

# The Oban Times

## & WEST HIGHLAND TIMES

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#### Consultant may be hired for school closure meetings

AN INDEPENDENT consultant may be appointed to chair a series of public meetings into the proposed closure of rural primary schools in Argyll.

The official consultation process began this week, and a number of public meetings have been arranged for early in the new year. Council officials say they are considering recruiting a consultant to act as an impartial chairman for the meetings, which are expected to be well attended.

As part of its review of the school estate which resulted in the closure proposals, the council paid £8,600 for consultant Keir Bloomer's services.

See page 7 for more on the closure proposals.

#### Move to extend public booze ban

A BAN on drinking booze in public is set to be extended throughout Oban.

Members of Argyll and Bute Council's Oban and Lorn and the Isles area committee unanimously supported the proposal.

The byelaw banning alcohol in public will be extended to include Soroba.

Despite residents' fears, this will not mean a ban on drinking in gardens. But the plans, it is hoped, will bring to an end the 'culture of street drinking' throughout the town.

Councillor Elaine Robertson asked for assurances from the meeting that police undertake enforcement of the ban 'sensibly'. She was told this would be the case.

#### A82 traffic chaos

THE A82 between Tarbet on the A83 and Crianlarich on the A85 was closed to traffic in both directions for nearly seven hours on Tuesday after a lorry jackknifed.

The road was closed at about 11.40am and diversions were in place via the A83 to Inveraray, A819 to Dalmally and A85 to Tyndrum to rejoin the A82 at Crianlarich.



Councillors Roddy McCuish and Elaine Robertson look over the haul of counterfeit goods before they are destroyed. 16\_t51contraband1

### Warning to shoppers as haul of fake goods is destroyed

A HUGE haul of fake goods has been seized in Argyll - leading to warnings for shoppers to look out for counterfeit items in the run up to Christmas.

As Argyll and Bute Council staff were being tasked with destroying the proceeds of serious organised crime, councillors Elaine Robertson and Roddy McCuish warned officers had powers to seize goods from market stalls or a person's home.

The haul of goods, shown to *The Oban Times*, included fake DVDs, trainers, branded tops and handbags; while other goods such as cigarettes and alcohol were also destroyed.

Councillor McCuish said: 'There is an incredible amount of goods found here in Argyll.'

'Goods can be dangerous - especially if they are toys for children or faulty parts for cars.'

'Argyll and Bute Council officers can seize goods and offenders can be prosecuted with custodial sentences of up to 10 years.'

Councillor Robertson added: 'At this time of year and in the present economic uncertainty it is very tempting to accept what looks like a bargain, but not at the expense of our health and our children's wellbeing.'

'Counterfeit toys, alcohol and cigarettes may look authentic but are not quality controlled and may be hazardous. If offered they should definitely be avoided, and reported to the Trading Standards Department or the police.'

### Is it time to sell off the 'family silver'?

Calls for council to cash in on valuable assets

CALLS have been made for cash-strapped Argyll and Bute Council to 'sell off the family silver'.

The authority has millions of pounds tied up in precious metal and rarely seen artwork, and as members face up to tough choices to balance the books, some councillors are suggesting it's time for a sell-off.

Chains of office - made of gold and silver - are rarely used yet are worth upwards of £75,000 each, and there are five sets in Argyll and Bute.

The council has two art collections, including two highly prized William MacTaggart impressionist paintings. It also has a number of historic artefacts, including a rare prehistoric jet stone necklace.

An *Oban Times* investigation revealed the council has recently brought together all the art work it owns for valuation in Oban

#### REPORT

by LOUISE LEE  
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- but insists it has no plans to sell it off.

Councillor Donald Kelly, of the Argyll First group, said: 'As a last resort the council should look at any asset that would help to sustain frontline services.'

'There is certainly a considerable amount of money lying around in council offices and attics that could be realised.'

'It could make a world of difference to the way we run our services, if and when the cuts get really bad.'

'I understand that the manner in which some gifts were given means we could never sell them but for those we can, we should consider it.'

George McMillan, a former chairman of the old Argyll and Bute District Council, said Campbeltown's historic

assets alone were worth more than £2m.

He said: 'There is cash in the attic, there must be millions of pounds sitting in storage. Some things would be better off sold.'

Councillor Ron Simon, SNP group spokesman, added: 'There are two views - one is that art should be seen regularly as our artworks tell our own history of Argyll and the other is that they are not doing anything and should be sold.'

'The provost's chains, for example, are exquisite to see, but when it comes to art that remains unseen for years on end you have to ask whether it is using the assets of the council to the best of their advantage.'

'We have to look at all options. Personally, I would be against selling the chains, but not necessarily against selling art to ensure it was on public display.'

'If we are not using the

art work and artefacts then perhaps someone else should.'

A spokeswoman for Argyll and Bute Council said: 'Selling paintings or the chains of office to raise funds would not ease the current financial difficulties the council faces. We are in the process of producing a published catalogue listing details of our paintings, including provenance and where the paintings are displayed and stored. The combined art collections of MacTaggart and Anderson are insured to the value of around £1.14 million.'

'Chains of office come from the former burghs, within Argyll and Bute. Each chain is different and they vary widely in terms of value and appearance.'

'The council has no plans to sell off its cultural heritage - heritage that ultimately belongs to the people of Argyll and Bute.'

### Town could benefit from increase in cruise liners

OBAN is well placed to cash in on plans to attract huge numbers of tourists from cruise liners - if the town can provide the infrastructure to welcome the visitors.

Figures contained in a newly-released national study, Cruise Scotland - The Way Ahead, states the country has the potential to quadruple visitor numbers from liners to almost 1.1

million people by 2019. It also outlines the need for a new cruising ground on the west coast for larger vessels.

Councillor Neil Mackay, Argyll and Bute Council's spokesman for tourism, said he is already aware of the great potential of Oban and that the authority is planning ahead.

'Thankfully we have been

enterprising and recognised the economic potential of the cruise ship business and have done a considerable amount of work in looking at how we can deliver what is needed - to coin a phrase we have to be careful not to miss the boat.'

'Oban is a true example of the boost cruise tourism in Scotland can bring - last year we welcomed

23 ships into the town,' he continued.

David Adams McGilp, regional director of VisitScotland, said: 'Oban is ideally placed to embrace this opportunity to increase the high-end tourism from cruise ships. But we also need investment in marine side developments to secure this outstanding opportunity.'

### Al fresco dining in Oban at the mercy of planners

THREE Oban businesses have been told they must apply for retrospective planning permission if they wish to continue offering seating areas outside their premises.

Planning officers approached the businesses saying a permit is now required if they wish to offer customers an al fresco service.

'One of those affected was Julie's Café, in Stafford Street, which has provided four tables outside its

premises, covered by an awning, for the past two decades.'

Owner Ann Smith, who has run the café since 2001, said: 'We have had to put a planning application in, but nothing will actually be changing. Outside dining is something that's happened ever since this business opened 20 years ago.'

'Someone from planning just came and asked if we had planning permission. We were then told we had to put in an application. You

just have to comply. We actually just assumed we had permission.'

'I think it's come about because other people in the town had started putting tables outside.'

'It cost us £300 to apply, then the permit will cost us £150 per year, so it is going to cost us a lot of money.'

A spokeswoman for Argyll and Bute Council said: 'Planning permission is required for outside seating areas as it is a material change in use of the land.'

'Three businesses have been approached in Oban town centre regarding outside seating areas. The council owns the land and businesses must now apply for a permit to occupy part of the road for a pavement café. A permit will only be issued where planning permission has been obtained, hence the department contacting businesses in the town.'

'Julie's Café was approached last summer, but no planning application was received.'

### New Winter Warmers

#### Battered Fish Menu

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Fillet of Plaice & Eusk Chips

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## Construction of care centre 'progressing well'

THE BUILDING of Mull's Progressive Care Centre (PCC) has begun and groundwork is progressing well.

The island hospital only got the go-ahead when health minister Nicola Sturgeon agreed 11th hour funding for the project after the Scottish government initially decided to pull the cash.

Andy Knight, of Torosay Sandpit Limited, the company which is undertaking groundwork at the site, said: 'The general story on the PCC is that work on site is progressing well, earthworks are substantially complete and the permanent access has been constructed.'

'The foundations are now being formed and the job is on programme, although the freezing temperatures have made concrete works challenging.'

Councillor Mary-Jean Devon said: 'It is good news that the Progressive Care Centre is now under way.'

'It was a frightening few days for the community in October when we thought the funding may be pulled from the project. So many people have invested time and money in getting this project to the stage it is at now. I would like to congratulate all the partners in making this happen.'

The project is jointly funded by charity Mull Progressive Care Centre, West Highland Housing Association, NHS Highland and Argyll and Bute Council.

'The foundations are now being formed and the job is on programme, although



Councillor Mary-Jean Devon pictured digging the first turf at the Progressive Care Centre. NHS Highland has confirmed all contracts for the job are in place.

Photograph by Phil McDermott.

## Flight subsidy cut may spell disaster for Barra

#### REPORT

by STEVEN FLANAGAN  
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PLANS to remove a subsidy for some flights from Barra have come under fire from the chairman of the council committee that took the decision.

Comhairle nan Eilean Siar's transportation committee last week voted by 9-4 to cut daily flights between Barra and Benbecula in a bid

to save £211,000. It would mean the 1,200 residents of Barra would no longer have a link flight to catch onward flights to Stornoway and Inverness.

The decision is yet to be

ratified by the full council, but there are already warnings that the move could have a hugely damaging effect on the island's economy.

Chief critic of the move is the chairman of the transportation committee, councillor and Barra resident Donald Manford.

He said: 'What concerns me is that no amount of evaluation at all has been done. The report simply identified a sum that could be saved if we cut the subsidy. It could have a huge impact. Firstly, this will have implications for the travellers between here, Benbecula and Stornoway.'

'Also, what of the health of the people? This move would limit access to the Western Isles Hospital on Stornoway. Tourism too - it cannot be undervalued - yet the

department directors have presented no alternatives whatsoever for what can be removed.'

'This is a matter of making a financial saving no matter what the cost. It's cutting your nose off to spite your face.'

Western Isles SNP MSP Alasdair Allan said he was left 'staggered' by the decision, which comes as the Scottish Government is poised to seal a million pound deal to buy two new-build Twin Otter planes to ply the Barra route.

He said: 'If the full council proceeds to remove the subsidy for this lifeline route I believe it will be making a grave mistake which people in Barra will not easily forgive.'

'The Scottish Government has shown its commitment to air services to Barra by

entering negotiations with a Canadian firm to replace the two Twin Otter aircraft currently serving the island. At the same time, we now learn of a serious threat to one of the island's two air routes.'

'Western Isles SNP MSP Alasdair Allan said he was left 'staggered' by the decision, which comes as the Scottish Government is poised to seal a million pound deal to buy two new-build Twin Otter planes to ply the Barra route.'

'He said: 'If the full council proceeds to remove the subsidy for this lifeline route I believe it will be making a grave mistake which people in Barra will not easily forgive.'

'The proposed cut will be debated by the full Comhairle today (Thursday).



## Beachd Ailein

Ailean Caimbeul

CHO MATH SGILLINN ACHAOMHNADH ri sgillinn a chosnadh!

Saoilidh mi gum bheil an dion thusadh air "luach as fearr" gar mealladh aig amannan agus a' cruthachadh dileab a nì crón maireannach, gu h-áraid ann an coimhearsnachdan air ionmali. Ciàmar? Tha air sgàth's gum bheil a' phris as saoie air seirbhisean poblach glè thric a' toirt na h-obrach do bhuidhnean bho thaobh a-mach nam sgìrean dùthchail sin agus ag àiceadh cosnaidh do mhùinntir na sgire fhèin. Sin, mar eisimpleir, mar a th' air tachairt as na h-Eileanan Siar far am bheil a' chùmhant togail sgoilean as mothach a bh' aca riamh bho thaobh a-mach na sgire.

Chan eil a' Chomhairle sin ach a' leantainn an iùil a th' aig an roinn phoblaigh as an fharsaingeachd ach feumar faighneachd dè tha 'n dàn nuair a chriochnaiches an obair togail. Mura bheil cosnadh leantainneach gu bhith ann, chan urrainn dha teaghlaichean òga fuireach agus bidh nas lughadhlachan as na sgòilean tìre sin. Thuit àireamh clann-sgoilean nan Eilean Siar 12% eadar 2000 agus 2008, seachd as a' cheud nas motha na thachair air Ghàidhealtachd thar an aon tìue. Tha lèirinn foghlaim na Comhairle ag athimeachadh mar a tha àireamh sluaigh nan Eilean a' sioladhach chan eil ceangal follaiseach eadar an lèirinn sin agus amasan leasachaidh eacnamaich. Ma the Breatann dol a dhireadh às an t-sloc eaconamach as am bheil e, the feum gniomhachas fhàs gus beartearas ùr a chruthachadh. Tha sin a' ciallachadh cosnайдhean ùra; calpa a cheadaicheas leasachaidhean air goireasan agus seirbhisean poblach agus a bheir obraichean dha daoine seach a bhith an urra ri sochairean; agus ionnhas a cheadaicheas le tionnsgalan agus malairt na roinne priobhaidhais fàs aig an aon àm. Cha bheag an dubhlan e, ach mura tachair sin, bidh crionadh sluaigh aig an oir a sior dhol am miosad agus bidh cosgais nan seirbhisean poblach an sin a sior fhàs cuideachd.

Tha e deatmach sealtaim ri amasan gu h-iomlan agus cosgais calpa leithid sgoilean agus goireasan eile fhàicinn mar airgead-seilbhinn innleachd leasachaidh choimhearsnachdan seach direach freagairt air feumalachdan lagħi. Bhiodh sin cuideachd a' ciallachadh aitheann a thoirt a chumail air luchd-fastaidh ionadil agus cosnaidhean leantainneach.

'S ionadh rud buidhe nach òr, agus rud bòidheach 's fhìach a sheachnadh!

'BEST value' is an important principle in any administration, but the rigid pursuit of the cheapest tender could seriously damage the social and economic viability of some communities.

Whilst the new schools construction and maintenance contracts in the Western Isles were doubtlessly awarded in line with appropriate governance and diligence, the local construction sector which provides critical long-term employment is starved of work.

It seems critical for government to initiate a more strategic approach to investment in the long-term social and economic development of communities, at the edge in particular, or the ultimate outcome will be further unemployment, out-migration and a further decline in children at these new schools!

**Ailean Caimbeul (Allan Campbell)**  
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## Terminal re-opens after linkspan repairs

PORT Askaig ferry terminal on the Isle of Islay has reopened following eight weeks of repairs to a linkspan caused by a ferry collision.

The new ferry linkspan was knocked out of alignment on October 18 when the MV Isle of Arran struck its seaboard corner as it was berthing. The ferry was also damaged in the incident. The repairs were completed by Houston's of Cupar on

time and on budget and the terminal re-opened last Friday.

Argyll and Bute Council, which is responsible for the pier, is arranging for a risk assessment to be undertaken, which will ensure it has contingency arrangements if there is future damage to the linkspan and the island's other ferry berthing pier in Islay, Port Ellen, is unavailable.

'We produced the gin for fun, on a small scale, but we have been surprised by how good it is.'

The gin is flavoured from an unprecedented total of 31 botanicals, 22 of which - including juniper - are native to the Hebridean island. Bruichladdich managing director Mark Reynier said: 'When we announced we were going to do gin we were stopped by people all the time who were

desperate to find out when it would be ready. Then we did a taster at the Islay Show and it's just gone mad since then.'

'We produced the gin for fun, on a small scale, but we have been surprised by how good it is.'

Graham Allison, of Port Charlotte Hotel, said: 'It is very zesty and lemony and people seem to be enjoying it. It is a good addition to the gin range and it is locally produced, which is good.'

The distillery initially produced 2,500 cases of The Botanist, bottled on Islay at 46 per cent with Islay spring water.

## Gin proves surprise success for distillery

A DISTILLERY on Islay, an island famed for its whisky production, says a new locally-produced gin is outselling its flagship whisky bottlings.

The independent Bruichladdich Distillery has sold hundreds of bottles of 'The Botanist' gin, which is produced and sold at the distillery.

Since the bottling went on sale two weeks ago, it has been outselling Bruichladdich's whiskies in the distillery shop.

Bruichladdich managing director Mark Reynier said:

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desperate to find out when it would be ready. Then we did a taster at the Islay Show and it's just gone mad since then.'

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## John bids farewell to Coastguard

A presentation was made recently to John MacKenzie who has retired from active duties with Port Charlotte, Islay, Coastguard office after 36 years' service. He was presented with a tide clock by Neil MacLellan who himself has 44 years of continuous service for the coastguard on Islay. Pictured, back row, from left: Duncan McPhee, Donald Jones, Andrew Wood, Andrew Jones, Douglas Smith, Danny Mather. Front row, from left: Euan Fraser, Neil MacLellan, John MacKenzie, Duncan McGillivray, Alan Logan.

## Rope and nets became tangled in propeller

A 30-FOOT crab fishing boat,

**Pharmacist bids fond farewell**

DALMALLY pharmacist Malcolm Bruce is getting used to life on the other side of the counter following his retirement after 16 years working in the village.

Malcolm and his wife Brenda ran the pharmacy and Post Office in Dalmally village for a decade before it moved to a new building beside the surgery six years ago.

Gilly Chrystal took over the running of the Post Office.

Malcolm, who retired last Monday, said: 'It is strange being this side of the counter; the phone rings and I think to myself, 'I don't have to answer that'.'

Malcolm and Brenda are now planning a camper van tour of Scotland.

The new owner of the pharmacy is Isma Yaqoob and the other director in the business is Rukhsana Akbar.

**MPs voted against rise in tuition fees**

TWO WEST Highland MPs were among six Scottish Liberal Democrats to vote against government proposals to raise tuition fees in England.

Ross, Skye and Lochaber MP Charles Kennedy and Argyll and Bute representative Alan Reid went against their coalition government by voting against the motion to raise fees to a maximum of £9,000.

The government won the vote but with a reduced majority of 21.

**Regent Hotel 'not on the market'**

DESPITE The Regent Hotel appearing 'for sale' on various internet sites, owners have confirmed it is not on the market.

A spokeswoman confirmed the 82 en-suite bedroom property, belonging to Oxford Hotels and Inns, was 'not on the market' and managers were undertaking a 'partial refurbishment' over the winter.

**Four held after spot searches**

FOUR men have been reported for separate drugs offences, following spot searches by Oban Police officers over the weekend.

Officers found cannabis resin and diazepam following the searches in the town centre.

# Bruce spreads seasonal cheer on Bulgaria visit



**Bruce Donn has helped bring some seasonal cheer to those less fortunate folk in Bulgaria.** t51brucedon01

**REPORT**

by STUART LAUNDRY  
slaundy@obantimes.co.uk

AN OBAN hotelier has helped bring a little seasonal cheer to underprivileged children in Bulgaria.

Bruce Donn, who helps run the Palace Hotel with his parents Anne and Ian, recently returned from the east European country after delivering a consignment of goods which would be considered everyday items by people in the UK but adds to the quality of life for those less fortunate in Bulgaria.

His car was piled high with everything from vacuum packed clothes and toiletries to audio books and videos.

On previous visits, he has taken towels and duvet covers which would otherwise have been thrown out by the hotel.

Bruce explained that his link with Bulgaria began when he bought a holiday property in the country in the mid-2000s.

'As a challenge to myself, I decided to do something over there other than simply eat and drink, as most people do on holiday. I decided to find out a bit more about the area and see something different.'

This led him into contact with a group of expats who split their time between Bulgaria and Britain and who had begun to look at ways they could provide some support to vulnerable

Bulgarians. This has come in a variety of projects. One saw new trainers provided for all the youngsters at a children's home.

Another resulted in a ball pool for the physiotherapy room at a disabled children's centre.

After almost four years, the group became a legally recognised non-profit making organisation known as Priteli-Veliko Tarnova. 'Priteli' translates as 'friends' and Veliko Tarnova is the part of the country in which the group operates.

Bruce said Bulgaria was a country of great contrasts between the 'haves' and 'have nots'.

'The first time I went out, it was a case of putting a few bits in the car.'

'We would have put the old linen from the hotel in the bins at Tesco, but instead, this, along with items such as towels coloured by hair dye, or duvets which perhaps had been marked, were perfectly useable, even if not for the hotel,' he added.

'It has grown since then and is getting bigger every year.'

And as word has spread of Bruce's efforts, other donations have been made from individuals and groups.

'This year was the first time I was actually given things to take over with me.'

Bruce said his next visit to Bulgaria will take place sometime in 2011.

## Planners refuse controversial Raera Forest wind farm scheme

A CONTROVERSIAL proposal to erect the biggest wind turbines in Europe in an Argyll beauty spot has been unanimously rejected by Argyll and Bute councillors.

Argyll and Bute officers had recommended the plan for refusal on the basis that the area is of 'panoramic quality', adjacent to the nesting sites of protected birds of prey and has settlements within 2kms.

SNH's view that the wind farm would have a significant adverse impact on the landscape character and qualities of a distinctive and valued coastal landscape was upheld by the council.

Oban councillor and vice chairman of the planning, protective services and licensing committee Roddy McCuish said: 'Every application has an adverse

effect on someone and we can try to mitigate that but the impact of this development on the landscape, fragile infrastructure and tourism is too big a risk. It's a fine project but in the wrong place.'

Kilnivern and Kilmelford Community Council chairman Nigel Mitchell, who has campaigned against the proposal for two years, said: 'I'm glad it's over. Now we are just hoping they will not appeal to the Scottish Government as that will be another battle for us. But at the moment it's jubilation. We have more wind farm applications in

renewable energy targets, tourism, the economy and health concerns were all debated but the scale of the development and its visual impact on the scenery dominated the arguments put forward.

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Raera Forest development manager at npower Karen Fox said: 'We are disappointed by the planning committee's decision to turn down our scheme. Raera Forest was chosen as a potential site because, amongst other reasons, it is outside any international or national designations.'

The sole reason for refusal was based on landscape and visuals, however, I believe we clearly demonstrated that the design evolution fully considered the impact on landscape and was within planning policy.'

