200,000 from both parties, which clearly could never have stacked up.

Based on the business plan, the project does stack up and is viable.

If elected members really want a step-ashore, transit facility in the heart of Oban, they need to invest the money allocated under CHORD for that purpose, by dredging and providing a floating breakwater - all as described in the business plan.

Representatives of the area committee have now requested sight of the business plan and we await the final outcome.

If the outcome is negative, after eight years of frustration the directors of Oban Bay Marine can do no more.

Directors of Oban Bay Marine.

Success of Tobermory Harbour Association

Sir, It was depressing to read of the difficulties Oban Bay Marine (OBM) has had getting its project off the ground - *The Oban Times*, March 12 - and contrasting it with the success of Tobermory Harbour Association (THA) on Mull in developing modern facilities in Tobermory harbour.

It should be remembered, however, THA has been running since 1983 and has steadily built up facilities to the point where the community-owned company has just started phase six of its expansion plans.

Perhaps OBM should take advice from Tobermory?

For example, THA has had help from Argyll and Bute council in the past but learned long ago that the council is short of money and the new phase of expansion has been

funded by a successful application to the Coastal Communities Fund.

Argyll and Bute council has a wonderful coastline, a necklace of islands and excellent sailing waters. The least it should do is develop a sailing strategy with plans for a network of facilities for sailors throughout the whole of the council area.

Clearly, all the developments cannot be done at once, but a strategy would help define the long term objective of the council in this vital area.

David Pollard, Salen, Isle of Mull.

Ship shape training

Sir, I was pleased to read Caledonian MacBrayne (CalMac) is taking on local apprentices.

As beneficiaries of the 'tonnage tax' regime introduced by Westminster in 2000, CalMac is obliged to offer training in return for the tax advantage the scheme offers.

When I first travelled on MacBrayne's ships more than 60 years ago, practically all crew members were islanders.

Nowadays on CalMac's ten larger vessels less than 10 per cent are.

I hope the training schemes being run by P&O Ferries, Serco-Denholm, V Ships, Condor Ferries, Stena, CalMac and many others will eventually restore the position where people living in the islands and adjacent mainland are the primary beneficiaries of the well-paid, secure employment which is available.

James Knight, by email.

Beachd Ailein

ALLAN CAMPBELL
ailean@obantimes.co.uk

BIDH gairdeachas ga dhèanamh feadh na dùthcha gum bheil coltas an earraich a' tighinn air ceùsan mu dheireadh thall, agus gealltanais air aimsir nas fheàrr.

Chan eil obair brosnachaidh turasachd a' sgur bho cheann gu ceann den bhliadhna, ach saoilidh mi fhìn gum bheil a' mhargaideachd a' fàs nas braise buileach toiseach an earraich.

Nuair a shuibhail mi eadar Inbhir Nis agus ceann an iar an Eilein Sgitheanaich bho chionn beagan làithean, bha mi a' cuimhneachadh air abairt a bhiodh aca nam òige nuair a bhiodh rathaidean feumach air càradh an dèidh droch aimsir a' Gheamhraidh. Theireadh iad gun robh suibhail an rathaid mar gum biodh tu a' falbh a' chladaich! Tha na rathaidean mòra againn ann an droch staid, agus tha iad air a bhith mar sin bho chionn bhliadhnaichean. Chan eil sa bheagan leasachaidh èiginn a thathas air a bhith a' dèanamh riutha ach mar tuthag air uachdar tuthaig, agus tha an suidheachadh a-nise a' ruigheachd ire èiginn! Chan eil dad ann am beatha làitheil choimhearsnachdan nach eil an

eisimeil còmhail agus rathaidean cothrom, agus tha cosnaidhean de gach seòrsa an crochadh air leithid de ghoireas a bhith ann. Tha mi air a bhith a-mach air a' chuspair seo roimhe, agus 's e seo deagh eisimpleir eile a th' ann far am bheil an dàrna cuid de innleachdan riaghaltais a' magadh air feadhainn eile.

Thar iomadach bliadhna a-nise tha riaghaltsan ma seach air a bhith a' tasgadh airgead poblach a' feuchainn ri gnìomhachasan ùra a thàladh gu sgìrean iomallach na Gàidhealtachd. Tha na buidhnean poblach rim moladh airson an cuid spàirn gus obraichean làn-ùine a' stèidheachadh a bharrachd air na cosnaidhean pàirt-ùine, ach luachmhor a dh'aindeoin sin, a tha turasachd a' cruthachadh. Ach fhad 's a tha na h-iomairtean margaideachd sin air a bhith a' gabhail àite, tha rathaidean nan sgìrean sin air a bhith a' crìonadh gun ionmhas ann airson an cumail an òrdugh. Tha sinn a-nise aig an ìre 's gun iarradh e bileanan a chosg gun rathaidean na Gàidhealtachd 's nan Eilean a leasachadh ceart, gun ghuth air a' chuid eile de dh'Alba. Leis gum bheil na h-amasan aig an riaghalts

uile an crochadh air còmhail gu ìre bheag neo mhòr air choreigin, nach saoilidh tu gum biodh e ciallach dhaibh plana càraidh is leasachaidh nan rathaidean a bhith aig teis-mheadhan nan iomairtean margaideachd uile?

IN 2004, the report *Maintaining Scotland's Roads* was produced for the Auditor General for Scotland and the Accounts Commission.

Among many recommendations the report said 'councils and the Scottish Executive should ensure that their road maintenance activities contribute to the environment and to sustainability'.

Motorists believe this is not happening and that our roads are deteriorating at an alarming rate without any apparent strategy to put things right. Should we be erecting new signs?

'Fàilte gu Alba. Welcome to Scotland. Apologies for the damage which your vehicle will suffer due to decades of underfunded road maintenance.'

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

Glasgow Letter

ROBERT ROBERTSON
robertson@obantimes.co.uk

Glasgow Islay dance to return?

THE GLASGOW Islay Association committee has decided to make it its mission to return the annual gathering to its former, busy glory.

A fortnight ago, a wonderful concert was witnessed by a notably smaller audience than in previous years, which has prompted the committee to act.

In March 2016, it is going to bring back the annual dance for the first time in years after it was dropped as a result of falling attendances.

I wrote in my first Glasgow Letter of the need to get the younger generation back along to the kindred associations.

A push from the Glasgow Islay to encourage new and old faces along to next year's dance is surely a step in the right direction.

A number of the association evenings last year showed the dances can still prove popular with a younger crowd and the committee has booked Trail West, a much-loved band amongst young Glasgow Gaels, so it seems bringing back the dance will be a good move for the Glasgow Islay.

GG concert

THERE was no Friday the 13th bad luck for the Glasgow Gaelic Musical Association (GG) last week whose annual concert went down a storm.



ON SONG: GG members at their annual concert, with conductor Kenny Thomson.

The choir performed well to a decent audience in Partick burgh halls and soloists Joy Dunlop, Jayne Morrison, Di Brown and Gordon MacKeeve all impressed the listeners. Youngsters from Glasgow Gaelic School folk group were tremendous.

Just in case anyone in the audience was disappointed to be missing out on the BBC's Comic Relief event, choir conductor Kenny Thomson wore a plastic red nose for part of the evening.

Comunn an Taobh an Iar

ALASDAIR Whyte, Eilidh Cormack and Claire Ann Macneill were all in good voice at the Comunn an Taobh an Iar ceilidh on Thursday March 12.

Graham Richardson provided the piping and Kirsteen Grant performed solo piano pieces. Awful weather made for a poorer attendance than usual but those who turned out were, nevertheless, treated to a great night.

Clydebank Highlanders' Association

WHAT a cracking night I had on Friday March 13 singing at the ceilidh in Napier Hall, Old Kilpatrick.

I have sung there a number of times now and there is always a warm welcome and, most importantly, an excellent selection of home-baking at the break!

Mary C MacLean and I were the

two Gaelic singers, Colin Fisher and Linda MacCallum duetted in a mix of Scots and Gaelic accompanied by guitar and young Kirsty Harkins performed a lovely selection of Scots songs. Luke Pringle played the pipes and Susan MacFadyen the accordion.

The audience was entertained by the Rev Fred Booth who was chairman for the evening. Rev Booth was chairman the last time I sang at the Clydebank association and I was delighted to see him back again last week. His stories, often weird and wonderful, added a great deal of hilarity to proceedings.

What's on

Friday March 20: Glasgow Skye Association Cothrom na h-Oigridh (children's concert) Airlie Theatre, Hyndland secondary school.

Saturday March 21: Glasgow Lewis and Harris Association ceilidh, Partick bowling club.

Friday March 27: Glasgow Uist and Barra Association ceilidh dance, Crawford Hall.

Wednesday April 1: An Lòchran's Gaelic music session, Partick Brewing Company.

Pub scene

Park Bar: Thursday March 19: Open Session. Friday March 20: Eriskay Lilt.

Saturday March 21: Ceòl an Aire.

Islay Inn: Friday March 20: Crooked Reel. Saturday March 21: Twist of Fate.

Robert Robertson
email robert.d.robertson@hotmail.co.uk

Press policy

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

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

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

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

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We will abide by the decision of IPSO.

Your letters

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

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

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

Anonymous letters or those supplied without a

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

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- Across
- 7 Stick in the mud (6)
 - 8 Alighted (6)
 - 9 Drop a line? (4)
 - 10 The next day (8)
 - 11 Breathing equipment (7)
 - 13 Symbol of thinness? (5)
 - 15 Encourage (3,2)
 - 17 Small catch (7)
 - 20 Unsuitably bring together (8)
 - 21 Trunk coat (4)
 - 22 Put away (6)
 - 23 Unaware (6)
- Down
- 1 Cut (6)
 - 2 Inner skin (4)
 - 3 Achievement if one found in headgear (7)
 - 4 Slightly mad (5)
 - 5 Enjoyer of food (8)
 - 6 Bright bird (6)
 - 12 House sharer (8)
 - 14 Minute top of the pointed implement (7)
 - 16 Stringed instrument (6)
 - 18 Bread maker (6)
 - 19 Musical composition (5)
 - 21 Coloured symbols of combat efficiency (4)

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION

F	A	C	E	B	U	R	S	I	T	I	S	
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R	N	O	S	R	Z	N						
O	R	G	A	N	I	S	T	P	R	E	S	T



MAKING MUSIC: young musicians enjoy a violin workshop



TROPHY WINNER: Carys Bilton



DOUBLE WINNER: Ally Weir



TALENTED: Amber MacDonald

CURTAIN RISES ON 41ST LOCHABER MUSIC FESTIVAL

Finlay's early treble hits all the right notes

LOCHABER Music Festival kicked off in Fort William with the traditional music competitions.

The 41st annual event began on Friday and saw Finlay Cameron pick up three trophies for his bagpipe performances.

Amber MacDonald and Ally Weir were double winners, both for bagpipes, and the Premier Scots Traditional Award went to Hannah MacRae for Scots violin.

Christine Martin from Skye was adjudicator for violin, clarsach and accordion while Craig Muirhead from Stirling judged piping.

The festival has been running all week, with competitions for vocal, strings, dancing drama, woodwind and brass with a grand final concert scheduled for tonight (Thursday) at Caol primary school.

Prizewinners: Elizabeth Findlay Memorial trophy for Scots violin solo age 17 and under, Carys Bilton and Aaron Mellis; Lochaber Strathspey and Reel Society trophy for under 18 fiddle group, Sgoil Chuil Loch Abar; Lydia Jackson trophy for clarsach solo, Lorna Linfield; John Tague Memorial Cup for accordion solo, Lucy MacIntyre; Lochaber Cup for age 10 and under chanter, Laura Robertson; William MacLeod Trophy for chanter solo, age 11 and over, Owen Pescod; Kenny Nicholson Memorial Trophy for novice march bagpipe solo, Sean MacDonald; David MacGregor Cup for intermediate march bagpipe solo, Amber MacDonald; Archie Kennedy Memorial Trophy for age 15 and under bagpipe solo march, Finlay Cameron; Alexander MacDonald cup for



CLARSACH: Syeda Choudhury

age 15 and under Strathspey and Reel bagpipe solo, Finlay Cameron; James Grace Memorial Trophy for age 16-18 bagpipe solo, Ally Weir; Evan MacRae Trophy for first year piobaireachd bagpipe solo, Amber MacDonald; Lochaber Piping Society Trophy for second year piobaireachd bagpipe solo, Megan Campbell; John MacCallum Memorial Trophy for senior piobaireachd bagpipe solo, Ally Weir; Lochaber Pipe Band Trophy for bagpipe solo, 18 and under jig, Finlay Cameron; Alee MacDonald Memorial Trophy for bagpipe quartet for age 18 and under, Lochaber Pipers; Premier Scots Traditional Award for Scots violin, Hannah MacRae.



PREMIER AWARD: Hannah MacRae



BAGPIPES: piping adjudicator Craig Muirhead, left, with Martin MacKinnon, Amber MacDonald and Megan Campbell



ACCORDION SOLO: Lucy MacIntyre

Skye woman's decade of dedication

MORE than 10 years after the Boxing Day tsunami killed hundreds of thousands of people, a Skye woman is still dedicated to fundraising for the orphans left behind.

Gill Williams, from Watnish, founded Hands Across the Water UK in 2005 after she was posted to Thailand in her job as a police officer and saw the devastation first hand.

Through donations to the charity and a number of sponsored cycles, Ms Williams has built an orphanage and arranged three trips for children to visit Skye, with another planned for next month.

A 330-mile 'tour de Scotland' cycle has just been arranged for August, which will

see 16 bikers travel from Fort William to Inverness, Pitlochry and Oban before returning to Fort William.

Ms Williams said: 'When I was posted to Thailand and saw the devastation caused by the tsunami I decided I wanted to set up an orphanage. The support was overwhelming and the charity has carried on from there.'

'Seven children are coming over to Skye from Thailand and as well as being a great experience for them, seeing the orphans here really brings the issue home to people.'

A fundraising target of £10,000 has been set for the cycle but Ms Williams said

raising awareness is just as important. She said: 'If we don't make the target we don't make it. We'll keep going anyway because for us it's about letting people know that even though it has been 10 years since the tsunami, these children still really need our help.'

When the orphans are visiting Skye, a Thai high tea will be held in Watnish village hall from 3pm on April 11, featuring dancing and singing from the children.

For more information or to sponsor the cycle go to www.facebook.com/HandsAcrossTheWaterUK. Donations can also be made via www.justgiving.com/HATWUK-TDS2015/.

Crash victims remembered 70 years on



COMMEMORATIONS: from left, the Reverend Rory MacLeod, John Angus MacDonald and Lachie Gillies with the plaque which will be added to the Staffin war memorial

COMMEMORATIONS were held at a war memorial in Staffin, north Skye, to mark the 70th anniversary of a plane crash which killed nine American airmen, just months before the end of the second world war.

Seventy people turned out to remember the tragedy of March 3 1945, when a B-17G Flying Fortress crashed in fog at Beinn Edra, on its way to a RAF base in Wales after departing from America.

Former commando chaplain and newly-installed Broadford Church of Scotland minister Rory MacLeod presided over the commemoration, assisted by the Reverend John Murray.

A plaque with the names of the nine fallen airmen was unveiled by John Angus MacDonald, who was out rabbiting as a young boy when the crash happened, although was too young to be involved in the rescue attempts. The plaque will be added to the Staffin war memorial.

Lachie Gillies, from Stenscholl, was an eyewitness to the crash and said a Gaelic prayer, the Royal British Legion paraded colours and teenagers Eoghann Beaton from Kilmuir and Anna Nicolson, Flodigarry, provided the piping and clarsach, respectively.

The event, held on March 7, was arranged by Staffin's community council and trust.

Residents urged to get on board island bus talks

RESIDENTS of Uist and Barra are being asked for their views on council-funded buses.

Comhairle nan Eilean Siar is to host a number of meetings on the islands from today (March 16) until March 23 to allow people to highlight important issues.

A questionnaire will also be sent to all

households and the consultation will be open for two weeks to allow residents to send responses.

Councillor John Mackay, chairman of the transport and infrastructure committee, said: 'I am pleased the process of community engagement has started.'

'The comhairle invests a significant

amount of resources into public bus transport services and it is extremely important that they meet the needs of the communities involved.'

'I would urge everyone in Uist and Barra to take an active role in this process.'

A full list of meetings is available from the comhairle.

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Easter Guide

ALL WEEKEND

- Oban Phoenix Cinema
- Oban War and Peace Museum
- Kilmartin House and Kilmartin Glen
- Atlantis Leisure Centre
- Mid Argyll Community Pool
- Dunollie Castle and 1745 house
- Campbeltown Museum
- Heritage Centre, Campbeltown
- Here We Are, next to the Loch Fyne Oyster Bar
- Arduaine Garden, near Kilmelford, Crae and Geilston Gardens

GOOD FRIDAY

Nature Nippers at National Trust of Scotland, Glencoe
 Nature Nippers is a pre-school nature group for under 5's and their parents. Join us every month for a chance to explore and enjoy nature through games and play.
 Suitable for: Under 5's and their parents. For more information call 0844 493 2222

SUNDAY

6am MacCaig's Tower Easter Dawn Service of Light and Eucharist
 10am - 4pm The Scottish Sea Life Sanctuary, Barcaldine Chocolate Easter Egg Hunt
 2pm - 4pm Craignure Producers' Market, Craignure Village Hall on the Isle of Mull.

EASTER MONDAY

2pm - 4pm Achnabreac Forest car park, Lochgilphead 2pm to 4pm
 This annual Easter event is a family fun event full of exciting activities. There will be an Easter fun trail, face painting, craft making and meet the forest bunny and beaver. Suitable for all ages, Booking essential on 01546 602518



Church services

Kilmore and Oban Holy Week and Easter Services

Tuesday 31st 7.00pm
 J Stainer's The Crucifixion
Wednesday 1st 7.00pm
 Holy Week Worship (at Kilmore)
Thursday 2nd 7.00pm
 Maundy Thursday Communion (in Church Centre)
Sunday 5th 9.45am
 Easter Breakfast and Egg Rolling
10.30am Easter All-Age Celebration Service
6.00pm Easter Evening Worship (at Kilmore)
 More info at: obancofs@btinternet.com
www.obanchurch.com
 01631 562405

VISITATION AT TAYNUILT

Taynuilt
Saturday Easter Vigil 9.30am
Sunday Mass 11am
Dalmally
Sunday Mass 9am

Oban Congregational Church

A Celebration Of Easter
 Easter Sunrise Rise Service At Pulpit Hill
 Breakfast Followed By
 All Age Morning Service 11AM
 Easter Monday Coffee Morning
 Between 10.30 and 12.30

St Columba's Cathedral

Corran Esplanade
 Oban, OBAN PA34 5AB
 Tel: 01631 562123
Holy Thursday 7pm
Good Friday 3pm
Easter Saturday Vigil 9am
Easter Sunday Mass 10.30am

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Craignure	Wed 8 April
Tobermory	Thu 9 - Sat 11 April
Coll	Mon 13 April
Tiree	Tue 14 - Wed 15 April

Big Hero 6 (PG) 108 mins
 02/04 at 5.30pm, 04/04 at 2pm, 06/04 at 5.30pm, 07/04 at 5.30pm, 08/04 at 5.30pm, 09/04 at 5.30pm, 11/04 at 2pm, 13/04 at 5.30pm, 14/04 at 5.30pm
The Theory of Everything (12A) 123 mins
 02/04 at 8.30pm, 05/04 at 5.30pm, 07/04 at 8.30pm, 11/04 at 8.30pm, 14/04 at 8.30pm
Paddington (PG) 95 mins
 03/04 at 5.30pm, 15/04 at 2pm
The Second Best Exotic Marigold Hotel (PG) 122 mins
 03/04 at 8.30pm, 05/04 at 8.30pm, 06/04 at 8.30pm, 08/04 at 8.30pm, 09/04 at 8.30pm, 11/04 at 5.30pm, 13/04 at 8.30pm, 15/04 at 5.30pm
Fifty Shades of Grey (18) 125 mins
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The Hobbit: Battle of the Five Armies (12A) 144 mins
 05/04 at 2pm
Selma (12A) 128 mins
 10/04 at 5.30pm
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www.dunollie.org

EASTER TRADITIONS

Since its origins, Easter has been a time of celebration and feasting and many Traditional Easter games and customs developed, such as egg rolling, egg tapping, pace egging and egg decorating.

EASTER means so many things to many people.

For many it is the greatest celebration of the religious calendar – early Easter Sunday service will see dawn break open with joyful singing on hillsides.

It is a time of year when people from every denomination come together to marvel in the death and resurrection of Christ.

As children many of us will remember rolling our decorated boiled eggs down a hillside – representing, of course, the stone being rolled away from the tomb where Jesus was buried when he was taken from the cross at Calvary.

Easter is also a time of family celebration. Winter is over, hopefully, and for many living on the west coast it is time to begin the season again.

In every area there will be loads to do whether the weather is good or bad.

With that in mind, this Easter there's lots to do for all the family.

GREAT BRITAIN

Marshmallow bunnies and candy eggs in an Easter basket. In some cultures rabbits, which represent fertility, are a symbol of Easter.

Throughout the English-speaking world, many Easter traditions are similar with only minor differences. For example, Saturday is traditionally spent decorating Easter eggs and hunting for them with children on Sunday morning, by which time they have been mysteriously hidden all over the house and garden. Other traditions involve parents telling their children that eggs and other treats such as chocolate eggs or rabbits, and marshmallow chicks (Peeps), have been delivered by the Easter Bunny in an Easter basket, which children find waiting for them when they wake up.

Families observe the religious aspects of Easter by attending Sunday Mass or services in the morning and then participating in a feast or party in the afternoon. Some families have a traditional Sunday roast, often of either roast lamb or ham.

Easter breads such as Simnel cake, a fruit cake with eleven marzipan balls representing the eleven faithful apostles, or nut breads such as potica are traditionally served. Hot cross buns, spiced buns with a cross on top, are traditionally associated with Good Friday, but today are often eaten well before and after.

In Scotland, the north of England, and Northern Ireland, the traditions of rolling decorated eggs down steep hills and pace egging can still be seen. Pace comes from the Latin Pacha which means Easter.

NORTH AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

In Louisiana, USA, egg tapping is known as egg knocking. Marksville, Louisiana claims to host the oldest egg-knocking competition in the US, dating back to the 1950s. Competitors pair up on the steps of the courthouse on Easter Sunday and knock the tips of two eggs together.

If the shell of your egg cracks you have to forfeit it, a process that continues until just

one egg remains.

In the British Overseas Territory of Bermuda, historically famous for growing and exporting the Easter lily, the most notable feature of the Easter celebration is the flying of kites to symbolize Christ's ascent.

Traditional Bermuda kites are constructed by Bermudians of all ages as Easter approaches, and are normally only flown at Easter. In addition to hot cross buns and Easter eggs, fish cakes are traditionally eaten in Bermuda at this time.

In Jamaica, eating bun and cheese is a highly anticipated custom by Jamaican nationals all over the world. The Jamaica Easter Buns are spiced and have raisins, and baked in a loaf tin. The buns are sliced and eaten with a slice of cheese. It is a common practice for employers to make gifts of bun and cheese or a single loaf of bun to staff members.

EASTERN EUROPE

In Bulgaria widespread tradition is to fight with eggs by pair and one's egg become last surviving is called borak. The tradition is to display the decorated eggs on the Easter table together with the Easter dinner consisting of roasted lamb, a salad called Easter salad (lettuce with cucumbers) and a sweet bread called kozunak.