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Kilnivern and Kilmelford Community Council chairman Nigel Mitchell, who has campaigned against the proposal for two years, said: 'I'm glad it's over. Now we are just hoping they will not appeal to the Scottish Government as that will be another battle for us. But at the moment it's jubilation. We have more wind farm applications in

## Kids' safe surfing campaign launched by police



**Oban High School's deputy head teacher John MacPherson and Sergeant Mike Wood launch the Stay Safe Online scheme with pupils Cailean Wilkinson, S1, and Katie Sims, S6.** t51websafety1

STAY safe online – that's the message from Strathclyde Police.

Children may have more knowledge about the world wide web than their parents, but that shouldn't stop youngsters being safe when they log on.

Officers from Oban, Lorn and the Isles are offering free advice to give families the latest information about online safety.

Officers will be rolling out a programme for parents through Oban High School and many primary schools in the area.

Chief Inspector Glen Bland said: 'Most children today use the internet - at home, at school and when they're out and about.'

'How can you be sure that they are surfing safely? As we all know, computers can

be great tools for kids, but there are dangers attached to using the internet.'

'Many parents have no idea what their children are viewing when they are on the internet.'

'They may be unaware that their child has encountered violent or sexual content or is engaged in inappropriate conversation with strangers,' he added.

'By taking an active role in supervising how your child uses the internet, you can help to ensure that they continue to have fun on the net and find the information they are looking for, while keeping safe from some of the medium's dangers.'

A competition to write a short message telling people to stay safe online has been launched by Strathclyde Police. More information can be found at [www.spstation.co.uk](http://www.spstation.co.uk).

## Road wrangle delays construction

THE DEVELOPMENT of 20 much needed homes on Mull is on hold because of a legal wrangle about an access road.

Developer TSL is pleading with Argyll and Bute Council to adopt the road as part of its network in order to get on with the West Highland Housing Association (WHHA) project.

Phase one of the Tobermory scheme was completed in November and 26 homes at the Shillinghill site were immediately filled. Construction of the 20 houses which make up phase two should have followed on straight away.

Lesley McInnes, chief executive of WHHA, said despite a delay in the project progressing: 'We fully anticipate there will be no difficulties with phase two.'

Andy Knight, of TSL, said: 'For the second phase to go ahead planning

permission has to be granted. The permission will not be granted until the road has been adopted, and there is a delay in this process.

'The council were sent the papers in August but they still have not reached a conclusion about the access road into the site. People are already in and living in their homes so it is a ludicrous situation.'

An Argyll and Bute Council spokeswoman said: 'During the past two weeks we have received representations on legal issues affecting this development from representatives of various parties involved.'

'The council has a responsibility to act properly in accordance with the law, so a decision on whether to adopt the road within the 12 month statutory period will not be taken until the legal issues are resolved. We hope to make a decision soon.'

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**Mull Lines**

CONCERNS have been raised that a Mull road remains ungritted, despite a business using it to deliver fuel.

The C46 road north of Salen is home to a woodchip supplier and a number of homes, yet for a number of days during the cold snap it remained ungritted.

Councillor Gordon Chalmers said: 'I understand there are finite resources within the council, however, these roads have to be considered as the business needs to get its fuel out to homes and daily life needs to go on.'

Mr Chalmers reported that a number of cars had slipped off the roads on Mull.



OFFICERS on Mull are supporting the national festive clampdown on drink driving.

The island's sergeant is reminding offenders he has the right to put into force new legislation if second time offenders are caught behind the wheel of a car.

Sergeant Mark Stevens of Tobermory Police Station said: 'Officers on Mull have changed shift patterns to make sure they are able to seize the vehicles of repeat offenders if they are caught drink driving. The message on Mull and Iona is do not drink and drive. If you are caught there are severe penalties.'



**MSP Mike Russell visited Lochdon and Ulva Ferry primary schools on Monday. The prospective parliamentary candidate met parents of the closure-threatened schools and although unable to talk about individual proposals, discussed the Scottish government's newly-published legislation on school closures. The two schools are among 25 in Argyll and Bute currently subject to consultation for possible closure. He is pictured with councillors Donald MacDonald, left, and Donald 'Skye' McIntosh. For more on the schools closure proposals, see page 7. 16.12.10russell1**



**Mull Eagle Diary:** As severe wintry conditions descend on Mull this week direct from the Arctic, our eagles will need to find a safe refuge to sit out the worst of the snow storm.

The chances are they will find safety in a dense conifer plantation. At Loch Frisa, the experienced white-tailed eagles will know every nook and cranny of their territory and will head for the trees which will give them most shelter. They have been resident in this area now for about 15 years and will have survived everything Mother Nature can throw at them.

Forestry Commission Scotland planted some of these big old Sitka and Norway spruce more than 30 years ago and they too have survived some serious gales and storms.

Once the trees get well established and well rooted, they can grow into magnificent specimens and provide ideal roosting and nesting sites for the eagles. Even golden eagles will make use of them, both as night time roosts and very occasionally as a nest site.

For now, we must wait and see how severe this next wintry blast will be and hope that Frisa and Skye make it through the blizzards. They are now wise old birds. Why not come and see them yourself? Call 07920 817362 to arrange a trip.

**Facing up to the prospect of Christmas away from home**

**FOR FOUR** Oban soldiers, Christmas this year could be spent away from home, with operations in Afghanistan taking precedence. The local lads are currently serving in Lashkar Gah with the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders, 5th Battalion the Royal Regiment of Scotland (5SCOTS). The *Oban Times* has been in touch to find out how they're getting on and this week, in the second of our two-part special, we hear from Oban's Jonathon Farragher, who still lives in the town, and Corporal Nawal Rai, who has heard so much about Oban that the first thing he wants to do on his return to the UK is pay the town a visit.

**Jono will be thinking of little Logan**

SERVING in another country during Christmas can be difficult for most soldiers, but for Private Jonathon Farragher, this year could be particularly difficult.

While he is likely to be on active duty in Rahim Kalay in south east Afghanistan with 5SCOTS, his wife Karen will be helping their son Logan celebrate his first Christmas.

While disappointed he's not there, the 22-year-old - who prefers to be called Jono - did have a special message for them.

'I miss my wife and I hope that my son enjoys his first Christmas,' he said.

Jono grew up in Oban and attended Oban High School before leaving to become a butcher with I Wynne and Son Butchers.

A keen sportsman, he played for Dunbeg FC as a youngster. He also enjoys



**Private Jonathon Farragher.**

boxing and shinty in his spare time.

He left his job as a butcher to join the Army in 2008, and this is his first tour of Afghanistan.

Currently tasked as a light machine gunner in a multiple working from Control

Point Salaam, his job is to patrol with other members of his call sign to prevent the Taliban intimidating the local population.

His multiple is also working closely with the continually developing Afghan National Army, something he's enjoyed so far.

He said: 'We are still getting to know the area, however my multiple has done a lot of patrolling with the Afghan National Army (ANA) and we are continuing to develop our relationship with them.

'They work hard and are improving every day and they show great promise for the future.

'I enjoy seeing new places and meeting new people, especially the locals here in Rahim Kalay.'

'I also enjoy working with the ANA and we are having a good time patrolling with them.'

He spent a decade serving all over the world including in Sierra Leone in 2001,

Not that he's complaining – he's even expressed a desire to have his hometown of Okkaldhumga, near Kathmandu, twinned with Oban.

He said: 'I'm really eager to visit Oban on my return to the UK. I've heard about nothing else.'

It would be yet another unusual chapter in the story of a man who fights for the British Army in Afghanistan, yet hails from the Himalayas.

His military career started in the most difficult way possible, with the Gurkhas. Renowned for having the most physically demanding entry exam in the world, Corporal Rai passed with flying colours, then set about qualifying as a jungle warfare and tracking specialist.

Having rebadged as an Argyll, he has been deployed to Afghanistan three times now, on his latest trip serving alongside Private Haggart in Nad-e-Ali for the last two months.



**Oban bound - Corporal Nawal Rai.**

Bosnia in 2002 and Afghanistan in 2005.

When his battalion was moved from Folkstone to Brunei in 2008, Corporal Rai decided to transfer to 5SCOTS as they are based in nearby Canterbury.

Having rebadged as an Argyll, he has been deployed to Afghanistan three times now, on his latest trip serving alongside Private Haggart in Nad-e-Ali for the last two months.

Currently working as part of the Police Advisory Team and working with the Afghan National Army, he is noticing fewer encounters with Taliban during his latest tour of the country.

**Message**

He misses his wife Pushpa and daughter Anaasp and had this message for his family: 'I miss you all a lot. Hi (Namaste) also to my dad and mum, who still live in Kathmandu, Nepal.'

**Winter weather leads to shooting restrictions**

**FROSTY** winter weather has forced the Scottish Government to impose a restriction on the shooting of ducks, geese and waders.

It's the second time this year that a suspension has been imposed, with the extended cold snap in January the last time the measure had to be taken.

The embargo was enforced on December 10, and is due to last for 14 days, but will be reviewed on Friday.

Dr Colin Sheddell, director of the British Association for Shooting and Conservation (BASC) Scotland, said: 'The legal suspension of the shooting of wildfowl and wading birds offers extra protection when an extended period of severe weather is likely to disrupt the birds' feeding and roosting patterns.'

'BASC has already issued advice to people who shoot to exercise restraint over the last week.'

**Visitor fined for possessing drugs on trip to Jura**

**ROBERT** Aiton, aged 25, of 15 Cuckoo Way, Motherwell, pleaded guilty by letter at Campbeltown Sheriff Court on Thursday to possessing the Class A drug cocaine while on Jura.

The offence happened on September 26 this year in the harbour area near the Jura Hotel. Procurator Fiscal depute Stephen Ferguson told the court that the quantity was four grammes, with a street value of £140. Aiton was fined £250.

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**'Use it or lose it' threat to Soroba community centre****REPORT**

by LOUISE LEE  
llee@obantimes.co.uk

THE FUTURE of Soroba Community Centre is under threat because it's not used enough.

However, a new community worker claims the complex could have a bright future.

Laura Macdonald, who has been in post at Argyll and Bute Council for three months, told the authority's Oban area committee that the group which runs the centre requires a large pot of money to ensure its future

funding in place.'Councillor Roddy McCuish, said: 'We are within sight of a new building in Soroba and it would be of great concern if that did not get the go-ahead.'

'It is disappointing to be in this situation where the lack of use of this facility may affect this.'

'The use of the centre has to go back out to community consultation.'

'This centre has never

had the support it needs or deserves so it is good that it may be in line to get that support from Laura.'

Councillor Skye Macintosh added: 'If the centre was to close it would be catastrophic for the community.'

Duncan MacIntyre, Oban, Lorn and Isles area committee chairman, called for a public meeting.

He said: 'A lot of time and effort has gone into the

community centre and we should find out what the community wants.'

Councillor Neil Mackay added: 'There is a very successful day nursery in the adjoining building – so this is not a difficulty in getting people in through the door.'

It is simply about keeping them there.'

Laura Macdonald will now arrange a public meeting in the Community Fire Station for early in the New Year.

headlights on full beam; they discovered he smelled strongly of drink and was slurring his words.

He refused to take the roadside breath test and at the police station would

not let a sample of blood be taken. Fraser's defence agent said: 'He knew he was over the limit and he didn't think straight.'

He was fined £500 and banned for 18 months.

**Diver fined and banned after refusing to take part in breath test**

A 46-YEAR-old man refused to take part in a breath test or give a blood sample when police, who suspected he had been drinking, stopped his car.

As a result, Andrew McGilvray Fraser, of 119 Frederick Crescent, Port Ellen, Islay, found himself before Campbeltown Sheriff Court on Thursday.

The court heard that police had reason to stop Fraser's car because he had the

November 13 this year on the A846 near Bay View, Port Ellen, Islay, and the police station at Bowmore.

The court heard that police

had reason to stop Fraser's car because he had the

headlights on full beam; they discovered he smelled

strongly of drink and was

slurring his words.

He refused to take the roadside breath test and at the police station would

not let a sample of blood be taken. Fraser's defence agent said: 'He knew he was over the limit and he didn't think straight.'

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**Water warning to property owners**

SCOTTISH Water is calling on property owners, including commercial building factors and landlords, to check for leaks or burst pipes.

A spokesman said: 'While visible leaks on public water mains are being fixed, others will be hidden by the snow and there will be some bursts on internal pipes on private property.'

'Unoccupied holiday homes, village halls and other outbuildings could also have internal bursts in their plumbing.'

Any outside leaks on the network can be reported by calling the Scottish Water Helpline on 0845 6018855.

Information on protecting pipes and short films showing practical advice such as how to locate your stop cock to stem the flow of a burst can be found on a special Scottish Water website: [www.scottishwaterresponse.co.uk](http://www.scottishwaterresponse.co.uk).

**Admonished after drunken assault**

A DUNBEG man was admonished at Oban Sheriff Court on Monday after admitting assaulting his partner of 10 years during a drunken argument.

Peter Uren, 54, of Top Right, Flat 5, Kirk Place, Dunbeg, was out in Oban with the woman at about 1.30am on October 2 when he grabbed her by the hair, causing her to fall to the ground. Both were drunk at the time.

Defending, agent Edward Thornton said the couple are still together and have decided to look at their drinking habits as a result of the incident.

**Thefts warning**

POLICE are warning party-goers to be watchful of their possessions this festive season.

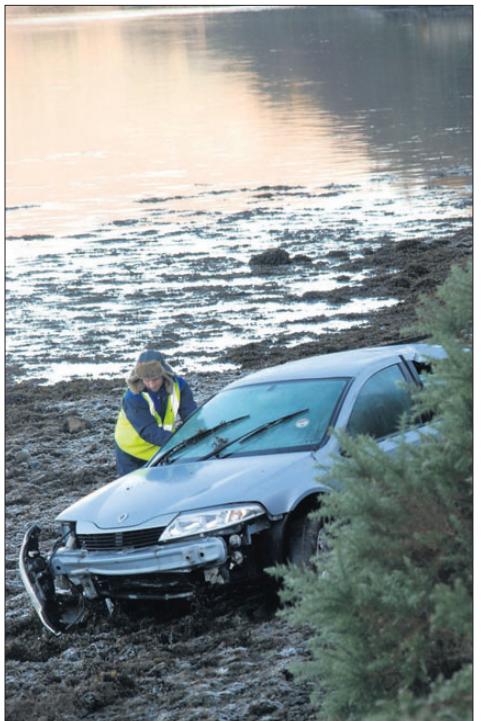
The advice follows reports of thefts of personal property over the weekend.

In the early hours of Sunday morning a jacket was stolen from Skipinnish Ceilidh House after it was left unattended and a mobile phone was stolen from a jacket in The Waterfront.

Enquiries are continuing into both thefts. Anyone with any information should contact Oban Police Station on 01631 510500.

**Verdict clarification**

THE Oban Times has been asked to clarify the verdict delivered in the case against two young business students, Layla Williams, 13D Corran Brae, Oban, was found guilty of damaging the paintwork of a car at Lorn Terrace and of no other charge. Co-accused, Alison McPhee, 5 Cowan Place, was found guilty of damaging the same car in Lorn Terrace, and of assaulting a man.



**The driver of this car escaped without injury after the Renault slid off the road and into the water at Kilmarnoak.** 06\_151connelcar01

**Grit stocks 'unsuitable' for use on Coll and Tiree**

THE isles of Coll and Tiree have suffered some winter disruption in recent weeks – after grit stocks held for the isles was found to be 'unsuitable'.

Islanders were left perplexed when council staff were observed not gritting roads, but trimming road verges during recent frosty weather.

As a result, the only gritting that was done for a few days was by the islanders themselves.

Speaking last week, one resident of Coll said: 'The roads were dangerous and white with snow.'

A spokeswoman for Argyll and Bute Council said they acted as soon as they were made aware of the situation. She said: 'We only became aware of a problem last Wednesday morning.'

'There is usually a stockpile of salt on Tiree, which is used between there and Coll.'

'When the quality of this stockpile was highlighted as being unsuitable, arrangements were made to replenish with fresh material from Oban. This was arranged on Wednesday, and was sent out the following day by ferry.'

The incident happened around 11am and the vehicle was quickly recovered.

**Tribute to truckers who ensured no disruption to deliveries**

AN ARGYLL fish farm has paid tribute to its haulage firm after drivers battled through recent wintry weather to ensure there was no disruption to deliveries.

Scottish Sea Farms, in South Shian, near Benderloch, were left

sweating as transport chaos swept the country, causing many roads to the south, north and east to close.

There were concerns that deliveries of salmon to high profile clients such as Marks and Spencers might not be completed, during one of the difficulties.

As spokesperson for Scottish Sea Farms said: 'The local transport company were

**Plumbers working round the clock**

ARGYLL'S plumbers have been working round the clock to help deal with damage caused by the recent cold snap.

Freezing temperatures in the area, coupled with the

thaw at the end of last week – and the prospect of caused many household pipes to burst. Oban plumber Adrian Cakebread, who works for JM Gillies Plumbers, said on Monday: 'There's not

one place you could say was worse than another. We're getting calls from everywhere.'

'The problem is particularly bad in older houses, which are not so well insulated.'

**Mobile library service 'will continue' in rural Lorn**

RESIDENTS in rural Lorn will still have a mobile library service, even if they do not have a dedicated van.

Argyll and Bute Council is proposing ditching the existing mobile library and it was assumed by many this meant the end to the library service.

However, an Argyll and Bute spokeswoman said: 'Although

**Drivers caught out as cold snap continues****REPORT**

by EUAN PATERSON  
epaterson@obantimes.co.uk

ICY ROAD surfaces over the weekend was blamed for a number of one-car road crashes.

However, the head of road policing in Argyll has praised drivers and gritters for keeping the number of accidents down to a minimum.

The A85 at Strone Hill, between Dalmally and Tyndrum had to be closed for a short period of time to allow the road to be gritted following a one-car road accident at 8.45am on Saturday involving Morag MacLachlan, her mother and three children.

Morag said: 'The road was horrendous; you couldn't even stand on it without slipping. Apart from a few bumps and bruises and shock we were all alright and got home all thanks to the passer-by who stopped to help, the ambulance men and the Oban policemen, especially Andy, who were amazing.'

On Sunday, the driver of a car escaped uninjured but was suffering from shock after his car slid off the road at Kilmarnoak and into the water, one mile east of Loch Etive.

The incident happened around 11am and the vehicle

was quickly recovered.



**This car hit and damaged a wall in the village of Dalmally after the driver lost control.** 08\_151crash01

are taking on board our message that if a journey is not essential, they should think twice about driving in these extreme conditions.'

Meanwhile, police said a 43-year-old man is to be reported to the procurator fiscal after his car crashed into a tree near Dunbeg last Thursday evening.

The incident happened at 7.24pm, when his car collided with a tree close to the Wide Mouthed Frog restaurant, on the A85.

Police, fire and ambulance were called to the scene and the driver of the vehicle was cut free from the car before being taken to Lorn and Islands Hospital.

The road was closed for a period as a result.

A police spokesperson said: 'The driver sustained serious but not life threatening injuries.'

but the last couple of weeks have been a nightmare.

'The central belt was the worst, especially around Cumbernauld. When one driver got stuck, we just decided not to send any more out until there was an alternative route. We kept in touch with Transport Scotland and, while we normally go through Stirling, we ended up using the west side of the M8. The Edinburgh side was better.

'I'm just hoping the cold weather doesn't come back at the end of the week as they've forecast.'

**Lorn Lines**

A GOOD turnout of Oban Photographic Club members gathered in the Regent Hotel, Oban last Monday to hear the results of the 'Transport' Competition.

The judge was local professional photographer, Cameron Harris of Highland Photos, who had donated the trophy for the Most Commercially Viable Image, the subject of which was, this year, 'Transport'.

Before giving the results, Cameron showed some of his own excellent images and talked about how they were taken. Results:

Prints: 1, 2 and 3 - John Douglas.

Projected Images: 1 Gus MacKinnon; 2 Stevie Lawson; 3 Ronnie MacKillop.

Gus MacKinnon was awarded the Highland Photos Trophy for the best overall image as well as receiving a voucher donated by Oban Photographic Centre.

The next meeting on December 20 (the last for 2010) is the Dougie MacIntyre Competition for 'Subtle Humour' which is judged by the members.



MORE than 30 members and friends of Oban Speakers Club attended their annual dinner on November 25.

The speaker for the evening was Philip Preston, the managing director of Caledonian MacBrayne. He gave an excellent speech, giving details of the development from the early days of David MacBrayne Ltd to the present, and indeed looking forward to the future.

His talk was laced with many humorous tales of events in days gone by and was thoroughly enjoyed by all.

This was then followed a week later by the normal fortnightly meeting when the chairman, Willie Melville, introduced main speakers Frank Walton, who spoke on the Rotary, John Maclean, who gave some of his Reflections on the Tartan Army, and Jim Young, who spoke on Lockerbie.

Their critics, all of whom had a difficult task, were Bill Leech, Alex Clark and Guido Faccenda.

In an entertaining topics session, chairman Donnie Graham gave a variety of subjects to Eamonn Arthur, Jim Fraser, Bill Leech, Donald Macaskill, Cameron Fletcher and Alex Clark. Timekeeper for the evening was Roy Wood and the general evaluator was Tom Clegg.

The next meeting and the final get together of 2010 is tonight, Thursday, December 16.



OBAN Pipe Band stepped up their fundraising efforts last Saturday by busking in George Street and holding a soup lunch in the band hall.

The fundraising committee members were delighted with the support of the community, and particularly those who came along.

The band raised £536 on the day, which will go towards the cost of new uniforms and drums for the band's new members.

The committee is indebted to everyone who assisted by supplying and serving soup and home baking, as well as providing items for the tremendous hamper, which was raffled on the day.



**Oban Pipe Band members played in George Street to help raise funds for the band.** 08\_151pipe01

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# The Oban Times

& WEST HIGHLAND TIMES

## Tied up in red tape

IS it really necessary to burden some of our small businesses with even more costly red tape?

Establishments wishing to offer an al fresco service to their customers have been told they have to obtain planning permission to do so. That'll be £300 - a lot of cups of tea and coffee in anybody's language.

Assuming planning permission is granted there is the inevitable permit - which must be renewed annually.

That'll be another £150 a year.

One wonders exactly what you get for your £150 that you don't already get paying business rates.

Paying the salary of the council officer sent round to demand payment in the first place, not doubt.

Given the limited opportunities for al fresco dining in Oban, surely the council's time and effort be better expended elsewhere.

### GLASGOW LETTER

#### Early winter in Glasgow

AS FAR as functions are concerned the most used word this past week has been 'cancelled' as snow and ice brought the city to a standstill.

Few can remember having to cope with such extremes at this time of the year as traffic ground to a halt, cars were abandoned, schools and colleges closed and public transport, road, rail and air was, at best, chaotic.

When did you last see the sledge taking over from the shopping basket in the city of Glasgow?

The bad weather meant amazing adaptations by the public as they attempted to maintain normal life as much as they could and hopefully individuals and the authorities will benefit from their experience if, as we are informed by the government, such winter conditions will be the norm in the years to come.

#### Trad Awards

READERS of this column will have noticed that in the Pub Scene the name Donald MacRae is still appearing.

Quite a feat when you consider that he first started singing in the Park Bar in the 1960s.

It gives me great pleasure in extending congratulations to him on his recent induction to the Scottish Traditional Music Hall of Fame.

For generations of Glasgow Gaels, Donald MacRae has been an institution, singing the songs they love in his own relaxed style and it is wonderful that he has been recognised by the wider traditional scene in this way.

Well done Donald and well done also to Fiona Hunter lead singer with Malinky, the winners of this year's best Scottish Folk Band.

A graduate of the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama, Fiona spent many years singing with Glasgow Islay Junior Gaelic Choir, a choir whose former conductor, Eilidh MacKenzie, was named Gaelic Singer of the Year.

With so many wonderful traditional musicians on the scene nowadays these are, indeed, prestigious awards.

#### President-elect

SHINTY enthusiasts throughout the land will be delighted that Archie Robertson will succeed Duncan Cameron as president of the Camanachd Association.

### PRESS POLICY

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

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

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



## Tobermory, Isle of Mull

This week's flashback photograph is of Tobermory, Isle of Mull. The photo was taken from Colin Armstrong of Coventry's collection of old photos of Oban and the surrounding area. We invite readers to send in flashback photographs. Please send prints to *The Oban Times*, PO Box 1, Oban, Argyll, PA34 4HB, or email editor@obantimes.co.uk. Prints or emails must be accompanied by a caption, name, address and telephone number.

Anyone wishing their prints returned must supply a stamped addressed envelope.

## Letters to the editor

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[www.obantimes.co.uk](http://www.obantimes.co.uk)

Telephone: 01631 568000  
Fax: 01631 568001

### Save Ulva Ferry Primary School

Sir,

I am writing to express deep concern over the proposed closure of Ulva Ferry Primary School on the Isle of Mull.

The school lies in a fairly remote rural area, which is enjoying an increase in the number of young families moving in. There are presently eight pupils in the school and no fewer than 13 toddlers and 'babes in womb' who will be entering the school over the next few years.

I am sure everyone in the Glasgow area will join with me in wishing Archie every success.

**Diary dates**

**Thursday December 16:** Prostate Cancer Charity Concert, City Chambers, 7pm, featuring Glasgow Islay Gaelic Choir - cancelled due to weather.

**Friday December 17:** Uist and Barra Association ceilidh dance, Crawford Hall, Beith Street, Partick, 9pm-1am.

**Saturday December 18:** Highlander's Club ceilidh dance, Partick Burgh Hall, 8pm, Mhairi Coutts Trio, Capercaillie, Paisley Abbey. Doors open 7.30pm. Runrig, Barrowlands - sold out. Paisley Carol Concert, Holy Trinity and St Barnabas Church, featuring Sinead MacIntyre and Kathleen MacInnes, 2.30pm.

**Sunday December 19:** Piping competition, Islay Inn - see Pub Scene.

### Pub scene

GUNNA Sound will be busy this weekend playing in the Park Bar on Saturday and Sunday and the Islay Inn on Friday. Eriskay Lilt will be in the Park on Friday while the Clachies will be in the Islay Inn on Saturday.

On Sunday the Islay Inn will host the second round of its piping competition when the competitors will be Alasdair MacLaren, Chris Armstrong, John Mulhearn and Margaret Dunn.

### Don't neglect villages

The audience will vote to decide which two pipers will go forward to the final in January.

**Neil Murray, Tel: 0141 954 8105. Email: neilmurray@yahoo.co.uk.**

Every recession brings cut-backs, but these are generally reversed when the good times return.

By contrast, school closures are seldom reversed. Once a school closes, it has gone forever. Should we care? I think we should.

Most parents want to raise their younger children amongst friends and neighbours served by local school that provides a familiar 'home from home' environment. Better still is to have a shop, a Post Office and a hall for various events.

A village that loses these things is no longer a village - it is a mere commuter zone

in which people come and go and lead separate lives. As our local authority, Argyll and Bute Council has a responsibility to prevent this happening. A school is one of the major attractors that keeps a settled population in place and encourages new blood in. As a result, the economy benefits, the countryside is better cared for and youngsters grow up in a wholesome environment.

Common sense tells us that this is so and that the current proposed schools closure programme represents the worst form of short-termism. On the bigger is better argument, a recent US report said: 'Hundreds of studies have found that students who attend small schools outperform those in large schools on every academic measure from grades to test scores. They are less likely to drop out and more likely to attend college.'

It is hard to believe that things are so different on this side of the Atlantic as to warrant an exactly opposite conclusion.

Doubtless, Argyll and Bute Council has some extremely difficult decisions to take in the weeks and months ahead but asset stripping the villages in its care ought not to be one of them.

**Andrew McIntyre, Barcaldine, Oban.**

### Hit list 'discussions'

Sir,

Your article on December 2, referring to a school 'hit list' does not give a wholly accurate report of my statements to the council meeting held on November 29.

Your report quotes me as saying: 'A number of hit lists had been discussed.'

I'd like to clarify that statement. Prior to my arrival at the council in May, there were rumours of 'hit lists' for schools. I confirmed to the meeting that I too had heard the rumours and confirmed to the best of my knowledge these lists existed purely in that form - just a rumour. These are the 'discussions' I referred to.

One of my first jobs at the council was to agree a standard methodology for assessing schools so we could take an objective view of our whole school estate.

The list we asked councillors to consider for consultation has constantly evolved since the start of the process. I expect it will evolve further as our formal consultation takes place.

**Cleland Sneddon, Executive Director of Community Services, Argyll and Bute Council.**

### Winter weather thanks

Sir,

I am writing to put on record my thanks to all those within the Highlands and Islands who have gone above and beyond the call of duty to help others during the horrendous weather conditions of the last two weeks.

I have been hearing about many examples of members of the emergency services, health professionals, council staff and ordinary members of the public who have done amazing work to try and keep local services and communities working as near to normal as possible.

It has been particularly heartening to hear about ordinary people who have helped their neighbours clearing paths or drives, helped fetch messages or helped in emergency situations when they have been in very difficult situations themselves.

I would like to say thank you to each and every one of these selfless people for their hard work and dedication, which may be called upon again, as the weather forecasters have intimated that more bad weather may be on the way. I know their efforts are much appreciated and I thank them all.

**Dave Thompson, MSP for the Highlands and Islands.**

### Encouraging development

Sir,

Your correspondent James Kennedy expresses disappointment with my actions and those of my colleague Councillor Eddie Hunter.

His reference to my declaration of interest in the Blair Mor development requires further explanation. My interest is based on my desire to bring a quality development and jobs to Lochaber. To that end I chose to publicly promote the master plan for the Blair and in the interests of transparency to declare that interest and remove myself from determining the planning application. This has also freed me to help officials negotiate planning gain for the community. The gift of 10 acres of land and £500,000 should be of great benefit to the community.

Mr Kennedy also claims to be shocked that Councillor Bill Clark did not receive a seconder for his amendment against the planning officer's recommendation to refuse permission for a supermarket on the North Road site. The shock would have come if any

of the other 13 councillors present lent support to a flawed application which, if approved against policy, would have killed off the strategic planning at Blair Mor which will result in many of the aspirations of Lochaber residents being met.

Mr Kennedy suggests Lochaber Independent councillors have disappointed since being elected. I would remind James of three examples of our work since we were elected in 2007. Invernevis House care home was to be closed, as was Roy Bridge Primary School and planning was being stifled as a result of the unpopular and difficult to deliver plans for Fort William waterfront. Today the care home remains open; Roy Bridge School was saved from closure and The Waterfront has been shelved and replaced with an alternative achievable plan for major investment in Lochaber.

It has been those 'disappointing' Independent councillors who brought about those changes and have been pro-active in encouraging development in Lochaber.

**Donald Cameron, Councillor for Ward 22, Fort William and Ardnamurchan.**

### Joiner turns back time

Sir,

Regarding your article 'Taynuilt builders unearth the news from 1958', I am Robin Pollock, the only surviving one of the joiners mentioned, now living in New Zealand.

I served a five-year apprenticeship as a joiner with local firm McLarty and McNicol. At the time we planted the bottle, I was 18 years old. I am now 70.

I vaguely remember that day, especially putting the paper in as I was a keen football fan and player. Nineteen fifty eight was the great Brazilian team with the young Pelé appearing on the scene. Taynuilt had a lot smaller population in those days and I must say I enjoyed working in various homes in the village and surrounding areas. As a joiner you often put your name and date on pieces of timber you were fixing. Well done to the McGougan's Builders lads for adding their bit and putting it back for future renovations.

Your paper still does a great job in the area as it did when I was young.

**Robin Pollock, New Zealand.**

## A view from the tower

by McCaig

### Can the Scots ever get it right?

AS WE sit huddled over the fire, wondering if the overdraft will stand the ever-increasing demands of the electricity board, we should remember there's a guy who is paid a great deal of cash - about three times that given to the Prime Minister - to forecast accurately what our winter weather is supposed to be.

Last time he was heard he was telling us that we were in for a series of 'warm, wet winters'. That was certainly at a time when bridges were being swept away and police officers, in pursuit of their duty, were being drowned.

What was true on that occasion was that it was wet, too damned wet, but it wasn't all that warm.

Last winter, by no stretch of the imagination, was anything other than a typical Victorian winter with sledging and boom business for skiers and other devotees of winter sports.

I didn't mind that 60 years ago as I would have been enjoying superb alpine conditions amid wonderful scenery and what thermals there were available then.

Now I'm past three score and ten and chary of even going out in reasonable conditions.

I am also mindful of the enormous growth in diabetes - and it's not just among the obese, sugar addicts.

Chaps who play sport and are frightfully fit still have to cope with what is one of the scourges of 21st century living.

I must admit that while the young guys still pursue the perfect male physique, the young ladies with huge thighs, a more than adequate supply of cheap chocolate and far too much cake and candy do nothing to attract a wolf-whistle or a sly demand as to 'what are you doing tonight, darling?'

This cold weather does nothing to help their fashion-plate image as they freeze in gear that was never meant to deal with sub-zero temperatures and worn several inches above the knee.

Be realistic, get granny's ankle length coat out of the dressing-up box, tart it up a bit and you'll be warm and comfortable and free from a visit to the doctor for a remedy for a chill or something more nasty.

At least, the boys, admit defeat and head for the second-hand shops that do a roaring trade at this time of year in old army greatcoats which are the best antidote to most types of weather thrown at us currently.

### Transport chaos - as ever!

HOWEVER, Stewart Stevenson, the now-resigned Scottish Transport Minister, has done the 'decent thing' and resigned from office because of the chaos caused by the failure of his schemes to get us from point 'a' to point 'b' without being stuck overnight in a huge queue of cars and without food or

hot drinks.

What his boss Alex Salmond did not do was to accept his resignation graciously and timeously and let the snow fall for a month or two and re-appoint him to another post.

It was certainly on this occasion not Stewart Stevenson's fault but it was that of a senior civil servant.

I'm not a particular fan of Mr Stevenson but I think a bit more of him now than I do for Alex Salmond who clings to office with the avidity of a leech desperate for blood.

This strange body, Transport Scotland, was one of Mr Salmond's creations to get Scotland's roads moving.

In this, over the past two years, it has been a pathetic failure.

Whoever wins the Scottish Parliament elections next May is going to have a king-sized hangover to try to sort it out. Whoever takes the job - and there is no guaranteed knighthood even if he/she makes a good fist of it - deserves a substantial bonus. That is about all that will be on offer.

We tend to spend as little as possible in capital, skimp on revenue funding and wonder why we are said to have among the worst roads in Europe.

Most Irish roads are a pleasure to drive on compared to ours - even when there is grass down the centre of them! And we cater for tourists?

### 'Macay Days' Stories from Glasgow

SCOTTISH author, scriptwriter and TV producer Lorn MacIntyre, the second of four sons of a distinguished banker and poet Angus, has done it again with his latest book 'Macay Days' Stories from Glasgow'.

Every student of the '60s and '70s of the last century should be given a copy for Christmas, even if they didn't go to Glasgow.

I didn't but I recognise if not the particular person who is the main character in his tale but certainly recognise the genre and empathised or otherwise with them.

This volume is a sequel to his 'Tobermory Days' and 'Tobermory Tales'.

The characters, while finely drawn, stand out and remind us of the trials and tribulations of ensuring that parents, and particularly maiden aunts, didn't have too fine detail of what we were about and whom we might be seeing, even down to details of which type of accordion we were playing when we should have been studying medicine.

If you don't know Lorn's work already, here is an admirable volume to make his acquaintance.

## Search begins for stars of the classroom

RESIDENTS in Argyll and Bute are being asked to find the county's top education stars for the Scottish Education Awards.

The awards, which celebrate hard work and innovation in Scottish classrooms, were launched by Education Secretary Michael Russell.

He said: 'I want all those within education across Scotland to start thinking about what they're doing or have seen that others could learn from.'

'If you think your school is doing something innovative, exciting or of genuine merit, get online and put it forward for the Scottish Education Awards.'

Councillor Isobel Strong, Argyll and Bute's spokesperson for education and lifelong learning, said: 'I know there is fantastic work going on in schools the length and breadth of Argyll and Bute and I would encourage all those who think that their teacher or school deserves to be recognised and celebrated to get their nomination in.'

The Scottish Education Awards are open to all publicly funded schools.

Award categories recognise the dedication of teachers, head-teachers and support staff.

Nominations can be made until March 4 next year.

## Helensburgh transformation

THE OBAN CHORD project has been left behind after Helensburgh approved its multi-million town centre transformation.

The plans involve developing a vibrant, attractive and sustainable town centre and waterfront at the West Bay Esplanade.

The aim is to provide the people who live, work and visit the town with an attractive environment for shopping, relaxing and socialising.

Councillors believe there will be an increased footfall, which would benefit businesses in the town by capturing a greater share of the retail and leisure markets.

Meanwhile in Oban, councillors are reconsidering plans for the waterfront area after a scheme to bring seasonal transit pontoons to the bay was considered too risky for the council to borrow money to invest.

## Mull Rally dates for 2011 unveiled

THE MULL Rally dates for 2011 have been announced.

The event will take place over the weekend of October 7-9 next year.

It is being organised by Mull Car Club, which stepped in to run the 2010 rally after the previous organisers withdrew after 30 years.



Collecting cash for the Firefighters Charity were, from left, Tony McLarney, Allan Robinson and Allan Cameron. 08.15fire01

## Firefighters swap hoses for buckets!

FIREFIGHTERS in Oban swapped their hoses and ladders for charity buckets and badges as they collected donations for the Firefighters Charity.

Crew members from the

Group Two shift were in George Street on Saturday with charity buckets and collected nearly £1,000 for the charity.

Firefighter Allan Robinson said: 'The Firefighters

Charity helps firefighters of every description, from crews like ourselves to RAF and airport firefighters. The charity has three centres for physiotherapy and helps those injured on duty.'

The firefighters recently held a car wash for charity and were recognised nationally for enlisting a record number of donors to the Anthony Nolan Trust's bone marrow register.

# Support pledged for Ardchattan parents

## Bonawe community will support school council over its verdict on closure plans

THE COMMUNITY of Bonawe has given its full support to local parents as they decide whether or not to fight plans to close the local school.

Last week's meeting at Ardchattan Primary School was called by the Friends of Ardchattan - which is a separate body from the parent council - in an effort to discover the level of support and how best to move forward.

However, the parent council is yet to decide its next step, saying the low school roll is not beneficial to the social development of its pupils.

Susan Bland, who co-chaired the meeting and is chairwoman of the parent council, said: 'There are five pupils currently, there will be three next year. However,

'There are things in the proposal that we could use

to build a case, but it all comes down to the number of pupils at the school,' she said.

Locals, who had turned out in numbers, were unanimous in their view - they would support the parent council whatever its decision.

'I think it's for the parents to make the decision, but I think I speak for everyone here when I say the community will support you whatever action you decide to take,' one resident told the meeting.

Another asked what would happen to the building if the school was closed and wondered whether the community would be able to continue using it.

Councillor Elaine Robertson said: 'I have asked that question; whether

the community would be able to lease the building on a peppercorn rent.

'I haven't had a straight answer, but I haven't been told "no" so the door is theoretically open for that.'

The Friends have also recently spent thousands of pounds upgrading the school garden and there were questions on its future should the school close.

Local councillor Neil MacKay said that whatever decision the community takes, he and other local councillors would provide support where they can.

Susan Bland said: 'I think the parents are now going to have a parent council meeting and we will take it from there.'

'There are a lot of emotions involved in this.'

## MSP calls for urgent rethink on primary proposals

MSP JIM Mather has hit out at Argyll and Bute Council's rural school closure proposals, claiming they are 'riddled with errors'.

The formal public consultation exercise began on Monday and Mr Mather expects them to be opposed

by every community affected.

'Along with the SNP group of councillors on the council, I am keen to see this re-thought such that we avoid adverse impact on children, families, local communities and their

economies, recognise the fact that the financial settlement from John Swinney is much better than was expected and recognise also that "savings" often either do not materialise or cost others dear.'

'I would also say that it is

clear now to everyone that the school closure proposals from Argyll and Bute Council are riddled with errors. If the council does not withdraw the closure list now, then it should be vigorously opposed by every community.'

A primary school is a key facet of a community's ability to develop and sustain itself. The loss of the school would potentially force people to leave the community and would reduce the likelihood of new families moving to the area.

## ARGYLL AND BUTE RURAL SCHOOLS DEBATE

## Stable numbers at Ulva

CONTINUING our look at the schools under threat as the consultation period continues, this week we focus on Ulva Primary, Mull, and Kilmodan Primary, Glendaruel

Ulva Primary School is on the north-west coast of Mull serving a rural population of about 100. It is a coastal community with many disparate families, but with only one community building, the school.

### How long it has been in existence?

The current building is relatively new, replacing previous facilities that had been in the area since 1870. Famous ex-pupils from the area include Sir Lachlan Macquarie, known as the Father of Australia, amongst many others who have gone on to be lawyers, bankers and writers.

Number of pupils affected if the school was to close: Eight.

**Parent Council comment:** People have moved here because of the school. People will not choose to move to an area, with a young family, if there is nowhere for them to be educated. In the long run this will mean the community will cease to have younger people living in it.

Journey times to the next school/distance to the receiving school: 43 minutes

**Parent Council comment:** Our timings of this journey add at least 10 minutes to this time, if not more. The first road the council asked us to consider is so treacherous that it was blocked off for nine weeks last year.

School capacity/occupancy levels: 21 per cent

**Parent Council comment:** We think the occupancy levels are calculated incorrectly and do not take into account the way a modern classroom is managed.

School roll: 2010/2011 is seven pupils

Cost per child: £12,183

School use: School is used fewer than 10 times a year for booked community use.

**Parent Council comment:** Every event organised by the school is a community event, but not necessarily booked as a let. The school is used regularly for activities.

Class size in receiving school: two classes with a total roll of 25 pupils made up of P1-3 with 13 pupils and P4-7 12 pupils.

Saving to council from staff and property: £61,553

Transport costs to take pupils to new school: £15,000

### Parent Council conclusion:

Despite its remote location and small-scattered population, Ulva Primary School has a stable school roll now and for the next five years.

A strong local community supports the school and every school event is well attended by local residents as well as family and friends. The area has no other community building, nor church or shop. The nearest school is 53 minutes away by, in winter, a treacherous road. Pupils embrace the principles of the Curriculum for Excellence every day. As well as being successful learners, with 100 per cent positive results in June 2010, they are responsible citizens with fundraising and beach cleans, effective contributors working with the Museum of Scotland Mediascape project and teaching resuscitation to locals and confident individuals, singing in the Mòd and acting in plays.

The isolated geography of the Ulva area should presume against closing this school as it would leave this remote community without an important incentive for future social and economic regeneration. It is an excellent school.

## Kilmodan road safety fears

KILMODAN Primary School is situated in the heart of Glendaruel. It serves the Cowal communities of Glendaruel and Colintraive, with a catchment area of more than 20 miles in length. The council's proposal would see the catchment area of Strachur Primary School extended to include the current catchment area north of Kilmodan Primary School. The catchment area of Tighnabruaich Primary School would also be extended to include the current catchment south area of Kilmodan.

Journey times: According to the council's proposal document, the journey time from Kilmodan to Strachur Primary is 12.3 miles and would take 25 minutes. The journey from Kilmodan to Tighnabruaich Primary is 11.6 miles and would take 30 minutes.

**Parent Council comment:** The journey from the extremities of the catchment area to the proposed schools is not acceptable by the council's own guideline of 45 minutes. The journey to the proposed schools represents a tangible risk in terms of road safety. Both routes are undertaken on road surfaces of variable quality.

Occupancy level of the school: 33 per cent; School roll: 2010/2011: 22

**Parent Council comment:** The council figures do not use a date range that show the actual fluctuations in the school roll over the past 10-15 years; this makes the decrease in the projected school roll in 2011 look more significant than it actually is.

School use: Between 2005 and 2009 there have been seven lets by community groups of Kilmodan Primary School. The last let was in March 2009.

**Parent Council response:** The current proposal would not only divide the Colintraive and Glendaruel communities but also split the Glendaruel community. This would leave Glendaruel with only Kilmodan Church as a central meeting place.