In the Czech Republic and Slovakia, a tradition of spanking or whipping is carried out on Easter Monday. In the morning, men spank women with a special handmade whip called a pomlázka (in Czech) or korbáč (in Slovak), in eastern regions of former Czechoslovakia Moravia and Slovakia they also throw cold water on them.

The pomlázka/korbáč consists of eight, twelve or even twenty-four withies (willow rods), is usually from half a meter to two meters long and decorated with coloured ribbons at the end. The spanking may be painful, but it's not intended to cause suffering. A legend says that women should be spanked with a whip in order to keep their health and beauty during the whole next year.

An additional purpose can be for men to exhibit their attraction to women; unvisited women can even feel offended.

Traditionally, the spanked woman gives a coloured egg (kraslica) prepared by themselves, invites to eat and drink as a sign of her thanks to the man. If the visitor is a small boy, he is usually provided with sweets, and a small amount of money.

In some regions, the women can get revenge in the afternoon or the following day when they can pour a bucket of cold water on any man. The habit slightly varies across Slovakia and the Czech Republic. A similar tradition existed in Poland (where it is called Dyngus Day), but it is now little more than an all-day water fight.

In Germany, decorated eggs are hung on branches of bushes and trees to make them Easter egg trees. Eggs also used to dress wells for Easter.

In Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and Slovenia, a basket of food is prepared and covered with a handmade cloth, and brought to the church to be blessed. A typical Easter basket includes bread, colored eggs, ham, horseradish, and a type of nut cake called potica.

The butter lamb (Baranek wielkanocny) is a traditional addition to the Easter Meal for many Polish Catholics. Butter is shaped into a lamb either by hand or in a lamb-shaped mould.

ITALY

Italian traditional Easter cake called the Colomba Pasquale

In Florence, Italy, the unique custom of the Scoppio del carro is observed in which a holy fire lit from stone shards from the Holy Sepulchre are used to light a fire during the singing of the Gloria of the Easter Sunday mass, which is used to ignite a rocket in the form of a dove, representing peace and the holy spirit, which following a wire in turn lights a cart containing pyrotechnics in the small square before the Cathedral.

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Eigg inspires Edinburgh Storytelling Centre exhibition

A UNIQUE collaboration inspired by the Isle of Eigg between Edinburgh artist Rose Strang, poet JL Williams and cellist Atzi Muramatsu will launch the Eigg Island exhibition at the Scottish Storytelling Centre on March 26.

Performed against a backdrop of three large paintings by Rose Strang, the culmination of this 12 month project will include readings of new poems by JL Williams, a cello piece improvised by Muramatsu in response to the artworks, and a performance of his composition for string quartet 'Gaea Metempsychosis'.

The exhibition is curated by artist Rose Strang and her paintings form the core of the exhibition. She and Atzi Muramatsu developed the work and their collaboration while spending time on Eigg, exploring its land, seascapes, human and geological history.

While Strang's work reveals her experience discovering the island in a process of distanced imagining and gradual familiarization, Muramatsu's 'Gaea Metempsychosis' takes its inspiration from the fossil forms melting into the sea at the northern cliff of the Isle of Eigg.

The exhibition, which runs until April 21, also includes work by photographer Simon Nicholas White, and four Eigg-based makers; cobweb lace knitter Jenny Robertson, traditional basket makers Catherine Davies and Pascal Carr and felt artist Libby Galli.

For more information visit the website tracscotland.org or phone 0131 556 9579.

Rhododendron festival in Argyll

£12k funding boost for region's gardens

A RHODODENDRON festival in Argyll is part of a new marketing campaign supported by VisitScotland.

The Glorious Gardens of Argyll and Bute, the group which this month celebrates its 20th anniversary, was awarded £12,202 through the national tourism organisation's growth fund to help highlight the stunning range of flowers and plants that thrive in the region's exotic micro climate.

Members range from An Cala on the Isle of Seil to the 120-acre Benmore Botanic Garden in Dunoon, which boasts more than 300 kinds of rhododendron and more than a third of the world's hardy conifer species.

Group secretary Sue Thornley, who owns Glenarn garden near Helensburgh with her husband Mike, said: 'The range and variety of plants that flourish in the mild, moist climate and acid soils of Argyll and Bute is truly amazing.'

'These plants come from every corner of the globe, from the Himalayas, North and South America and even from Australia and New Zealand.'

David Adams McGilp, VisitScotland's regional director, said: 'Argyll and Bute really does boast some of the most beautiful gardens in the country, and I am delighted that this award from the VisitScotland growth fund will help the group to raise its profile.'

'I am sure that their new campaign will encourage even more visitors to the region, with the Festival of Rhododendrons set to be a particular highlight.'

Taynuilt siblings guest dance with Duchy Ballet

BALLET West's senior principal dancers, Jonathan and Sara Maria Barton from Taynuilt, are to star as guest artists in Duchy Ballet's Cinderella in Truro, Cornwall.

Sara Maria is returning to guest with the company she first danced with aged 16, and both brother and sister will be working with choreographer, Terence Etherbridge, their former teacher.

Jonathan and Sara Maria will be taking the roles of Prince Charming and Cinderella.



CINDERELLA: Brother and sister Jonathan and Sara Maria Barton will have lead roles in Duchy Ballet's production. Photo: Ryan Davies.

Mod Music marathon

A MUSIC marathon will raise cash for the Royal National Mod being held in Oban in October.

The sponsored accordion music marathon will take place on Saturday March 28 between noon and 5pm in the Royal Hotel, Oban. Ross MacPherson, Calum MacPhail and friends will be playing Gaelic/Scottish music non-stop followed by a Stovies cèilidh dance starting at 8 pm.

The dance will see the Ross MacPherson Dance Band, Mod gold medallist Mary Catherine MacNeil and Uist-based singer Paul McCallum.



TROUBLE IN STORE: Benderloch and North Connel Junior team who are performing Detective Mimms and the Snaffler. They are, from left: Finlay McLuckie, Dylan Howe, Saskia Miller, Rose McIntyre, Callum McLuckie, Murray Scott, Tara Crabb, Katy MacCorquodale, Ewan Macpherson, Jenny McIntyre, Darcey Miller, Shona McKenzie and Ruby Crabb.

All roads lead to drama fest

THREE great nights of live theatre will be brought to the Corran Halls in Oban by members of drama societies from Campbeltown, Lochgilphead, Adrishag, Taynuilt, Benderloch, and Appin starting on Wednesday, March 25 at 7.30pm

A particularly interesting spectrum of plays from authors as diverse as Geoff Bamber and James Saunders,

are guaranteed to stimulate the imagination of the teams, their directors and the audiences.

This year the festival will have eight entries - eight one-act plays over the three nights culminating in the final adjudication and award ceremony on the last night.

Participating in live theatre provides extraordinary opportunities to learn and apply

a wide range of skills and talents, on stage and back stage, so it is particularly pleasing to be welcoming two junior teams to the festival, one from Taynuilt and one from Benderloch.

The Benderloch play Detective Mimms and the Snaffler features 13 children ranging in age from seven to 13.

Central to the success of a drama festival is the adjudicator, who has the challenge

of assessing and analysing the various performances, offering encouragement and criticism in equal measures, and keeping audiences entertained with his insights and observations.

This year's adjudicator is Dr. Paul Dougall from Hamilton. Dr Dougall was formerly vice dean in the faculty of education at the University

of Strathclyde and head of department of applied arts.

As an adjudicator he has worked at festivals all over Scotland, and internationally, for more than 40 years.

So, come along to the Corran Halls in March, enjoy a great evening's entertainment, and give your support to the teams young and old who have worked so hard to put on their plays.



Musicians get together for Mod fundraising ceilidh

A FUNDRAISING ceilidh saw a packed house enjoy performances from young and old at the Commercial Lodge in Oban recently.

The ceilidh was organised to raise money for the Oban Royal National Mod 2015, and the audience heard a variety of instruments from a number of musicians.

The Soillse folk group performed at the event, a band which was recently formed from Oban high school pupils who were unsuccessful in making it into the school's traditional school of music.

The youngsters were superb, working alongside seasoned professionals such as Sileas Sinclair, Stuart Campbell, Danny MacRae, John Joe MacNeil, Morag Smith and Freddie MacKenzie.



Mid Argyll Crinan Puffer race sponsorship renewed

SCOTTISH Sea Farms has renewed its sponsorship of the popular Crinan Puffer race, held in Mid Argyll, for a further two years to the tune of £3,000.

The 8.5mile point-to-point race along the Crinan Canal shows off the best of the local scenery as runners race along the banks of the picturesque canal.

Sue Hillman, chairwoman, Mid Argyll Community Enterprises Ltd, said: 'This fantastic event is proving ever more popular and we offer our sincere thanks to our race sponsors Scottish Sea Farms, which is now in its four year of

supporting the event. 'We expect numbers in the region of 170 to take part this year.'



The Puffer race takes place along the banks of the Crinan Canal

Lochgoilhead Fiddle Workshop receives limelight award

STRACHUR'S Lochgoilhead Fiddle Workshop is the 20th recipient of Hands Up for Trad's business limelight award.

The Limelights is a monthly initiative recognising the outstanding contributions made by businesses and organisations that contribute, shape and influence the arts and cultural sector in Scotland today.

Alison Duncan of Lochgoilhead Fiddle Workshop said: 'We are amazed and delighted to receive this award. Thank you for the opportunity to tell everyone about our enthusiastic tutors who cheerfully travel by the Rest-and-Be-Thankful or Western Ferries to tutor us in Strachur; our dedicated class members who journey from Dunoon, Tighnabruaich, Lochgoilhead, Inveraray, Lochgilphead and places in between to play their fiddles and thank you to our hard-working committee, and non-committee members, who keep the workshop running smoothly.'

'We have two events coming up in March so we will use each of them to congratulate ourselves.'

Social scene

Fort William Football Club Sportsman's Dinner



Fort William Football Club players (back) join the top table at the club's sportsman's dinner

THOUSANDS of pounds was raised for Fort William Football Club at this year's sportsman's dinner. More than 100 people turned out for the fundraiser in the Moorings Hotel on Saturday night to hear former old firm stars Tosh McKinlay and Gordon Smith tell tales of their footballing days. An auction on the night raised more than £3,000 for the club and when The Oban Times went to print committee members were awaiting the total raised from the raffle and games.

And the players were in high spirits, enjoying the evening after a 3-2 victory against Wick Academy at Claggan Park on Saturday afternoon. David MacDonald, vice chairman of Fort William Football Club, said: 'Our sportsman's dinner, like last year, was an outstanding success. 'We would like to say a very big thank you to all those who attended, those who donated auction lots and raffle prizes. Your support is very much appreciated.

'We would also like to thank Aileen Tasker and her excellent team at The Moorings Hotel who looked after us superbly and the evening was brilliantly compered by Dave Edwards. 'Finally, a big thank you to our two special guests, Tosh McKinlay and Gordon Smith who had the audience in hysterics from start to finish, and were absolutely brilliant to listen to. 'All in all, Saturday was a very good day to be involved with Fort William Football Club.'



Master of ceremonies Dave Edwards, middle, with guest speakers Gordon Smith, left, and Tosh McKinlay



Gordon Smith recounts his career in football



Club stalwart Colin Neilson and his wife Grace were top table guests



Guest speaker Tosh McKinlay entertained the audience



Celebrating: From left, vice chairman David MacDonald, manager Calum MacLean and assistant manager Ally Ewen



Members of the club committee and their guests enjoyed the evening

Join in poet's centenary celebrations

ORGANISERS of the George Campbell Hay Centenary Celebration (GCHCC) are looking for people to join in creative music, art and language workshops and to participate in a final concert and exhibition on December 5, 2015, to celebrate the works of the prolific Tarbert poet.

As well as writing Gaelic, Scots and English poetry, Hay also wrote poems in French, Italian and Norwegian, and translated poetry into Gaelic.

Organisers are running this centenary celebration to encourage more people to appreciate Hay's works in his centenary year.

Various weekend workshops are being held in the Mid Argyll village throughout 2015 with artists including singers Joy Dunlop, Kenny Thomson and Finlay Wells and others via Artmap Argyll. Musician Mary Ann Kennedy is also hoping to put in an appearance.

Joy Dunlop is offering beginners' Gaelic workshops and various tutors will offer poetry workshops to study Hay's use of language and the linguistic history of Tarbert and Kintyre.

Participants from both the Gaelic and poetry workshops will also be encouraged to learn some of Hay's poetry at the centenary concert on December 5, accompanied by a fitting musical soundscape and display of visual art and photography.

Kenny Thomson is offering choral workshops so that participants can learn various aspects of vocal and choral technique as well as perform new choral settings of Hay's poetry in Gaelic, Scots and English. No knowledge of Gaelic or Scots required.

Staying with the musical theme, Finlay Wells is offering music workshops in which participants compose and create soundscapes to reflect Hay's poetry and perform new vocal/instrumental settings of Hay's poetry.

Both choral and music workshop participants are welcome to perform at the concert on December 5, and will have the opportunity to record at least one track for the Centenary CD.

For those more inclined toward the visual arts, Artmap Argyll and various local photography tutors will offer art and photography workshops, using George Campbell Hay's poetry as inspiration to create artwork and photography to be exhibited at the centenary exhibition and concert.

Participants' artwork and photography may also be used in the centenary book and CD cover and on information boards for Hay-inspired walks.

The first workshop dates are May 2 and 3, then May 23 and 24, with the two-day music workshop on May 30 and 31. For further information, contact: Susan Rhodes on 07516355969, or email: gchcc@outlook.com

Entertainment Guide

Cinema

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

LISTINGS FOR 20 MARCH 2015 - 26 MARCH 2015

HOME (U)	
Sat 21, Sun 22: 11:00, 3D 11:10, 13:10, 3D 13:20	
INSURGENT (12A)	
Fri 20: 15:00, 3D 17:45, 20:15	Sat 21: 3D 15:30, 18:10, 20:40
Sun 22: 15:30, 3D 18:10, 20:40	Mon 23: 15:20, 20:15
Tue 24: 15:00, 3D 17:45, 20:15	Wed 25: 3D 15:00, 17:45, 20:15
Thu 26: 15:20, 20:15	
NT LIVE: A VIEW FROM THE BRIDGE (12A)	
Thu 26: 19:00	
NT LIVE: HAMLET (12A)	
Mon 23: 19:00	
THE SECOND BEST EXOTIC MARIGOLD HOTEL (PG)	
Fri 20: 14:50, 17:30, 20:30	Sat 21: 15:20, 18:00, 20:50
Sun 22: 15:20, 18:00, 20:50	Mon 23: 14:50, 17:30
Tue 24: 14:50, 17:30, 20:30	Wed 25: 14:50, 17:30, 20:30
Thu 26: 14:50, 17:30	

FILM SYNOPSIS

HOME (U) 124MINS
An alien fugitive bonds with an Earth girl in this crazy animated comedy from the creators of 'How to Train Your Dragon'. The Boov are an alien race desperate for a new place to call home. Under their supremely confident leader, Captain Smek (Steve Martin), they decide the Earth will do just fine. So an invasion is launched and all the inconvenient humans relocated. But a feisty girl named Tip (Rihanna) manages to avoid the round-up, along with her adorable pet cat. She then encounters Oh (Jim Parsons) - a lonely, unpopular Boov who's been banished for causing major calamities. An unlikely friendship develops as the odd couple embark on an epic road trip, during which Oh supercharges Tip's car and learns that music does funny things to his body!

DIVERGENT SERIES: INSURGENT (12A) 130MINS
One choice can transform you-or it can destroy you. But every choice has consequences, and as unrest surges in the factions all around her, Iris Prior must continue trying to save those she loves--and herself--while grappling with haunting questions of grief and forgiveness, identity and loyalty, politics and love. Iris's initiation day should have been marked by celebration and victory with her chosen faction; instead, the day ended with unspeakable horrors. War now looms as conflict between the factions and their ideologies grows. And in times of war, sides must be chosen, secrets will emerge, and choices will become even more irrevocable--and even more powerful. Transformed by her own decisions but also by haunting grief and guilt, radical new discoveries, and shifting relationships. This must fully embrace her Divergence, even if she does not know what she may lose by doing so.

NT LIVE: A VIEW FROM THE BRIDGE
The great Arthur Miller confronts the American dream in this dark and passionate tale. In Brooklyn, longshoreman Eddie Carbone welcomes his Sicilian cousins to the land of freedom. But when one of them falls for his beautiful niece, they discover that freedom comes at a price. Eddie's jealous mistrust exposes a deep, unspeakable secret - one that drives him to commit the ultimate betrayal. The visionary Ivo van Hoof directs this stunning production of Miller's tragic masterpiece, broadcast from London's West End by National Theatre Live.

NT LIVE: HAMLET
From its sell-out run at Manchester's Royal Exchange Theatre comes this unique and critically acclaimed production of Shakespeare's tragic Hamlet. In this stripped-back, fresh and fast-paced version, BAFTA nominee Maxine Peake creates a Hamlet for now, giving a performance hailed as "delicately ferocious" by The Guardian and "a milestone Hamlet" by the Manchester Evening News. Hamlet is Shakespeare's most iconic work. The play explodes with big ideas and is the ultimate story of loyalty, love, betrayal, murder and madness. Hamlet's father is dead and Denmark has crowned a new king. Consumed by grief, he struggles to exact revenge, with devastating consequences. This groundbreaking stage production, directed by Sarah Frankcom, was the Royal Exchange's fastest-selling show in a decade. Alongside Maxine Peake as the eponymous prince, a number of other roles, including Polonius and Rosencrantz, are also played by women. Hamlet is brought to cinemas by director Margaret Williams, whose Written on Skin for the Royal Opera House/BBC won the Gramophone Contemporary Award and the Diapason d'or, and producers Anne Beresford and Debbie Gray, the team behind the highly successful cinema broadcast of Peter Grimes on Aldeburgh Beach.

THE SECOND BEST EXOTIC MARIGOLD HOTEL (PG) 122 MIN
The Second Best Exotic Marigold Hotel is the expansionist dream of Sonny (Dev Patel), and it's making more claims on his time than he has available, considering his imminent marriage to the love of his life, Sunaina (Tina Desai). Sonny has his eye on a promising property now that his first venture, The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel for the Elderly and Beautiful, has only a single remaining vacancy - posing a rooming predicament for fresh arrivals Guy (Richard Gere) and Lavinia (Tamsin Greig). Evelyn and Douglas (Judi Dench and Bill Nighy) have now joined the Jaipur workforce, and are wondering where their regular dates for Chilla pancakes will lead, while Norman and Carol (Ronald Pickup and Diana Hardcastle) are negotiating the tricky waters of an exclusive relationship, as Madge (Celia Imrie) juggles two eligible and very wealthy suitors. Perhaps the only one who may know the answers is newly installed co-manager of the hotel, Muriel (Maggie Smith), the keeper of everyone's secrets. As the demands of a traditional Indian wedding threaten to engulf them all, an unexpected way forward presents itself.

Radio

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THIS WEEK'S LISTINGS

MONDAY: 0800 AM on FM, 0810 Breakfast Show, 0900 Monday Morning With Andy and Stephen, 1100 Molly Black, 1300 CLYDE 2, 1500 Jim Edge, 1700 Drivetime With Danni Hay, 1900 Rosie's Highland Fling, 2000 John McLuckie's Show, 2100 David Cullen, 2200 American Jukebox with Michelle
TUESDAY: 0800 AM on FM, 0810 Breakfast Show with Maggie May, 1000 Ken Hunter, 1200 Memories are Made of This with Ken Hunter, 1330 The Quiz with Danni Hay, 1500 Lesley Blair-Simmonds, 1700 Drivetime with Jim Lynch, 1900 Sounds Scottish with Archie Cameron, 2000 Highest Praise with Stuart, 2100 Elaine Lamb, 2300 Northern Soul with Gordon Covey
WEDNESDAY: 0800 AM on FM, 0810 Breakfast Show, 0900 Sound Scottish (repeat), 1000 Comfort Zone with Doug Carmichael, 1300 CLYDE 2, 1500 Elaine Lamb, 1700 Drivetime with Campbell and Coll, 1900 Country Meets Rock with Len & Ken, 2100 Gordon's Grooves
THURSDAY: 0800 Maggie May's Carousel, 1100 Molly's Mix with Molly Black, 1300 CLYDE 2, 1500 Gordon Covey, 1700 Drivetime with DJ Taz, 1900 Christie's Collection, 2100 Ann's Ceilidh, 2200 Margo Till Midnight
FRIDAY: 0800 Jean Ainsley Breakfast Show, 1000 Teeny and Tiny Show, 1300 CLYDE 2, 1500 Weekend Warmup with Ian Blair-Simmonds, 1700 Drive Show with Jim Lynch, 1845 Sports View, 1900 Country Meets Country with Jackie Craig, 2000 Friday Night with Innes, 2100 TFI Friday with Jim Lawn
SATURDAY: 0900 Maggie's Swingin' Sixties, 1000 Saturday Morning Live with Linda Crowther, 1330 CLYDE 2, 1800 Sports View with the Dream Team, 1900 Marcus, 2000 Dave Lewis
SUNDAY: 0900 Sunday Morning with Breege, 1100 - 1400 Allan, 1630 Archie Darling, 1800 Ken's Friends with Ken Hunter, 1900 New Country Show with David Entwistle, 2100 Drum & Bass with Graham Scott

COMMUNITY NOTICEBOARD

The Lorn Show CEILIDH DANCE
With Gunna Sound
Saturday 21st March
North Connel Hall, 8pm
Tickets £10
Available from Oban Music
Under 14's free (Must be accompanied by an adult)
Supper, Licenced

ABCD: Argyll Beats Cardiovascular Disease
Annual 10k race and Fun Run
Sunday 10th May at 1.00pm
starting from the Hospital
All ages and abilities welcome.
Application forms from Atlantis Leisure, selected shops in Oban, and on our web site: www.abcd-oban.co.uk
Or register on the day from noon till 12.30pm

APPIN HISTORICAL SOCIETY
Oban Mountain Rescue: Gordon Binnie
Saturday 21 March
Port Appin Hall
2.30pm
All welcome!
www.appinhistorical society.co.uk

ARGYLL ANIMAL AID
Congregational Church Hall
Tweeddale Street, Oban
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10am - 4pm
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Sponsored Accordion Music Marathon
By Ross MacPherson, Calum MacPhail & Friends
ROYAL HOTEL, OBAN
Saturday 28th March 2015, 12pm to 5pm
Followed by Stovies Ceilidh Dance at 8.00pm
Admission: £10.00
Featuring: Ross MacPherson Dance Band
Mary Catherine MacNeil (M.G.M./T.G.M.)
Paul McCallum (M.G.M./T.G.M.)
Raffle prizes to be won

An Comunn Gaidhealach MEUR CHRUACHAIN (Cruachan Branch)
CEILIDH
Robert Robertson (Mod Gold Medallist),
Ainsley Hamill (Mod Silver Medallist)
The OHS Trad Group, Grant MacFarlane - Accordion
The Isla Sinclair Dancers, Fear an Taighe: Eric Smith
TAYNULT VILLAGE HALL SATURDAY, 21st March at 7.30 pm
Admission £4.00, Members £3.00, children £2.00

OBAN ART SOCIETY
Talk/Demonstration by Fraser MacIver
From Life/Mind or Memory
20th March 2015
in The Lorn Resource Centre
Soroba Road, Oban
7.30pm to 9.30pm
Visitors very welcome

Advertise in the Community Noticeboard for just £16.21 (plus VAT)
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Oban High School Pipe Band concert



IT WAS standing room only at the Corran Halls recently for a concert held by Oban High School Pipe Band and Friends. From primary school children who have just picked up a chanter, to the 2010 Oban high school band who reunited for a one-off performance, the night was heralded a great success on March 11 by host and pipe major Angus MacColl.