Class sizes: The capacity for Strachur Primary School is 96 with the number of children to come from Kilmodan being six (based on the expected 2011/12 rolls). This would bring the total number of pupils in Strachur up to 63 split into three classes. The capacity for Tighnabruaich Primary School is 78 with the number of children to come from Kilmodan being 12 (based on the expected 2011/2012 rolls). This would bring the total number of pupils in Tighnabruaich up to 36 split into two classes. The combined occupancy across all schools in the proposal would be 62 per cent.

**Parent Council comment:** The original proposal contained arguments and data on a number of points from projected school rolls through to occupancy rates, travel times and projected savings which don't stack up.

Saving to council from staff and property: £149,909

Transport costs to take pupils to new schools: £23,074

**Parent Council response:** Kilmodan Parent Council and associated community groups are firmly against the proposal to include Kilmodan Primary School in any consultation process regarding closure.

Kilmodan has consistently delivered a high standard of education as recorded in the Quality and Standards Report.

There is no evidence to suggest that moving the children to a larger school will improve their education.

A primary school is a key facet of a community's ability to develop and sustain itself. The loss of the school would potentially force people to leave the community and would reduce the likelihood of new families moving to the area.

## CURSAICHEAN AIR ASTAR

Faigh barrachd fiosrachaidd air a' phrògram ionnsachaidh aig astar againn airson a h-uile duine a tha airson a' Ghàidhlig ionnsachadh no an cuiid Gàidhlig a neartachadh. Tha iomadh latha toiseachaidh is clàr-ama againn agus bidh na cùrsaichean againn gad fhàgail nas fileanta sa chànan agus a' leigeil leat a' dol air aghaidh gu'ire ceum oilthigh tro mheadhan na Gàidhlig.

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## ISLAY

**Your correspondent is Susan Campbell: 01496 850215**

**Weather**

ALTHOUGH Islay has not had the heavy snowfalls experienced in other Scottish islands and the Argyll mainland, the past week of persistent freezing weather made for icy roads and tracks throughout the island.

Several local events were cancelled or re-scheduled.

**High school French fashion show**

ISLAY High School's first year French class designed, planned, filmed and edited a video of their fashion show.

The 'journalists' interviewers were pupils Stacy, Mirren, Alex, Joseph, Dylan and Emma, who in turn conversed in French with their classmates who were dressed either as 'models' or the 'public'.

Their teacher, Miss MacGregor, was also interviewed by a pupil. The short video can be seen at <http://vimeo.com/17605724>.

**Bowmore pre-5s tartan fundraiser**

CHILDREN at Bowmore Pre-5 Unit had a fun, learning day while raising money for the 'Children 1st' charity.

At the start of the week the children were helped to search for tartans on the internet, then they planned to paint their own.

The colours chosen each had a special meaning to the children, relating to something important to them. The week was completed by inviting parents to the nursery to see the work.

'Kilt For Kids' pin badges were sold and the children donated pennies for balloons and transfers.

A big thank you goes to everyone who joined in and helped raise £63.

**Carol service**

ON SUNDAY the annual Christmas Carol Service was held at St John's Church, Port Ellen, at 7.30pm.

Còisir Ghàidhlig ile, Islay's senior Gaelic choir, will take part leading the Gaelic carols.

## SCALPAY

**Your correspondent is D Morrison: 01859 540217**

**Farming**

THE FLOCK is still foraging in the snow and frost for



Ruth Reddie, Agnes Liddell, Flora Crystal and Jane Mackay man their stall at the Glenaray and Inveraray Parish Church Christmas sale. 08\_49churchsale03

**'Remarkable woman' remembered at church sale**

THIS year's Glenaray and Inveraray Parish Church Christmas sale was particularly special for the ladies of the parish choir as they sold copies of a cookbook dedicated to the memory of a close friend.

Inspiration for book, which features local recipes, came from Janet Gibson

who hoped it would be a good way of raising funds for the parish church. However Janet's sudden and untimely death in September this year meant that she was unable to fulfil her ambition. But, with the support of Janet's family, the ladies of Inveraray Church Choir completed the book. In the opening

pages of the book, dedicated to Janet's memory, the ladies of the choir refer to a 'tireless worker of the community'

a truly 'remarkable woman'.

But,

the church hall was jam packed as Inveraray folk enjoyed a cup of tea and home-baking and scoured the sweets, book and bric-a-brac stalls.

**Fishing**

HERRING is brought from mainland ports, such as Mallaig, as herring from the Minch is scarce, it seems.

Strong winds are prevailing and creel boats have been berthed for some weeks now, but for sheltered home sea areas.

Pollock is still quite plentiful when there is a lull in the weather to allow local fishermen the chance to catch them. Some were caught recently by one of the local creel boats during a calm period, which allowed boats to fish by the shore.

Sometimes creel fishermen use pollock for creel bait when there is no alternative. Deer, as experts, tell us to make for the low ground for grazing through their movements.

**Roads**

GRITTERS have been out gritting where patches of slippery ice have formed on the main roads.

By now, the roads have been well salted to allow motorists to drive. But local roads still have a slight touch of frost in patches.

There is a light northerly wind.

**Tourists**

SOME people, who had been thinking about travelling across the Minch on a holiday trip, were in doubt about the journey because of the snow and ice affecting motoring.

**Sailings**

BOATS remain berthed locally because of strong winds.

Meanwhile, ferries continue to brave the wild weather, although there aren't as many passengers at this time of year.

## KILMORE

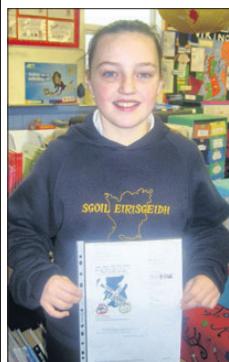
**Festive cheer**

THE CHRISTMAS tree lights were switched on at Kilmore Hall on Saturday December 4 and a warm welcome was made by members of the community council with mulled wine, mincemeat pies and shortbread.

Games and sweets were enjoyed by the children while families and friends enjoyed a chat as the 100 Club draw was made.

Winners of the December big draw were £100 M McMahon; £300 J Hamill; and £500 A Ferguson.

A Beetle Drive at Kilmore WRI organised for Wednesday December 8 had to be cancelled because of the icy weather conditions.



Catriona with her poster.  
Eriskay pupil's poster success

A POSTER created by an Eriskay school pupil was picked out of more than 1,000 entries as the runner up in the Scottish Government's St Andrew's Day Poster Competition.

Catriona MacLeod's illustration of a Saltire covered Scotland with the phrase 'support your local produce' was recognised in the primary section of the competition.

As a runner up, the primary seven pupil's poster was put on display at Holyrood on St Andrew's Day and put online through the Engage For Education website.

Catriona's poster explored global citizenship, Scottish culture and man's impact on the environment.

**Goldmine:** Discussions are ongoing. An appeal is being made against the National Park decision.

**Youth Group:** Weekly meetings in the Golf Club are going well.

**Scottish Native Woodlands:** Mostly interested in the River Tay in the Dunkeld area. No funding available for this area.

**Rural Stirling Housing Association:** New houses in Ballochrois are now allocated and will be ready for occupation soon.

**Speeding:** Buses have now stopped for the winter. They were, however, being monitored.

**National Park:** There has been considerable interest in the conservation grants available for village enhancement. Application forms are available at the library.

**Community futures:** KAT is to arrange a meeting with the community council to allow them to start an update.

**Carbon cutting:** Anne Winther is having a meeting with various people in Killin to discuss cutting carbon in the future and what Killin will be like in 2030 with less fuel available and rising costs.

**Planning:** PFK garage extension passed.

**Fireworks licence:** This has been paid for by the community council.

**Bio fuel plant:** More information required on whether proposed Bio Fuel Plant is as eco-friendly as first thought.



Mull school sale raises charity cash

**Ulva Primary School** held a table top sale to raise money for Children in Need and school funds. Ten tables sold brie a brac, bread, bird food and local crafts. There was also a raffle and teas, coffees and delicious cakes. Organisers said it was an enjoyable day with lots of people coming from all over the island. The event raised £452.40.

**Around the Rurals****Morar**

TEN LADIES attended the December meeting.

Hostesses were Christine Haynes and Pauline Elwell. Karen kindly gave the table centres as raffle prizes and they were won by Christine Haynes and Ann Currie.

Foxwell; 3 Linda Maclean; 4 Heather Simpson.

Hostesses were Christine Haynes and Pauline Elwell.

Karen kindly gave the table centres as raffle prizes and they were won by Christine Haynes and Ann Currie.

**Oban**

SIXTEEN members of Oban SWRI gathered at Manor House, Oban on December 7, 2010 for their Annual Christmas Dinner. As usual they were delighted with the delicious food, excellent service and festive ambience.

**Concert pupils hit all the right notes**

**Barcaldine Primary School** pupils demonstrated their musical abilities at the school's Christmas concert last week. The event, held at the village's Sealife Sanctuary, celebrated the festive season in style, with the selection of songs and carols delighting the packed venue. ts1barci

**Toy Cupboard tea is the 'Crème de la crème'**

Parents and supporters of The Toy Cupboard recently raised £230.59 at a 'Creme de la Creme' afternoon tea. Using pretty tablecloths, flowers and wonderful home baking, waitresses with crisp white pinnies gave the afternoon a bygone era feel. All proceeds go towards providing a lending library of toys and weekly sessions at the Church Centre where parents and children under six can come and have fun. 07\_149creme49

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**Inveraray woman Frances celebrates after winning top award at 'education Oscars'**

AN ARGYLL woman is celebrating after being honoured at this year's Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) Star Awards.

Frances Nolan, of Inveraray, was highly commended for the SQA Champion award, which recognises staff who champion SQA qualifications and supports candidates to achieve their full potential.

Frances, who runs Drumbeat training consultancy in Inveraray, has operated SQA-approved centres since 1991 and has

helped more than 1,350 candidates achieve SQA qualifications.

Known within the teaching profession as the 'education Oscars' the awards celebrate the achievements and commitment of learners, teachers, training providers and businesses across Scotland.

Frances said: 'I am really pleased with the award. It's nice to have yourself and your contribution recognised. The interesting thing about these awards is that they do not just recognise schools and colleges but

private businesses and their commitment to developing talent.'

Dr Janet Brown, SQA chief executive, said: 'Scottish education and training is full of inspirational stories and magnificent achievements from students, schools, colleges and training centres.'

'To all who were entered, and particularly to those who made it through to the awards ceremony, well done. You represent the absolute best of Scotland and should take enormous pride in your achievements.'



Inveraray's Frances Nolan is delighted with her Scottish Qualifications Authority Star Award.

## Fort centre aiming to be world leader in subsea training

THE UNDERWATER Centre in Fort William is to embark on a £5 million improvement and expansion programme designed to make it a world leader in subsea training.

The ambitious project, backed by £1.5million Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE) cash, will create 20 new jobs, safeguard 53 existing posts and increase diver training capacity by around 100 per year.

The redevelopment will also include upgrading pier infrastructure, a new diving-training barge and other training amenities.

The Lochaber centre, the leading European facility of its kind and one of only three in the world to provide closed bell diver training, was purchased by current owner Finlay Finlayson in 2004.

It has successfully established itself as a leading player in the commercial diver training market, tailoring training to reflect the growing importance of marine renewables, especially offshore wind farms.

Finlay Finlayson said: 'This will undoubtedly give us a great platform for future growth in Fort William. With a growing oil and gas industry and a new focus on marine renewables, improving the training for divers and [remote-operated vehicle] pilots is going to be fundamental for us to take real advantage of these opportunities. This is the largest investment we have ever undertaken and we are grateful for the support of HIE.'

David Oxley, Head of Operations for HIE in Fort William, said the centre already had a strong reputation for its quality of training. This expansion will allow the company to not only be at the forefront of the market in the UK, but the world,' he said.

## NEWSDESK 01631 568000

### Fire safety message

'TIS THE season to be careful' - that's the message from Strathclyde firefighters.

Thomas Keay, station commander in Oban, said: 'We have given Christmas fire safety leaflets out throughout the town.

'Anyone who would like a free fire home safety visit should contact me on 0800 0731999.'

### Top Tory to visit

THE FIRST lady of Scottish Conservatism will be in Oban on Friday to discuss her views on the state of the nation with Oban and Lorn Conservative Lunch Club.

Annel Goldie, leader of the Tories in Scotland, will be speaking at the group's annual Christmas meal. For more details contact Sara Rutherford on 564230.



## Spean Bridge Primary School stages nativity story

**Christmas came early to Spean Bridge Primary School on Tuesday when the pupils performed their version of the nativity story. Family and friends packed out the school's games hall to see the children act out the story of Jesus' birth with costumes, singing and dancing, all accompanied by the school's orchestra. Head teacher Kate MacGillivray said: 'The kids haven't had much time to work on this and I think they've managed to put on a great show for us.'**

## Ambitious Fort William plans get green light

AMBITIONOUS plans for a supermarket, shops, community facilities and leisure complex near Fort William have been given the provisional green light.

At Portree on Tuesday, Ross Skye and Lochaber planning committee unanimously approved Miller Developments' outline £50million scheme. Miller's scheme for a 105-acre site next to the A830 at Blair Mhor envisages a 70,000 square foot supermarket and retail park, with space

for a new Gaelic primary school, an all-weather sports pitch, a combined police-ambulance headquarters and a relocated Belford Hospital with helicopter landing pad.

Speaking after the meeting, Councillor Donald Cameron, who took no part in the debate because he had previously declared his support for the plans, told *The Oban Times*: 'I am pleased that the committee went with the recommendation. I think despite the

economic downturn it is a development that will be delivered and will meet the aspirations of the local community.'

Colleague Eddie Hunter, who moved approval, added: 'I am delighted that the proposal received unanimous support and look forward to the development starting as soon as possible. It has been a long wait for the good people of Lochaber, but hopefully we have taken one giant step along the road of what we want to see.'

## West Highlands heading for record cold early winter

THE WEST Highlands could be heading for a record cold early winter if present weather patterns persist, according to the latest figures.

With Arctic conditions once more in control, last week's short-lived thaw appears to be a blip in a prolonged frigid spell as the mercury plunges well below freezing yet again.

Readings for Andrew Bootman's weather station at Achnabobane near Spean Bridge show that from November 23 to December 7 inclusive, the average

REPORT by STEPHEN NORRIS snorris@obantimes.co.uk

temperature was a bone-chilling -3.8°C (25.2°F) - almost 8C below the norm. The temperature remained below freezing for the entire week up to December 3, reaching a low of -12.1°C, only climbing into positive territory on four days.

The station is a useful indicator for the region, as it lies midway between the milder coast and the interior, which is significantly colder. Further severe frosts are

expected over the coming days with significant snow much more of a threat - but Mr Bootman was reluctant to predict whether the latest sub-zero blast could potentially mean more pre-Christmas travel misery for local commuters and businesses.

He told *The Oban Times*: 'There is certainly a bigger snow threat on this occasion as the wind is northwest rather than easterly as last time, when the snow was dumped on eastern Scotland. But I am no forecaster - I stick to recording what has happened.'

### Renewable energy scheme on hold

PLANS for a renewable energy scheme near Kinlochleven have been put on hold. Alcan Aluminium's five-megawatt hydropower scheme on Loch Eilde Mor would require raising the existing dam by 0.78m and a 43-foot high powerhouse.

But Ross, Skye and Lochaber planning committee deferred a decision at Portree on Tuesday pending a site visit.

Highland Council leader Michael Foxley told *The Oban Times* more talks were needed on windfall cash for the community and impacts on the West Highland Way.

'The site visit will allow us to have a serious look at the proposals,' he said.

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This is assuming that the driving conditions are favourable and the GP is not already occupied with a patient elsewhere. We consider that without the appropriate clinical cover patient safety will be compromised.'

Pensioner Tim Steele from Kilchoan also slammed the move. Mr Steele, aged 66, underwent kidney surgery at

43-foot high powerhouse.

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committee unanimously threw out Mrs Bryce's plan. 'The combined noise level from the three turbines would exceed the level considered acceptable at the nearest noise sensitive location and as a result will have a significant impact on residential amenity,' planners said.

Arisaig and District Community Council had also objected to the proposal and the clerk to the Common Grazings Committee raised concerns.

## Arisaig wind turbine bid rejected

A LOCHABER landowner's bid to erect three wind turbines on her land has been rejected by councillors.

Julie Ann Bryce's proposal for three 15metre high turbines near her home Sunnyside Croft campsite at Bunacaimbe, Arisaig, had been unpopular with locals, attracting 61 objections, with just six representations made in support.

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## 5 Scots strike deep into Taliban territory

SOLDIERS from The Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders, 5th Battalion The Royal Regiment of Scotland (5Scots) joined forces with members of the 2nd and 3rd Battalions of The Parachute Regiment and the Afghan National Army to advance deep into the Taliban's Helmand heartland last weekend.

This was the first time that British and Afghan forces have driven into the Nahr-e Saraj 'Green Zone'

to establish an enduring presence.

Approaching the village of Tor Ghai, B Company 5Scots were first to come under insurgent small arms

fire but with large numbers of British and Afghan National Army troops arriving, the village was secured.

Commanding Officer 2 Para, Lieutenant Colonel Andrew Harrison said: 'We have struck a blow right into the heart of the insurgency in Nahr-e Saraj. This area was a command and control node for those who subjugated Afghan and British soldiers.'

The troops are now working with the local community of Tor Ghai to repair the road network, clear known areas of improvised explosive devices and prevent Taliban intimidation towards the population.

## Doctors and patients back campaign to keep nurses

REPORT by RICHARD HADDOCK fort@obantimes.co.uk



**'Ridiculous': Kilchoan resident Tim Steele has slammed NHS Highland's decision.**

of the economics of the situation, never mind the human issues. It would have been much more expensive to send an ambulance or to keep me in a hospital bed for months.'

He added: 'I retired to this area from London 16 years ago because I saw this as the perfect place to live. But this is making me question the viability of living in this part of the world. The thought of having no out-of-hours service fills me with absolute horror.'

Tracy Ligema, NHS

Lochaber general manager for Lochaber, told *The Oban Times*:

'In common with other areas, the community nursing service will continue to provide planned care both in and out of hours for patients with long term conditions and those requiring end of life care at home. We are also working closely with the Scottish Ambulance Service to create a wider team of

more highly skilled nurses, paramedics and health care assistants who are able to share aspects of planned and routine care and in so doing provide additional capacity to respond to emergency calls. This will mean there

will be more staff trained to respond to emergencies in the Kilchoan area and these staff will be more readily available.'

## Starfish slime delights scientists

A RESEARCH team based in Argyll is hoping slime from spiny starfish could hold the key to treating conditions such as asthma, arthritis and dermatitis.

Dunbeg firm Glycomar, which is based at the Scottish Association for Marine Science (SAMS), has been leading research into the gloop for the past 13 years after its unique non-stick properties were discovered.

The spiny starfish, which are found off the west coast of Scotland, use the slime to prevent unwanted debris or bacteria sticking to them.

It is now hoped a chemical produced by the starfish can help develop drugs to

treat anti-inflammatory conditions, removing the need to use steroids which can often carry unwanted side-effects.

Lead researcher at Glycomar Dr Charlie Bavington said: 'In theory, this could be useful in treating any inflammatory disease, from asthma and joint complaints to a number of other conditions.'

Inflammation is a side-effect of the body's own response to an irritant or illness. White blood cells build up in the blood vessels and they stick to the walls, a process that can cause tissue damage.

Making the cells less sticky, it's hoped, will therefore

reduce inflammation. The research is being carried out in conjunction with King's College in London and with the support of SAMS.

Professor of pharmacology at King's College Clive Page said: 'The starfish is effectively providing us with something that is giving us different leads; it has had billions of years in evolution to come up with molecules that do specific things.'

News of progress into starfish slime has made national headlines and with little surprise as the work being carried out at SAMS is on the cutting edge of a new area for pharmaceutical research.

Like its SAMS neighbours, Aqua Farm, Glycomar is looking at other species in the hunt for new medicines or cosmetic products.

Dr Bavington said: 'It's called bio-prospecting and a growing number of companies around the world are looking towards the sea. It's a whole new era and in some ways Scotland is at the forefront of Europe by having this centre here.'

'Developing new drugs can be quite high risk and has to be balanced by the potential benefit.'

Dr Bavington explained that because of this risk companies are looking at other market opportunities, such as potential applications

for cosmetics and nutrition. 'We work with sea squirts, which are common around here but quite a nuisance for the fishing industry; sea cucumbers, which are also quite common around here; marine worms and marine microalgae,' he said.

Dr David Hughes, an ecologist from SAMS, added: 'We know marine animals and plants produce a huge range of compounds, sometimes very different compounds from those produced by animals and plants on land.'

'So many might have useful properties that could be brought into medicine and other medicinal applications.'

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Top class fundraisers: Lochyside kids presented £1,500 to Children in Need. 10\_f51side01

## Lochyside raises £1,500 for Children in Need

LOCHYSIDE RC Primary School pupils have counted up the proceeds from their Children in Need fundraising campaign - an incredible £1,500.

Primary 3/4 organised activities as part of their class enterprise project and involved the whole school. Fun ideas to raise cash included

dressing in something spotty, face painting, filling a Pudsey Bear shape with coins, a cake stall and - a tricky one this - a sponsored silence.

## Sheriff warns witness: lie and you face jail

A CROWN witness at the trial of a Kinlochleven motorcycle ace accused of drink driving was warned by a sheriff he could be put in prison for lying.

Mark Comrie, aged 26, had given a statement to police that Gary MacDonald, a regular top performer in Lochaber's Scottish Six Days Trial, was driving his car after drinking in a local pub.

But at Fort William Sheriff Court, Mr Comrie told Procurator Fiscal Alison Wylie he did not see who was behind the wheel and could 'not remember' what he told police.

Sheriff Douglas Small warned the witness he could face perjury or contempt of court charges and suspended

**EXCLUSIVE**  
REPORT by  
RICHARD HADDOCK  
fort@obantimes.co.uk

proceedings allow him time to think things over. After a brief recess, Mr Comrie, who described MacDonald as a friend, took the stand to testify he had after all seen MacDonald driving the car.

Mr Comrie told the court he was drinking in the Tailrace bar, when he noticed MacDonald drinking with friends.

Later, he said MacDonald's blue Ford Focus drove past on Lochaber Road then turned back towards them, nearly hitting Mr Comrie's cousin Brian who was trying to flag it down.