Singer Mary Catherine MacNeil gave two special performances, singing Ellan Vannin at the start of the night and Piper to the End as

the second half drew to a close. Angus John MacColl, who won the silver medal at the Northern meeting in Inverness last year, led some of the younger pipers through performances throughout the night. Five members of the Sinclair School of Dance were also on hand danced in both halves of the night, ably assisted by all the band members past and present for the finale reels, before the night was rounded off with a performance of the pipe favourite, Ducking and Diving.



Angus John MacColl, who leading some young pipers. 16_t12pipeband3



Angus John MacColl leading the Novice Juvenile pipers. 16_t12pipeband11



The Oban high school band of traditional music. 16_t12pipeband5



Mary Catherine MacNeil, who joined the Oban high school pipe band for two performances throughout the night. 16_t12pipeband4



The 2010 pipe band, who reunited for a special performance. 16_t12pipeband8



Chanter players from local primary schools showing off their talents. 16_t12pipeband6



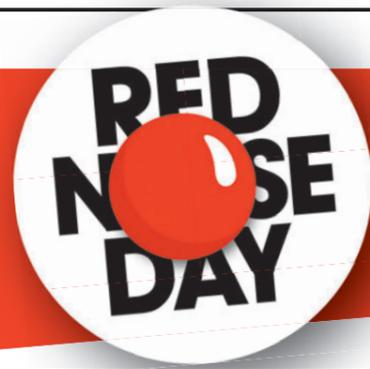
All band members, led by Angus MacColl for the finale. 16_t12pipeband9



Members of the Sinclair School of Dance. 16_t12pipeband10



Ellie MacNiven, who will be taking her pipes with her to North Carolina this summer as she takes up a scholarship in the USA. 16_t12pipeband7



THE BRITISH public's generosity has helped Comic Relief reach a total of £1 billion over the last 30 years. The amount of money raised since 1985 wouldn't be possible without all the small fundraising efforts made

by communities across the UK. Here is a selection of some of the fundraising fun schools in the West Highlands and Islands had up to on March 14, raising fantastic sums for the cause.

Because so many of our local schools were involved in their own fabulous fundraising endeavours, more Red Nose Day pictures will feature in next week's Oban Times



The Salen Primary school pupils who dressed up for Red Nose Day.



Bowmore primary pupils dressed-up or dressed-down for a non-uniform day, raising £250 along with money from sales of red noses.



Children at Iona primary school took part in a sponsored walk raising £650. Pictured is pre-five pupil Erin Tindal.



Pupils from Dunbeg primary school with their funny faces for Red Nose Day. 16_t12dunbegnose01



Rockfield primary school primary one and gaelic primary one pupils with their noses, glasses and red outfits for Comic Relief. 16_t12rockfieldnose01



Roy Bridge primary school held a sponsored swim and bake sale, raising more than £300



Some of the Park primary school pupils who dressed up for Red Nose Day. 16_t12parknose01



The morning children at Taynuilt Nursery enjoying Red Nose Day Fun. t12taynursery01no



Taynuilt primary school pupils made their faces funny for money, raising £94.20.



Portree primary staff and pupils dressed up, raising £63. f12portree1no



St Bride's primary school raised £114 for Comic Relief. f12stbrides1no



Tobermory High School pupils raised more than £1000 by dressing up and holding a danceathon. t12tobermoryhs01no



Pupils of Kilcattan Primary School on Colonsay. t12kilcattan01no



Port Ellen primary school children made cakes and held a party, raising £263.25

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Hill farmers and crofters receive support payments

THOUSANDS of hill farmers and crofters should have received Less Favoured Areas Support Scheme (LFASS) payments at the end of last week. More than £56 million of the government's £65 million was expected to be paid out to 10,000 claimants.

Scottish rural affairs secretary Richard Lochhead said: 'This funding will benefit Scotland's rural economy, in particular our hard-working farmers and crofters who produce the food we eat and who are among the most disadvantaged in Europe because of the naturally poor quality of the vast majority of agricultural land in this country.'

'My officials continue to work

hard to ensure the remaining LFASS 2014 payments are made as quickly as possible and we are firmly focused on making a smooth transition to the 2015 scheme payments.'

Farmers and crofters can apply for LFASS 2015 funding, alongside basic and greening payments, in their single application form (SAF).

Active farmers, who did not previously qualify for LFASS, may be eligible for support under the 2015 scheme, which is still subject to European approval.

Mr Lochhead added: 'Although the new Scottish Rural Development Programme (SRDP) is still subject to formal EU approval, the European

Commission has indicated it is content with our proposals for LFASS 2015. These include more flexibility when applying the criteria so that established, active farmers who were previously frozen out under the old rules may now qualify for support. I would therefore encourage all farmers and crofters to register on the new rural payments and services website as soon as possible so they can apply for LFASS on their SAF when the window opens this week.'

He also confirmed that because of EU delays in approving the new SRDP, and the resulting clash with the SAF window, the forestry grant scheme and agri-environment climate

scheme (AECS) will now open on Monday March 30. AECS applications will be accepted until Friday June 12, while the forestry grant scheme has no closing date.

'It would not be possible to have the AECS window closing any later than mid-June for applications to be processed and approved in time for contracts starting on January 1 2016,' said Mr Lochhead. The continued delay in having our new SRDP approved by Europe is frustrating, but from 2016 we will be able to design SRDP application windows which are convenient for everyone concerned.'

Mr Lochhead also said that feedback from the European

Commission suggests that the Scottish Government is unlikely to be able to add sporting estates to the negative list at this point in time. He said: 'I am determined that large, sporting estates should not be entitled to receive Common Agricultural Policy payments that are intended to support hard-working farmers who produce the food for our tables. We have been advised by the European Commission that current negative list rules would mean that even if a farm that has just one day of sporting activity it would be ineligible for farm payments. This is clearly not acceptable and I will continue to press the commission on this issue.'

Market reports Caledonian Marts

CALEDONIAN Marts in Oban Livestock Centre sold 109 store, breeding and OTM cattle, 618 store hoggets and feeding ewes at its sale on March 10.

Bullocks (46) averaged 258p per kg selling to 303p per kg for a Limousin from I Campbell & Son, Airds, Ardfern and to £970 for two 410kg Herefords from DL & C Bolt, Largiemore, Campbeltown.

Heifers (47) averaged 220p per kg selling to 257p per kg for Limousins again from Airds, Ardfern and to £730 gross from D McDonald, Tyree, Benderloch.

Bulls (2) averaged 186p per kg selling to 194p per kg for a Limousin from A McLarty, Homesteads, Ardfern and to £770 for an Aberdeen Angus from Largiemore, Campbeltown.

In-Calf Cows (4) averaged £580 per head selling to £880 for a Limousin from H & L Boa, Antium, Dervaig, Isle of Mull.

OTM (12) cows averaged 113p per kg selling to 151p per kg for a Limousin from D McDonald, Tyree, Benderloch and to £970 for a Limousin from D Buchanan, Shenavallie, Benderloch.

Prices per head:
Bullocks: £970 Largiemore; £800 Homesteads; £790 Knockvoulagan; £770 Upper Largie; £740 Aird and Upper Largie.
Heifers: £730 Tyree; £640 Upper Largie; £630 Knockvoulagan; £600 Kengharair.

Prices per kg:
Bullocks: 303p Aird; 271p Upper Largie; 270p Tyree and Upper Largie; 269p Aird and Upper Largie; 250p Knockvoulagan.
Heifers: 257p Airds; 244p Turnnalt; 237p Upper Largie; 233p Aird; 222p Kengharair.
OTM cattle: 128p Shenavallie; 127p and 125p Turnnalt and Kilbridge (Anderson) 118p Knockvoulagan; 115p Keil (Ardgower).
Store hoggets (183) averaged £51.23 selling to £88 for Cheviots from A McColl, Mingary, Dervaig.
Feeding ewes (372) averaged £46.89 selling to £122 for Suffolks from J Wilson, Drummore, Kilmicheal, Lochgilphead.
Tups and riggs (63) averaged £60.75 selling to £100 for a Llyne from A Carrie, Park, Kilmilver.
Leading Prices:
Hoggets: Tex - £70 Acharonich and Drummore; BF - £70 and £60 Ardnamurchan Estate, £55 Ardachy;
Suff - £65 Tyree, £62 Slaterich; Mule - £68 Ardachy, £60 Slaterich.
Ewes: Chev - £80 Drummore, £78 Shenavallie; Mule - £70 Achnacreebeg and Drummore, £68 Ardfenaig; BF - £60 Turnnalt and Ardnamurchan, £55 Torloisk and Tiraghoil.
Tups: Suff - Tyree, £70 Achnacreebeg; BF - £60 Slaterich, £56 Torloisk; Chev - £82 Slaterich;
Tex - £80 Strongorm; BFL - £68 Balure of Shran; Jacob - £50 Far Field House.

New pledge to help Kintyre dairy industry meet future challenges

THE EXTENT of the challenges facing Kintyre's dairy industry has been brought to the attention of the area's MP and MSP, with both pledging to take the matter to their respective parliaments.

Argyll and Bute MP Alan Reid and Secretary of State for Scotland Alistair Carmichael MP had a 'kitchen conference' with farmers to discuss the problems facing the industry. Issues raised around First

Milk area representative Sandy Pirie's kitchen table at Machrihanish Farm included the need for grants towards the modernisation of Campbeltown creamery, a loan for First Milk to see it through its current difficulties, better marketing of Mull of Kintyre Cheese, a ferry fare concession for taking milk from Bute and Gigha to the mainland and extending the powers of the supermarket ombudsman.

'Milk is a global commodity,' said Mr Reid following the meeting.

'Increased production in New Zealand and sanctions against Russia both have their impact. Most analysts say that the long-term future of the dairy industry is bright, but the industry needs help to see it through the current crisis caused by the low farm gate milk price. I will take up the issues raised with UK and Scottish governments.'

Michael Russell, Argyll and Bute's MSP, had previously met Mr Pirie and other Kintyre farmers in Campbeltown.

'There was agreement that the priority was to ensure that First Milk honoured its commitment to major investment in the creamery, which is being supported by grants from the Scottish government.'

'I agreed to meet the dairy farmers and their families again soon when there will hopefully

be more information from the company about the timescale of upgrading of the creamery which is vital for the future of the producers and the area.

'In the meantime, I will seek answers from the Scottish government and the company to a range of questions about that investment, the costs incurred by the plant and the prospects for better marketing, innovation and new products.'



MILK QUESTIONS: Michael Russell MSP, right, with Sandy Pirie, First Milk's area representative, centre, and Kintyre farmer and councillor John Armour 08_c10farmmeet01



FARMING ISSUES: dairy producers Malcolm Ronald, David Bolt, chairman Kintyre branch NFUS, David Barbour, Alistair Carmichael MP, Secretary of State for Scotland, Sandy Pirie, John Smith and Alan Reid MP

United Auctions

A CATALOGUED entry of 965 store cattle at United Auctions Islay Auction Mart on March 14 met with a very satisfying trade.

An excellent show of quality cattle was on offer and sold to regular main-land buyers. Charolais Cross Bullocks from Tallant Farm sold to £1,335 whilst Limousin Cross Bullocks from Smalladh led the kilo prices at 339 pence.

Ardbeg Farm led the prices per head for Heifers with Limousin Crosses selling to £1,105 whilst Woodend took the top price per kilo at 286 pence in this section, also with Limousin Crosses.

Principal lots and prices:
Top prices per head:
Bullocks: AAX: £1,175 - Aoradh Farm: £1,045 - Craigens (8) and Octomore (2): £1,035 - Aoradh (2): £955 - Octomore: £945 (5) and £905 (3) - Tallant: CHARx: £1,335 - Tallant: £1,215 - Eorrbabus: £1,175(3) - Aoradh: £1,135 (2) - Eorrbabus: £1,095 (2) - Tallant: £1,085 (6) - Aoradh: £1,085 - Tallant: £1,075 - Craigens (5), Eorrbabus (8) and Tallant (4): £1,065 - Aoradh (11) and Octofad (3): £1,015 - Aoradh and Octofad (7): £985(5) - Craigens: £975 (7) - Eorrbabus: £965 - Craigens (4) and Aoradh (4): £925 (2) - Eorrbabus: £915(6) - Tallant: LIMx: £1,235 and £1,175 - Eorrbabus: £1,165 (2) - Octofad: £1,145 - Eorrbabus & Octofad: £1,125 (2) and £1,115 (7) - Ardbeg: £1,095 - Mulindry: £1,085 - Carrabus and Tallant (8) - £1,075 - Eorrbabus (2) and Tallant (2): £1,055 (7) - Octofad: £1,050 - Carrabus: £1,045 - Eorrbabus, Lossit (2), Ardbeg (2) and Carrabus: £1,045 - Mulindry (2), Lossit, Ardbeg and Foreland Estate: £1,015 and £1,005 - Aoradh: £995 - Ardbeg (2) & Octofad (3) - £990 (4) - Eorrbabus: £975 - Octofad (14), Octomore, Ardbeg (5) and Eorrbabus (2): £955 - Ardbeg (3), Tallant (8) and Mulindry (9): £945 - Tallant and Ardbeg (5) - £935 - Mulindry: £925 (3) - Octofad: £920 (7) - Starchmill: £915 (5) - Aoradh: £915 - Tallant, Blackrock (5) and Eorrbabus (6). SIMx: £895(9) - Cladville. BRBx: £1,325 and £1,205 - Knocklearach Farm: £1,165 - Octofad: £1,075 - Starchmill: £1,015(3) - Octofad: £945 (3) - Foreland Estate: £925 - Octofad.
Heifers: AAX: £975 (2) - Octomore: £865 - Blackrock. CHARx: £1,085 - Aoradh: £1,065(2) - Eorrbabus: £925 (3) - Aoradh: £915 (8) - Eorrbabus: £905 - Craigens (4) and Aoradh (9): £895(15) - Eorrbabus: £885 (9) - Octofad. LIMx: £1105 - Ardbeg: £1085 (3) - Lossit: £1,045 - Blackrock: £985 -

Lossit: £975 - Ardbeg: £965 (2) - Eorrbabus: £955 (2) - Octofad: £945 (2) - Carrabus: £915 and £905 - Eorrbabus: £895 (3) - Octofad: £885 (16) - Ardbeg: £870 (12) - Starchmill. LU-INGx: £635 (7) - Duich. SIMx: £845 (4) - Cladville. BRBx: £895 and £855(4) - Octofad.
Top prices per kilo:
Bullocks: AAX: 302p - Aoradh: 281p (8) - Craigens: 269p (2) - Aoradh: 260p (3) - Ardmenish: 255p (6) - Aoradh: 254p (4) and 253p - Tallant: 252p (2) - Aoradh. CHARx: 317p (2) - Aoradh: 305p(4) - Tallant: 304p (2), 302p (3), 297p (2) and 294p (9) - Aoradh: 291p (2), 289p and 285p (4) - Carrabus: 284p (2) - Tallant: £282p - Carrabus: 280p (2) - Aoradh: 277p - Tallant: 276p - Aoradh (6) and Carrabus (6): 271p - Carrabus and Aoradh (5): 268p (4) - Aoradh: 265p (6) and 262p (3) - Tallant. LIMx: 339p (2), 311p (5) and 305p - Smaladh: 304p (2) and 295p (4) - Aoradh: 295p (2) - Smaladh: 294p (3) - Carrabus: 291p (3) - Kinnabus Estate: 287p - Ardbeg (7), Kinnabus Estate (3) and Carrabus (5): 254p - Tallant (8) and Kinnabus Estate (2): 281p - Carrabus: 280p (2) - Tallant: 278p - Octofad: 277p (7) - Tallant: 276p (6) - Carrabus: 275p - Carrabus and Tallant (8) - 274p (2) - Ardbeg: 273p (4) - Ardbeg: 271p - Carrabus: 265p - Aoradh (11) and Tallant (3): 262p - Aoradh (11) and Tallant: 261p - Carrabus (6), Ardbeg (9) and Kinnabus Estate (2): 257p (2) - Kinnabus Estate: 255p - Eorrbabus, Tallant (2) and Octofad (5) - 254p (7) - Starchmill: 252p - Aoradh (2) and Starchmill: 251p (5) - Aoradh: 250p (3) - Octofad. SIMx: 287p - Carrabus: 248p (4) - Kinnabus Estate. BRBx: 267p - Starchmill: 266p (3) - Octofad: 263p and 260p - Knocklearach: 250p - Octofad.
Heifers: AAX: 268p - Crauch (E & J Brown): 254p (5) - Aoradh. CHARx: 281p (7) - Aoradh: 276p (6) - Carrabus: 275p (9) - Aoradh: 266p (4) - Tallant: 263p - Carrabus (6) and Tallant (2): 260p - Octofad (9) and Aoradh (9): 257p(9) - Aoradh: 256p (3) - Tallant: 254p (3) - Carrabus. LIMx: 286p - Woodend: 277p (14) - Tallant: 274p (2) - Mulindry: 271p (11) - Ardbeg: 268p - Ardbeg and Carrabus: 263p (5) - Ardbeg: 262p - Tallant: 259p - Ardbeg (5) and Carrabus (3): 258p(4) - Aoradh: 257p (7) - Ardbeg: 256p - Tallant: 254p - Smaladh (2) and Carrabus: 252p - Aoradh (7) and Kinnabus Farm (3): 251p - Lossit (3) and Carrabus (3): 250p - Smaladh.

Kintyre ploughing match sees best turnout in 20 years

DRUMLEMBLE farmer Thomas Ralston took home top prize at Kintyre agricultural society's ploughing match.

Hosted by his own Kilkivan Farm, Thomas did not have far to travel with his society cup and medal.

He was one of 19 ploughmen engrossed in a tough afternoon's competition on March 7 across three categories.

In a break from the traditional late January event, the March meeting saw young Jake Ronald have an excellent day too, picking up a number of awards for his precise work with the plough.

John Armour, Kintyre agricultural society secretary, said: 'After being held in January or February for the past 130 or more years, we decided to hold the ploughing match in March, to have a better chance of dry weather and more daylight.'

'Nineteen ploughers this year is our best turnout in more than 20 years and it was very pleasing to see younger ones joining the more experienced ploughmen.'

'Thanks to our hosts at Kilkivan Farm for an excellent field for ploughing. It made for a great day of competition.'

As well as modern machines there were also vintage Ford tractors from the early 1970s.

William Ralston, from Linton Farm in Kelso and formerly of Low Peninver farm, was judge on the day.

He said: 'There was a good turnout and several young people competed, which is always encouraging. The competition



TROPHY: Thomas Ralston receives the Kintyre agricultural society cup and RHAS medal from his mother Anne 20_c11plough03



MATCH: eventual champion Thomas Ralston, right, and father John Ralston, who hosted the ploughing match at their Kilkivan farm 20_c11ploughing02

Ploughing match results

10 - 12 inch - 1 Jake Ronald, Colinlart; 2 Ian McKendrick, High Dalrioch; 3 Tom McMilland, Eskechraggan, Bute.
Over 12 inch - 1 Thomas Ralston, Kilkivan; 2 Jamie Reid, Campbeltown; 3 Murray Barbour, Keil Point.
Reversible class - 1 Stuart Newlands, Killeonan; 2 Andrew Ralston, Dalivaddy; 3 James Young, Drum; 4 Ian Barbour, Keil Point.
Tractor prizes - best maintained, Gavin Reid; second best maintained, Jamie Reid; oldest tractor, Ian McKendrick; newest tractor, Ian Barbour.
Cup winners - Kintyre Agricultural Cup and winner of the RHAS Medal - Thomas Ralston. Messrs Ralston Cup for winner in non-medal class - Jake Ronald.
John Cullen Cup for winner of reversible class - Stuart Newlands; John McKay Cup for best lot by 25 years and younger - Jake Ronald; Glenside Cup for most points using case/international tractor - Murray Barbour.
Hamilton Brothers Cup for most points using a Massey Ferguson tractor - Jake Ronald; Ford Cup for most points using a Ford tractor - Jamie Reid.

Time running out for crofters to make views known on housing grant review

CROFTERS are being urged to have their say on proposed changes to the croft housing grants before the end of March deadline.

Highlands and Islands MSP Jamie McGrigor, who is also convenor of the Scottish Parliament's cross party group on crofting, said crofters had told him the review of the croft house grant scheme was long overdue.

'Support for croft houses is a very important issue to crofters and one that has been raised repeatedly at our cross party crofting group meeting,' he said.

'The new scheme should be accessible and flexible and help retain people in our remote, rural and island communities.'

'I am urging crofters to have their say on the government's proposals, particularly in relation to the new support rates and a new distinction for island and non-island areas as opposed to the current three geographical areas.'

Comhairle nan Eilean Siar is also asking all crofters to send in their comments to the Scottish government.

Councillor and vice chairman of the comhairle's sustainable development committee Donald Crichton said while the authority supported an increase in the island new build and repair grant of up to £28,000, it was felt it didn't go far enough.

He said: 'We consider an intervention rate of up to £50,000 to be more appropriate in the Outer Hebrides where costs are considerably higher than mainland areas.'

'Access to good quality affordable housing is essential for the future development of crofting communities and I would encourage those with an interest to respond to the consultation before the deadline of March 31.'

The consultation documents can be accessed via: <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2015/01/4893>

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We are certified to B.S.P.A.S.43 for recovery work
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Beloved Vectra hatchback, 1.9 SRi CDTi, 111,000 fond miles, MOT July 2015, good service history, £1,900 or reasonable offer (for quick sale before I get too upset).

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Bailey Pageant 5 Berth Caravan

2005 series 5 model, Immaculate condition with full 3m wide awning and many extras.

£5900

Tel: 01688 400586 / 07988 674102

Mitsubishi L200

Animal DI-D D/C, 2007 reg, 2.5 Diesel, Black/decals, 1 year MOT

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Mitsubishi L200

Single Cab 4 Life First Reg. October 2008 and MOT to October 2015. Good condition with 94,500 miles and one owner. Towbar, electrics and load liner.

£5000

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Renault Kangoo

11 plate, 50,000 miles. MOT 2 owners £6,500 o.n.o. no VAT

01631 770647 evenings after 6pm

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JCB 530-B TELEHANDLER

11mt REACH, 3 TON LIFT 4X4 MACHINE, WITH FORKS AND BUCKET. NO VAT. IDEAL FOR SMALL BUILDER, OR SELF BUILD

£7,750 o.n.o.

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£18,500

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NEW CAR INDEX

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Puma Electric Fork Lift 1.8 Ton lift with side shift, good tyres, lights flasher and reversing sounder

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2007, mot'd until good condition September 2015

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MX5

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10ft x 6ft

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Kia Soul 2 CRDi

12 months MOT, FSH, 1.6 diesel, 5 doors, low mileage 26,000, reg may 2010.

£5,300 o.n.o.

Call Lyndsay 07919 651181 or Roger 07775 756115

WANTED

4 x 4's, all makes and models, Toyota, Landrover, Mitsubishi, high miles no problem, MOT or not, instant decision, same day payment. Also light commercials, vans and pick-ups bought.

Contact William 07730 130284 or 07716 200394 or email wlmotorhomes@outlook.com

WANTED

Motor homes, caravanettes and camper vans, all makes or models considered. Also touring caravans and statics, instant decision, same day payment.

Contact William 07730 130284 or 07716 200394 or email wlmotorhomes@outlook.com

Audi A3 2.0 TDI SE Sportback 5dr

(Mar 2005) Hatchback 102,300 miles Manual 2.0L Diesel, FSH, (serviced last month). MOT until March 2016 Akoya Silver, VGC.

£4,450

Tel: 01967 431377

WANTED

All types of 4 x 4 vehicles Landrovers, any 4x4, Toyotas, Nissan, considered. Also non-runner and accident damaged, MOT failure, single or double cab. Genuine people to deal with.

Telephone 01250 884306 Mobile 07885 203020

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All types of good quality 4 x 4 vehicles, Landrovers, Mitsubishi, Kia, Ford etc and all 4 x 4 pickups, must be good condition and reasonable mileage. Older 4 x 4's and non runners/MOT failures etc considered. Will collect.

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- Prominent Main Street location
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Contact 0141 332 8615
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Argyll Otter Ferry Long Let

2 bedroom cedar wood bungalow, with beautiful views over Loch Fyne, wood burning stove in lounge, quiet area on private estate.

Tighnabruich 12 miles
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Glasgow 1 hr 40 mins
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Telephone: 01700 821220
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HOUSE TO LET
Oban

Landlord Registration No 56821/130/30440
EPC Rating D61
Unfurnished 2 bedroom modern house with small garden and parking.

£550 pcm plus council tax and bills. Early entry.
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RICS UK Residential Market Survey, February 2015

Edinburgh skyline

There is still a reasonable market with continuing demand but limited supply. Properties, if correctly priced, selling within a reasonable period. In the lettings market, demand continues to rise, while instructions remained steady. This is being reflected in the medium term view for rents with respondents, on average, envisaging an increase of 2.6% over the coming year.

Iain Swayne BSc FRICS
Dunfermline and Environs, D M Hall

Lack of supply continues to affect the housing market in Scotland, according to the latest RICS UK Residential Market Survey, although Scotland and

Northern Ireland continue to outperform the rest of the UK.

EXPECTATIONS
Price expectations for Scotland remained positive, with a net balance of 49 percent of surveyors predicting a rise in property prices over the next three months. The upward shift in prices is in part being driven by a decline in the number of houses coming onto the market, with supply continuing to fall behind demand in most parts of the UK.

OUR ANALYSIS
With supply restrictions continuing to impact the market in Scotland, it is imperative that the Scottish Government and industry look at viable solutions to the lack of housing and increase new start targets in order to meet needs.

Respondents have also reported increased activity at the higher end of the market in the lead up to the introduction of Land and Buildings Transaction Tax in April and we will continue to monitor any impact of

the new tax on all levels of the market.

CONFIDENCE
Across the UK, is encouraging that the negative trend in buyer enquiries appears to be dissipating, perhaps in part because of growing confidence that the cost of borrowing will stay lower for longer, but more worrying that instructions to sell property continue to drop. This very modest reversal in the demand picture is already being felt in the key measures of price expectations highlighting the extent of the challenge policy makers will face in addressing the housing crisis in the aftermath of the coming general election.

GROWTH
Sales expectations over the next quarter remain positive, with 37% of respondents expecting an increase in transactions across Scotland. Across the UK the member forecast for house price growth over the next 12 months stand at 2.4% (up from 1.8% in January).

Home Improvements



With an ever increasing number of DIY programmes on the television, more and more people are taking it upon themselves to conduct improvements to their home with a view to increasing the value.

1. **Not every idea is a good one** - Before deciding to carry out improvements, think carefully about your motivation for doing so, ultimately big initiatives around the home should be a lifestyle choice. Take into consideration the average

price of properties in the local area; this will dictate the maximum price your property can achieve. Even building an extension is unlikely to increase the value of your home much above this threshold.

2. **Be inoffensive** - When it comes to luxury items such as swimming pools or hot tubs, bear in mind that these could in fact alienate families who consider this a safety concern, hence affecting the resale value of the property. These types

of improvements are only ever likely to be worth the amount they cost to put in; the real value is in the lifestyle choice.

3. **Weigh up your costs against the added value of your modifications** - If you want to increase the value of your property, I recommend updating your kitchen and bathroom. Many people consider these to be the key rooms in a home, modernising these areas will certainly help boost both value and saleability of your property.



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Leading the way in Learning Disability
 ENABLE Scotland is a dynamic, vibrant and expanding organisation dedicated to improving the lives of people across Scotland.

Personal Assistants in Care
 Location: Oban. Salary: £7.80 per hour (23 & 32 hours per week).
 Are you looking for an opportunity to make a difference?
 Would you like a job that is rewarding?
 If that involves wanting to support people with learning disabilities then we would love to hear from you.

Please contact the local office for further details or information on 01631 565062, email kirsty.mackenzie@enable.org.uk or visit www.enable-scotlandjobs.org.uk
 Closing date: 29 March 2015.

ENABLE Scotland is an equal opportunities employer. Scottish charity number SC009024.

School Crossing Patroller (Permanent)
£12,501 - £13,292 pro rata **Campbeltown Ref: DVR00276**
12 hours 55 minutes per week
 ☎ 01546 604334

Closing date: 3rd April 2015.
 To apply visit our website www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/jobs

Dunollie MUSEUM, CASTLE & GROUNDS
 Receptionist 36 hours p/w
 Retail Assistant 30 hours p/w

We are looking for reliable, flexible and friendly front of house seasonal staff team members. Must have previous experience in a hospitality, sales or heritage setting and enjoy working with the public. Knowledge of local area an advantage.

For full job descriptions see www.dunollie.org
 Contact fiona@dunollie.org or ring the office on 01631 570550.
 Closing date Tuesday the 24th of March at 5pm 2015
 Dunollie Projects Ltd, North Wing, Dunollie House, Oban, PA34 5TT

Oban Times RECRUITMENT

GREENKEEPERS REQUIRED
Lochgilphead Golf Club
 Flexible Hours
 £8 per hour
Call Robbie on 07429 714838 for more details

Scottish Sea Farms Ltd

Scottish Sea Farms is the UK's leading producer of premium quality Atlantic Scottish salmon specific for UK and International markets. We operate a unique training and personal development programme designed to add to the skills of our staff and enable rapid career progression.

Marine Husbandry Staff – Oban and Mallaig
 (£18,000 - £21,000 plus weekend allowance & bonus dependant on experience)

The successful candidate should have at least 2 years practical fish farming experience and must be able to demonstrate competence across a wide range of farming disciplines. You will have the drive to succeed, a well-developed sense of pride and the ability to inspire others.

This position is salaried with a 1:3 weekend working demand. The successful candidate should see this as a key step to career development and be open to training investment.

Minibus Driver – South Shian

The role will be to transport employees to/from Oban to South Shian on a daily basis. The hours of work will vary, but will involve early morning and evening work, as well as some weekends.

Applicants must have held a clean driving licence for at least 2 years with Category D1, D1e or a PCV Licence.

In return Scottish Sea Farms offer a competitive pay and benefits package including entry into the company's pension scheme, occupational health programme, gym membership and cycle to work scheme. All applicants are required to hold a full UK driving Licence.

Interested?? Please contact claire.scott@scottishseafarms.com or call 01786 445521 for an application pack.

Closing date for applications is **Friday 2nd April 2015.**

Scottish Sea Farms Makes it Happen!

Do you want to part of something new in Argyll & Bute?

For over 45 years Addaction has been at the forefront of helping people overcome their substance misuse problems. Our continued success means continued growth.

Senior Practitioner
 Helensburgh • 37.5 hours per week • £24,000pa

Substance Misuse Workers
 Helensburgh • Oban • Kintyre • Isle of Bute
 20 hours per week • £22,000pa pro rata

Addaction is one of the UK's largest providers of substance misuse services. Our aim is to transform the lives of people affected by drug and alcohol problems. Not only do we help individuals recover from their dependency but we also support those closest to them. Working with families and loved ones forms a major part of Addaction's treatment ethos. Recovery for all of our service users is our ultimate ambition and to achieve recovery we recognise that we need to provide a range of different interventions to meet individual needs.

We are now recruiting for an experienced and skilled Senior Practitioner as well as skilled Substance Misuse Workers to be part of our brand new recovery service across Argyll and Bute.

For a full job specification and to apply for any of these posts please visit the Addaction website: jobs.addaction.org.uk/home.html

Advert References 227 & 228
 Closing date for applications is **Friday 3 April 2015**

Charity registered in England and Wales no 1001957 and in Scotland no. SC040009. A company limited by guarantee. Registered no 2580377

Argyll & Bute Citizens Advice Bureau

Position: Money Advice Outreach Worker
 Employer: Argyll & Bute Citizens Advice Bureau
 Job Location: Based in Lochgilphead
 Salary: LGE9 £24,198 - £26,443 pro rata + 6% pension
 Hours: 28 hours per week
 Contract: 3 years fixed until 31st March 2018
 Closing date: 7th April 2015
 Interviews: 24th April 2015

The Money Advice Outreach Worker will take responsibility for the quality of advice and standards of service provided by the Bureau in money advice cases by managing the caseload and supporting volunteer advisers. In addition s/he will run the bureau's outreach service in Campbeltown, Dunoon and Oban. Current driving licence essential.

Further information/applications can be obtained by phoning 01546 605551 or email info@abcab.casonline.org.uk
 Scottish Charity, number SC030477

LOCH MELFORT HOTEL & RESTAURANT

Full Time Receptionist required

Flexible Hours. Rate of pay negotiable.
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 Please apply to rachel@lochmelfort.co.uk
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www.lochmelfort.co.uk

THE MELFORT CLUB
SATURDAY CLEANERS & HOUSEKEEPING ASSISTANTS

Melfort Village is a 4 star holiday village in Kilmelford, with 32 holiday cottages.

We are looking for hardworking, dedicated people, who take a pride in their work.

We are offering a minimum of 6 hours (Saturdays only) or up to 40 hours per week for Housekeeping assistants, which could include weekends, and the opportunity to work at a friendly resort within a wonderful environment.

For a full job description, or to apply for either position please contact Linda Brown, Manager on 01852 200257 or email a CV to linda.brown@melfortvillage.co.uk

FORTEITH FOODSERVICE - RECRUITING NOW!

Class 2 drivers + 7.5t drivers required (permanent)
 40 hrs per week + overtime.
 Any 5 days from Mon - Sat
 To undertake Multi Temp drops throughout Argyll and the Islands

Warehouse Operatives (Full Time Seasonal)
 40 hrs + overtime. Dayshift & Backshift
 To undertake various warehouse functions

For both roles you should be physically fit and be flexible in your approach to the days and hours you may be required to work.

To apply in the 1st instance contact:
 Dina Murphy, Forteith Foodservice
 Glengallain Rd, Oban, Argyll, PA34 4HG
 Tel: 01631 569100
 email: dina@forteith.lfs.com

Motorman SAMS
 Salary circa £25,000 per annum

To serve on both the research vessels RV Calanus (20m) and RV Seol Mara (11m) based at the Scottish Marine Institute, Oban.

The successful candidate will have certification and experience to work on SAMS vessels.

We are looking for an individual who is flexible to the needs of the vessels and has a hands-on approach. You will have extensive practical experience in maintaining marine engines and auxiliary systems of a variety of ages and sizes.

You will also be expected to participate in other shipboard activities and will be required to work for short periods away from base including occasional weekends.

We are looking for a team player and someone with a flexible approach to their work.

Whilst this is a full-time post, we would consider part-time for an appropriately skilled candidate.

For further information and to apply for this position online, go to: www.sams.ac.uk
 Alternatively, please write to: Human Resources, Motorman, (Job Ref. D13/14.FC), The Scottish Association for Marine Science, Scottish Marine Institute, Oban, Argyll, PA37 1QA or e-mail recruitment@sams.ac.uk

Closing date: Tuesday 7th April 2015

SAMS is a registered Scottish charity (SC 009206), has an equal opportunities policy and welcomes applications from all sections of the community.

COUPLE WANTED

Part time Gardener/Handyman and Housekeeper wanted. Perthshire. Good hourly rate with minimum of ten hours per week each guaranteed. Fully modernised detached bungalow provided rent free. Dog lovers and car drivers essential. Suit recently retired active country loving couple.

Reply by email to wignick@btinternet.com with CV and contact telephone number.

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Helper required for general kennel and cattery duties.

2-3 morning per week
 Tel: 01546 606695

CRINAN HOTEL
STAFF REQUIRED

Cashier - suit morning person, suit any age group, who likes dealing with figures.
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Receptionist - must be computer literate.

Please apply to: reservations@crinanhotel.com

CRAOBH MARINA
2 persons required for pontoon/marina maintenance.

further details from Alistair Spence
 07702517038
 or email aspence@craobhmarina.co.uk

Oban Times RECRUITMENT

Ardnacross is a family farm on the Isle of Mull, with holiday letting properties.

We are looking for a full time housekeeper to help in the main house and administer the cleaning, management and Saturday changeovers of the holiday letting houses.

This is a full time job with an excellent annual salary and bonus and access to the farm produce.

Driving licence and car essential.
 Please call **Rory Forrester on 01680300371** or email to enquiries@ardnacross.com

MacArthur Legal

Receptionist/ Admin Assistant

required for Oban Office to cover Maternity Leave

CV's to info@macarthurlegal.co.uk

Oban Times RECRUITMENT

51% of people turn to their local newspaper first when looking for a new job.

The regional press is the best medium to use when looking for local jobs.

Mid Argyll Community Pool
Business Development Manager
 We are seeking a highly motivated individual to drive the next phase of MacPool's development. Working closely with the Pool Managers, the successful candidate will develop and implement new income streams and capital improvements.
 The role would suit a Business Development or Project Manager working in the charity, 3rd or sports sector.
 We are offering a part time, one year Fixed Term contract initially, with remuneration in the order of £20,000.
 Relocation to Mid Argyll is not essential.
 To find out more about this opportunity and to download an application form, please visit www.macpool.org.uk
 Closing date 10th April 2015

Lord of the Isles
CHEF WANTED
 Experienced CDP/Sous chef for busy restaurant in Craobh Haven.
 Must be capable of high volumes and who can assist head chef. Transport essential.
 Please send CV to: **Wil Craig** at lotinews@aol.com

WANTED
Domestic assistant, central Fort William, 4 hours per week.
 Please apply in writing specifying day time telephone number and/or email address to Box No 5, Oban Times, Lochavullin Industrial Estate, Oban PA34 4HB by Monday 6th April.

Etive Taxis
WANTED TAXI DRIVER
Full & Part Time
 Excellent rates of pay
Contact Michelle Or Helmut 01631 566880

Part time Clerical Assistant required for Lochgilphead Legal Practice.
 Previous office experience preferred.
C.V. and applications in writing to Ian Smith Watson, Rubens, 77Argyll street, Lochgilphead.

Oban Times RECRUITMENT

MALLAIG HARBOUR AUTHORITY
Appointment of Non-Executive Board Members
 Mallaig Harbour Authority is seeking to make appointments of three non-executive members to its Board and individuals with an interest in public service are being sought.
 Mallaig Harbour Authority is a Trust Port which differs from company or local authority owned ports by its constitution and powers. All port investments are funded from trading revenues supplemented by commercial borrowings.
 The main duties of the Authority are to maintain, improve and develop the Port.
 Appointments will be for three years commencing April 2015 and will be part time, typically a few days per month. A modest remuneration is payable.
Competencies/Skills
 Applicants must be able to demonstrate the following:
 • That they have achieved results in demanding situations and can demonstrate ability and a proven track record in their chosen profession (or other activities);
 • That they have the ability to contribute effectively in group discussions involving a wide range of people, including specialists and professionals. This includes the intellectual ability to extract the essence of an argument from papers and to analyse problems and assess evidence impartially;
 • That they have been able to earn the respect of colleagues and been influential as a member of a team working over a sustained period of time towards demanding goals;
 Applicants should make clear the level and depth of management or specialist expertise (if any), and of any other experience which demonstrate knowledge and interests relevant to this post e.g. management of harbours, financial management, human resources and industrial relations, laws relating to Scotland.
 Residence within a reasonable distance of the port, and familiarity with local issues in the region surrounding the port, are highly desirable.
 The Authority is committed to equality of opportunity and encourages a diverse range of applicants and to the principle of appointment on merit with independent assessment, openness and transparency of process in accordance with the Guide To Good Governance for Trust Ports.
 Further details and application forms can be obtained from: Mallaig Harbour Authority, Harbour Office, Mallaig, Inverness-shire. PH41 4QB or info@mallaigharbourauthority.com
 Closing date for applications – 2pm on Friday 3rd April 2015

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT
Inverchaolain Glen, Loch Striven near Dunoon, ARGYLL
Proposal for the Establishment of a Mixed Forest
 An application has been made to Perth and Argyll Conservancy of Forestry Commission Scotland under the Environmental Impact Assessment (Forestry) (Scotland) Regulations 1999 for tree planting and associated works in Inverchaolain Glen, some 6.5 kilometres West of Dunoon and adjoining Loch Striven.
 Copies of the Environmental Statement will be available for public viewing for a period of 28 days at the both the SNH and Forestry Commission offices during normal working hours (normally 9.00am to 5.00pm but please check over holiday periods). The office addresses are:
 SNH – Visit Scotland Office, 7 Alexandra Parade, Dunoon, Argyll. PA23 8AB
 Forestry Commission – Glen Branter, Dunoon, Argyll. PA27 8DJ
 Within the total estate area of 1359.09 hectares, 333 hectares (or 24.5% of the gross area) is proposed for woodland development. This comprises of 200 ha of Sitka spruce and 133 ha of new native woodland.
 Any comments on the scheme should be submitted in writing to Forestry Commission Scotland, Perth and Argyll Conservancy, Upper Battleby, Redgorton, Perth, PH1 3EN within the 28 day consultation period which closes on Thursday 16th April 2015.
 The Forestry Commissioners may decide either to grant consent subject to the standard conditions required by Regulation 18 of the EIA Regulations, or subject to such further conditions as they see fit or refuse consent.
 Copies of the Environmental Statement can be purchased and are available at a cost of £200 hard copy or £20 CD from Edwin Thompson, Fifteen Rosehill, Montgomery Way, Carlisle, Cumbria. CA1 2RW. Please telephone 01228548385 or e-mail carlisle@edwin-thompson.co.uk. E-access can be arranged through a "Drop Box" account.

Campbeltown Picture House
Cinema Audience Development Officer
 Responsible for building cinema audiences and public engagement during the restoration of the historic Picture House. Cinema, arts, tourism, marketing or events experience is essential. Freelance. 4-5 days/week.
 Email ron.inglis@raigmount.org for information and details of how to apply. Closing date: 12:00pm on Friday 27 March 2015

Full Time Veterinary Receptionist
 Receptionist required with good communication and practical skills, a caring attitude and enthusiasm for the job. Computer experience preferred. Must be able to work some Saturdays.
 Apply in writing or email to:-
 The Partners, Westwards Veterinary Practice, 89/91 Longrow, Campbeltown, Argyll, PA28 6EX. campbeltownvets@aol.com

CARNACH COMMON GRAZINGS COMMITTEE MEETING
 Carnach (Glencoe) Common Grazings in the Parish of Lismore and Appin will elect a new grazing committee at a meeting to be held:
1900hrs, Fri 3 Apr 15, in the Glencoe Church Hall.

First Registration of a Croft
 Colin N Kennedy has registered his croft 2 Arinagour, Isle of Coll and 47 (10) Shares in Arinagour Common Grazing, Isle of Coll on the Crofting Register held by the Registers of Scotland.
 Any person who wishes to challenge the registration may apply to the Scottish Land Court by 27th November 2015.
 Details of the registration can be found at www.crofts.ros.gov.uk/register/home. The croft registration number is AO408 and A1695

First Registration of a Croft
 Ms Eileen Mackenzie has registered her croft 2 Lorgbaw, Kilchoman, Isle of Islay on the Crofting Register held by the Registers of Scotland.
 Any person who wishes to challenge the registration may apply to the Scottish Land Court by 9th September 2015.
 Details of the registration can be found at www.crofts.ros.gov.uk/register/home. The croft registration number is AO536.

CROFTING COMMISSION COIMISEAN NA CROITTEARACHD DECROFTING APPLICATION
 Mr A J Cameron
 81 Portuairk, Ardnamurchan & Sunart
 0.100 ha - Site for a dwelling house
 4.86.52450
 Comments can be made to the Crofting Commission by any member of the crofting community within the locality of the land, within 28 days of the date of this newspaper.
 Crofting Commission, Great Glen House, Leachkin Road, Inverness IV3 8NW or info@crofting.scotland.gov.uk

First Registration of a Croft
 Mr Angus John Cameron has registered his croft 81 Portuairk, Ardnamurchan & Sunart on the Crofting Register held by the Registers of Scotland.
 Any person who wishes to challenge the registration may apply to the Scottish Land Court by the 10th December 2015.
 Details of the registration can be found at www.crofts.ros.gov.uk/register/home. The croft registration number is C 931.