## Councils draw up joint action plan to save two coastguard tugs

HIGHLAND, Shetland, Orkney and Western Isles councils are preparing a joint action plan to retain two coastguard emergency towing tugs.

The Anglian Prince at Stornoway and the Lerwick-based Anglian Monarch face the axe next September in a UK

Government cash-cutting drive. Highland Council leader Michael Foxley said: 'The need is obvious and will be even greater with the development of offshore marine renewables.' Shipping Minister Mike Penning could meet council leaders on a visit to the Northern Isles in January.

## Getting ready for your Christmas Party?

Need to put a little sparkle into your outfit?

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Call in today and see our wide selection of diamond jewellery and Tiaras

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Jim hands over the rock box to second year pupil Erin Wells.

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**National Garden Gift Tokens**

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## Rock box donated to Lochaber High

JIM BLAIR, the chairman of Lochaber Geopark, dropped into Lochaber High School to donate a 'rock box' containing 13 samples of rocks found within the Lochaber area.

Mr Blair, a former geography teacher at Kinlochleven High School, is now retired and spends some of his time developing Lochaber's Geopark status.

Lochaber Geopark Association was set up in February 2006 and was awarded European and global Geopark status in April 2007.

Lochaber has a wealth of outstanding Earth Heritage features, ranging from the roots of ancient mountain chains to the Parallel Roads of Glen Roy. The Geopark is donating a rock box to each school in the area. – Chelsea MacGillivray 6L

## Torlundy man's poor treatment of dog leads to pet ban and £500 fine

A TORLUNDY dog owner has been banned from owning a pet for two years and fined £500 after the treatment of his dog left the animal looking 'emaciated'.

John MacKay, 58, of 4 Torlundy Courtyard, pled guilty to causing the animal unnecessary suffering by omitting to provide adequate nutrition and veterinary attention between April 1, 2009 and January 21, 2010.

No escape for drink or drug drivers

NORTHERN Constabulary say they will keep the pressure on drink and drug drivers after week one of the force's festive safety campaign. Eleven people, eight men and three women aged between 18 and 56, were caught – four more than last year.

## Teenage climber dies on Ben Nevis

A 19-YEAR-OLD climber from Alness fell to his death from Tower Gully on Ben Nevis on Sunday afternoon.

Daniel Rafferty, who was studying at college in central Scotland, was with four other recreational climbers when he plunged down the mountain while attempting to cross Tower Gap. A member of the party contacted the emergency services about 5.20pm. Lochaber Mountain Rescue Team and a search and rescue helicopter from RAF Lossiemouth attended the scene and recovered Mr Rafferty's body.

The party was well equipped for winter conditions, Lochaber police said. It is unclear if the victim was secured by ropes while attempting the manoeuvre. A report will be submitted to the Procurator Fiscal.

## Drugs accused appear in court

TWO MEN from the Fort William area have been fully committed for trial after appearing on petition at Fort William Sheriff Court charged with drug offences.

Louis James MacLean, 37, and Ross Kennedy, 38, appeared in private at Fort William Sheriff Court charged with being concerned in the supply of cocaine at various locations throughout Scotland and the UK between January and November 2007. Neither man entered a plea. Kennedy was released on bail whilst MacLean was remanded in custody. No date has been set for a further hearing.

## Police files

A BEDROOM window in staff accommodation at the Alexandra Hotel was smashed sometime between 10.30pm on Thursday, December 9, and 1.45am on Friday, December 10.



THE LIGHT fitting and bulb within the wooden bus shelter on Battlefield Crescent, Inverlochy, were smashed about 3.30am on Saturday, December 11.



THE WING mirror was knocked off a camper van parked in East Bay Mallig sometime between 2.30pm on Saturday, December 11, and 10.30am Sunday, December 12.



AN ARTEC Alt Rocker snowboard with bright orange bindings was removed from the racks at the upper station restaurant at Nevis Range sometime between 1pm and 1.30pm on Sunday, December 5. The snowboard is blue, white and green with the name ARTEC in bright orange.

## Race warning

ATHLETES in Lochaber Athletic Club's 10km Cruim Leacainn hill race on Boxing Day have been warned to prepare for 'ultra-bad' winter conditions. Organiser Roger Boswell says grippy shoes will be essential for the 11am race from Torlundy Farm. If conditions are too bad an alternative road route will be substituted.

Procurator Fiscal Alison Wylie told Fort William Sheriff Court when the five-year-old English sheepdog was taken from MacKay's house it weighed about half the weight it should. A vet said the animal's condition could only be explained by a prolonged period of malnutrition'. Sentencing MacKay, Sheriff Douglas Small said: 'You are not a fit person to keep a pet.'

Seven of those snared spent time in the cells and four were reported by members of the public. The Association of Chief Police Officers Scotland-led campaign began on December 6 and will run for four weeks.



Nursery pupils from Caol Primary School entertained friends and family with their nativity play on Monday afternoon. Fifty-one children from both the morning and afternoon classes took part in the show. 10\_f51caol01



This year's nativity play at Rockfield Primary School, Oban involved all 120 children in primary one to three. 'Christmas around the World', explores how different cultures celebrate the festive holiday. 15\_t51rock01



After-school club Skool's Out held its own Christmas fundraiser on Saturday to help pay for a pantomime trip to Glasgow and a Christmas party. The Santa's Grotto and Holly Tea in the Royal Hotel, Oban raised more than £600. Pictured are some of the young club members and supporters with Santa Claus. 08\_t51grotto01

## Countdown to Christmas



Some of the nativity stars in this year's play at St Columba's Primary School

08\_t51nat01



Cousins Ellie Johnston and Olivia MacCuish met Santa at the Christmas Grotto in the former Trespass shop in Argyll Square, Oban. The grotto was organised by Oban and Lorn Lions, and the group has asked Santa to come back this Saturday. 08\_t51santa01



Pupils at Banavie Primary School got into the festive spirit when they held their Christmas concert in a packed out games hall on Monday. 10\_f51banavie01

### St Columba's unique take on the nativity story

ST COLUMBA'S Primary School, Oban, offered a unique take on the nativity story this year, with its production, Tinsel and Teatowels.

The story of the play was a look behind the scenes of a school preparing for a nativity, when officers from Her Majesty's Inspectorate appear. The play was held in the Oban Primary Campus

hall and attended by a large audience and every one of the 88 children in the school had a part to play.

Head teacher Sarah Jane MacSween said the feedback from the audience was positive. She said: 'Some of the parents watching said it was the best nativity they had seen.'

'Every child in the school, from primary one to primary seven took part and it was a great night.'

Among the audience were a number of special guests including Bishop Joe Toal, Father Donald MacKay, Sister Mary Jo MacCallum, Argyll and Bute Councillor Duncan MacIntyre, School Quality Improvement Officer Elaine Magor and David Aubertin, manager of WH Smith in Oban.

You can send pictures and information about your Christmas party, play or event to editor@obantimes.co.uk



Some of the children who attended the S.W.R.I. Christmas party in Kichrenan Village Hall.



## Budget consultation - your chance to have your say

### What you said - what we've done

Here's just some of the suggestions we've had so far and the impact the suggestions have had:

Reduce pay by 15%	Pay has been frozen for local government workers
Sell off council buildings	The market is slow but we're trying to sell
Charge more for services	Some charges could increase
Renegotiate contracts to get better value;	We're doing this
Invest in opportunities like renewables	We have a plan to do this
Review the school estate	We're consulting on proposals on this now.
Use former school buildings for community groups	We have a process which allows community groups to take on unused buildings
Close libraries; cut library hours; make libraries self funding; charge for libraries	These options have been proposed.
Use third sector partners to manage community assets	We're exploring which groups could do this.

### What are the options now?

We've reviewed nine service areas and each one now has a list of possible money-saving options. We'd like you to tell us what you think.

Some of the proposed options are:

- Reorganise children and family services
- Close part time libraries in Cardross, Tarbert and Rosneath
- Reduce winter maintenance of roads
- Amalgamate smaller primary schools
- Increase the cost of school meals by 15p per day
- Reduce grants for under used bus services
- Increase our recycling rates to reduce landfill tax
- Transfer hall to community ownership
- Reduce funding to organisations such as Visit Scotland and Pass Plus

You can read the full proposals on our web site [www.argyll-bute.gov.uk](http://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk) And you can fill in an online questionnaire to tell us what you think of the proposals.

We need your responses on the general budget consultation by 31 December 2010 so there is time for councillors to analyse the feedback and decide on which savings to take.

Some of the options, such as the school estate review, require additional consultation with residents and this will be to a different timetable.

### What happens next?

Consultation on these options ends on 31st December 2010.

Councillors will then consider the responses and incorporate them into the final budget, which will be presented to council on 10 February 2011.

If the proposals are agreed you can expect to see changes to your services take place in 2011.

### Where to get more information:

[www.argyll-bute.gov.uk](http://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk)

Email: [budget@argyll-bute.gov.uk](mailto:budget@argyll-bute.gov.uk)

Mail: Budget Queries, Argyll and Bute Council, Kilmory, Lochgilphead, PA32 8RT



### How do we spend it?

Council Service	Budget - £m	Budget - %
Education	99.6	35.9
Social Work	52.3	18.8
Roads and Transport	14.8	5.3
Environmental Services	17.4	6.3
Planning and Development	5.1	1.8
Culture and Sport	8.1	2.9
Housing Support	10.5	3.8
Police and Fire	22.2	8.0
Loan Charges	30.5	11.0
Miscellaneous	17.1	6.2
Expenditure	277.6	100.0

Education and social work account for more than half of the council's budget. If we didn't make any cuts to these services then we'd have to make all of our savings from just half of our budget. This means some service areas would face especially harsh cuts.

### How can we do more with less?

We've been planning for cuts for the next three years and since August we've been asking residents to suggest how we could save money. Their comments have been used to help us come up with some options to become more efficient, change the way we deliver services and in some cases stop delivering services altogether.

# An ab-fab version of old favourite

THE CORRAN Halls were full to capacity with excited children and adults on Thursday, Friday and Saturday nights with a matinee Saturday afternoon, as Benderloch and North Connel Drama Club took to the stage with *Jack and the Beanstalk*.

Under the expert direction of Linda Robb, the all-age cast brought all the traditional features of panto, adding their own flavour and humour to the performance.

*Jack in the Beanstalk*, written by Alan McHugh, brought the old story alive for all ages. The show opened with the Oban High School Dancers using traditional steps to upbeat music to create the right atmosphere.

Young actress Lauren Stewart expertly led the story as Fairy Firefly, mesmerizing us all with her rhyming and promise of three wishes to overcome the evil Giant and his personal assistant, Ab Fab (Dougie MacKenzie), who skilfully flexed his muscles and basked in the boozing from the audience.

He frightened the villagers of 'Retropolis' and supplied his master - the terrifying voice of Sam Martin - who lives up in 'Stratofheria' with a supply of fresh meat.

But with meat in short supply, the ever more evil Ab Fab decides that the beautiful Princess Lulu (Jenny Livingstone) should be served for dinner. Her poor parents the King (Jack Degnan) and Queen (Susan Forrest) cause her endless stress, as they were rendered deaf by the shouting Giant.

This led to some hilarious 'misunderstandings' beautifully delivered between the King and Queen.

Archie worked the audience beautifully with his ever increasing water pistols and with the help of local firefighter 'Winky' Alan MacDougall, of Strathclyde Fire and Rescue, managed to soak most of the audience!

The Dame thrilled the whole audience with her jokes, antics and fantastic costumes, but the star of the show was Moo Moo the cow, who won the hearts of the audience, especially during the milking scene when she sat on Marji's knee!

A fantastic performance from Benderloch and North Connel Drama Club. Their costumes, props and scenery are the envy of many a theatre group and all that despite being flooded out last week!

Fiona Cruickshanks.

## Father and son duo delight Oban Accordion Club

DESPITE the frosty weather preventing some regulars attending, there was a healthy turnout at the most recent Oban Accordion and Fiddle Club

monthly club night. The evening, in the Argyllshire Gathering Hall, began with Craig McFadyen, Oban, on accordion, accompanied by Lisa Mitchell, North

Connel, Scott Sinclair, Sileas Sinclair, Clare Jordan, all Connell, and on melodeon, James MacArthur, Oban.

Craig, Sileas and Claire also played keyboard and on drums were Angus MacColl, Benderloch, and Dave Laverty and Archie Cameron, both Oban.

A variety of music was heard from all the local musicians and was greatly appreciated by the audience.

Archie introduced the special guest artistes, the Fraser McGlynn duo.

Fraser is from Lochgilphead and plays button key accordion and his son, Kevin, based in Oban, plays drums.

The band delighted the audience with many fine sets with stories and jokes from Fraser. Archie thanked the guest artiste.

The evening came to a close with a stramash, which included a selection of Christmas carols. The next event is the annual club dance on January 14.



Special guests Kevin, left, and Fraser McGlynn performed for members of Oban Accordion and Fiddle Club.

# Personal Christmas Greetings

**MERRY CHRISTMAS**

Margaret Whellan would like to wish all her friends and neighbours a Merry Xmas and a happy New Year 3 Firth Court, Oban.

**SEASONS GREETINGS**

Anne Marie and Raymond, (McKelvie Heights) would like to wish everyone a peaceful Christmas and a Happy New Year.

**CHRISTINE KING**

Hawthorn, Appin wishes all her relatives and friends a very Happy Christmas and a prosperous and contented New Year.

**SEASONS GREETINGS**

Mary McLaren, Ballachulish, would like to wish friends and neighbours a peaceful Christmas and a Happy New Year.

**IAIN AND ALMA RODGER**

would like to wish their friends a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

**LORD MACLEAN OF BENTALLA**

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to all my friends and relatives.

**SEASONS GREETINGS**

To all our friends in Lochawe, Dalmally and Portsonachan. From Iain and Rena

**SEASONS GREETINGS**

Norma Burnet and Fearless Fred would like to wish everyone a peaceful Christmas and a Happy New Year.

**SEASONS GREETINGS**

Lizzie Munro would like to wish all her friends and family a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

**SEASONS GREETINGS**

Moira and Douglas say Happy Christmas to friends along with hope for a Happy and healthy 2011 with love.

**SEASONS GREETINGS**

Colin and Lorna Campbell would like to wish friends and family a very Happy Christmas and Best Wishes for 2011.

**SEASONS GREETINGS**

Jean Campbell 12E Breadalbane St Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to all my friends

**SEASONS GREETINGS**

Mairi Campbell, 27 Glencruitten Drive, would like to wish everyone a peaceful Christmas and a Happy New Year.

**SEASONS GREETINGS**

Nollaig Chridheil agus Blàdhna Mhath Úr to all friends in Mull and Iona from Archie & Janet MacDonald, Tobermory

## REVIEWS

### Church closes in on £18,000 organ cash

HARDWORKING churchgoers at Glencruitten Parish Church have almost raised the £18,000 required to replace their church organ.

The congregation hopes it is on the final fundraising stretch as it hosts a Rejoice at Christmas Festival, which begins today (Thursday).

The church has been decorated in a Christmas carol theme for the festival and will be open for viewing from 10am to 4pm until Saturday. There will also be a concert at the church today with the Sequence Choir, conducted by Janet Ferguson, at 7.30pm and on Saturday, Rockfield School Choir will perform at 2pm. Margaret MacLean, a member of the congregation, said: 'We have been raising money for the replacement of our church organ and everyone has been working really hard. The fundraising efforts have included whisky drives, sponsored abseils and fashion shows. We are hoping that if the festival is successful we will be close to having the final total required.'

'Everyone is determined to get the money we need.'

### 'Awe-some' confusion

SANTA got mixed up between Loch Awe and Loch Melfort when he was planning a trip to the world famous Arduaine Gardens for the coming weekend.

The lochs, almost 50 miles apart, were caught up in an 'awe-some' mistake as the National Trust for Scotland sent out a letter telling people Father Christmas would be visiting the Loch Melfort side gardens 'on the shores of Loch Awe'.

*The Oban Times* informed Santa of his mistake and he assured visitors he would indeed be visiting Arduaine Gardens, near Kilmelford, on Saturday and Sunday between noon and 4pm. The man in red also assured children he would not get the areas mixed up again – children in Loch Awe and on the banks of Loch Melfort will receive the correct gifts this Christmas!

### Ballachulish author releases new novel

BALLACHULISH author Marie Campbell has released her third novel *The Whispering Sea* – and is already planning the release of her next book.

Marie told *The Oban Times* the book will be about her early years growing up in Ballachulish and will be her 'swansong'. *The Whispering Sea*, a historical fiction, is being published by American company iUniverse. It tells the story of a young girl growing up with her artist father as they move from place to place. It is available at Ballachulish Visitor Centre and other outlets.



Leisure reporter

Louise Lee

llee@obantimes.co.uk 01631 568023

## Huge support to resurrect silver screen in Oban

LOVERS of the silver screen turned out in force to discuss plans to resurrect the Highland Theatre building, in Oban, as a cinema.

More than 120 people attended a meeting in Cuan Mor on Monday night.

The consensus of the meeting was that the town needed a cinema and with more than 100 people offering to volunteer for a community-run venture, the Phoenix may indeed rise from the ashes.

Campbell Cameron, town centre manager for Oban Business Improvement District (BIDS), chaired the meeting.

'Everyone in their lifetime trips over an opportunity.'

'We have been given a window of opportunity to secure the cinema for the people and town of Oban,' he added.

'But the race is on. We have two months to complete a deal with the bank.'

Paul Sloan, a member of the BIDS steering group, suggested the community would need to find money from grants and trusts to match any individual donations or take up the offer of a local family buying the cinema and leasing it back to the community.

Mr Sloan estimated £98,000 would be required to refurbish the cinema – a figure seen as conservative by many in the packed room.

In response to a question by Rhona Dougal about his estimates, he said: 'We have had seven days to pull together this meeting and come up with some ideas.'

'I have worked on the costs I would use to complete a similar scale and size of project. These figures are not set in stone.'

'But we are willing to get quotes for the jobs and raise as much money as it requires, within reason.'

## Music school to host Christmas concert

LOCHABER Music School will hold its Christmas concert in St Margaret's Church, Roy Bridge, on Sunday at 3pm.

Featuring ensemble and solo performances from many of Lochaber's most talented young people, performances will include orchestral and choral items – along with handbell ringers – which will set the scene for Christmas.

**REPORT**  
by LOUISE LEE  
llee@obantimes.co.uk

The meeting heard that a potential buyer was still willing to purchase the building and lease it back to the community.

Duncan Martin, secretary of Oban Community Council, said: 'It would be in the best interests of the community to own the building outright. But it is understandable that in the short period of time you have very few options open to you.'

Other suggestions from the floor included opening a fast food restaurant, such as MacDonalds, in the foyer, applying to the National Lottery, making the building a multi-use venue, fitting a 3D screen and using the venue for a number of other purposes.

MSP Mike Russell, who insisted he attended the meeting as a 'lover of cinema' and not as a politician, added: 'I support your venture wholeheartedly.'

'I hope to put my former career as a projectionist to use as we press play on the first film in the new cinema.'

Raymond Hyames, chairman of BIDS, said: 'There are many possibilities open to us and every suggestion we have heard tonight is a possibility.'

A further meeting has been arranged for Oban Phoenix Cinema on Monday December 20 in Skipinnish Ceilidh House at 8pm.

A Facebook page, Oban Phoenix Cinema, has been set up for anyone interested in the cinema to get involved.

Alasdair, who lives in Connel, said he was delighted to be awarded a long service certificate. He said he still enjoyed playing and vowed to continue for as long as he could.

Letters of support for the project were received from Alan Reid MP, Jim Mather MSP and Councillor Neil Mackay.

## A showstopping treat for the audience



**Lochaber Showstoppers' Christmas pantomime 'Robyn Hood and her Merry Women' went down a storm with crowds in Fort William last week. The show saw an all-star local cast put a modern spin on the famous Sherwood Forest story, complete with jokes, singing and music from a live band. It ran for three nights at the Nevis Centre from Thursday to Saturday, with a matinee performance on Saturday afternoon.** 10\_f51panto01

## Alasdair clocks up 50 years of hymns

**REPORT**  
by EUAN PATERSON  
epaterson@obantimes.co.uk

AN ACCORDION player, who has provided music for a congregation for 50 years, has received a long service certificate from the Church of Scotland.

Alasdair MacDonald's accordion is used for hymns at the fortnightly services in Bridge of Orchy and Crianlarich, where there are no church organs.

He has also played at weddings and funerals in Dalmally; St Conan's Kirk, Lochawe and Portsonachan.

He was presented with his certificate by Rev Liz Gibson, minister for the parish of Glenorchy and Innishail, linked with Strathfillan.

Alasdair, who lives in Connel, said he was delighted to be awarded a long service certificate. He said he still enjoyed playing and vowed to continue for as long as he could.

Alasdair said: 'My wife, Mary Ann, and I have talked about retiring but I want to play for as long as I can.'

The 73-year-old moved



**Alasdair MacDonald was awarded a long service award for playing the accordion in church over half a decade.** 08\_f51alasdair01

from Liverpool to Achallader, Bridge of Orchy, in 1958 to work as a shepherd.

At that time the churches had a presenter, John MacLean.

Then in September 1960, the Rev Ian 'Uist' MacDonald

came to the parish and wanted to add music to the services.

'Rev MacLean knew I played the accordion and asked me to play on Sundays in church.'

'I think it was frowned upon at first but they soon came round. Visitors who came to the church thought it was fantastic

as you get a more lively sound from the accordion.'

The Rev Gibson said:

'He is hugely appreciated, especially as we have a small congregation at Bridge of Orchy and having a strong instrument to lead us helps.'



### WIN tickets for Glasvegas' Oban gig

GLASVEGAS are in the building, or they will be on January 11 when they make their first visit to the Corran Halls in Oban.

The Scottish alt-rock band hail from the east end of Glasgow and have received exceptional critical acclaim including being nominated for the Mercury Music Prize in 2009. Glasvegas are currently putting the finishing touches to their highly anticipated second album before heading out on an 'intimate Scottish tour' in the new year.

Lucky fans will get the first chance to hear new songs alongside the classic tracks such as Geraldine and Daddy's Gone.