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To find out more about living and working in argyll & bute visit us @ www.argyll-bute.gov.uk
Argyll Bute COUNCIL
FRAMEWORK FOR SUPPLY AND DELIVERY OF FRESH BREAD AND ROLLS
 Argyll and Bute Council requires to tender for the supply and delivery of fresh bread and rolls to schools, outlets, hostels and Social Care Units throughout Argyll and Bute.
 Please contact Artem Derevyankin, procurement officer, for further details: Tel: (01546) 60 4088 Email: Artem.Derevyankin@argyll-bute.gov.uk

MARINE (SCOTLAND) ACT 2010 CABLE PROTECTION, EASDALE
 Notice is hereby given that Scottish Hydro Electric Power Distribution has applied to the Scottish Ministers of the Scottish Government, under Part 4 of the Marine (Scotland) Act 2010, in respect of Cable protection, Easdale:

Cost	£15,000	
Location	Latitude Co-ordinates	Longitude Co-ordinates
Easdale	56° 17.51' N 56° 17.51' N	005° 39.17' W 005° 39.12' W

 (WGS84)
 Plans showing the position of the works may be inspected at **Scottish Hydro Electric Power Distribution Oban Depot**, Crannog Lane, Oban, PA34 4HB between the hours of 9am and 4pm Monday to Friday for one week from the publication of this notice.
 Objections relating to safety of navigation or environmental issues in respect of the application should be made in writing to:
 Licensing Operations Team, Marine Scotland, Marine Laboratory, 375 Victoria Road, Aberdeen, AB11 9DB within 28 days of the date of this notice or by email: MS.MarineLicensing@scotland.gsi.gov.uk, quoting reference: **05479**
Scottish Hydro Electric Power Distribution

To find out more about living and working in argyll & bute visit us @ www.argyll-bute.gov.uk
Argyll Bute COUNCIL
FRAMEWORK FOR SUPPLY AND DISTRIBUTION OF FRESH FRUIT AND VEGETABLES.
 Argyll and Bute Council requires to tender for the supply and delivery of fresh fruit and vegetables to schools, outlets, hostels and Social Care Units throughout Argyll and Bute.
 Please contact Artem Derevyankin, procurement officer, for further details: Tel: (01546) 60 4088 Email: Artem.Derevyankin@argyll-bute.gov.uk

Proposed Assignment of a Croft
 Mr Frank Larkin is applying to the Crofting Commission for consent to assign the tenancy of the croft at 15 Clovullin, Ardgour, Fort William, PH33 7AB to Sheila M Larkin, 3 Buchanan Place, Ardgour, Fort William, PH33 7AG. If you have an interest in this application, you may submit comments on the proposal in writing or some other permanent form to the Crofting Commission, Great Glen House, Leachkin Road, Inverness IV3 8NW (email: info@crofting.scotland.gov.uk) within 28 days from the date of publication of the advert.
 Please note that any comments you provide are part of an open process and will be made available to interested parties. Your comments would also be released under a Freedom of Information enquiry.

public notices

To find out more about living and working in argyll & bute visit us @ www.argyll-bute.gov.uk
Comhairle Earra-Ghàidheal agus Bhòid
Argyll Bute COUNCIL
PLANNING
 These applications listed below together with other related documents may be inspected at Municipal Buildings Albany Street Oban PA34 4AW, Monday to Friday 9am to 12:30pm and 1:30pm to 5pm. On Wednesdays, the Customer Service Points will open at 10am. At the alternative locations detailed below or by logging on to the Council's website at www.argyll-bute.gov.uk. Written comments for the following list of applications should be made to the above address within 21 days of this advert. Please quote the reference number in any correspondence.
TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT PROCEDURE (SCOTLAND) REGULATIONS 2013 REGULATION 20(1) ADVERT STATEMENT

Ref	Proposal	Site Address	Location of Plans
15/00013/PP	Demolition of existing building, erection of Class 1 retail store and associated works	Former Co-Op Store Soroba Road Oban Argyll and Bute PA34 4HY	Oban Area Office
15/00343/PP	Erection of dwellinghouse, installation of septic tank and formation of new access.	Land South East of Fasgadh Port Appin Argyll and Bute PA38 4DE	Sub Post Office Ledaig
15/00575/PP	Change of use of boathouse to residential holiday let annex (retrospective)	Ben More Cullipool Road Cullipool Isle of Luing Oban Argyll and Bute PA34 4TX	Sub Post Office Cullipool
15/00609/PP	Erection of dwellinghouse	Land North of Willics Cottage Kilmoran Argyll and Bute PA35 1HG	Sub Post Office Taynult
15/00658/PP	Renewal of planning permission reference 11/02141/PP - Partial demolition, alterations and extension of existing steading to form 12 dwellings and associated storage building	Glennmore Steading Kilmelford Argyll and Bute	Sub Post Office Kilmelford

 These applications listed below together with other related documents may be inspected between 09:00 - 17:00hrs Monday to Friday at 1A Manse Lochgilphead Brae PA31 8RD, at the alternative locations detailed below during their normal opening times or by logging on to the Council's website at www.argyll-bute.gov.uk. Written comments for the following list of applications should be made to the above address within 21 days of this advert. Please quote the reference number in any correspondence.
TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT PROCEDURE (SCOTLAND) REGULATIONS 2013 REGULATION 20(1) ADVERT STATEMENT

Ref	Proposal	Site Address	Location of Plans
15/00662/PP	Formation new vehicular access off the AB47 to facilitate new car parking area.	Bruichladdich Distillery Bruichladdich Isle of Islay Argyll and Bute PA49 7UN	Sub Post Office Port Charlotte

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (SCOTLAND) ACT 1997 (AS AMENDED), RELATED PLANNING (LISTED BUILDINGS AND CONSERVATION AREAS) (SCOTLAND) ACT 1997

Ref	Proposal	Site Address	Location of Plans
15/00597/PP	Erection of detached garage	Laggan View Main Street Port Charlotte Isle of Islay Argyll and Bute PA48 7TL	Sub Post Office Port Charlotte
15/00663/LIB	Alteration to existing boundary walls to facilitate new vehicular access off the AB47 to facilitate new car parking area.	Bruichladdich Distillery Bruichladdich Isle of Islay Argyll and Bute PA49 7UN	Sub Post Office Port Charlotte

 Argyll and Bute Council encourages planning applications to be made on-line through The Scottish Government website: <https://eplanning.scotland.gov.uk>
 The Council maintain a Register of planning applications which can be viewed during normal office hours at Planning and Regulatory Services, Central Validation Team, 1A Manse Brae, Lochgilphead PA31 8RD.
 A weekly list of applications can be viewed at the above address and at all Council Libraries.
 Any letter of representation the Council receives is considered a public document and will be published on our website. Anonymous or marked confidential correspondence will not be considered.
DEVELOPMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE
THE ARGYLL AND BUTE COUNCIL (OFF STREET DISABLED PERSON'S PARKING PLACES) ORDER 2015
 Argyll and Bute Council proposes to make a Traffic Regulation Order in accordance with the introduction of the Disabled Persons' Parking Places (Scotland) Act 2009 and the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984. The effect of the order will be to make it an offence for anyone to park in a marked disabled person's parking place unless they are the holder of a valid blue badge and are using it in accordance with the terms of the national blue badge legislation.
 This Order affects all Argyll and Bute Council off street car parks that are not already covered by a controlling order.
 Full details of these proposals, which form the proposed 'The Argyll and Bute Council (Off Street Disabled Person's Parking Places) Order 2015', and a Statement of Reasons for proposing to make this Traffic Regulation Order, are available to view at www.argyll-bute.gov.uk, or can be inspected during normal office hours Monday to Friday inclusive at Argyll and Bute Council Offices at:- 1) Municipal Buildings, Albany Street, Oban; 2) Breadalbane Street, Tobermory; and 3) Council Headquarters, Kilmory, Lochgilphead.
 Any person wishing to object to the proposals should send details of the grounds for objection in writing to the Head of Governance and Law, Argyll and Bute Council, Kilmory, Lochgilphead, Argyll by 10th April 2015.
Jim Smith, Head of Roads and Amenity Services, 1A Manse Brae, LOCHGILPHEAD PA31 8RD

www.highland.gov.uk
The Highland Council Comhairle na Gàidhealtachd
TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (SCOTLAND) ACT 1997 PLANNING (LISTED BUILDING AND CONSERVATION AREAS) (SCOTLAND) ACT 1997
 The applications listed below, along with plans and other documents submitted with them, may be examined between the hours of 9.30 a.m. to 4.30 p.m. Monday to Friday (excluding public holidays) at the SERVICE POINT, LOCHABER HOUSE, HIGH STREET, FORT WILLIAM, PH33 6EL and online at <http://www.highland.gov.uk>
 Written comments should be made to the EPC at the contact details below within the time period indicated from the date of this notice. Anyone making a representation about this proposal should note that their letter or email will be disclosed to any individual or body who requests sight of representations in respect of this proposal.

Reference Number	Development Address	Proposal Description
15/00660/FUL	Gealach Mor, Morar, Mallaig	Conversion and extension of garage to form a residential/holiday letting cottage
15/00719/PIP	Land North West of Maybank, Mallaig	Erection of 2 houses (renewal of 12/01043/PIP)
15/00773/FUL	Barn East of Taigh Breagh, Achnabobane, Spean Bridge	Demolition of existing barn & erection of house (renewal of permission 11/00532/FUL)

 Time period for comments is 14 days
 ePlanning Centre, The Highland Council, Glenurquhart Road, INVERNESS IV3 5NX
 Email: eplanning@highland.gov.uk

Proposed let of a croft
 Mr Gavin Aldridge is applying to the Crofting Commission for consent to let the whole croft and associated common grazing shares at 15 Moss, Achacrae, PH36 4JY, on a short term lease to Mr. Scott Fletcher of 15 Moss Achacrae, PH36 4JY, for two years.
 If you have an interest in this application, you may submit comments on the proposal in writing or some other permanent form to the Crofting Commission, Great Glen House, Leachkin Road, Inverness IV3 8NW (e-mail: info@crofting.scotland.gov.uk) within 28 days. Please note that any comments you provide are part of an open process and will be made available to interested parties. Your comments would also be released under a Freedom of Information enquiry

MARINE (SCOTLAND) ACT 2010 PONTOON INSTALLATION, DUNSTAFFNAGE MARINA
 Notice is hereby given that Dunstaffnage Marina Ltd has applied to the Scottish Ministers of the Scottish Government, under Part 4 of the Marine (Scotland) Act 2010, in respect of Pontoon Installation, Dunstaffnage Marina:

Cost	£498,000	
Location	Latitude Co-ordinates	Longitude Co-ordinates
Dunstaffnage Marina	56° 27.11' N 56° 27.13' N 56° 27.11' N	005° 25.99' W 005° 25.83' W 005° 25.82' W

 (WGS84)
 Plans showing the position of the works may be inspected at Oban Library, Lorn House, Oban, PA34 4AR Relevant and appropriate objections relating to safety of navigation or environmental issues in respect of the application should be made in writing to:
 Licensing Operations Team, Marine Scotland, Marine Laboratory, 375 Victoria Road, Aberdeen, AB11 9DB within 28 days of the date of this notice or by email: MS.MarineLicensing@scotland.gsi.gov.uk, quoting reference: **05308 Dunstaffnage Marina Ltd**

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LOCAL SERVICES

Happy 18th

Happy 18th birthday

Niamh

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XXX




BIRTHS

GEMMELL - BLACK - Willie and Diane are delighted to announce the safe arrival on March 6, 2015 of their son and daughter, Euan Alasdair William and Mara Claire. Both families absolutely delighted.

Celebrating a new arrival? Why not share your joy in our Birth notices?

Tel: 01631 568000

The Oban Times
A WEST HIGHLAND TIMES

ENGAGEMENTS

McPHEE - McGOWAN - Michael, Shirley and family, Duncraggan, Connel are delighted to announce the engagement of Gavin and Adele.

GOLDEN WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

THOMSON - MACPHERSON - On March 20, 1965 in Duncansburgh Parish Church, Fort William by Rev J.M. Annand and Rev K.J. Macpherson, Bill to Marsaili. Present address: Mulindry Schoolhouse, Bridgend, Isle of Hysay.

DEATHS

BANKS - Peacefully, at The Lynn of Lorne Nursing Home, Benderloch, Marjory Rankin Banks, (Sister Banks, late of Oban Maternity Hospital) and formerly of Balmoral Villa, Ardconnel Terrace, Oban, daughter of the late James Banks, Solicitor and Mrs. Marjory Banks, sister of the late Robin and sister-in-law of Ishbel. Funeral will take place at the Oban Parish Church on Thursday, March 19, at 1.00 p.m., followed by interment at Pennyfuir Cemetery. Family flowers only.

DARLING - Suddenly but peacefully at home, on March 16, 2015, aged 85 years, Iain, beloved husband of Jean, (née MacFarlane), father of Peter, Iain and Marion and much loved grandpa of Jamie, Terrie, Scott, Graeme, Stuart and Fiona. Sadly missed by all who knew him.

LEES - Peacefully at Mull and Iona Community Hospital on the March 9, 2015, Harry Lees, Dervaig, Isle of Mull. Loving husband of the late Jean, father and grandfather. Funeral service was held at Kilmore Church, Dervaig on Wednesday March 18, thereafter to Kilmore Cemetery.

McARTHUR - June 21, 1931 - March 14, 2015. Joyce Rosalin McArthur passed away peacefully in the Belford Hospital. She will be missed by her daughters Fiona, Lesley and by all the grandchildren. Funeral service to be held on Saturday, March 21, 2015 at 11 am in John McLellans Funeral Home, Dudley Road, Fort William; thereafter to Glen Nevis Cemetery. Flowers welcome and donations in lieu will be donated to the MS Society.

Oban Times BIRTHS, MARRIAGES, DEATHS
Oban Times BIRTHS, MARRIAGES, DEATHS

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MACEWAN - Suddenly on March 10, 2015, aged 43 years, Alexander Gray MacEwan (Alex), loving dad to William, Duncan & Alexander, beloved son of Betty and the late Duncan MacEwan, a dear brother, brother-in-law, uncle and great friend to many.

MACINNES - Peacefully on March 14, Polly passed away with her family beside her under the attentive care of Mosspark Nursing Home. Polly worked for many years at the Belford Hospital especially remembered for her years in maternity ward and affectionately known as "Sister Polly." Her sisters Mary and Katie and all respective families invite you to celebrate Polly's requiem mass at St Margaret's, Roy Bridge on Saturday, March 21 at 12 noon. RIP.

MACVICAR - Peacefully at home, with her family by her side, on March 16, 2015, Peggy MacVicar, in her 84th year, beloved wife of Robbie and much loved mother and much loved grandmother. Will be sadly missed. Funeral service will take place at Lochgilphead Parish Church at 11.00am, on Saturday, March 21, 2015, thereafter to Achnabreac Cemetery.

SHAW - Peacefully, at Glenary Ward, Mid Argyll Hospital, surrounded by his family, on March 16, 2015, Alexander Shaw, in his 86th year, of Lergychonnie Cottage, Barbreck, by Lochgilphead, beloved husband of Mary MacNeil, much loved father of Sandra, Robert, Donald and Mairi and a treasured father-in-law, grandfather, great grandfather, brother and much respected friend to many. Funeral service will be held in Craignish Parish Church, on Friday, March 20 at 12.00 noon, thereafter to Kilveare Cemetery. Family flowers only please. Donations if desired, to Glenary Ward, Mid Argyll Hospital.

WEST (née MacNeil) RGN, SCN, RMN, RMPA, of "Faithlie", Port Wemyss, Islay, passed away peacefully after a short illness, at Islay Hospital on March 13, 2015 in her 100th year. Dearly loved wife of the late Fred West and formerly of Finlayson Street, Fraserburgh. Betsy will be greatly missed by all who had the privilege of knowing her, at home and abroad. Her funeral will take place on Thursday, March 19 at 11.30am in Portnahaven Church and thereafter to Nerabus Cemetery.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

PENMAN - Audrey, Gordon and Pauline would like to thank relatives, friends, neighbours and colleagues for their messages of support by way of cards, calls and flowers received following the sad loss of their mum. Thank you to Father Roddy McAuley for all his support and for the beautiful funeral service, to Shiona for the stunning floral tributes, Libby and the staff at Moss Park for all the care provided to mum and also to Scott and all staff at John McLellan for the wonderful compassionate care throughout the funeral arrangements.

Finally thanks to all who paid their last respects at church and graveside and so generously donated £240 to SCIAF.

MEMORIALS

ARMSTRONG - In loving memory of my dear mother, who passed away March 23, 1975. Also remembering dear friends Tootsie and Marie Campbell. Mrs Madge MacIsaac and the Rev John MacLeod and his dear wife Dolina, also Donnie Ferguson a very kind and caring vet, also John Alan MacNeil of Barra and friend Nancy Duffy. - Inserted by her loving daughter Mary Lamont.

CAMPBELL - In loving memory of my dear mother and Grandmother, Betty Lyall, who died on March 19, 1979. Never a day but in our thoughts. - Inserted by her loving daughter Ann, Angus, Lorne, Gordon, Gillian, Ardness, Tirraghoil, Bunessan, Mull.

LAFFERTY - In loving memory of our Da, John J, who passed away March 15, 1989. In our thoughts. - Love Denise and Kerry.

MACPHERSON - In loving memory of Sandra, died March 17, 2013. Always in our thoughts. - Donald and family.

NISBET - Flora M, of Heanish, Isle of Tiree. In loving memory of my dear aunt, who died March 18, 1965. - Kenneth.

PATERSON - In loving memory of George, a dear brother, brother-in-law and uncle who died March 19, 2013.

Till memories fade and life departs
You will live forever in our hearts.

- Love Curly and Rhonda.
Miss you uncle George
Simply the best
- Love Jacqueline.

PENROSE - Treasured memories of Colin who was tragically taken from us on March 20, 2014 aged 22. A loving son, brother, grandson, brother-in-law and uncle.

There are moments in life when you wish you could bring someone down from Heaven.
Spend the day with them just one more time, give them one more hug, kiss them good bye or hear their voice again.
One more chance to say I love you.

- Mum, Dad, Mark, Ross, Neil, Aileen, Natalia, Paul, Dylan, Konrad and Freddie.

WHITEHEAD - In loving memory of our beloved mum, Patricia, died March 23, 2013.

To those who have a mum
Love her while you may
Because we wish with all our hearts
Our mum was here today.
Loved and missed always.
- Christine, Alistair, Elizabeth, Michael, Fiona and families.

Oban Times BIRTHS, MARRIAGES, DEATHS
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Oban pupils learn from on tour Glasgow Science Centre



LESSON: Primary 6 and 7 pupils at St Columba's primary school, with Andy McGoech and Craig Sinclair of the Glasgow Science centre's BodyWorks on Tour team

PUPILS at St Columba's primary school in Oban had a lesson with a difference when Glasgow Science centre's On Tour team visited the school recently. The children experienced BodyWorks On Tour on Friday - an interactive outreach programme about

the human body with fun educational science shows, spectacular demonstrations, interactive workshops and hands-on exhibits. Primary 1-3 pupils were treated to the live science show Journey Through My Body, where the children were shown how food travels

around their digestive system. Older pupils in the school discovered how diet can affect the body's function and well-being in the science show Disgusting Digestion. The pupils also got the chance to get hands-on with the BodyVision exhibits,

which included synthetic human limbs and other anatomy-themed exhibits. Each BodyWorks On Tour programme encourages pupils to learn more about the science behind how the human body works and how to keep it healthy.

Thought for the week

A 'No Brainer'

I ONCE had to endure listening to a drunk at a wedding destroy that fine Sinatra standard, 'I did it my way'. At the time it was not a particularly uplifting experience. Always identified with Frank Sinatra, the song's lyrics are about a man who has really experienced life, and even when things didn't turn out the way he wanted, he stood his ground. No-one was going to tell him what to do. For some reason drunks love to sing that song. 'I did it my way' was adapted by the singer Paul Anka from a French pop song, 'Comme d'habitude' sung by Claude François. Anka negotiated the publishing rights to the song at no cost, and re-wrote it with Sinatra in mind, subtly altering the melodic structure and changing the lyrics. Frank Sinatra, whose career was on the wane at the time, recorded his version of the song on December 30, 1968 for release in early 1969. It reached No. 27 on the US Hot 100 chart, but in the UK, the single achieved a still unmatched record, spending 75 weeks in the Top 40. Since then the song has been recorded by many different artists in varied

musical genres from punk to rap. It has become particularly popular at funerals. Apparently, music mogul Simon Cowell reckons that the song would be the most appropriate anthem for his funeral. 'I Did It My Way' is a great song which sums up the story of all human nature, mine included. As a Christian, however, living the lyrics leads me down a bind alley. The Book of Proverbs is clear: 'There is a way that seems right to a man, but in the end it leads to death.' However, when we stop living for ourselves and begin to live our lives according to God's standards, things immediately become different. When the Apostle Paul became a Christian he was able to say: 'It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.' My way or God's way? A 'no brainer' really.

C. E. Morrison

Pass it on grabs attention



AN OBAN couple received free items for their home as part of an initiative supported by the Group for Recycling in Argyll and Bute (GRAB) Trust, and Argyll Community Housing Association. Pass it on Week is organised by Zero Waste Scotland to show the huge benefits there are from passing on unwanted items. Pictured on Tuesday, March 10 are Grab Trust volunteer James Bowie, Dee Maloney from ACHA, Grab trust workers Julie Fairbrass and Steve Hughes, and Magdalena Przedpelska, with the furniture she received for her flat which she shares with her partner Martin (not pictured).

The Oban Times
& West Highland Times
THE REGIONAL NEWSPAPER FOR THE WEST HIGHLANDS, ISLANDS AND ARGYLL

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Lochavullin Industrial Estate,
Crannog Lane, Oban,
PA34 4HB
Tel: 01631 568000
Fax: 01631 568001
www.obantimes.co.uk

Editorial

News Editor
Euan Paterson
epaterson@obantimes.co.uk

Reporter
Emma Crichton
ecrichton@obantimes.co.uk

Reporter
Louise Lee
lle@obantimes.co.uk

Reporter
Steven Rae
srae@obantimes.co.uk

Web Co-ordinator
Marian Miller
mmiller@obantimes.co.uk

Newsdesk
Oban 01631 568060
Fort William 01397 703003
editor@obantimes.co.uk

Advertising

Advertising Executive
Rhona McKillop
adverts@obantimes.co.uk

Advertising Executive
Nadine Ross
nross@obantimes.co.uk

Advertising Executive
Danielle Martin
dmartin@obantimes.co.uk

Branch Offices

Fort William
Tel 01397 703003

Lochgilphead
Tel 01546 602345

Campbeltown
Tel 01586 554646

Arran
Tel 01770 302142

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Athletic have to settle for just one point

Good goalkeeping and missed chances deny Oban side victory

Oban Athletic	1
Cardross	1
West of Scotland AFL	

CARDROSS were the visitors to Glen 2 last Saturday on a beautiful day for football.

The Woodside sponsored Oban side started the game well with Mark Robertson, Ryan Campbell, David Smith and Fraser McFarlane passing the ball between themselves in midfield playing some good football and trying to set up chances for Dene Cassells who was playing up front on his own.

In the first 10 minutes Paul Carmichael and Dene Cassells had two reasonable chances but good goalkeeping and defending resulted in only corners.

From one of the corners the ball was crossed to the back post and headed back by Craig Campbell to Dene Cassells who passed the ball to Fraser McFarlane who took on a shot from 16 yards only to see his effort go over the bar.

Cardross settled into the game and playing the ball out to their two wide men and from the right hand side a ball was squared to the centre forward whose shot was saved at the second attempt by Craig Maitland.

The home side took the lead after 20 minutes when a free kick from Craig Maitland inside his own box found the head of Paul Carmichael whose flick on

sent the ball through to Dene Cassells who ran to the edge of the box before shooting past the goalkeeper and into the net for a well-taken goal.

The game became scrappy after the goal with Cardross trying to change the game with some hefty tackles and much complaining to the referee. This seemed to stop the flow from Athletic and turned a tidy passing game into a hard midfield battle.

Cardross drew level with a spectacular goal when a corner on 35 minutes was punched clear by Craig Maitland under pressure. The ball landed at the feet of Neil McLean who volleyed it into the top corner of the net from fully 35 yards.

The second half started the same as the first with Oban trying to push for an opening and in the 50th minute a through ball from Mark Robertson was knocked back by Dene Cassells to the onrushing Ryan Campbell whose shot was well saved by the keeper.

The chances kept coming for the Oban side with shots from Paul Carmichael, Dene Cassells and Mark Robertson going wide of goal or saved by the keeper.

Cardross were seldom seen as an attacking force in the second half and on the rare occasion they did threaten the Athletic back four of Craig Livingston, Stephen Kelly, Craig Campbell and captain Steven McLeod dealt

Football

with the threat quite comfortably.

David Smith, Fraser McFarlane and Stephen Kelly who was injured were replaced by Kris Gilles, Alan Buchanan and Callum Stewart to try and get a winner and in the 80th minute a one-two from Kris Gillies sent Alan Buchanan through but Alan's shot from a tight angle was saved at the post by Jim Craig who was having a good game in the Cardross goal.

Athletic created two good chances when a cross from Ryan Campbell was met by the head of Dene Cassells but his effort went the wrong side of the post and another cross by Mark Robertson was pushed away by the goalkeeper onto the onrushing Craig Campbell but the bounce off the surface was at an awkward height and Craig could only watch his shot go over the bar with the keeper beaten.

Referee John Stobbo then blew for full time with Athletic having to settle for a share of the points in a game they should have won comfortably.

This Saturday Athletic are at home against Point Media from Glasgow on Glen 2 with a 2pm kick off in the first round of the league cup.

Referee will be Peter Laing from Lochgilphead.



EYE FOR GOAL: Oban Athletic's Dene Cassells slots the ball past Cardross goalkeeper Jim Craig to open the scoring during last Saturday's match at Glencruitten. Photo: Kevin McGlynn

Sports hall athletics final this Saturday

Athletics

ARGYLL'S top young athletes will meet in Oban's Atlantis Leisure on Saturday for the Argyll Sports Hall Athletics final.

The competition starts at 1pm with young athletes from most parts of Argyll taking part in various running, jumping and throwing events.

The final on Saturday, which is expected to attract 120 young athletes, is the last of a series of competitions held in the district this winter, starting with local area events in Lochgilphead, Oban, Tobermory and finally Campbeltown.

Athletes are reminded to register between noon and 1pm on Saturday.

The Argyll Sports Hall competitions are promoted by Mid Argyll Athletic Club. For more information on the final please phone 01546 602 664.