The Oban Times has teamed up with Glasvegas and the Corran Halls to offer 10 pairs of tickets to the gig. And as a special treat the band will bring their new drummer, who is yet to be named, to the town in January.

To enter, simply tell us the name of one Glasvegas hit. Send your answer to: Glasvegas Competition, Newsdesk, Oban Times, Crannog Lane, Oban, PA34 4HB. Closing date for entries is Thursday December 30.

### SEASONS GREETINGS

To all our family and friends a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. James, Rona, Rachael, Kelly, Sarah

### Merry Christmas

Jean Whyte, Benderloch, would like to wish all family and friends a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

### JAMES MACDONALD

(Jimmy), Creag Ghorm, Kentallen, will not be sending cards this year, but would like to wish his family and friends a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. Blàthadh Mìcheal Ur.

### SEASONS GREETINGS

Margaret & Willie Melville, Treshnish, are not sending local cards this year. They wish friends everywhere a happy, peaceful and joyful Christmas.

### KATHIE MACCOLL

Kilmore, will not be sending Christmas cards this year but would like to wish his family, neighbours and friends a happy Christmas and a prosperous New Year.

### SEASONS GREETINGS

Archie, 4 Dunmar Court wishes all family, friends and neighbours a happy Christmas and a peaceful New Year.

### GILBERT MACKENZIE (SNR)

Beinn Dorain, Oban. Wishing all my friends and relatives every happiness for Christmas and New Year. All the best.

### SEASONS GREETINGS

Chrissie and Hamish Yeoman wish friends, family and relatives a happy Christmas and a very good New Year.

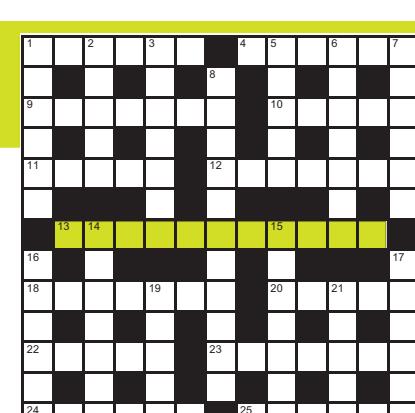
## GENERAL KNOWLEDGE CROSSWORD

### Across

- 1 Fuel (6)
- 4 Incidental (6)
- 9 Covered walkway (7)
- 10 Assassinated (5)
- 11 Formed Italian dough (5)
- 12 See!! (2,5)
- 13 A refractive error of the eye (11)
- 18 Fit (7)
- 20 Dried coconut meat (5)
- 22 Snare (5)
- 23 Territory of Islamic leader (7)
- 24 Covered face (6)
- 25 For six players (6)

### Down

- 1 Unwanted pages that appear on the computer (3-3)
- 2 Conditions (5)
- 3 Paper art (7)
- 5 Money in the bank, say (5)
- 6 Sliding shelves (7)
- 7 Dainty stepper (6)
- 8 Introducer at dinner (11)
- 14 Outdo (7)
- 15 Feeling (7)
- 16 Diminutive (6)
- 17 Ability (6)
- 19 Outdated (5)
- 21 Place to discredit another (5)



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## gig guide

Every Sunday >

Quiz Night

Markie Dans

Every Thursday >

Ceilidh Night

Skipinnish Ceilidh House

free entry

Friday 17 December >

Skerryvore Opening Show

Skipinnish Ceilidh House

(check website)

Friday 17 December >

Skerryvore Late Show

Skipinnish Ceilidh House

(check website)

Friday 17 December >

Chris Suckle

Markie Dans

Saturday 18 December >

Face the West

Skipinnish Ceilidh House

(with DJs, 10pm Tickets £8)

Thursday 23 December >

Tim O'Connor

Markie Dans

Friday 24 December >

DJ Stevo

Markie Dans

Friday 24 December > Christmas Eve Family Ceilidh Night

Skipinnish Ceilidh House

(9 - 12.30 Tickets £5)

Saturday 25 December >

Sandra MacBeth

Markie Dans

9.30pm Licensed until 2am

Saturday 25 December >

Christmas Party Night

Skipinnish Ceilidh House

(with DJs, £10 - 10pm)

Sunday 26 December >

Ash Bash's Bday Bash

Markie Dans

with Chunks</



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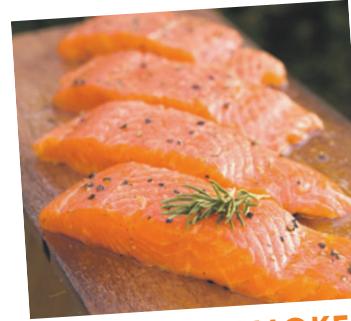
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**Cost of flying to rise**

LOGANAIR has announced it will introduce a below-inflation increase of an average two per cent for tickets from January 1 2011.

The carrier, which operates more than 500 flights a week on 26 routes around the Highlands and Islands, says the rise is lower than those recently announced by trans-Scotland ferry and rail operators. The airline has also decided to stop offering complimentary alcohol and soft drinks to passengers from January 10.

**Fort William man admits threats**

A FORT William man has admitted forcing his way into his ex-partner's house and threatening her.

Alan Tomlin, aged 46, of Flat 2A, Glenlochy Guest House, pled guilty at Fort William Sheriff Court to behaving in a threatening manner at Grant Place, Claggan, entering whilst uninvited and shouting and uttering threats on October 30.

Sheriff Douglas Small deferred sentence on Tomlin for nine months for good behaviour.

**Man denies drink drive charges**

A FORT William man has denied crashing into a parked car in the town while he was intoxicated.

John Gallacher, aged 53, of 8 Brown Court, pled not guilty to driving in Moray Place car park whilst unfit through drink or drugs and driving without due care and attention, causing him to collide with the other vehicle. The trial will be heard at Fort William Sheriff Court on February 9 2011.

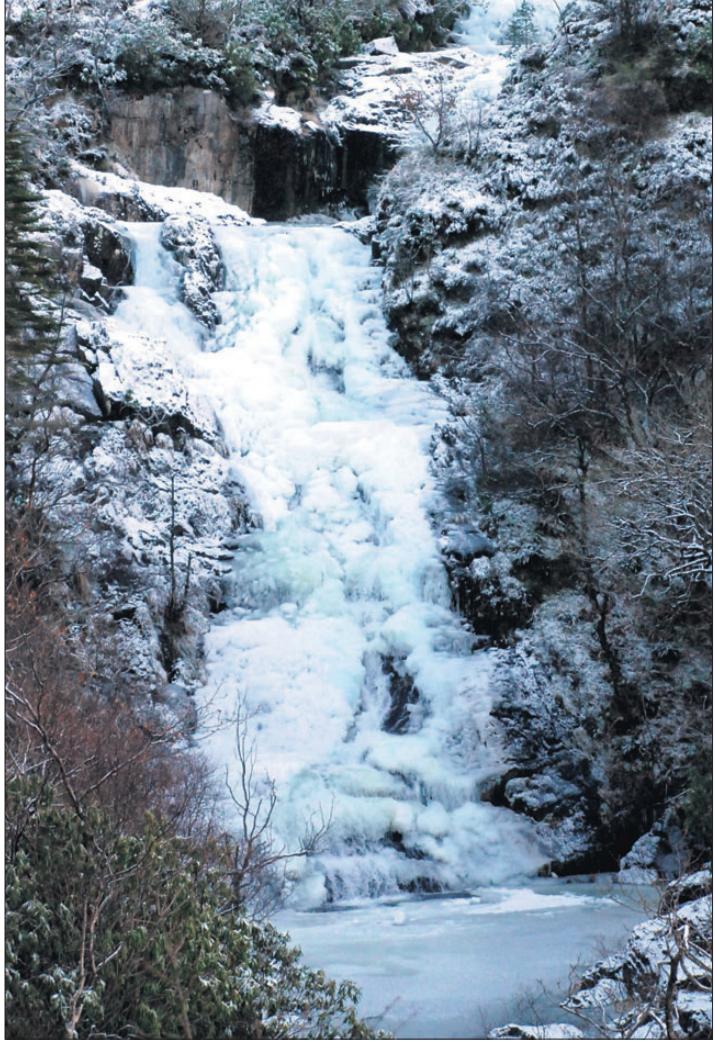
**North Labour MSP to stand down**

**Peter Peacock: standing down.**

HIGHLANDS AND Islands Labour MSP Peter Peacock is to stand down at May's Holyrood elections.

Mr Peacock has been in elected office for 28 years, 11 as an MSP and 17 as an Independent Highland councillor, latterly as Highland Council's first leader.

He said: 'At the coming Scottish election I would be entering my 30th consecutive year in elected office and I feel it is time for change. I look forward to using my experience of public life to full effect.'

**Rare freeze for River Righ falls**

Walkers brave enough to tackle the woodland walk up to the falls on the River Righ near Onich last week were rewarded with this spectacular view. The 100-foot cascade, normally a foaming torrent, had almost completely frozen solid into a sculpted column of ice, shimmering green and blue in the winter light. Last weekend's thaw ensured the path, which had been covered in sheet ice and snow, was once more easily negotiable. For the waterfall to freeze up is a rare event; for it to do so at the beginning of December is almost unheard of. 10\_f51falls01

**Barra gives view on East Mingulay conservation area**

BARRA residents attended afternoon and evening drop-in sessions yesterday (Wednesday) to give their reaction to controversial plans to designate waters round East Mingulay as a Special Area of Conservation (SAC).

The events, staged in Barra Learning Centre in Castlebay, saw Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) staff field questions on the plans.

SNH started the formal consultation on the proposals on behalf of the Scottish Government four weeks ago.

Scottish Ministers will consider all submissions before deciding whether or not to confirm the site.

**Fort William man denies violent assault**

A FORT William man has denied carrying out a violent assault on a woman in his home.

William Smillie, aged 51, of 3 Bruce Place, pled not guilty to assaulting the woman by repeatedly kicking her on the head to her injury at the address

on October 1. Smillie pled guilty to a charge of possessing cannabis at Fort William Police Station on the same date.

The trial will be heard at Fort William Sheriff Court on February 9, when Smillie will also be sentenced for the second charge.

Richard Stojak, aged 61, of Corran Ferry Hotel, Corran Ferry, Onich, pled not guilty to falsely representing to a police constable at Fort William police station that another man had threatened him with violence on August 6.

The trial will be heard at Fort William Sheriff Court on February 9.

**Bogus claims denial**

A LOCHABER man has denied making bogus claims to police about threats made to him.

Richard Stojak, aged 61, of Corran Ferry Hotel, Corran Ferry, Onich, pled not guilty to falsely representing to a police constable at Fort William police station that another man had threatened him with violence on August 6.

Mr Melrose said: 'He didn't anticipate seeing people at that time in the morning. He felt he was being cornered.'

Stafford, who was dressed in full camouflage at the time, repeatedly told the group to 'back off' whilst pointing his gun at them. Stafford left the scene and police were contacted the following day.

Sheriff Douglas Small decided against forfeiture of Stafford's air gun, saying: 'I trust that the fine will press home to you the fact that you can't carry a rifle around where there are people.'

# Corpach drug dealer jailed

## Three-and-a-half year sentence after police discover £6,000 worth of cocaine in raid

A CORPACH woman has been jailed for three-and-a-half years after a police raid on her house uncovered nearly £6,000 worth of cocaine.

Fiona Ferguson, aged 43, of 19 Drumfada Terrace, supplied the class 'A' drug and amphetamine from her house and elsewhere in Lochaber between June 1 2008 and January 31 2010.

Ferguson, who pled guilty at an earlier hearing, had her dealing brought to an end when police raided her house and found her and others with amphetamines as well as a rucksack containing 114 grammes of cocaine with an estimated street value of £5,726.

Police also arrested a man who was leaving Ferguson's house in possession of cocaine.

A mobile phone seized during the search provided details of text messages and phone calls from people who had bought drugs from Ferguson.

Police questioned several, who admitted Ferguson had supplied them with the illegal substances. Two said they had been given the drugs for free.

Describing Ferguson as 'one of life's travellers', defence solicitor Gerry Sweeney said: 'She seems to be completely detached from what matters to normal people in a normal society. But she does seem to appreciate that this is a turning point in her life.'

Jailing Ferguson, Sheriff Douglas Small told her: 'The court has to take a very serious view of these offences.'

A SKYE community's bid to buy a 1,000-acre woodland has been given a £5,000 boost by a local family trust.

Sleat Community Trust is looking to purchase Toromore Forest south of Ardmale from the Forestry Commission for £330,000, £20,000 of which must be raised locally.

A donation from the Raonull and Eileen MacInnes Charitable Trust has brought the community's kitty nearly halfway to its target, with just over three months till the March deadline.

The trust's forestry plans include the creation of local employment from forest management and timber processing. Improved access into the forest for walking, cycling and potentially pony trekking also feature.

The purchase is being made through the National Forest Land Scheme, a Forestry Commission scheme that gives community organisations the opportunity to buy national forest land. Under the terms of the scheme, the money for the purchase must be raised by March 2011, or the woodland will be put on the open market.

Trust secretary Henry Mains told *The Oban Times*: 'We have to raise £20,000 and we need to get that money from the public so we are always delighted when we get a donation like that. We are confident we will reach our target.'



**Henry Mains: confident of reaching target.**

10\_f51forest01

RECENT Arctic conditions across Scotland has forced the re-opening of post office services in Kyleakin to be put back a week.

Post Office Limited had hoped to open the temporary host service in the former Cameron's Shop today (Thursday). But extreme weather conditions and long travel distances involved to complete the required works means the counter will now open next Thursday, December 23. The service will be provided by the Broadford postmistress and will run for seven hours a week, on a Tuesday and Thursday between 9.30am and 1.30pm. Post Office Limited apologises to customers for any inconvenience the delay may cause.

□ □ □

THE FIRST English-authored introduction to the works of Raasay Gaelic poet Sorley MacLean has been published.

The book, *Sorley MacLean*, by BBC Alba broadcast journalist Dr Peter Mackay, examines the contemporary political, cultural and philosophical impact of the bard's poetry and why it continues to resonate today.

Dr Mackay also works for BBC Radio nan Gàidheal.

□ □ □

A COMMUNITY effort to chart the spread of predatory mink in Skye and Lochalsh has reached its halfway point.

The Skye and Lochalsh Mink Project has seen scores of volunteers, including members of conservation organisations, crofters, grazing clerks and members of fishing organisations, gather data on the animals by logging sightings, trappings, road fatalities and footprints in tunnels set with clay pads. Latest findings show that mink, the descendants of fur farm escapees, have colonised most of the coastline of Skye and Lochalsh, with hot spots being Kyle, Kylerhea, Loch Bracadale and North Trotternish as well as the islands in the Sound of Raasay.

The second phase of the programme will focus on the mating period. Tunnels will be re-set and checked from February to April, and by May 2011 survey organisers Skye and Lochalsh Environment Forum will be able to provide a more complete picture of mink distribution.

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**Breastfeeding initiative a step closer to award**

A HIGHLAND health initiative to support breastfeeding mothers and their babies has moved a step closer to gaining an international award.

Mid Highland Community Health Partnership (CHP) has achieved stage two in the three-stage award process in the Baby Friendly Initiative, a World Health Organisation and UNICEF programme run globally to ensure high standards of care. NHS Highland infant feeding advisor Karen Mackay said: 'Breastfeeding rates have increased by 10 to 15 per cent since we started working towards Baby Friendly status.'

It is hoped the CHP, which includes Lochaber, Skye and Lochalsh, will achieve full accreditation by the end of next year.

**New boiler will cut pool's fuel bills**

MALLAIG and District Swimming Pool will cut fuel bills by 10 per cent once its new biomass boiler is installed.

Director Fiona Baker told *The Oban Times* further savings could follow from the government's Renewable Heat Incentive scheme from April 2011.

Pool managers announced last week they are replacing the ageing oil-fired boiler with a renewable wood chip unit on environmental and cost grounds.

**Salt supplies low**

THE EXCEPTIONALLY cold start to the winter has not left Highland Council low on salt supplies, says TEC Services committee chairman John Laing.

Some 30,000 tonnes of rock salt is on order from Carrickfergus, Northern Ireland, and a 4,600 tonne delivery is due to arrive in Invergordon this week.

Councillor Laing said: 'We currently have 17,000 tonnes of salt in supply throughout the Highlands and are making internal movements of salt stock throughout our 41 depots to where the need is greatest.'

**Care forum boost**

LOCHABER Community Care Forum has been awarded £7,000 from local councillors' discretionary budgets towards the cost of employing a development worker.

# Passenger's anger after pet dog bus ban stalls trip home



**Shaggy dog story: Catriona and Skye at the Citylink stance bus to Inverness.**

10\_f51dog01

**Walks highlight flytipping and litter problems**

KINLOCHLEVEN Primary School P3/4/5 pupils will be looking out for the environment again on their final walk of term tomorrow.

The class has been going on local short walks every Friday in recent weeks with class teacher Mrs McSorland and came across litter and fly tipping.

Shocked at what they saw, the children invited Councillor Bren Gormley, Rio Tinto Alcan, Kinlochleven Community Trust and Scott Bellwood of the Highland Council TECS Services to join them on tomorrow's ramble.



**Centenarian Joyce Ducker celebrates with Abbeyfield Ballachulish staff and, back left, vice chairman David Thomson and Ann Gunton, who presented the certificates.**

10\_f50abbey01

**Support services on the move in New Year**

USERS of day and community support services in Fort William are being advised of changes to services in the New Year.

The Angus Centre, a base for people with learning disabilities, is closing and from the week beginning January 10 the centre will operate from the Montrose Centre at Inverlochy.

Dementia day services provided at the Montrose Centre will close on December 23 and transfer to Invernevis House from January 4.

A council spokesman said: 'We will ensure a smooth transition of services and will give families and users of both centres the opportunity to visit their new surroundings during the week prior to the move.'

The future of the Angus Centre has yet to be determined.

## Citylink refuses to bend rules on no animals policy

**EXCLUSIVE**

REPORT by  
STEPHEN NORRIS  
snorris@obantimes.co.uk

round trip of 140 miles. 'The attitude of the bus driver and the stance controller was awful. They were really rude to me,' she fumed.

'I think at a time like this they could have had a more reasonable attitude to help people out.'

'They were a wee bit officious to say the least. I was told dogs were not allowed on the bus because people might be allergic to them. I said I could ask people on the bus, but they said no.'

'Skye is the best-behaved dog you could get. I was not aware of the rules before I went and they obviously have a blanket policy. I have taken the dog on local buses before with no problem.'

'But staff quoted Citylink regulations that only guide dogs and hearing dogs could be carried on company services.'

'With no way of getting home Catriona, from Redcastle, had to phone her husband to leave his work in Inverness and come to Fort William to collect her – a

*The Oban Times* to leave the bus office.'

A spokesperson for Scottish Citylink said: 'While we are sorry to hear about this passenger's experience, our company policy states that pets, other than guide dogs, are not permitted to travel on our coaches.'

'This is not an arbitrary policy and is in place out of consideration for other passengers. We appreciate the extreme weather conditions are causing travel issues for people with pets, but the comfort and safety of our passengers is our number one priority.'

Local company Shiel Buses confirmed to *The Oban Times* dogs 'were not encouraged', but drivers had discretion.

Owner Donnie MacGillivray said: 'We do allow dogs on our buses in certain circumstances if the dog is clean, well behaved and does not get up on the seats.'

Catriona has asked her MSP John Farquhar Munro to take the matter up with transport minister Stewart Stevenson.

## Snow wreaks havoc with court schedule

SNOW played havoc with the schedule of Fort William Sheriff Court last week, causing three cases to be adjourned.

James Lowther, aged 54, of 3 West Larch, Ballachulish, was due to face a charge of driving without due care and attention after attempting an overtaking manoeuvre whilst a motorbike was trying to overtake him on the A82 near Dalmarnock just south of Fort William on July 19.

The vehicles collided, injuring the biker, Paul Fletcher.

As two crown witnesses who were travelling from Sheffield could not attend court, Sheriff Douglas Small agreed to adjourn the trial until February 4.

**Adjourned**

Paul Allan, 38, of 58 Blair Mhor Road, Caol, had his trial adjourned until February 9 as his solicitor, Bob MacDowell, of Glasgow, could not make it to Fort William.

Mr Allan denies assaulting Iain MacKay by repeatedly punching and kicking him on the head and body to his injury, claiming he acted in self-defence.

A Perth man who was reliant on public transport to travel to Fort William also had his case adjourned, until February 4.

Desmond Jaffrey, 20, of 2 Kestrel Way, was due to be sentenced for failing to appear at court on September 16.

## Joyce parties on after 103rd birthday bash

ONE OF Scotland's oldest residents has celebrated her 103rd birthday in a Lochaber nursing home.

Joyce Ducker enjoyed her big day – then joined Abbeyfield Ballachulish staff for a party of their own to mark their successful completion of a six-month university course.

The sprightly centenarian has been a resident at Abbeyfield since moving in at the tender age of 98.

She told *The Oban Times*: 'I can't believe I am now 103. I have so much enjoyed my celebrations and getting so

months have really enhanced their knowledge and practice. Abbeyfield board of trustees congratulate them all on their achievements.'

Abbeyfield Ballachulish had another reason for getting into the festive spirit – the Care Commission awarded the home its day care and care at home services the top mark of six for 'excellent' following recent inspections.

Wilma said: 'I owe a big thank you to not only the staff, but to all the clients and their families for their continuing support.'

## Labourer punched ex-partner in the face

A CAOL man has admitted punching his ex-partner in the face to stop her throwing his belongings out of the window of her flat.

Labourer Bryan Garrick, aged 38, of 4 Torcastle Crescent, pled guilty to assaulting Joanne Birrel by seizing her body and punching her on the face at

7 Mossfield Apartments, Lochside, on May 16.

Defence solicitor Hamish Melrose told Fort William Sheriff Court that during a row Ms Birrel had started throwing Garrick's clothes out of the window. Mr Melrose continued: 'The matter really came to a head when Ms

Birrel tried to throw a laptop belonging to Mr Garrick out the window.'

Fining Garrick £300, Sheriff Douglas Small said Garrick had a 'formidable' record of previous convictions, adding: 'It's not the most serious offence but it is very unpleasant, punching a female in the face.'

## Late night drunken row turned to violence

A FORT William man has admitted assaulting his partner in their home during a drunken row.

Marek Roznovjak, aged 30, of 10 Douglas Place, Fort William, pled guilty to assaulting Daniella Timcakova by repeatedly punching and slapping her body to her injury on November 6.

Fort William Sheriff Court heard the Czech man started rowing with his partner of 15 years after he came home late from a house party.

Ms Timcakova admitted she slapped Roznovjak before the pair got into a fight during which he punched and slapped her.

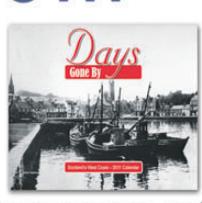
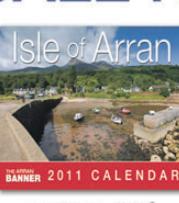
Ms Timcakova went to the police the next day where officers saw bruising on her upper thighs.

Sheriff Douglas Small said to Roznovjak: 'Domestic violence in this country is seen as a serious offence.' He deferred sentencing for nine months for good behaviour.

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## Pupils back to nursery for a day

Sgoil Araich Braigh Lochabair, the Gaelic nursery in Roy Bridge, had an impromptu boost to numbers last Monday. Former pupils, who now attend Gaelic medium education in Fort William, were unable to get to school because their school was shut so they joined siblings and former classmates in Sgoil Araich/nursery for the day.

## Oban champion heifer sells to £2,000

CALEDONIAN Marts (Stirling) Ltd sold 1,251 suckled calves, store, breeding and Over 30 Month cattle at their Christmas Show and Sale at Oban Livestock centre last Tuesday.

Judge John Owen of Muirpark, Bannockburn selected as his champion and winner of the Caledonian Marts Perpetual Challenge Trophy a 380kg Limousin cross heifer from Douglas McDonald, Tyree, Benderloch which sold at £2,000 to R Wright, Woodend, Ardgour. Reserve champion was a 395kg Limousin bullock, again from Douglas McDonald, Tyree which made £1,450 to Graeme Stirling, Burnbank, Thross.

The 670 bullocks sold to an average of 165p per kilo and to a top of 367p for the reserve champion and to 264p per kilo for Limousin crosses from A McGillivray, Achuran, Lismore. The 504 heifers averaged 149p per kilo and sold to 526p per kilo for the champion and 272p per kilo for young heifer calves from D MacDougall, Tirfuir, Lismore.

Prizes:  
Bullock Calf Mainland Bred 1 and Reserve Champion Douglas McDonald, 2 Douglas McDonald, 360kg £700 to Craig Malone, Corbewood, Bannockburn, 3 Malcolm Campbell, Airds, Ardfern, 375kgs £580 for D Low, Pittenkerrie, Glassel.  
Heifer Calf Mainland Bred 1 Douglas McDonald, 2 D W Semple, Dippin, Carradale, 360kgs £720 to George Harvey, Keirhill, Balfron, 3 Ewan McGillivray, Barcaldine Home Farm, 275kgs £740 to Ian Dick, Kipperroch, Dunbarton. Bullock Calf Island Bred 1, 2 and 3 Archie McGillivray, Achuran, Lismore, 365kgs £760, 240kgs £580, 315kgs £650 to Alan Wilson, Crawfordjohn Mill, Crawfordjohn and Dexter Logan, Greenhead, Alva respectively. Heifer Calf Island Bred 1 and 2 Dougie McDougall, Tirfuir, Lismore 310kgs £680, 280kgs £540 to John Owen, 3 Messrs McDonald, Ballygrundle, Lismore, 270kgs £530 to Robert Wotherspoon, Holybush, Falkirk. Native Bred Bullock Calf 1, 2, 3 J & M Turner, Kildolloig, Campbeltown, 345kg £520 to D Low  
Native Bred Heifer Calf 1 M Bonniewell, Dalvuike, Connell, 300kgs £380 to T Millar, High Gameshill, Stewarton. Pen of 4 Bullocks, Malcolm Campbell, Airds, Ardfern 395kgs £620 to D Low.  
Pen of 4 Heifers, Lagan Farms, Lochgilphead, 375kgs £510 to T Millar, High Gameshill, Stewarton.

## Market reports

### DALMALLY United Auctions

Bullocks  
Aberdeen Angus X: £955 and £945 10 Eoligarry, Barra £805(4) Moleigh Farm £775 and £750 10 Eoligarry £565(3) Machrins Farm, Colonsay. British ShorthornX: £515(2) Cornagmore, Coll. CharolaisX: £115, £1045, £1010 and £985 10 Eoligarry, Barra £610 Tullochmhor £585, £570 and £560 Morenish £555 Braglenmore. Limousin X: £865, £835 and £810 10 Eoligarry, Barra £805 and £785 Moleigh Farm £785 Clachan, Tiree £770(3) and £755(3) Moleigh Farm £755(2) 10 Eoligarry £735(2) Moleigh Farm £715 9 Killeoran £705(3) and £695(2) Clachan, Tiree £655 9 Killeoran £635 Moleigh Farm £605(3) Morenish £600 Moleigh, 9 Killeoran and 10 Eoligarry(2) £595(4) Garraron and Melfort Farms £585 and £570 Tullochcan Farm. Luing: £705(2), £685(2), £675 and £630 Stronacroibh, Lismore. SalerX: £770 Moleigh Farm Simmental X: £985 and £925 10 Eoligarry, Barra £920, £825(3), £755(4) and £735(2) Moleigh Farm £655(6) Drissaig farm.

**Heifers**  
Aberdeen Angus X: £685 10 Eoligarry, Barra British ShorthornX: £570 Cornagmore, Coll. CharolaisX: £510 Braglenmore £495 Morenish Limousin X: £755(2) 10 Eoligarry, Barra £720 Auch Estate £645(2) Clachan, Tiree £620(3) 9 Killeoran £595 Clachan, Tiree(3) and Drissaig Farm(3) £585 9 Killeoran £580, £555 and £545 10 Eoligarry, Barra £525 Tullochcan £515 9 Killeoran and Morenish Farm. Simmental X: £790, £760, £750, £700, £685, £660 and £640 Auch Estate £620(2), £605, £590, £555(2), £545(4), £540 and £535 Drissaig Farm.  
**Breeding cattle**

## New legislation steps up the fight against sheep scab

NEW controls have been introduced to deal with the persistent problem of sheep scab in Scotland.

The legislation puts a legal obligation on any person who suspects that sheep in their possession or care have the infection to let their local divisional veterinary manager know as soon as possible. Movement restrictions will then apply until the sheep are either treated or slaughtered, or a veterinary surgeon provides a negative diagnosis.

### Rhododendron poisoning threat increases in winter weather

SEVERE winter weather could lead to a sharp rise in the number of plant related poisonings, warns vets at the Scottish Agricultural College (SAC).

Rhododendron bushes present a particular threat on the west coast and crofters and farmers have been advised that there is little they can do if their stock eat rhododendron leaves.

Brian Hosie, SAC Consulting Veterinary Services Group manager, said: 'Sheep will usually avoid rhododendron bushes if other sources of food are available but in winter it is not unusual for sheep to break

into gardens and woodland

or nibble on green leaves as the heavy snow bends rhododendron branches within reach. SAC Disease Surveillance Centres have confirmed several cases of poisoning since the snow storms began. In most cases little can be done to treat the sheep affected.'

Rhododendrons contain a poison which, amongst other things, slows the heart and lowers blood pressure. Symptoms in sheep include drooling, vomiting, pain and distress. They stagger and collapse before dying.

Other plants in the rhododendron family, such

as Azalea and Pieris, are also toxic, as is the yew tree, another plant that can be problematic in severe winters.

Cattle, horses and man can all suffer rhododendron poisoning.

Rhododendrons were introduced to Britain from the Himalayas by plant collectors and were often planted in gardens and parks. In recent years they have been allowed to spread and escapees have colonised areas in the west where conservation groups have mounted campaigns to clear the invaders from islands like Colonsay.

## Aberfeldy lambs are Caledonian's Martinmas Show champions

CALEDONIAN Marts held their annual Martinmas Show and Sale at Stirling last Monday when they had 5,879 store lambs and feeding ewes forward.

The show was judged by Stewart Gray, Clash Farm, Callander and the following was his awards. Champion and 1st Cont - £75.50 M & J Kennedy, Lurgan Farm, Aberfeldy; 2nd Cont - £69 M & J Kennedy, Lurgan Farm, Aberfeldy; 3rd Cont - £68 D McNicol, Whitecross.

Reserve Champion & 1st Suff - £73.50 M L Wilson, Baluskie; 2nd Suff - £65.80 G Black, Torbharen; 3rd Suff - £64.50 W S Paterson, Golland.

1st Tex - £72 M L Wilson, Baluskie; 2nd Tex - £68.50 J Lambie, Knockdaw; 3rd Tex - £64.50 D McNicol, Whitecross. An annual consignment of 967 lambs from M L Wilson, Baluskie Farm averaged £65.89 while 520 from D McNicol, Whitecross averaged £63.76.

## Brisbane Glen takes Stirling prime lamb championship

UNITED Auctions had 6,131 prime sheep including 4724 lambs averaging 169.2p/kg (+0.7p/wk) and 1407 ewes and rams for sale at Stirling last Thursday.

The event also included a Blackface prime lamb show, sponsored by J Cooper and Co, Gartocharn, and judged by A Black, Dunbia who selecting a lamb from Brisbane Glen Estate as his champion.

Beltex lambs from Mill of Montague sold to £89.50 and

to 221p per kilo from West Park with Texels from Prieston to £86 and 213p per kilo from Mill of Montague.

Blackface lambs from Brisbane Glen Estate sold to 78 and to 187p per kilo from Rynaclach, Killin.

Texel ewes from Quixwood sold to £98.50

**Show results**  
Champion - Brisbane Glen Estate 45.3kg - £78.00 Reserve champion - Mr Burnett, Rhodders 39.8kg - £73.00 Class 1

## Invernoaden Texels sell to £73 at Stirling

UNITED Auctions sold 407 store cattle, young bulls and 93 cows and 4,977 store lambs at Stirling last Wednesday.

Bullocks averaged 153.73p (-3.85p) and sold to 180p per kg for a 453kg Limousin cross both selling to £66. Cheviots from £68.50 Ashentially sold to £68.50 while Blackfaces from Ronachan fetched 350.

An annual consignment of 967 lambs from M L Wilson, Baluskie Farm averaged £65.89 while 520 from D McNicol, Whitecross. 1st Mules - £73 M L Wilson, Achuran, 2nd Mules - £72 D Cowden, Cowden, 3rd Mules - £65 W H Atkinson-Clark, Ashintully.

1st BF - £60.50 D Bryce & Sons, Cowden; 2nd BF - £52 D Bryce & Sons, Cowden; 3rd BF - £50 Couston Farming Co.

1st Mule Ewes - £64.50 M L Wilson, Baluskie; 2nd Mule Ewes - £59 Markhill Farms; 3rd Mule Ewes - £58 Craigmadam.

1st Prize Ewes - £48 Baluskie; 2nd BF Ewes - £44 Dumyat; 3rd BF Ewes - £40 Ashentially.

Texel lambs sold to £72 from Baluskie, with Suffolks from Poltalloch and Suffolks from Acharonich both selling to £66. Cheviots from £68.50 Ashentially sold to £68.50 while Blackfaces from Ronachan fetched 350.

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880440

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Old Bridge Road,  
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AUTOSERVICES

### CAR OF THE WEEK



Vauxhall Corsa 1.2 Club (2003)

£2700.00

48,894 Miles

Service & MOT At Time Of Purchase

Unit 6 Lochavullin Estate, Oban PA34 4HB  
Tel 01631 566502 Fax 01631 566470  
VAT Registration Number 717 2772 26

Contact Donald or Neil  
Quarry Road MOT Centre  
Quarry Road, Oban  
Tel: 01631 564614

### Robertson Van Sales

04 CITROEN BERLINGO 2.0 HDI	£2,250 + vat
White 78K miles. Mot April 2011, one owner, woodlined	.....
03 PEUGEOT PARTNER 1.9D	£1,400 + vat
White, woodlined, towbar, one years mot.....	.....
55 VAUXHALL COMBO WHITE 1.3 CDI	£2,800 + vat
52K miles Mot Feb. 2011 Woodlined, CD Player, taxed March 2011	.....

Billy would like to wish all his customers and  
friends a Happy Christmas and a Good New Year.

Tel: mob. 07990548046

All above vehicles plus VAT at 17.5%

EM COMMERCIALS LTD

Tel: 01294 554098 or 077696 88110  
Fax: 01294 554560  
www.emcommercials.co.uk

Many other vehicles in stock

All above vehicles plus VAT at 17.5%

For the latest local deals on new and used cars

In association with Quarry Road MOT Centre

MOT Sept 2011, excellent  
condition, FSH.

Telephone: 01546 606880

### FORD KA 1.3L COLLECTION



2000, metallic blue, alloy  
wheels, 9,000 miles,  
road tax March 2011,

MOT Sept 2011, excellent  
condition, FSH.

Telephone: 01546 606880

£795

### WANTED



Wanted an old  
motorcycle  
Running or not

Telephone:  
01505 341208 /  
07966 192217

### WANTED

Landrover 90 or 110, new or  
old models, also Toyota Hilux  
and Land Cruiser, Range Rover  
and all Japanese models, high  
miles, damaged, anything  
considered, motorhomes and  
caravanettes also required.

Contact James 07866 590583 or  
07966 293996.

### MITSUBISHI L200 WARRIOR



2004, MOT and taxed 9 months  
120,000 miles  
Good condition

Tel: 01546 606032 / 07990 773368

£5000 o.n.o.

### Need an MOT?

From Cars  
to Light  
Commercials



Contact Donald or Neil  
Quarry Road MOT Centre  
Quarry Road, Oban  
Tel: 01631 564614

## Motoring Times

For the latest local deals on new and used cars

The Quarry Road  
**MOT CENTRE** FLIT

[www.westcoastpropertyguide.co.uk](http://www.westcoastpropertyguide.co.uk)

## West Coast property service

### Two bedroom flat 14B Corran Brae, Oban

Solid fuel central heating, double glazed  
throughout, wooden flooring, bath / Jacuzzi.  
Walk in condition.

Offers in the region of £95,000.

Home report available.

Telephone 07796485041

West Coast property service

### FOR SALE

Three bedroom semi detached  
house in Lochgilphead, nice area.

Entry January 2011.

Offers over £125,000

Contact 0786 786 4436

### WANTED

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15%  
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For details and an Owner Information Pack  
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Email: karen@scottish-cottages.co.uk

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To find out how our Royalties Gold account could help,  
visit your local branch, call 0800 408 0036 (Minicom  
0800 404 6160) or go online at [rbs.co.uk/royaltiesgold](http://rbs.co.uk/royaltiesgold)

Rooms to rent  
In Large House  
Central Oban

£80 per week  
+ Bills  
No DSS  
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07770931967

**TO LET**  
4 bedroom house  
Un-furnished  
Central Heating  
8 miles from  
Tarbert  
(possibility of  
part time work)

Telephone  
01880 820654

**FLAT FOR RENT**  
Fully furnished one bedroom flat in the centre of  
Lochgilphead  
Available for long let  
Own car parking space  
No DSS  
References required  
£420p.c.m + Council Tax

Apply in writing to Box Number 150 Argyllshire Advertiser,  
Argyll Street, Lochgilphead, PA31 8NB

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One Bedroom  
Cottage  
TOLUNDY,  
FORT WILLIAM  
Furnished  
No D.S.S. or pets  
£450 pcm + £450  
deposit  
Tel: Mob.  
07766811082

**West Coast  
Property Guide**

**COTTAGE  
TO RENT**  
Cairnbaan

Telephone  
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evenings

TERRACED  
HOUSE TO RENT  
Banff Crescent,  
Fort William,  
2 Storey, Fully Furnished,  
2 Bedrooms, Accessible  
to town centre,  
Immediate entry.

Further details Telephone  
07990 752599 or  
07598 712565



Louise Rennie  
RBS customer for 8 years

**RBS**  
The Royal Bank of Scotland

Here for you

**COAST PROTECTION ACT 1949  
APPLICATION FOR DEER FENCE:  
GLACERISKA BAY, LOCH CRENAN**

Notice is hereby given that AIRDS ESTATE has applied to the Scottish Ministers of the Scottish Government, under section 34 of the Coast Protection Act 1949, as amended by the section 36 of the Merchant Shipping Act 1988, in respect of the installation of a deer fence extending below the level of mean low water springs in Glaceriska Bay at the above location in the positions(s):

Description	Latitude	Longitude
Deer Fence: Start	56° 32.570N	05° 24.141W
Deer Fence: End	56° 32.527N	05° 24.098W

Plans showing the position of the works may be inspected at PORT APPIN COMMUNITY CO-OP PORT APPIN, ARGYLL, PA38 4DE

Objections relating to safety of navigation, in respect of the application should be made in writing to:

Gordon Hastie, The Scottish Government, Ports and Harbours Branch, Area 2G North, Victoria Quay, Edinburgh EH6 6QQ within 28 days of the date of this notice quoting reference: 2SPC15/119

AIRDS ESTATE, c/o BIDWELLS, CARN DEARG HOUSE, NORTH ROAD, FORT WILLIAM

**COAST PROTECTION ACT 1949  
APPLICATION FOR PRIVATE  
MOORING AT ASKNISH BAY**

Notice is hereby given that Ian Taggart has applied to the Scottish Ministers of the Scottish Executive, under section 34 of the Coast Protection Act 1949, as amended by the section 36 of the Merchant Shipping Act 1988, to carry out A PRIVATE MOORING at the above location in the positions(s):

Description	Latitude	Longitude
Private Mooring	56° 13.834 Dec Min	05° 33.026 Dec Min

Plans showing the position of the works may be inspection at ARDFERN POST OFFICE, ARDFERN, PA31 8QN

Objections relating to safety of navigation, in respect of the application should be made in writing to:

Gordon Hastie, The Scottish Government, Ports and Harbours Branch, Area 2G North, Victoria Quay, Edinburgh EH6 6QQ within 28 days of the date of this notice quoting reference: 2SPC/2/5/421

Ian Taggart, 252 Nithsdale Road, Dumbreck, Glasgow, G41 5AH

**GOODS VEHICLE OPERATOR'S LICENCE**

BARRATLANTIC LTD trading as BARRATLANTIC LTD of ARDVEENISH, NORTHBAY, ISLE OF BARRA, WESTERN ISLES, H595YA is applying to change an existing license to keep an extra 3 Goods Vehicles at the operating centre at ARDVEENISH, NORTHBAY, ISLE OF BARRA, WESTERN ISLES, H595YA. Owners or occupiers of land (including buildings) near the operating centre who believe that their use or enjoyment of that land would be affected, should make written representations to the Traffic Commissioner at HILLCREST HOUSE, 386 HAREHILLS LANE, LEEDS, LS9 6NF stating their reasons, within 21 days of this notice. Representors must at the same time send a copy of their representations to the applicant at the address given at the top of this notice. A guide to making representations is available from the Traffic Commissioner's Office.

**GOODS VEHICLE OPERATOR'S LICENCE**

Robert Didcock, trading as Argyll Service Company of 15 Glenfyne Crescent, Ardriishag, Argyll, PA30 8EJ is applying for a licence to use Old Lorne Garage Yard, Chalmers Street, Ardriishag, Argyll, PA30 8DZ as operating centre for 1 goods vehicles 1 and trailers and to use MacQueen Bros Ltd, Unit 7a, Glengallen Road, Oban, Argyll, PA34 4HG as an operating centre for 1 goods vehicles and 1 trailers. Owners or occupiers of land (including buildings) near the operating centre who believe that their use or enjoyment of that land would be affected, should make written representations to the Traffic Commissioner at Scottish Traffic Area Office, Hillcrest House, 386 Harehills Lane, Leeds, LS9 6NF stating their reasons, within 21 days of this notice. Representors must at the same time send a copy of their representations to the applicant at the address given at the top of this notice. A Guide to Making Representations is available from the Traffic Commissioner's Office.

**Oban Times  
RECRUITMENT**
**crofters commission  
ughdarris nan croitearan**

Angus MacDonald has applied to **decroft** part of the croft at Drimduh, Arisaig & Moirdart extending to 0.0761 ha for the purpose of providing a site for a dwellinghouse. Case number: 4.6.28326 If you are a crofter, shareholder or owner of a croft in the township you may submit comments on the proposal in writing or some other permanent form to the Crofters Commission, Great Glen House, Leachkin Road, Inverness IV3 8NW or info@crofterscommission.org.uk, by 5 January 2011 quoting the above case number.

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 inquiry.

**C  
PLANNING**
**TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING**
**PLANNING (SCOTLAND) ACT 1997 (AS AMENDED), RELATED PLANNING (LISTED BUILDINGS AND CONSERVATION AREAS) (SCOTLAND) ACT 1997**

Take notice that the applications in the following schedule may be inspected during normal office hours at Lorn House Albany Street Oban PA34 4AR, at the location detailed below and by logging on to the Council's website at www.arryll-bute.gov.uk and clicking on Online Planning Applications. Anyone wishing to make representations should do so in writing to Lorn House Albany Street Oban PA34 4AR within 21 days of the appearance of this notice. Please quote the reference number in any correspondence.

**SCHEDULE - DESCRIPTION AND LOCATION PLANS**
**Ref No: 10/01932/PP**

Applicant: Ms Janet Thom And Ms Ann Smith

Proposal: Change of use of pavement to form outside seating area

Site Address: Julie's Coffee House 33 Stafford Street Oban Argyll And Bute PA34 5NH

Location of Plans: Argyll Area Office

Listed Building/Conservation Advert

Closing Date: 06/01/2011

**Ref No: 10/02000/PP**

Applicant: Eilean Easdale

Proposal: Erection of 6kW wind turbine with a maximum height of 17.75 metres to blade tip.