Double up for Oban High School teams

OBAN High School scored an impressive double last Friday as football and rugby teams progressed in their respective cup competitions against the same school in Tranent.

The school's under-13 football boys progressed to the semi-final of the SSFA Shield after defeating Ross High in a penalty shoot-out. The tie was level at 2-2 thanks to

two Lennon Campbell goals. Penalty scorers were Cammy Hill, Aiden McPhee, Daniel Sloss, Lewis Campbell and Jamie Forgiveve. Man of the match was Arran McKay.

The school's under-15 girls rugby team thrashed East Lothian select team Lothian Wanderers 87 - 5 in the Scottish Schools Bowl semi final.

Try scorers were Lucy Stewart (4), Marley

Football / Rugby

Squire (3), Eilidh Shearer (2), Heather Fothergill (2), Anna Bain, Kelsey Whitlow, Rachel MacDonald and Grace Thompson.

Lucy Stewart kicked 12 out of 15 conversions and Marley Squire was player of the match.



TOP OF THE CLASS: Oban High School's football and rugby teams who progressed to the latter stages of their national competitions.



Dave Simcox of Electrotech Marine is pictured with Oban primary league football team Spartak wearing their new kit which was generously sponsored by Electrotech Marine. The Oban youngsters are going to have a busy season as they have entered a number of football festivals, the first is at Hamilton Accies' stadium New Douglas Park in April. The boys will be travelling far and wide this season, including trips to Annan, Armadale, Crieff, and Campbeltown.

Oban Pool League

Pool

LEAGUE TABLE

	P	W	D	L	FF	FA	FD	Pts
1 Lochavullins Cellar	12	10	2	0	92	28	64	22
2 Lancaster A	11	10	0	1	77	33	44	20
3 Lochnell	13	7	3	3	74	56	18	17
4 Markie Dans A	11	6	1	4	62	48	14	13
5 Lancaster B	9	4	3	2	54	36	18	11
6 Markie Dans B	12	5	1	6	56	64	-8	11
7 Gluepot	13	5	0	8	58	72	-14	10
8 Outreach	12	1	0	11	29	91	-62	2
9 Lochavullin	13	0	0	13	28	102	-74	0

DOUBLES CHAMPIONSHIP

	P	W	L	FF	FA	FD	Pts
1 Lochnell	13	9	4	22	17	5	18
2 Lochavullins Cellar	12	8	4	24	12	12	16
3 Lancaster A	11	8	3	22	11	11	16
4 Lancaster B	9	6	3	18	9	9	12
5 Markie Dans B	12	6	6	17	19	-2	12
6 Gluepot	13	6	7	18	21	-3	12
7 Markie Dans A	11	5	6	17	16	1	10
8 Outreach	12	3	9	13	23	-10	6
9 Lochavullin	13	2	11	8	31	-23	4

RESULTS 12/3/15

Lancaster A v 8-2 Lochavullin
Markie Dans A 6-4 Gluepot
Loch Cellar 5-5 Lancaster B
Outreach 3-7 Lochnell

FIXTURES 19/3/15

Gluepot v Lancaster A
Loch Cellar v Lochavullin
Markie Dans B v Lochnell
Outreach v Lancaster B

Lorne Ladies turn the tables on Garioch with impressive win

Garioch	5
Oban Lorne Ladies	85
National League 2	

LORNE Ladies rejoiced in their epic win this weekend 85 - 5 away to Garioch WRFC, Inverurie.

Oban met Garioch in the home match last weekend when they met their first defeat of the league this season with a close score of only 5 - 0.

Oban Ladies returned to the pitch this weekend with determination and took dominance from the beginning. With style they secured themselves a massive win along with the bonus point needed to chase the leaders on the league board.

The backline made a massive impact this week, securing the majority of the tries. Multiple tries by Jemma Campbell (5), Kirsty Sinclair (4) and Sheila McGregor (4) safely put Oban in the lead and smash the four tries needed to secure the bonus point. With their fast foot work they

Women's rugby

were able to skip around the opponents, stepping them and slipping through tackles. Forwards, Rebecca Sims and Mhairi Cruickshanks, further contributed to the score line with a try each, both breaking the defensive line from deep and sprinting the pitch, outpacing the opponents. Laura McCormick's sound kicking skills further added to the scoreline.

Player of the match was given to captain Camilla Leslie, nominated by her team and coach, Corrie Louw, for her leadership on the pitch.

Despite the scoreline of the previous weekend she took to the pitch with confidence and the belief her side could reclaim their positive team play.

Oban Ladies next take to the pitch in Edinburgh in the plate semi-final against Watsonian Women on March 29.

SPOT THE SHINTY BALL

LAST WEEK'S SHINTY BALL WAS HERE. . .



This week's nearest the ball winners, who each receive £25 are:

S Morrison
Fionnphort
Isle of Mull

E Wilson
Lochaber Road
Fort William

THIS WEEK'S JACKPOT £2000

We have removed the shinty ball from the photograph opposite. Now look carefully at the position of the players and use your skill and judgement to place a cross at the exact point where you think the centre of the ball was. You may have a maximum of 20 attempts on this coupon at a cost of £1. If you wish to have more attempts, you must enter on separate coupons.

Easy to enter

Cut out your completed coupon and put your entry plus £1 per 20 attempts into a sealed envelope and post it to "Spot the Shinty Ball" Competition, The Oban Times, PO Box 1, Oban, Argyll PA34 4HB by 12noon Tuesday. You may hand it into The Oban Times Head Office, Lochavullin, Oban by the same time. Otherwise all entries must be posted.

Competition rules

No responsibility will be accepted for entries which are delayed, mistaid or lost, and proof of posting cannot be accepted as proof of delivery.

The Company's decision is final on all matters relating to the

game starts with a jackpot of £500 and will increase by £50 per week until it is won outright. To win the jackpot, the centre of your cross must be in the exact centre of the ball. If the crosses overlap the entry will be void. If no correct entry is received, two 'near miss' prizes of £25 will be awarded. When the jackpot is won, no other prizes will be awarded that week.

competition and no correspondence will be entered into. The final decision rests with the Company.

In the event of more than one correct entry, the jackpot will be shared equally between all winning entries. Any decision regarding the awarding of a prize is entirely at the discretion of the Company.

The Company reserves the right to declare the competition null and void at any time, subject to its discretion and to make full refund of the price of the coupon to any person who has entered the competition at that time.

Employees of Wyvex Media, their immediate relatives and any person otherwise connected with the competition are ineligible to enter.

Please remember to enclose £1 for 20 crosses. The maximum number of attempts on this coupon is 20, but you may enter on separate coupons as many times as you wish. No photocopies allowed. You agree to abide by the rules. How to enter: Mark your crosses using a ballpoint pen. Twenty crosses may be put on this coupon for £1. Send to 'Spot the Shinty Ball' Competition, The Oban Times, P.O. Box 1, Oban PA34 4HB



Please tape your £1 coin here

Name

Address

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Tel No.

Oban Camanachd lose to Kyles on their return to the premiership

Marine Harvest Premiership

OBAN CAMANACHD remain in positive mood ahead of a tough trip to The Dell, despite losing their opening fixture this season at home to Kyles Athletic.

Mossfield suits Kyles' attacking style and this was evident when they opened the scoring after only nine minutes.

Camanachd failed to find their rhythm until the final 15 minutes, when Andrew 'Papa' MacCuish scored their only goal and the team showed glimpses of the standard they are capable of.

Describing last weekend's performance as 'a bad day at the office', manager Gussie Campbell said there was more to come from his side.

He said: 'Kingussie have rebuilt a strong side that could be on the scene for a long time, but if we play to our potential we are capable of giving them a good game.'

'Our team has a lot more in the tank and I hope that over the next few games that will show.'

KYLES ATHLETIC will be favourites on Saturday against Lochaber as the Tighnabruach men look to maintain a winning start to 2015.

Kyles beat Oban Camanachd 3-1 at Mossfield last Saturday with Roddy MacDonald continuing his goalscoring streak from last season with a first-half brace.

Duncan Kerr made sure of the two points with a goal early in the second half.

KINLOCHSHIEL got their season off to a good start with a 2-0 home victory against Lovat on Saturday.

A Jordan Fraser goal near the end of the first half and a John Macrae strike in 51 minutes sealed the win for the Balmacara side.

Manager Colin Fraser was pleased with the result and performance, saying: 'There wasn't a lot in it but I think we deserved the win overall. Jordan and John both took their goals well.'

Looking ahead to this Saturday, Fraser's side play hosts to Glenurquhart, who also won their first game on Saturday.

'From what I hear, they had good pre-season results, but if we keep up the form like we had on Saturday we're in with a good chance.'

LOVAT will play hosts to premier-ship new boys Fort William this weekend, having lost 2-0 to Kinlochshiel on Saturday in the first league game of the season.

Manager John McRitchie said that despite the loss, his side could take a lot of positives from the game.

'We did everything apart from put the ball in the net,' said McRitchie.

'All credit to Lovat though and especially their keeper, he had a fantastic game and some great stops.'

With the prospect of Fort William at the weekend, McRitchie is under no illusions how tough a game, and season, lie ahead:

'We drew 2-2 with them pre-season, so we know it'll be a tough game, but with one or two key players back from injury, we're not far from full strength.'

LOCHABER will be hoping for a better result when they face Kingussie this weekend, after going down 7-1 to Newtonmore on Saturday.

It was a blow for the Spean Bridge side, who picked up their first point of the season against Lovat the previous weekend.

This Saturday, Lochaber will travel to Tighnabruach for the Premiership clash against Kyles.



Inveraray's David Robertson clears his lines during the game against Glenurquhart. Photo: Stephen Lawson

Reigning league champions **NEWTONMORE** had a comprehensive 7-1 victory at the weekend, putting them straight to the top of the Marine Harvest Premiership.

The side, who have won the title five years in a row, went a goal down in the first five minutes, but hit back four minutes later to equalise and were 3-1 up at half time. Glen Mackintosh added his second and Newtonmore's fourth, before Evan Menzies scored a hat-trick in the last half hour to round off the win.

'We're pleased to get the result, you never get an easy game away to Lochaber,' said Newtonmore manager PJ Mackintosh.

'We're away to Inveraray this week, but with a quality squad of players as big as we have, if we play our best I don't think we have to fear anyone in the league.'

A dramatic last-minute winner by rising star Savio Genini sealed a win for **KINGUSSIE** in their opening match at home to Fort William on Saturday.

With the score at 1-1 and the clock ticking, a draw looked like the only outcome, but the ball fell to Genini from a corner, and the 18-year-old smashed it home from 12 yards.

'It was a great game, I'm really pleased we got the win because you don't want to be drawing at home,' said Kingussie manager, Russel Jones.

'We had a few players missing, but the young lads that took their place played some good shinty.'

Jones still has a couple of injury woes, but with captain Louis Munro back fit for Saturday's game against Oban Camanachd, he will be hoping his side takes the two points.

FORT WILLIAM will be hoping for a win against Lovat this weekend, after going down 2-1 to Kingussie in their first game of the season.



UP CLOSE AND PERSONAL: Calum Grant, Kingussie, gets a bird's eye view of Fort William's Calum Shepherd's camanachd. Photo: Neil Paterson

Ewen Campbell was the only Fort scorer at the Dell on Saturday but co-manager Victor Smith said there were missed opportunities for more.

He said: 'The boys played quite well but there were chances in the first 20 minutes that we didn't take, it just wasn't enough to get a good start.'

This weekend the An Aird side will travel to Kilmallie to take on Lovat in the Premiership tie.

Smith said: 'We would like to get some sort of result but Lovat have got off to a poor start so they'll want the win as well.'

Fort William will be without Steven Stewart who is in his last suspended game and Sean Cameron who was injured in the game against Kingussie.

INVERARAY have little to cheer at the start of the season as they prepare to face Marine Harvest Premiership favourites and defending champions Newtonmore this weekend.

The Royal Burgh will hope home advantage on Saturday will give them a chance of causing an

Shinty

upset but last week's 2-0 defeat to Glenurquhart also saw talisman Euan McMurdo sent off.

GLENURQUHART got their season off to a winning start with a 2-0 win away to Inveraray.

With part of the A82 shut to traffic, the side left Drumadrochit at 8am and didn't get back until almost 11pm at night, making it a long day for Billy McLean's men.

'It would have felt like an even longer journey if we had lost,' said McLean.

'The first game of the season is always important as it sets the tone for what lies ahead. It's never an easy fixture down at Inveraray.'

The win was sealed with two goals from striker Fraser Heath, who was out last week with a hand injury.

This Saturday, McLean's men travel to Kinlochshiel, in a tie he is looking forward to.

'We always like playing them - we've got a good relationship and a good friendly rivalry with them, but there'll be no love lost during the 90 minutes.'

'They'll be delighted with their win against Lovat at the weekend, so it should be an entertaining game of shinty.'

National Division

KILMALLIE manager Mark MacPherson is 'quietly confident' about his team's clash with Glasgow Mid Argyll this weekend.

He said: 'The next game will be very hard for us, especially down in Glasgow because they're a really good team.'

'We're going to have to be at our best and some people have said we're the favourites which puts a bit more pressure on us but we're a good enough side so I'm quietly confident.'



Kyles Athletic's Donald Irvine gets his block in to prevent Oban Camanachd's Andrew 'Papa' MacCuish getting a shot on target during last Saturday's Marine Harvest premiership game at Mossfield Stadium. Photo: Kevin McGlynn

youngster Cain MacPhee, with Scott Henderson sidelined with a broken wrist.

Indeed, the scoreline could have been worse, but for an excellent display in goal from 15-year-old Cameron Sutherland.

South Division One

GLENORCHY will play hosts to Kyles Athletic this Saturday in their first game of the season.

The side will be hoping to shake off the cobwebs after missing out on vital pre-season friendlies because of the weather.

'I'd expect Kyles to have quite a strong second team, although we haven't played them for a while,' said John Smith, Glenorchy manager.

'I think it'll be a tough game, but I'd hope with our experience we've got enough of a squad to get the result.'

'Apart from one injury that we know about long-term, we should be at full strength.'

OBAN CELTIC are taking nothing for granted this Saturday as they travel to take on struggling Taynuilt in Marine Harvest South Division One.

Celtic will be looking to follow up a good 2-1 win at Aberdour last Saturday, when goals from Lee Askew and defender-turned-forward Daniel Madej secured the win.

Outfield player Stephen Davidson won plaudits for his display in goal, which included a penalty save after two minutes, and young defender Andy MacDonald shackled Aberdour danger man Darren Coyle.

Ahead of this Saturday's trip to Taynuilt, Celtic president David Hamilton said: 'This will be just as difficult as the Aberdour game because we know from experience that Taynuilt is a hard place to get points from.'

LOCHSIDE ROVERS boss Gareth Evans believes the large Mossfield pitch and the addition of an experienced forward could be the difference as his side hosts Kilmory on Saturday.

Iain 'Scally' MacMillan, who has premier league experience with Oban Camanachd, is expected to turn out for the club's junior team this weekend.

The young side ground out a 3-2 away win over Taynuilt last Saturday with goals from Liam Higgins, Daniel MacMillan and Brian MacCallum.

Evans singled out centre Keith Burnett for praise in a match that also saw the team win the JC Memorial Trophy.

TAYNUILT have lost two of their main goalscoring threats to injury as they prepare for the visit of on-form Oban Celtic this weekend.

Strikers Willie Neilson and David Graham both limped off during their 3-2 defeat to Lochside Rovers, a game for the JC Memorial Trophy that Taynuilt had been winning 2-1 at half time.

Stephen Parr may be deployed in the forward line once again this weekend, as he proved his eye for goal with a good strike last Saturday, adding to Willie

Neilson's earlier goal.

Taynuilt man and former Scotland player Fraser Inglis was called in at the 11th hour to referee the match and gave an impressive display.

Taynuilt's Ryan Gillies was named man-of-the-match after impressing alongside fellow young defender Mark Reid.

BUTE got their season off to a good start on Saturday, with a 3-0 win away from home against Strachur.

Goals from Robert Walker, Stuart Stirling and James Dunn sealed the win, and put the side top of the Marine Harvest South Division One.

Having struggled last year in the National Division with just one win and opting to drop down a division, manager Graham Fisher will be hoping this is a turnaround in fortune.

This Saturday, Bute play hosts to Aberdour, who lost their first fixture of the season at home to Oban Celtic at the weekend.

The game will throw-up at 2.30pm at the Meadows.

STRACHUR will play host to Inveraray's second team this Saturday, in a local derby.

Brian Dickie's side came unstuck 3-0 in their first fixture of the season on Saturday against Bute, losing all three goals in the last half hour.

Saturday's game will throw-up at 2.30pm at Strachur Park.

KILMORY Camanachd will travel to Oban on Saturday to face Lochside Rovers in the Marine Harvest South Division One.

It will be the Lochgilphead side's first league game of the season, having had a free week last week, whilst Lochside beat Taynuilt 3-2 away from home.

The game will throw-up at 2.30pm, at Mossfield.

South Division Two

OBAN LORN will meet Bute's second side at home this Saturday, in what will Lorn's first league match played.

The newly-formed club's first fixture of the season did not go ahead on Saturday as Tayforth were unable to field a team, meaning Lorn were awarded a 5-0 victory by default.

Lorn manager Jocky Martin

said Tayforth notified him they had only eight players available after 18 called off.

Martin also said he was confident about his side's chances on Saturday.

'It looks like we'll have pretty much a full squad, so I think we can take the points if we play like we know we can,' said Martin.

'There's a possibility there could be one or two guys out from either injury or work commitments, but we've got a player coming back who has been away from the game long term which will boost the squad.'

The game will throw-up at 2.30pm at Ganavan.

North Division Two

THIS Saturday **GLENGARRY** will face Lewis for the first time.

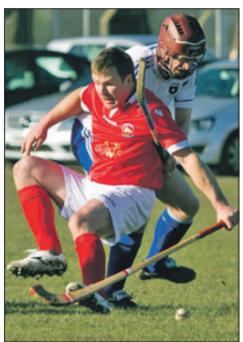
The teams will meet at Craighaird Park for the first time at the weekend, off the back of Glengarry's 3-1 win against Kilmallie, also at home, on Saturday.

The victory was the result of a double from Stuart Gregory and another goal from Steven Cameron.

Manager Ewen Cameron said: 'It was a good result at the weekend, we'll definitely take that.'

'I don't know what to expect from Lewis this weekend because we've never played them and I've never even seen them play.'

'We'll have to treat them with caution until we know what we're dealing with.'



TUSSLE: Dougie Rankin, Inverness, and Glasgow Mid Argyll's Brian Slattery in a tussle for the ball during last Saturday's game at the Bought Park. Photo: Donald Cameron

Fixtures

Saturday 21 March

Marine Harvest Premiership
Inveraray v Newtonmore
Lachie Wood
Kingussie v Oban Camanachd
Evan MacRae
Kinlochshiel v Glenurquhart
Innes Wood
Kyles Athletic v Lochaber
David Mitchell
Lovat v Fort William
Ron Kennedy

Marine Harvest National Division

Beauy v Ballachulish
John Angus Gillies
Glasgow MA v Kilmallie
Billy Wotherspoon
Skye v Caberfeidh
Deek Cameron

Marine Harvest North Division 1

Fort William v Lovat
Duncan Kelly
Glenurquhart v Kinlochshiel
Archie Ritchie
Newtonmore v Lochcarron
David Stafford
Strathglass v Beauy
John Matheson

Marine Harvest South Division 1

Bute v Aberdour
John MacGregor
Glenorchy v Kyles Athletic
Robert Baxter
Lochside Rovers v Kilmory
Ewen MacDonald
Strachur v Inveraray
Graham Cameron
Taynuilt v Oban Celtic
Ronnie Campbell

Marine Harvest North Division 2

Aberdeen University v Skye
Calum Girvan
Caberfeidh v Kilmallie
Rab MacAskill
Glengarry v Lewis
Callum Duff
Lochaber v Boleskine
Andy MacLean
Strathspey v Inverness
Sandy Tulloch - 1.30pm

Marine Harvest South Division 2

Aberdour v Glenorchy
Euan Pearson
Col Glen v Glasgow Mid Argyll
Jim Innes
Oban Lorn v Bute
John Wood
Tayforth v Ballachulish
John Gallagher

(All throw ups 2.30 unless stated)

Results

Saturday 14 March

Marine Harvest Premiership
Inveraray 0 - 2 Glenurquhart
Kingussie 2 - 1 Fort William
Kinlochshiel 2 - 0 Lovat
Lochaber 1 - 7 Newtonmore
Oban Camanachd 1 - 3 Kyles

Marine Harvest National Division

Beauy 3 - 0 Caberfeidh
Inverness 0 - 2 Glasgow MA
Kilmallie 8 - 0 Ballachulish

Marine Harvest North Division 1

Fort William 2 - 1 Kingussie
Lochcarron 0 - 1 Glenurquhart
Lovat 0 - 1 Kinlochshiel
Newtonmore 5 - 2 Strathglass

Marine Harvest South Division 1

Aberdour 1 - 2 Oban Celtic
Kyles Athletic 2 - 3 Inveraray
Strachur 0 - 3 Bute
Taynuilt 2 - 3 Lochside Rovers

Marine Harvest North Division 2

Aberdeen University 4 - 0 Lewis
Caberfeidh 8 - 0 Inverness
Glengarry 3 - 1 Kilmallie
Strathspey 1 - 2 Boleskine
Skye 5 - 2 Lochaber

Marine Harvest South Division 2

Ballachulish P - P Col Glen
Ballachulish Unable to raise a team. Points to Col Glen
Bute P - P Aberdour
Unplayable Field
Glasgow MA 9 - 2 Glenorchy
Oban Lorn P - P Tayforth
Tayforth unable to raise a team. Points to Oban Lorn.



SPONSORSHIP: Ewan Bowman (left) of EM Bowman presents a cheque to Kilmallie Shinty Club Chairman Alastair MacIntyre, marking his 26th year of sponsoring the team. Photo: Iain Ferguson, The Write Image

Former Oban Lorne rugby players on international duty



Magnus Bradbury



Abigail Evans



Fergus Bradbury

'Everybody at Oban Lorne is very proud of these three players'

THREE former Oban Lorne players have been involved in international rugby action this year, with a club official calling them an 'inspiration' to aspiring stars.

As well as playing for the club, all three studied at Oban high school as well - a fantastic achievement for grassroots rugby in Oban.

Fergus Bradbury was recently selected for Scotland under-18s against England, having been capped at both under-15 and under-16 levels.

Despite the team's loss to the 'Auld Enemy' on March 8, Fergus is delighted to be back in the set-

up once again. With his debut for the under-18s, he is following in the footsteps of elder brother Magnus, who played internationally at under-16 and under-18 levels.

Magnus is currently in action in the under-20 Six Nations tournament, with the squad's final fixture against Ireland on Friday night.

Flying the flag
Meanwhile, flying the flag for women's rugby in Argyll and Bute is Abi Evans, 19, who made her debut for Scotland ladies in February against France during the Women's Six Nations.

Abi, who plays wing and centre,

played for both Oban high school and Oban Lorne ladies rugby team.

Despite losses to France, Wales, Italy and England in the first four matches, Abi will be keen to appear in Scotland's final tie of the Six Nations this Sunday against Ireland.

Murray Hamilton, vice president of Oban Lorne rugby club and head of PE at Oban High school, said: 'Everybody at Oban Lorne is very proud of these three players, who came through from playing mini rugby, to the senior first teams at Oban Lorne and are now all playing for their country.'

'This is inspiring a lot of the younger players I deal with myself, both within the club and Oban high school, that with the right amount of hard work and dedication, players can make it to the highest level. These three players are proof of that.'

Attitude
'In particular, I've spoken to a lot of the younger players about Magnus' attitude towards the game, and he has become almost an unofficial ambassador here in Oban for what it takes to be successful in rugby.'

Discussing his recent call-up to the under-18s, Fergus said: 'Although it was disappointing

to lose, it was obviously a dream come true to be selected.'

'It was a good game, with a huge crowd - the biggest I've ever played in front of.'

'It was at Kingston Park and there was a Newcastle Falcons game on before us and most people stayed to watch our game, which made for a great atmosphere.'

The under-18s will be taking on the Ireland schools team on March 21 - a friendly game in preparation for the Rugby Europe tournament at the end of the month.

Held in Toulouse this year, the side take on hosts France in their

Rugby

opening game on March 27. As it is a seeded tournament, further fixtures will be determined by the outcome of the first round games.

Magnus is part of the squad for Scotland's final match of the under-20s Six Nations on Friday, against Ireland at Netherdale stadium in Galashiels at 7.30pm.

Scotland ladies' final Six Nations fixture is on Sunday against Ireland, with a kick-off time of 1pm at Broadwood stadium in Cumbernauld, where Abi will earn her fifth international cap if

Oban Saints on cup duty this Saturday

Football

OBAN Saints senior team are on Jimmy Marshall Cup duty this Saturday when they take on Jamestown in the second round.

The match will be played on the 3G pitch at Oban High School with a 2.30pm kick-off.

Saints defeated Jamestown 2-1 in the quarter finals of the Jimmy Marshall Cup last season before going on to win the trophy beating Inverclyde 2-0 in the final.

Saints manager Iain Jackson should have a full squad to choose from for this important cup tie.

Iain said: 'Jamestown made us fight all the way last season for our narrow 2-1 win so we are expecting a tough game on Saturday.'

'However, we played well against Haldane on the 3G a couple of weeks ago and if we play anything like that then I would expect us to be in the draw for the next round.'

Oban Saints youths results and fixtures

Youth football

LAST weekend's results: Under 13s no game; Under 14s v Helensburgh, postponed; Under 15s v Whitecraigs, postponed; Under 16s no game; Friendly match Clydebank 2 v Under 19s 5. On target for Saints were Dougie MacLeod, Inny MacColl, Josh Coates and Paul McFadrigue.

This weekend's fixtures: Under 13s v PFD United; Clydebank v Under 14s; Under 15s v Whitecraigs; Under 16s v Ardencauld; Under 19s no game.

Scottish Amateur League results and fixtures

Football

LAST Saturday's results: Premier Division - Oban Saints no game; Campbeltown Pupils 0, Kings Park Rangers 1; Premier Division One - Shawlands 2, Dunoon 1; Premier Division Two - Dunoon Athletic 3, Drumchapel Colts 8; Port Glasgow 3, Lochgilhead Red Star 2; Division 1B - Tarbert 4, Shawlands 'B' 2.

This Saturday's fixtures: Jimmy Marshall Cup, 2nd round - Oban Saints v Jamestown; Premier Division - Thorn Athletic v Campbeltown Pupils; Premier Division One - Rutherglen v Dunoon; Premier Division Two - Lochgilhead Red Star v Neilston; Motherwell Thistle v Dunoon Athletic; Division 1B - Tarbert v Milton of Colquhoun.

Bethan proves to be a golden girl

A TINY Oban karate student has proven she packs a big punch after winning two Scottish titles.

Five-year-old Bethan Neil, a pupil at Rockfield primary school's Gaelic medium unit, won two

gold medals at the Scottish Karate Championships on March 8 in Dundee's Alder Complex.

Karate

Bethan, representing Oban Shotokan Karate Club, competed in the rising star category for five to six year olds and won gold in the Kata, gold in the Shobu Ippon Kumite and silver in the Shobu Nihon disciplines.

Olympian
The tournament was organised by the Scottish Karate Alliance (SKA), World Union of Karate Do Federation (WUKF) and the newly formed United World Karate (UWK). The UWK has been recognised by the International Olympic Committee (IOC), meaning Bethan could one day be an Olympian in her sport.

Proud father, Robert, said: 'The event, as always, attracted the elite of Scottish Karate and I was so proud of her, as her dad and as her coach.'

The club, which trains every Tuesday at 6.30pm in Oban's Scout Hall, continues to make its mark at prestigious karate tournaments.



TOUGH: Gold medal winner Bethan Neil, centre, punches above her weight against taller opponents.

Sean scores in his last game for Fort William

AN AUSTRALIA-bound Oban butcher scored a winning goal for Fort William Football Club in his last game for the club.

Sean Grant's 70th minute strike secured an impressive win against Wick Academy at the weekend.

The Claggan Park side had not played at home since November 22 but came back in style on Saturday, when Grant scored with a direct free kick in the Highland League clash against third-placed Wick.

It took just three minutes for James Whyte to open the scoring, taking the Fort to an early lead, but two goals in two minutes from Wick's Craig Campbell and Gary Weir soon put the visitors in front.

The Fort men were back on level terms by the hour mark thanks

Football

to an equaliser from Nick Stein before Grant secured the victory with his 25-yard free kick.

Not only was it the goal to win the match, it was possibly Grant's last goal for Fort William as he is set to move to Australia after more than four years with the club.

The 25-year-old, who worked at Jackson Bros Butchers, will soon be playing for Shepparton South, Victoria.

David MacDonald, vice chairman of Fort William, said: 'We all wish Sean the best of luck in Australia and he really went out on a high. He scored in his first game with us and has been a great player ever since.'

Islay Golf Club Golf

FORELAND Trophy played Sunday March 15: 1 A MacAlister 86 - 16 = 70; 2 J Rozga 78 - 6 = 72; 3 A Livingstone 83 - 11 = 72. CSS 72.

Oban Lorne back in action

Rugby

THE Green Machine get back to action after a two week break on Saturday March 28 with a home game against Waysiders.

The match will take place at Glencruitten with a 3pm kick-off.

SPONSORS OF THE OBAN TIMES WEATHER AND TIDES

NORTH WEST MARINE
7 E Glengallan Road, Oban, Argyll, PA34 4HG
T: 01631 565740 F: 01631 565780 M: 07836 366419
Em: enquiries@northwestmarine.co.uk Web: www.northwestmarine.co.uk

WEATHER

Thursday Light rain
Winds light south westerly
Temperatures 6°C to 7°C

Friday Sunny intervals and showers
Winds moderate north westerly
Temperatures 3°C to 9°C.

Weekend Outlook Cloudy on Saturday
Light rain on Sunday
Winds light south easterly
Temperatures 5°C to 8°C.

TIDAL INFORMATION

Tide tables for Oban during the week from **Thursday, March 19, 2015** are listed below with differences for major ports listed on the right. All times are GMT (add one hour BST)

Date	am				pm			
Thur	04.56	4.1	11.10	0.5	17.11	3.9	23.27	0.3
Fri	05.36	4.3	11.53	0.3	17.48	4.0	***	**
Sat	00.11	0.1	06.15	4.3	12.35	0.2	18.25	4.1
Sun	00.55	0.1	06.53	4.3	13.16	0.2	19.03	4.0
Mon	01.38	0.2	07.32	4.1	13.56	0.4	19.40	3.9
Tues	02.22	0.4	08.11	3.8	14.37	0.6	20.18	3.7
Wed	03.07	0.7	08.50	3.5	15.22	0.9	20.58	3.4

Tidal Constants: (Add or deduct from High Water at Oban)

Ferry Crossings/Sea States

Oban to Barra/South Uist	Moderate
Oban to Coll/Tiree	Moderate
Kennacraig to Islay	Moderate

WIN £2K WIN £2K WIN £2K SPOT THE SHINTY BALL

Switch to sea transport the way forward

'REDUCING lorry traffic on the A82 is good for the environment but also for users of the road.'

This is the view of transport minister Derek Mackay, who visited Corpach last week to see how a Scottish government waterborne freight grant of almost £1 million to Boyd Brothers timber haulage company is making a difference.

The grant has been used to set up a shipping freight service to help reduce the number of timber lorries heading south by road.

During his visit, Mr Mackay said: 'The new Boyd Brothers shipping service is an excellent example of how the Scottish government can work in partnership with the private sector to deliver more sustainable freight transport options. It is also pleasing to see a close partnership between a freight operator and its customer, in this case BSW Timber, aimed at achieving greener transport solutions.'

Callum Boyd, director of Boyd Brothers, said: 'The vessel we are using will bring grain up from England to be used in Scottish distilleries and is a good fit to take timber back south to Tilbury. The waterborne freight grant is providing vital funding support in the first three years.'

Tony Hackney, chief executive of BSW Timber, said: 'The new shipping service has allowed us to significantly expand our logistics operation in southern England, linked to our new Essex-based southern distribution centre which opened in 2014. It is helping us feed the demand for the high-quality home-grown Scottish timber produced by our Fort William mill, driven by the upturn in the construction sector in London and the south east.'

The number of HGVs travelling on the A82 and M74 is expected to fall by more than 6,300 journeys over the first three years of transporting the timber by sea.

Hurdle cleared in race to open indoor sports centre



Pipers hit the festival high notes

PIPING HIGH NOTES: the talent of four teenagers was hailed at Lochaber Music Festival this weekend when they were crowned winners of the piping quartet. The Lochaber Pipers, made up of Sandy Cameron, 17, Alistair MacRae, 13, Ally Weir 16, and Finlay Cameron, 13, were marked 'outstanding' for their performance on Saturday. For more on Lochaber Music Festival see page 11.

EMMA CRICHTON
ecrichton@obantimes.co.uk

LOCHABER'S new indoor sports centre has overcome a 'huge hurdle' as it has been approved for planning permission.

Just last week members of Lochaber Sports Association (LSA) worried the £1.47 million training centre could be in jeopardy as Highland Council officials delayed agreeing the £850,000 they have pledged in principle until the summer.

But Jane Blanchard, chairwoman of LSA, was delighted to hear that not only has the multi-use facility received planning permission but the local authority delay will not mean the loss of £500,000 pledged in principle by Sport Scotland, as she originally feared.

Ms Blanchard said: 'Things are looking more positive this week. The past week has been a total rollercoaster.'

'I know there will be more hurdles to overcome but this is a huge hurdle and we're over it. It's a big step forward and now we're working towards the end.'

'This potentially sounded the death-knell on five years of hard work and community commitment, financial and professional, as our Sport Scotland stage one offer was due

to expire at the end of this month. However, not only have we had assurance from SportScotland that it will wait until Highland Council get the project on to June's agenda, but we have had many pledges of support and encouragement from all quarters.'

The next step for the facility, to be built at Blar Mor on the outskirts of Fort William, is to work out exact costs and find the £100,000 outstanding to reach the estimated total.

One of the messages of support came from Highland Council leader Drew Hendry, which has boosted confidence that the local authority will approve the funding, after Tesco pulling out of developing on the Blar left a further cash gap.

Councillor Hendry said: 'The leadership of the council is committed to supporting the LSA project. We need to find a way to plug the gap left by the decision of Tesco not to proceed, and that poses challenges, but these should not be seen as insurmountable.'

'I personally believe this is a great example of community empowerment and is a great credit to Lochaber Sports Association, which has had to work very hard to get to this stage. It must now be supported through to conclusion.'

Rockfall cleared but more work needed

THE TRUNK road connecting Lochaber to Inverness re-opened this week after four days of closure, but officials have warned there is more work to do.

The A82 was closed from Thursday after rock fell from the hillside between Invermoriston and Drumnadrochit and didn't re-open until Monday morning, but a spokesman for Forestry Commission Scotland warned equipment put in place to contain rocks is a temporary measure.

Alex McLeod, the commission's steep ground programme manager, added: 'The immediate issue has been dealt with and made safe.'

'However, during a final inspection, it was clear there are other areas of concern. We were scheduled to come to this site in September but in light of recent events we will liaise with our geo-technical contractors and consultant engineers to review our operations plan.'

TIMESLINE

Disagreement stalls work on new student digs

NEW STUDENT accommodation in Fort William is 'on hold' but still 'top priority', after disagreements between University of the Highlands and Islands (UHI) and contractors.

The planned 40-bed facility near the town's West Highland College campus received planning permission in September last year but building work has been postponed until a new contractor is found.

This is part of a number of new residences planned by UHI, but only the proposals in Fort William and Inverness have planning permission so far.

A spokeswoman for UHI declined to comment on the problems with developers Robertson Group but added: 'Everything is on hold for now but we are determined to move forward and Fort William will be top priority as it has planning permission in place.'

'We're working to find a new bidder as soon as possible but we're in limbo at the moment.'

Village internet not up to speed

A STREET in Kinlochleven has been named the slowest in Scotland for broadband.

Residents of Corrie Road in the village have the misfortune of the worst internet in the country, with an average speed of just 0.985 megabits per second (Mbps), compared to the fastest of 68.53 Mbps in Southhouse Broadway, Edinburgh.

A report by comparison site uSwitch also ranked Corrie Road as number 12 in the slowest 30 across the UK.



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Corran ferry group claims major victory in battle against fare hike

CORRAN ferry campaigners have claimed a 'major victory' in the fight against cost increases as Highland Council went back on a plan to raise fares by 13 per cent in three years.

Instead, councillors voted through a two per cent increase for one year only last Thursday (March 12) to allow a consultation on alternative cost-cutting measures.

Currently, a single trip on the 500-metre ferry journey between Corran and Ardnamurchan costs £7.90 and members of campaign group Free Crossing For Corran (FC Corran) said further increases would kill tourism in the area and force families to move away.

Tony Boyd, chairman of FC Corran said: 'Highland Council is, at last, listening to local people and realising that fragile communities with significant areas of rural deprivation cannot continue to suck up the incessant increases being imposed on a service which is our main connection to the outside world.'

'Both council and government are duty-bound to support the infrastructure of outlying areas and we see this as an opportunity now for Highland Council and the Scottish government to work with these local communities and take a proactive role in creating a secure, imaginative and sustainable future for the crossing.'

'We applaud our local councillors for coming together to defend their own communities and we look forward to a constructive dialogue with Highland Council and the Scottish government, as has been promised.'

Councillor Graham Mackenzie, chairman of the council's community services committee, said: 'The council has a duty to seek to reduce the deficit in the running costs of the ferry service.'

'We will continue to involve the community and local members by consulting on alternative ways to reduce costs and we will look at longer term plans exploring opportunities for savings and efficiencies.'

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Four Skye schools to be merged

A NEW school in north west Skye has been approved by Highland Council, amalgamating four rural schools into one.

The proposal to replace Dunvegan, Edinbane, Knockbreck and Struan primary schools with a new building in Dunvegan was recommended by the local authority's education, children and adult services committee in January and approved at the full council meeting on Thursday March 12.

It was also confirmed a new consultation will be held for families who previously expressed interest in sending their children to Carbost, MacDiarmid or Portree primaries, instead of the new school, which is as far as 40 minutes away for some pupils of the current schools.

Councillor Alasdair Christie, chairman of the education, children and adult services committee, said: 'I welcome the support for a new school in Dunvegan, which will provide educational benefit for children across north west Skye and will be a tremendous new development for these communities.'

'I am also keen to start early discussion with those families who are directly affected by these changes, where continuity in their children's education might be achieved by them attending other local schools. I am appreciative of council staff and local people and groups who contributed to this extensive consultation.'

Be aware of bogus traders

HOUSEHOLDERS are being warned to be vigilant of bogus traders following the recent stormy weather.

Highlands and islands police said bogus workmen would be seeking to convince people who have suffered damage to their homes to let them carry out repairs.

They often ask for money up front and then carry out substandard work or fail to complete the job.

Trading Standards at Highland Council advises people to get several quotes from reputable companies and not to rush into a decision.

Where any damage is covered by an insurance policy, the insurance company involved will be able to provide advice on how repairs should be carried out.

Pupils boost charity funds with Fairtrade coffee morning

KIND-HEARTED pupils of Lochside RC primary school held a Fairtrade coffee morning and raised more than £500 for charity.

The Fort William children brought in home-baking and invited relatives to the event on March 6, to raise awareness about Fairtrade products and raised £560 for Dalmally-based children's charity Mary's Meals.

FUNDRAISER: Lochside's Fairtrade committee show off the Fairtrade home-baking on offer



Action plan to improve town centre is unveiled

EMMA CRICHTON
ecrichton@obantimes.co.uk

AN ACTION plan to improve Fort William town centre has been revealed by Highland Council.

The proposals include building a promenade and marina at Loch Linnhe and filling empty units on High Street. This comes as a result of a public consultation event held in the town in May last year.

The grand plans are outlined in a report by Highland Council and stem from the main issues highlighted by residents and business owners at the gathering last year. Similar workshops were also held in Tain and Nairn.

But the report is clear that

funding is not yet available for any of the ideas, although it states having a clear plan in place puts Fort William in a 'strong position to compete for any available funding.'

The most ambitious of the proposals is a suggestion to build a new waterfront promenade, pier and marina at Loch Linnhe, as well as improving access from High Street to the water. This sparked controversy when it was discussed at last year's workshop as part of the A82 dual carriageway would need to be removed to build the facility but the report states trial lane closures would be carried out before a decision is made.

Other topics include how best to make use of empty units such as the old police station at the

west end of town and the Fort William R C primary school building once pupils move to the new school in August this year.

Highland councillor Thomas MacLennan, leader of Lochaber area committee, said: 'The Fort William process was about drawing the community together, young and old to explore ways to move Fort William forward and rejuvenate this town - how we interact with Loch Linnhe, how we release the potential in some of the towns derelict and underused buildings and how we improve the visitor experience.'

'One of the surprise parts of the process was the formulation of Fort William Town Team which is driving forward the town's appearance and are already making a big difference. We now have

already been involved up to this stage for their time and effort. 'No doubt everyone will have different views and ideas on what they'd like to see and what they feel the priorities are which is why we want as many people as possible to not only come along to the drop-in events but use the online form to let us know their views.'

The report is now open for public consultation and a drop in session will be held on Wednesday April 29 at Lochaber House between 2pm and 5pm.

A discussion with representatives from the local authority and Highlands and Islands Enterprise will be held at 6pm the same day. An online form is available for those who can't attend the meeting.

Thomas Prag, chairman of the council's planning, development and infrastructure committee, said: 'From the initial meetings we've made real progress and I'd like to thank everyone who has

already been involved up to this stage for their time and effort.

'No doubt everyone will have different views and ideas on what they'd like to see and what they feel the priorities are which is why we want as many people as possible to not only come along to the drop-in events but use the online form to let us know their views.'

The action plan and online form can be found on the Highland Council website, Fort William service point and library or the Nevis Centre.

Responses can also be sent to devplans@highland.gov.uk or Town Centre Action Plans, Development and Infrastructure Service, The Highland Council, Glenurquhart Road, Inverness, IV3 5NX.



DAMAGE: the weir after the breach

Major breach closes Caledonian Canal

THE CALEDONIAN Canal is to remain closed to sea-to-sea traffic until the end of April, following a major breach of a weir six miles south of Fort Augustus.

Heavy rains and snow-melt last week partially washed away a weir near Culloch causing a major breach of an embankment.

While there was no risk to life or property, there has been an impact on the flow of water between the canal and the local system of lochs.

Loch Oich, which usually sits at an average depth of 1.2m, is now at 0.4m, although the water level is higher than normal because of excessive rainfall.

Josie Saunders, head of corporate affairs for Scottish Canals, said: 'We are keenly aware of the importance of the Caledonian Canal to the local economy and are treating the incident as a top priority. However, it will mean the Caledonian Canal, which was due to open for the season

on March 23, will be closed to sea-to-sea navigation until the end of April.'

'We are doing all we can to minimise the impact on tourism in the local area and will manage further works from the end of April onwards around boat movements. While it is too early to say what the repair costs will be for Culloch Weir, our current estimate is between two and three hundred thousand pounds - although we won't know the

costs until the design works on site have been carried out.'

Contractors were on site last week to stabilise the towpath side of the weir and create access points next to Aberchalder Bridge. This has enabled excavators to start getting close to the canal to unload the rock into the water, which will then allow the necessary repairs to the weir itself.

Once complete, the dam will be removed.

Lochaber chef tastes top three success

JUST two points separated a Lochaber high school student from the top place in a cookery competition run by Rotary International in Great Britain and Ireland.

Gregor Mews won the Rotary Club of Lochaber Young Chef competition last October and earlier this month went on to represent the area at the Scotland and north east England final.

Gregor was beaten by only one point by the second-placed contestant, who herself was beaten by only one point by the winner, Heather Nisbet from Stonehaven.

The head judge made special mention of Gregor's starter of caramelised red onion and goat's cheese tartlet with hazelnut dressing and caramelised hazelnuts and his dessert of chocolate and raspberry fondant with raspberry

coulis. Gregor hopes to pursue a career in catering, specialising in cakes and pastry.

Gerald MacIntyre, of the Lochaber club's youth activities committee, accompanied Gregor, his parents Paul and Elizabeth and his grandmother to the regional round in Dundee and Angus College.

He said: 'Gregor was delighted with his award, although naturally disappointed he was beaten by such a small margin.'

This was the sixth year Scottish Rotary clubs have participated in this competition. By the time of the grand final, 1,100 clubs will have taken part, involving 6,500 schoolchildren from throughout GB and Ireland.

The grand final of Great Britain and Ireland is to be held in Wrexham in April.



CHEF: Gregor Mews with his starter, main and dessert courses he cooked for the competition

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Island SOS first-aiders left without emergency service

LOUISE LEE
lee@obantimes.co.uk

EMERGENCY medical first responders who have been without the use of pagers for three months, say the lack of support from mobile giant Vodafone is putting volunteers under 'house arrest.'

Vodafone said it had 'fixed the complex repair' and the service is now back up and running in the island of Luing.

But the first responders and ferry staff on call, as the *Oban Times* went to press, said the system was still not working.

First Responders are first aid volunteers working in some of the West Coast's most remote and rural areas. Often they can be on the scene of an incident hours before an ambulance or helicopter ambulance and provide vital care to patients.

Their pager system links directly to the 999 service and is used by many emergency teams in hospitals.

Chairwoman of registered-charity Luing First Responders, Fiona Cruickshanks, told the *Oban Times*: 'We rely on our Vodafone pager system for emergency call-outs for the Isle of Luing.'

'Luing is a small island with some 160 residents but no resident GP, and our nearest hospital is a 45-minute journey away. 'Our successful first responder



POOR RESPONSE: First responders Simone Van Dijn and Fiona Cruickshanks at the council-run ferry Belnahua

scheme has been running for eight years, providing the first-person-on-scene assistance for the people and visitors of Luing, and assisting in the fast response times for giving people the support they need.'

Over the years the scheme has been running on the island, many lives have been saved as a direct result of first responder intervention.

Mrs Cruickshanks, herself a volunteer on the service and also a nurse, said: 'Our pager system has been down since December 12, 2014, and despite a weekly phone call to Vodafone - this is still not rectified.'

'We pay £118.96 a year for the pager service, but since the storms in December we have had to make alternative arrangements locally so that we can

provide emergency cover for the people of Luing.'

'These arrangements mean that from the hours of 6 pm - 7.30 am, the responders on call have to sit beside a telephone line under house arrest.'

'As an island community, we rely on the council-run ferry. The operators are also alerted by Vodafone pagers. 'They rely on the first responder

calling them out should there be a ferry required and an ambulance arrival anticipated.'

'We need this system to be rectified.'

Alan Reid, MP for Argyll and Bute, who received a mayday call from Mrs Cruickshanks immediately called the phone company.

He said: 'This is appalling. Maintaining a link to emergency services like first responders

should always be a top priority.'

Vodafone were unable to comment as the *Oban Times* went to press, but told Mr Reid in an email the problem was solved.

'Service to Luing is provided by our site on the Isle of Mull', the company told Mr Reid.

'It failed on December 11 due to hardware problems; this was a complex fault which was made more challenging to resolve by bad weather conditions at the time, and the need to order multiple spare parts. The site was restored to service on December 29.'

'It then suffered a further outage in January, and a ticket to resolve the problems affecting local paging services was raised on January 12.'

A catalogue of events then led to three attempts by Vodafone to fix the same problem.

The Vodafone email continued: 'Engineers climbed the site on January 30 to carry out further tests. We reached the conclusion it was necessary to replace an antenna entirely.'

'This was due to take place on March 12, however adverse weather conditions meant that engineers were not permitted to climb the mast that day for safety reasons.'

'Engineers were re-booked and they climbed the site yesterday, March 16. They installed the new antenna and restored the service.'



SIGNAL ISSUE: the bridge at Innis Chonain

Seven year itch over upgrade to A85 bridge

THERE are still no plans to remove the temporary traffic lights at Innis Chonain, near Loch Awe village on the A85, which have operated there for the past seven years.

The lights were installed to control the flow of traffic over the bridge while it was upgraded but the road surface is now crumbling and pot-

holed. Highlands and Islands MSP Jamie McGrigor argued that the bridge needs to be widened to avoid a disastrous traffic pile-up caused by queuing at the lights. Work to widen the bridge was originally scheduled for 2010, but has not yet started.

Jamie McGrigor said: 'I understand that unless the bridge can be widened,

the traffic lights will remain. Only the Scottish government could bring forward an infrastructure project to alleviate the need for traffic lights at the bridge.'

A spokeswoman for BEAR Scotland, who manage the road on behalf of the Scottish government, said: 'Plans are in place to carry out repairs

to the surfacing of the structure as part of our maintenance programme this year.'

The bridge has passed regular safety inspections.

The traffic signals were installed on the bridge due to the condition of the surface and the alignment of the approach road.

Tiree woman condemns emergency care policy

A THREE cancer patient has asked councillors to re-think Argyll and Bute council's medical assessment policy so people who need emergency care in their own home can receive it.

Due to a family bereavement Fiona MacKinnon, of Kirkcubbin, had to leave the island to attend a funeral in Aberdeen.

Fiona, who has cancer and dystonia - a neurological condition affecting muscles that can cause epileptic-type seizures - was then faced with no-one to check her condition.

She claims a social worker in Oban refused to allow her to employ a carer to provide the support that was needed for her in that situation.

Fiona, 51, says she was told an emergency alarm system, that she considers faulty, was to be her only means of sup-

port while her carers were off the island.

She said: 'I want to raise this issue of assessments before care is provided so that people who cannot stick up from themselves know what the real situation is.'

'I had an assessment for care for my original condition and I was provided with carers to help me deal with it. I was then diagnosed with cancer.'

'When my carers were going away for the week, I was going to be left without care. I can cope with things most of the time, but as my illness gets progressively worse, so does my night-time condition. I have something like an epileptic fit, but unlike epilepsy sufferers I remember every moment of the episode.'

'I took my concerns to my doctor and because I had taken ill, in part due to the stress

of the situation, I was moved into the old folk's home on the island.'

An Argyll and Bute council spokeswoman said: 'We are committed to providing the best quality service possible to people who have identified assessed needs.'

'After assessment of need some individuals choose to employ their own carers via the direct payment route.'

'If an individual has a change in circumstances then further review/assessment is undertaken and any change in identified needs is reflected in the level of care.'

'In an emergency situation the council will arrange care appropriate for the circumstances and duration of the emergency.'

'Any person may self-refer to a nursing home if they intend providing the funding them-

selves. If not, and funding is being sought from the council, then an assessment would need to be made to ensure the authorities criteria for residential care is met.'



Fiona MacKinnon

Tourism delegates focus on how others see Argyll area

THE FOURTH Argyll and the Isles tourism summit, held on Tuesday, was hailed a 'major success' by organisers.

The event, delivered by Argyll and the Isles Tourism Co-operative (AITC) with support from VisitScotland, was held at the Lochs and Glens Ardgartan Hotel just outside Arrochar.

AITC chairman Gavin Dick said the theme, 'to see ourselves as others see us', focused delegates' minds on the demands of today's actual and potential visitors and how these can best be met.

Visit Scotland director David Adams McGilp said: 'It has been a very constructive event which

has enabled extremely productive discussions and idea-sharing to take place on how local businesses can join forces and work in partnership more effectively - not only to their mutual benefit but to the considerable benefit of the region's economy - to attract more visitors and deliver an outstanding visitor experience.'



VISITORS: Delegates at the Argyll and the Isles annual tourism summit

Sportsman's dinner declared a winner



THE ANNUAL Ryan MacPhail Memorial Fund sportsman's dinner was a sell-out success once again, raising thousands of pounds for the Oban charity.

Held in the Argyllshire Gathering Halls in the town last Saturday, the top table, pictured, from left, included Independent councillor Roddy McCuish,

speaker and ex-footballer John Geoghan, Alan MacPhail, speaker George McNeill and chairman John Horne. The popular event is the main

fundraiser for the memorial fund, which aims to support young people and sports teams throughout the Oban and Lorn area.

Wooden gangplank not a way forward

A WOODEN gangway is the solution to ongoing problems at Craignure pier, Mull community council heard last week.

The retrograde step would be 'quite impossible' for people with disabilities to use, claimed councillor Mary-Jean Devon, who said

she wasn't aware that a long-term solution for a faulty passenger access system had been found.

After discussing the problems of people getting on and off the ferry, one community councillor said: 'We should go back to having a wooden gangplank - it

doesn't have a huge price tag and it would be up within the week.'

Councillor Devon, who is a wheelchair user, said: 'People with any sort of disability would not be able to use it. I don't think that's a viable plan it would be quite impossible to use.'

Producers interested in Scottish King Arthur

A BOOK revealing King Arthur and his connections to Argyll may be made into a film.

Finding Arthur argues that the legendary king was not an Englishman but a Scot who is hiding in plain sight in Mid Argyll.

Author Adam Ardrey told the *Oban Times*, that following talks

with American film producers, they will be coming to the region to look at the possibility of making a screenplay of the book.

Mr Ardrey was delighted with the news and said tourism operators should consider using Arthur in their own promotion and advertising.

New Dalmally PC

A NEW police constable has been found for the community police officer post in Dalmally, which is being vacated by PC Iain Young.

PC Darren Miller, who currently lives in Glasgow, will begin the position next month. PC Young is taking up a position as rural police officer in Fort William.

The Dalmally position will involve covering a large geographical patch, including Oban and Lorn, and engaging with the community and community councils in the area.

TIMESLINE

Government sinks Mull ferry plan

A PLAN for a community ferry to serve Mull has seemingly been sunk.

The Isle of Mull Ferry Company had proposed a share offer to buy the island's own ferry.

But on Tuesday a spokesman from Transport Scotland said it had no plans to split up the services on the Clyde and Hebrides ferry services.

Oban tradeshow attracts suppliers

A TRADESHOW opens today (Thursday) in Oban's Corran Halls, featuring more than 100 catering and retail suppliers.

Organiser John Forreth of Oban's Forreth Foodservice said: 'We recognise the frustration of businesses in the West Highlands and Islands who have to travel hundreds of miles to attend major national trade shows.'

Driver not at fault for tourist's death

AN OBAN driver was cleared by a jury at Oban sheriff court on Tuesday of causing the death of a tourist.

James Hodge, 32, denied causing the death of a German motorcyclist by careless driving on the A828 near Appin on June 7, 2013.

The jury accepted the incident was a 'tragic accident' and found the case not proven.

Turbine tailback causes traffic jam

A LORRY carrying part of a wind turbine brought traffic to a standstill on Tuesday as it made its way across Connel Bridge.

The lorry then moved onto Barran Culter on the back road between Connel and Kilmore.



Pier too short for second boat, irate islanders are told

A SECOND ferry between the Isle of Mull and Oban is off the cards until the island pier can be extended. Mull community council heard last week that the second ferry was not due to come into service until summer 2016. Dismayed islanders at the meeting said they had believed the additional ferry service was due to coincide with the introduction of cut price fares brought about by Road Equivalent Tariff (RET) in October 2015. Car tickets would be priced at £21 instead of the £57 at present for a return journey from Oban to Mull. Islanders heard the pier at Craignure was too short for a second boat and work would need to be done to lengthen the pier. A spokesman for Transport Scotland said: 'We are working with CalMac, Caledonian Maritime Assets Limited and Argyll and Bute council on a joint project aiming to deploy a second vessel during summer 2016 when demand is highest. The project is looking at the short and longer-term infrastructure requirements at both ports.'

Glasgow band to headline festival

THE FRATELLIS will headline this year's Tìre Music Festival taking place from July 17-19. It will be the Glasgow band's only Scottish festival this summer when they close the event on the Sunday. Other acts playing the multi-award-winning festival include We Banjo 3, Skerryvore, Manran, Gentlemen of Few, Skipinnish, The Chaplins, Cherry Grove, Trail West and Gunna Sound. Tickets will go on sale at 5pm on Monday and will be available from the festival website tiremuscifestival.co.uk. Its recent success saw the festival take place over three days in 2014, expanding the capacity to 1,600 revellers - more than three times the population of Tìre.

Passenger figures up for ferry group

FERRY operator Caledonian MacBrayne (CalMac) has seen its annual passenger figures hit a four-year high. Last year 4,653,958 people travelled with the company, up from 4,594,520 in 2013 - an increase of 1.29 per cent. The last time passenger numbers topped this figure, at 4,736,552, was in 2010.

Mission possible, says trust

ROCKFIELD GROUP CALLS FOR PUBLIC SUPPORT AS IT LOOKS SET TO BUY OBAN SCHOOL FOR £1000

LOUISE LEE
lle@obantimes.co.uk

TODAY (Thursday) is D-Day for a final decision on the future of former Oban primary school, Rockfield. It is understood that the private meeting of Argyll and Bute council will recommend that the school should be sold to Oban Communities Trust (OCT). OCT has mounted a high profile campaign over the past nine months to save the listed building from demolition and turn it into a cultural hub for the town. The asking price from the council is understood to be £1,000. But there will be no help from the council to pay for essential repairs to the building, which is riddled with dry rot. The total repairs bill could top £200,000. At a special public meeting held on Monday night in Oban's Caledonian hotel, the trust outlined its plans for the building. In an impassioned address, OCT chairman Gordon MacNab said: 'The support from the community has been exceptional. We are on the cusp, hopefully, of achieving what we believed to be impossible. The offer from the council will come with a sting in the tail - it will not pay to have the dry rot treated.' Mr McNab explained that OCT



D DAY: Gordon MacNab and Graham MacQueen hope today's council decision will unlock the potential for Rockfield to become a cultural hub for the town

was still not fully aware of the extent of the dry rot, but damage during the recent storms had seen the roof of the extension near to Buchanan Terrace collapse. It was also revealed that the wooden floor in the school hall was now beyond repair. Mr MacNab continued: 'We need to build a fighting fund of £100,000 to £200,000 over the next three to six months. We need everyone to assist with fundraising. What we need is the money to get the building stabilised. We also need to deal with asbestos in the building.' He said that local tradesmen had agreed to offer their time free of charge and design a 'plan of attack' to tackle the problems in the building. OCT amended its constitution during the meeting to define its objects as advancing community development. Mr MacNab continued: 'We don't need the money all at once but we will need to raise a substantial amount from the community to support the project. The state of the building is

down to neglect and very little management by the council. The water is pouring in. 'We could decide right now to walk away, but that is not what OCT is about. We need to put our hands in our pockets and fund the repair of the building. But we also need to get ourselves into work teams to carry out the work required in the building.' He said OCT might consider taking on a loan from a social investment bank in order to deal with the problems. OCT trustee and Oban businessman Graham MacQueen said: 'If the play park people can raise £200,000 in a short period of time then it is possible for us to do the same. 'It is a big mission - but we can do it.' The meeting heard that the group had received £20,000 from Highlands and Islands Enterprise to fund a business case and feasibility study. Commenting on today's meeting, a council spokeswoman said: 'The council will consider a report on Rockfield and recommendations from the Oban, Lorn and the Isles area committee which discussed the matter on February 11. 'We will contact the community group in the first instance about the outcome as soon as possible following the meeting.'

Pontoons dead in the water

THE PLAN to install pontoons in Oban Bay by the summer has been blown out of the water. Councillor Roddy McCuish, chairman of Oban, Lorn and the Isles area committee, had stated unequivocally that the pontoons would be in the water by early summer when two major cruise liners are scheduled to visit Oban. Councillor McCuish, who would not be drawn on why the project was not going ahead, told the *Oban Times* said: 'I understood the pontoons would be in Oban Bay this summer. Unfortunately that is not now the case. 'The council is actively pursuing this and has been looking at a temporary and a long-term solution for a marine facility in Oban Bay. These will be coming to the area committee in the very near future. 'I, and the rest of the area committee, fully recognise the need for a marine facility in Oban Bay and we will be pursuing that, subject to the usual business case approach that the council takes with all major projects. 'This will include both sides of the pier. Like everyone else, I am disappointed we cannot do



Like everyone else, I am disappointed we cannot do it by this year

Councillor Roddy McCuish (Pictured)

it this year but this encourages us to move even quicker to get the marine facility that Oban so richly deserves.' Oban-based councillor Iain S MacLean said: 'There has been a real drive and determination to get the pontoons into the water. 'Every member of the area committee has been behind getting pontoons into the water. 'This would have been particularly good for the cruise ship market. 'It is important that everyone remembers that anything is possible with some determination. 'There is no time to delay - Oban needs pontoons, and we need them. We will continue to get the matter with some vigour.' A spokesman for Oban Bay Marine, which put forward a plan for a short-stay marina in Oban Bay to Argyll and Bute council but was rejected as not being 'viable', said: 'If elected members really want a step-ashore, transit facility in the heart of Oban, they need to invest the money allocated under CHORD for that purpose, by dredging and providing a floating breakwater.'



BRANCHING OUT: members enjoyed the dinner at the Royal hotel

Glasgow belongs to Oban

THERE was a record turnout at the weekend for the 48th Oban high school former pupils association's dinner dance. Held annually by the Glasgow branch, the only one that still exists, it is the first time it has been held in Oban and it attracted more than 150 guests. Anne Byiers, who now lives in Bearsden, is president of the Glasgow association. She explained: 'Historically there were Oban, Glasgow and Edinburgh branches of the former pupils association, but through time the Glasgow one is the only one which still exists. 'There are guests here tonight from all over Scotland and even further afield. 'The associations were used previously to support people who moved away from the area for work or study, either morally, socially or financially as they settled into new surroundings, but now it is for our annual reunion. 'Holding it in Oban has given us a tremendous boost in numbers, and I'd like to say a big thanks to everyone for coming along and supporting this fantastic event.' Oban businessman Graham McQueen, who was a pupil from 1964 to 1969, was invited as guest speaker. He said: 'It's great holding the event in Oban, and I would hope to continue this on future years as it's seen a rise in numbers. I think this is because it has given people who have left the town a reason to come back.'

Heartfelt plea to cemetery lights thieves

EUAN PATERSON
epaterson@obantimes.co.uk

TWO OBAN widowers have spoken of their devastation after thieves stole solar lamps placed to light up their wives' grave-stones at night. Pensioners Frank Toman and William Goldie both bought the lamps to light up the grave-stones of their late wives but discovered them missing on Saturday. Frank, 76, searched the graveyard over the course of three days with the help of staff at Pennyfuir cemetery, near Oban, in the hope his lamp had merely blown away. But he and William reported the theft to the police on Monday after concluding they had been stolen. Now the men have appealed to the thieves to return the lamps,

insisting the matter will then be finished, as far as they are concerned. 'I don't understand why someone would do this,' said a devastated Frank, whose wife Mairi died from Parkinson's Disease in September 2013. 'I've got no enemies, I would help anyone and I have even helped other folk keep grave-stones nice and tidy. 'I just feel terrible that someone would do this.' William, a former telecoms worker, who lost his wife Morag in June 2010, said he found out about the theft when his son, Scott, phoned him on Saturday to say: 'My mum's light's away.' William, 75, told the *Oban Times*: 'Whoever did this must have been desperate, because their head is not there if they can do something like this. I feel sorry for them, more than anything

else. I just cannot fathom why this would happen.' William and Frank became friends after William's grandson, Scott, was buried just yards from Mairi's grave. Both men regularly tend to the grave-stones, with Frank visiting almost every day. William added: 'We don't feel any malice towards whoever did this. We just want the lights back.' PC Emma Campbell of Oban police said she had begun 'extensive enquiries' into the theft, adding: 'If anyone puts themselves in that situation, they will realise how upsetting this is for the families involved, because the grave site is so personal to them. 'I would appeal to the public to pass on any information they may have on this incident. Someone will know who is responsible for this.' Oban police can be contacted by phoning 101.



LOVING CARE: Frank Toman wife's grave at Pennyfuir

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Grant scores 25-yarder in his last game for Fort William

Grant is set to move to Australia after more than four years with the club

FORT William Football Club made the three-month wait for a home game worthwhile with an impressive win against Wick Academy at the weekend.

The Claggan Park side had not played at home since November 22 but came back in style on Saturday, when a goal from a Sean

Grant free kick in the Highland League clash secured victory against third-placed Wick.

It took just three minutes for James Whyte to open the scoring, taking the Fort to an early lead, but two goals in two minutes from Wick's Craig Campbell and Gary Weir soon put the visitors

Football

in front. The Fort men were back on level terms by the hour mark thanks to an equaliser from Nick Stein before Grant secured the victory with a 25-yard free kick on 70 minutes.

Not only was it the goal to win the match, it was also Grant's last with Fort William as he is set to move to Australia after more than four years with the club.

The 25-year-old will soon be playing for Shepparton South, Victoria.

David MacDonald, vice chairman of Fort William, said: 'We all wish Sean the best of luck in Australia and he really went out on a high.'

'Sean scored from the forward line in his first game with us and has been a great player ever since. He'll be a big loss.'

As *The Oban Times* went to print Fort William were preparing to welcome Forres Mechanics last night (Wednesday) before taking on Inverurie Locos, also at home, on Saturday.

For a report and pictures of the Fort William Football Club sportsman's dinner on Saturday night, see page 15.



Nick Stein, left, and Iain MacLennan



Sean Grant celebrates scoring the winner against Wick Academy

Phoenix boxers reach open finals

Boxing

LOCHABER Phoenix young boxers Cameron Whyte and Dan Nixon have powered their way into their respective Scottish Open finals this weekend after winning their semi-finals last weekend.

Whyte effortlessly shifted through the gears against the accomplished Jack O'Keefe of Doon Valley Boxing Club. O'Keefe tried to use his jab at the start of the contest but 12-year-old Whyte's jab took away O'Keefe's most effective weapon and it was really one way traffic as Whyte won every round and inflicted a standing count on his opponent and came away with an overwhelming points victory.

Nixon easily won the opening round of his bout against John Reilly of Lochee Boxing Club, but went down in the second. But Nixon, 13, has a steely resolve and drove forward to win in the final round on a unanimous decision.

Other Phoenix youngsters, Leon Smith, Robert MacDonald and Kevin Aitchison, performed well but fell short of their respective finals.

Paul makes the arrows fly

Darts

IN WEEK two of the Tradewinds singles darts league, Paul Shearer was victorious after beating Duncan Carmichael by three legs to two in the final.

Semi finalists were John Matheson and last week's champion Darren Sutherland.

Robbie MacFadyen hit a 180 and high finishes included 152 from Carmichael, 126 by Sutherland and 101 by Martin Cuthbertson.

The league in Tradewinds bar will continue this Friday as well as an open singles competition on Saturday, all welcome for the 1pm start.

Margaret Jane named player of the year

Women's shinty

IT WAS a double celebration this weekend for Margaret Jane Malcolm of Glengarry Girls shinty club.

The youngster was named player of the year for last season on Saturday after the club won their first game of the new season 2-0 against Lochaber Ladies.



Margaret Jane Malcolm, left, is presented with the Glengarry Girls player of the year by club official Karen Williamson

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Lochaber high win Leanachan Challenge



Team: Lochaber high picked up the prize for best school

Cross country

LOCHABER high school athletes picked up the trophy for this year's cross country Leanachan Challenge.

Pupils from the school competed against fellow runners from Mallaig and Portree high schools at Torlundy on Friday and Eilidh Moynihan from Lochaber also won the prize for fastest girl, running the eight kilometres in 39 minutes and 22 seconds.

It was Portree athlete Seumas Meghan who won fastest boy, running the same distance in 38 minutes and three seconds.

Three age groups

The race was split into three age groups, the S1-2 category ran 3.5km, the S3-4 pupils ran 5.5km and the S5-6 pupils ran the whole 8km.

Organisers thanked the Rural Education Trust for hosting the event and marshalls for their help on the day.

Prizewinners: S1-2 girls 1 Aimee Mackay, Lochaber, 2 Rebecca Johnston, Lochaber, 3 Elaine Dead, Portree. S1-2 boys 1 Ben Johnston 2 Ryan Boyle 3 Fergus Fraser, all Lochaber. S3-4 girls 1 Kirsty Watt 2 Gaia Jones 3 Rona Stewart, all Portree. S3-4 boys 1 Sandy Laing, Portree, 2 Kyle Ingram, Mallaig, 3 Andrew Grieve, Portree. S5-6 girls 1 Eilidh Moynihan, Lochaber, 2 Rachael MacPherson, Lochaber, 3 Holly Sharratt, Lochaber. S5-6 boy 1 Seumas Meghan.



Winners: Individual top finishers from left: Kirsty Watt, Sandy Laing and Seumas Mehan (all Portree), Eilidh Moynihan, Aimee Jo MacKay and Ben Johnston (all Lochaber)



Lochaber's youth team enjoyed a day of rugby in Inverness

Lochaber rugby youngsters do well in Inverness event

LOCHABER youth rugby players were 'a credit' to their club when they attended a festival at the weekend.

The primary six and seven team won three out of their six games at the Highland Rugby Club event in Inverness on Sunday.

'The Lochaber boys celebrated victories against Caithness, Moray and Highland but went down to Huntly, Ellon and Ross Sutherland.'

Youth manager Gary Hendrie said: 'The team from Lochaber played some excellent rugby and were a credit to themselves and their club, especially with a good few players missing and having few training sessions lately due to poor weather.'

Three-way

Next weekend the S1/2 team will host clubs from Moray and Plockton for a three-way tournament on Saturday, March 29.

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WEATHER		TIDAL INFORMATION	
Thursday	Light rain Winds light south westerly Temperatures 6°C to 7°C.	Tide tables for Oban during the week from Thursday, March 19, 2015 are listed below with differences for major ports listed on the right. All times are GMT (add one hour BST)	
Friday	Sunny intervals and showers Winds moderate north westerly Temperatures 3°C to 9°C.	Date	am
Weekend Outlook	Cloudy on Saturday Light rain on Sunday Winds light south easterly Temperatures 5°C to 8°C.	Thur	pm
		Fri	Ardrishaig
		Sat	Campbeltown
		Sun	Crinan
		Mon	Islay Port Ellen
		Tues	Lochboisdale
		Wed	Lochboisdale
			Ferry Crossings/Sea States
			Oban to Barra/South Uist
			Oban to Coll/Tiree
			Kennacraig to Islay
			Mallaig
			Portree
			Tobermory
			Dover
			Moderate
			Moderate
			Moderate