Site Address: Land South East Of Easdale Museum Easdale Island Oban Argyll And Bute PA34 4TB

Location of Plans: Sub Post Office Balvairc

Listed Building/Conservation Advert

Closing Date: 06/01/2011

**Ref No: 10/02013/LB**

Applicant: Eilean Easdale

Proposal: Erection of 14 solar PV panels and air source heat pump

Site Address: Easdale Island Community Hall Easdale Island Oban Argyll And Bute PA34 4TB

Location of Plans: Sub Post Office Balvairc

Listed Building/Conservation Advert

Closing Date: 06/01/2011

**Ref No: 10/01998/PP**

Applicant: Celtic Sea Limited

Proposal: Change of use of land to temporary storage of mussel farming equipment.

Site Address: Seabank Benderloch Oban Argyll And Bute PA37 1SB

Location of Plans: Sub Post Office Taynuilt

**Ref No: 10/02059/PP**

Applicant: Penny Dixon

Proposal: Erection of dwellinghouse and associated works.

Site Address: Land To The Rear Of Aurora View 1 Kiel Crofts Benderloch Oban Argyll And Bute

Location of Plans: Sub Post Office Taynuilt

**Ref No: 10/01932/PP**

Applicant: David And Sandy Orr

Proposal: Erection of integral garage and extension to dwellinghouse

Site Address: Seabank Benderloch Oban Argyll And Bute PA37 1SB

Location of Plans: Sub Post Office Taynuilt

**Ref No: 10/01933/PP**

Applicant: Mr E P Bowden-Smith

Proposal: Construction of micro-hydro electricity production scheme on the Allt Doire nan Sibhrach burn at Braevallich Farm, Loch Awe.

Site Address: Land To South Of Braevallich Farmhouse East Lochaweside Dalmally Argyll And Bute PA33 1BU

Location of Plans: Sub Post Office Dalmally

**Ref No: 10/01895/PP**

Applicant: Mr Donald Harper

Proposal: Site for the erection of 4 dwellings and formation of new vehicular access

Site Address: Land West Of The Anchorage Gallanach Road Oban Argyll And Bute

Location of Plans: Oban Area Office

**Ref No: 10/01828/PP**

Applicant: Mr R Moreland

Proposal: Removal of condition 4 (relative to levels) of planning permission 07/02221/DET for Erection of 2 dwellings

Site Address: Land South Of Lios Mhoire Ardonnel Terrace Oban Argyll And Bute PA34 5DJ

Location of Plans: Oban Area Office

**Ref No: 10/01942/PP**

Applicant: Mr David Gunn

Proposal: Erection of a dwellinghouse and associated works.

Site Address: Land Adjacent To Fair View Mannal Isle Of Tiree Argyll And Bute

Location of Plans: Tiree Area Office

**Ref No: 10/01993/PP**

Applicant: David And Sandy Orr

Proposal: Erection of integral garage and extension to dwellinghouse

Site Address: Seabank Benderloch Oban Argyll And Bute PA37 1SB

Location of Plans: Sub Post Office Taynuilt

**Ref No: 10/01998/PP**

Applicant: Celtic Sea Limited

Proposal: Change of use of land to temporary storage of mussel farming equipment.

Site Address: Seabank Benderloch Oban Argyll And Bute PA37 1SB

Location of Plans: Sub Post Office Taynuilt

**Ref No: 10/02059/PP**

Applicant: Penny Dixon

Proposal: Erection of dwellinghouse and associated works.

Site Address: Land To The Rear Of Aurora View 1 Kiel Crofts Benderloch Oban Argyll And Bute

Location of Plans: Sub Post Office Taynuilt

**Ref No: 10/01931/PP**

Applicant: Dunleiss Estate

Proposal: Erection of dwellinghouse and detached garage.

Site Address: Land To South East Of Laggan Bridge B8016 Isle Of Islay Argyll And Bute

Location of Plans: Sub Post Office Bridgend

**Ref No: 10/01941/PP**

Applicants: Mr Richard Hill

Proposal: Erection of dwellinghouse

Site Address: Land South West Of Calraig Cottage Lower Kilchattan Isle Of Colonsay Argyll And Bute

Location of Plans: Sub Post Office Port Askaig

**Ref No: 10/02006/PP**

Applicant: Islay Estates Company

Proposal: Site for the erection of 2 dwellings

Site Address: Land South West Of 7 Distillery Houses Caol Ila Isle Of Islay PA46 7RJ Argyll And Bute

Location of Plans: Sub Post Office Port Askaig

**Ref No: 10/01944/PP**

Applicant: Steven Corry

Proposal: Approval of conditions one to ten (house design and siting, landscaping, water and drainage arrangements and vehicular access) relative to planning permission reference 06/02163/JU/T.

Site Address: Plot 6 - Land South Of The Yard Ardmore Salen Isle Of Mull Argyll And Bute

Location of Plans: Sub Post Office Aros Isle Of Mull

**Ref No: 10/01734/PP**

Applicant: Mr Duncan Mackinnon

Proposal: Refurbishment and extension to dwellinghouse including installation of septic tank

Site Address: 6 Barapoll Isle Of Tiree Argyll And Bute PA77 6XJ

Location of Plans: Tiree Area Office

**Ref No: 10/01727/LB**

Applicant: Mr Michael McNaughton

Proposal: Construction of dwellinghouse and extension to dwellinghouse

Site Address: 10a Argyll Street Oban Argyll And Bute PA34 4TR

Location of Plans: Argyll Area Office

**Ref No: 10/01724/PP**

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**BABY EQUIPMENT**

102 PAMPERS NAPPIES  
5 Junior in packets, £10  
Telephone 07856 819576  
Taynuilt.

**BABY WALKER** Fisher Price Stride-to-Ride Lion perfect condition - Roaring Ride on or Push Along Fun!, £10 Telephone 01631 720513.

**BABY WALKER** red patterned seat, £15  
Telephone 01631 569678.

**TOMY WALKABOUT** BABY MONITOR portable parent unit volume control 2 way talk, £20 Telephone 01631 570846.

**BICYCLES**

**CARRERA VALOUR** ROAD BIKE 56cm frame, suit 5'4"-6' rider, Shimano Tiagra/Sora flight deck gears, Tektro caliper brakes. Good condition, £200. Campbeltown, £200 Telephone 07909 661857.

**CHILD'S RALEIGH BICYCLE** In Good condition. Children's Mini Raleigh Bicycle. Would suit 4-7 year old, £35 Telephone 01631 564364.

**GIRLS BIKE** lilac/silver Shimano bike, will suit 6-9 year old, £15 Telephone 01586 550272.

**LADIES' BICYCLE** Raleigh, 3-speed gears, brand new tyres, very good condition (nr TARBERT), £49.99 Telephone 01880 820060.

**BUILDING / DIY**

**BALLACHULISH SLATE** good quality, size 12 (8" x 13") £40 per 100 buyer to uplifts. £1200 Telephone 01880 820741 or 07760 466091.

**PORTACABIN & COLD STORE** available together or separately. Container type cold store 3 phase, good condition. Both on The Isle of Mull. Price for both, £1500 Telephone 07768 506462.

**CATERING EQUIPMENT**

**FOOD PROCESSOR** Braun combi max 750 food processor / liquidiser with all accessories, good condition (Lochgilphead), £35 Telephone 01546 600171.

**CHRISTMAS**

**HOLLY WREATH** (hand made), made on moss ring has fresh mixed holly/with berries) Xmas roses, ribbons cones, £15 Telephone 07810 395141.

**CLOTHES, SHOES AND ACCESSORIES**

**ADIDAS TRAINERS** climacool grey / blue size 8, boxed. Telephone 01546 604750 Office Hours Mon - Fri. Can post, £25.

**BOYS BENCH JACKET** leather look , Black Bench Jacket. Never worn, all new, age 7-8, £10 Telephone 01631 564364.

**REGATTA BOYS JACKET** as new, never worn. Black, age 5-6, £10 Telephone 01631 564848.

**TIMBERLAND BOOTS** boys black timberland boots size 15 used but vgc, £10 Telephone 07868 481242.

**COMPUTERS AND GAMES**

**LCD FLAT SCREEN PC MONITOR** 17inch. Standard mains cable needed, £38 Telephone 07799 332609.

**RED NINTENDO DS LITE** hardly used(no charger) in case but has four games, £49.99 Telephone 07856 819576 Taynuilt.

**DOMESTIC APPLIANCES**

**AGA OC DOUBLE OVEN COOKER** Oil fired. Dark green. Good condition. Light usage. In situ for inspection. Buyer to dismantle and collect mid-Jan, £600 Telephone 01852 316224.

**AGA TWO OVEN** with water heating, traditional dark blue, LPG, 10 years old, excellent condition, buyer dismantles and collects, £1,199ono Telephone 01583 431113.

**BEKO GAS COOKER** four burner, 3 months old, immaculate condition, £150.00. Telephone 01586 552089 or 01586 553835.

**DOMESTIC PETS**

**BABY GUINEA PIGS FOR SALE** 2 girls and 4 boys, 7 weeks old various coats and colours, £10 Telephone 01680 814234.

**KITCHEN AND BATHROOM**

**BATH MIXER TAP** stainless steel bath tap cost £100 new, bargain price ex condition, £20 Telephone 07796 283513.

**PUPPY** Jack Russell puppy, 8 week old male, well fed and wormed. Both parents owned. £150 to good home. Telephone 01546 603770 or 07766 535569.

**FURNITURE**

**DINING TABLE** solid mahogany, 48" round, extending to 67" oval, £49.99 Telephone 07919 520747.

**DRUM MAHOGANY TABLE** small round with 3 double legs bottom shelf and drawer, size H28" D 18", beautiful piece of furniture, £30 Telephone 07879 685771.

**FURNITURE** solid pine chest of drawers £10; IKEA pine wardrobe £20; black bookcases £5. Telephone 01688 500245.

**MAIL ORDER**

**SCOTTISH FIELD CALENDARS**, featuring spectacular photography of some of our most scenic lochs, rivers, beaches and mountains. Always a popular gift for family and friends at home or abroad. Order on-line at [www.scottishcalendars.co.uk](http://www.scottishcalendars.co.uk)

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**OFFICE DESK** Curved front office desk. Telephone Office Hours, £15.00 Telephone 01631 564848.

**SMALL BEDSIDE CABINET** beech, size W12" H24" D10", £10 Telephone 07879 685771.

**SOFT BROWN FOAM SOFA BED** chair in good used condition. Makes excellent bed/ seat for children, £10 Telephone 01631 564364.

**SOLID PINE** refectory type dining table L48" W30" H29, £20 Telephone 01855 811879 Ballachulish.

**SUITE** dark blue with soft red pattern, lounge suite, reasonable order. Telephone Office Hours, £19 Telephone 01631 564848.

**TWENTY SEASONED HAZEL SHANKS**, ready to use £40 the lot. Telephone 07818 435025 (Lochgilphead).

**WINKLES** 25kgs bag of winkles, basically just looking for a buyer. Oban, £47.50, Telephone 01700 503451 or 07710 529975.

**MISCELLANEOUS**

**DOMESTIC OIL TANK** 1000 litre oil tank, suitable for spare. Buyer uplifts. Telephone 01855 831242.

**SHOE STORAGE CABINET** approx 6ft tall, approx 2ft wide cabinet with 4 pull out shelves metallic finish for shoes etc. Neat and new, £20 Telephone 01631 720369.

**TWENTY SEASONED HAZEL SHANKS**, ready to use £40 the lot. Telephone 07818 435025 (Lochgilphead).

**WINKLES** 25kgs bag of winkles, basically just looking for a buyer. Oban, £47.50, Telephone 01700 503451 or 07710 529975.

**THREE PIECE SUITE** in good clean condition. Telephone Office Hours, £39.00 Telephone 01631 564848.

**TV & HI FI UNIT** by Meredew made in real wood mahogany veneer, L48" W23" H18", £25 Telephone 01855 811879 Ballachulish.

**TV AND HI FI CABINET** like new polished mahogany, size W38" H33" D20". Beautiful piece of furniture, £35 Telephone 07879 685771.

**TV CABINET** Lovely Stained Pine TV Unit, one open shelf for DVD Video etc and a storage part with two doors underneath. Rustic style VGC, £30 Telephone 07888677645.

**HEALTH AND FITNESS** METAL CAGE large cage for budgies, hamsters etc with plastic feeders approx 4ft wide. Ex condition as new, £10 Telephone 01631 720369.

**ADIDAS BIKE** Gents bike, Dawes Galaxy. Telephone Office Hours, £19.00 Telephone 01631 564848.

**HEATING, FIRES AND FIREPLACES** CALOR GAZ HEATER AND BOTTLES Calor Gaz heater with 2 spare bottles, bargain, £49.99 Telephone 01631 720369.

**HOME ENTERTAINMENT** 24" SANYO TV in excellent condition, £30 Telephone 07879 685771.

**BUSH FREE VIEW** tap up digital recorder box, Argos guarantee replaced product Feb 2013, £40 Telephone 07780 844900.

**CD PLAYER** Technics compact disc player / 5 disc changer with remote control. Ballachulish. 01855 811879, £20 Telephone 01855 811879.

**GREETING CARD DISPLAY** stand good condition, £49.99 Telephone 07789 680551 or 01866 553134.

**SHOP FITTINGS** 2 TELETUBBIES CHAIRS 2 wooden, painted children's chairs. Good condition, £10 Telephone 01631 720513.

**6FT FOLD UP POOL TABLE**, £30 Telephone 07856 819576 Taynuilt.

**6V POLICE PATROL BIKE** light, siren, tool box, forward and reverse engine, max speed 2kph. 2+ years, £30 Telephone 01631 570846.

**FISHER PRICE DINOSAUR** roll-a-round drop & roar, 3 coloured lights, 10 songs and 5 sound effects, good condition, £10 Telephone 01631 720513.

**MAGNETIC MUSICAL EASEL** Fisher Price Brilliant Basics, lights up, 5 fun sound effects & 6 songs - perfect working condition, £10 Telephone 01631 720513.

**BOXED NICE NECKLET** and bracelet set, £30 Telephone 07856 819576.

**JEWELLERY AND WATCHES**

**SING ALONG MIRROR**

Fisher Price stage mirror - music and lights galore - encourages singing, dancing and discovery. Great condition, £10 Telephone 01631 720513.

**KITCHEN WORKTOP** new Axion Turin Marble laminate, 1550mm x 600mm x 38mm. £20 Telephone 01855 811879 Ballachulish.

**WHITE BATHROOM SINK** and pedestal standard size sink vgc, good basic design!, £12 Telephone 07888 677645.

**WANTED**

**ADMIRALTY CHARTS** WANTED - Admiralty charts preferably of St Kilda from 1985 Telephone 07970 959845.

**COPPER brass, lead, stainless steel, zinc, all types of cable** household and armoured. Top prices paid. Telephone 0800 959 6483 or 07700 724851.

**SCRAP METAL** all types of scrap metal, we uplift scrap cars, call Mr Cook, West Coast Scrap Metals. Telephone 01499 500638 or 07787 991636.

**WINKLES WANTED** good prices paid. Telephone 01700 503451 or 07710 529975.

**MAHOGANY BOOK CASE** with two shelves and two drawers above. Size W30" H28" D11", £30 Telephone 07879 685771.

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**BIRTHS**

**FRASER** - Neil and Lesley are delighted to announce the safe arrival of Evie Rose on November 15, 2010. A little sister for Innes, another grand-daughter for Duncan and Eileen Ferguson, Isle of Eigg and first grand-daughter for Graham & Anne Fraser, Oban. Thank you to everyone involved.

**LIVINGSTONE**

Stuart and Claire (née Bamber) are delighted to announce the safe arrival of their beautiful baby girl Caya on December 6, 2010. First grandchild for Mary Livingstone and the late Duncan Livingstone, first grandchild for Liz Bamber and 3rd grandchild for the late Stewart Bamber. Special thanks to midwives Katherine and Jackie and all at Oban maternity unit.

**MEGAN**

Mara Lynsey was born at Oban Hospital on November 24, 2010. Kirsty and Brian and big sister Riona are delighted. Seanaid will now need to buy more white mice.

**DEATHS**

**BROMLEY** - Suddenly after a short illness, at Glenaray Ward, Mid Argyll Hospital, on December 13, 2010, Colin T. Bromley, aged 53 years of Dunad View, Bridgend, Kilmichael Glassary. Beloved husband of Steina and much loved stepdad and friend to Greig and Stephanie, and adored Papa of Ciaran and Justin. Dear brother law and uncle to all the family. A much respected work colleague, dear neighbour and good friend to many. Funeral service will be held at Lochgilphead Parish Church on Monday December 20, 2010, at 11.30am, thereafter to Achnabreac Cemetery. Flowers or donations, if desired to Glenaray Ward. All friends are respectfully invited to attend.

**CRAWFORD** - Peacefully, at home on December 7, 2010 in his 94th year, Ian Crawford, Fishnish, Isle of Mull. Husband of the late Mary, dear father of Cynthia and Christine, father in law, grandad and great grandad. Funeral service was held at Salen Parish Church Isle of Mull on Tuesday December 14, thereafter to Pennygawn Cemetery.

**HARRISON** - Peacefully at Eadar Glinn on December 11, 2010 Grace, aged 83, formerly of Camus Beag, Clachan Seil. Retired Matron of Elsie Ingles Maternity Hospital, beloved sister of Janet, Isobel and the late Mary and very dear friend of Colina, will be sadly missed.

**HIGGINS** - George Kerr formerly of Oban died peacefully at home in Dundee, Sunday December 12, 2010. Please contact Daniel Higgins on 01383 830812 concerning funeral arrangements.

**ORK-EWING** - Sam. At Lorn and Islands District General Hospital, Oban, after a short illness on December 3, 2010, much loved husband of Bett Orr-Ewing and father of Derrick and Maureen. Funeral service to be held at Pennyfuir graveside at 9.30am on December 17, 2010, thereafter purvey at Roxy's Coffee and Tea House, Argyll Square, Oban. All friends and carers are warmly invited to say goodbye to Sam, a perfect gentleman.

**PENROSE** - Peacefully on December 13, 2010, aged 92 years, Mary, loving mother of Sheila, grandmother of Eilidh and Shona and great grandmother of Ronia. A graveside service will take place at Pennyfuir Cemetery on Friday December 17 at 12.00 noon. All friends are respectfully invited to attend. Family flowers only, please.

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

**MACCOLL** - Kathie, Elspeth and Iain would like to thank family, neighbours and friends for cards, phone calls, sympathy and support following the sad loss of John (Jock). Thanks to the medical team on Ward B, Lorn and Islands Hospital for their care and attention throughout John's time in hospital. Many thanks to D & Munn for their support and guidance, to Rev D Cameron for the warm and caring services, to Craig Dunbar for his tribute and to the many who attended the memorial and committal services in extremely inclement weather. The sum of £650 was raised for Ward B.

**MACDONALD** - Alasdair, John, Mairi, Sandra and all the family wish to thank all relatives, neighbours

and friends for the loving support and kindness received following the sudden loss of our mum and granny, Meg (Millar), grateful thanks to ambulance staff, the wonderful nurses and doctors at the Belford Hospital, Tweeddale Medical Practice, and Joan and all mum's carers for their care for mum over the last few years, thank you to the Rev R Corbett and John Fraser for a beautiful service, to Neil Sinclair and Andrew for the music, to Ewen and John, J MacLellan & Co for their kindness and efficient funeral arrangements and to 'Tosh' and staff at Corpach Hotel, for the funeral tea. Many thanks to all who attended the service and interment at Kilmailie. The sum of £535.62 was collected at the Church for the Belford Hospital. XXXXX

**RILEY** - Peter and Alison Riley (Uijsken) would like to thank everyone who sent messages of sympathy on the death of their daughter, Venetia.

**MEMORIALS**

**CAMERON** - In loving memory of Alastair, a dear husband, father and grandfather who passed away on December 18, 1990. Also remembering those gone before and since.

Time may pass and fade away But silent thoughts and memories stay.

- From Helen and family, Strontian.

**CAMPBELL** - Iain, December 16, 2008.

I miss you still every day And my memories of you will always stay Happy, funny and sad ones too.

But I'll always smile Cos they're all of you Miss and love you always Muukka!

- Jenna

**DUFF** - 10th Anniversary. Remembering our son Stuart who died December 18, 2000, aged 26.

Gone from our home But not from our hearts Loved and remembered always.

- Mum and Dad xx

**HAY** - Treasured memories of Robert, a dearly loved son, brother, brother-in-law and uncle who died December 13, 1998.

Thinking of you today, tomorrow and always.

- All the family

**KENNEDY** - Precious memories of my beloved Chris, died December 16, 2009. Daonan Nam Smuanantean.

- Archie.

**ECCLESIASTICAL NOTICES**

**SCOTTISH EPISCOPAL CHURCH ANGLICAN COMMUNION**  
Sunday 19 December 2010 Advent 4  
St John's Cathedral, Oban

Holy Communion .....08.00  
Sung Eucharist .....10.15  
Sunday School Tableau Loop System  
Large Print Hymn Books All Welcome  
Norman MacCallum, Provost, (01631) 562323

**St Columba, Grulin, Mull**

Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols .....11.00  
**St Columba, Bishop's House, Iona**

Holy Eucharist .....10.00  
Monday 20 Dec 2010 St John's Cathedral, Oban Service of Nine Lessons and Carols .....19.30

**Advance Notice**

**Friday 24 Dec 2010 Christmas Eve**  
St John's Cathedral, Oban Children's Service "Let's Go to Bethlehem" .....15.30  
Midnight Eucharist .....23.15

**Saturday 25 Dec 2010 Christmas Day**  
St John's Cathedral, Oban Holy Communion .....09.30  
Sung Eucharist and Carols .....11.00

**St James, Ardbrecknish, Cladich**  
Service of Readings and Carols .....11.00

**St Columba, Grulin, Mull**  
Holy Eucharist .....11.00

**LORN CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP**

Sunday 19 December 2010 Oban High School Main Hall 10:30am All Welcome Telephone 07836 342 622 www.lorref.org.uk

**ASSOCIATED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, OBAN**

Campbell Street Church

Sunday 19 December 2010 11 a.m. and 6.30 p.m.  
Phone-In 'Worship Link' available

Rev. Archie McPhail MA, MTh (01631) 567076

All welcome

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**MACARTHUR** - Treasured memories of Duncan, who died December 13, 2004. A much loved husband, father and papa.

It does not take a special day To bring you to our minds As days without a thought of you Are very hard to find

- Betty and family in Islay and USA

**MACDONALD** - In loving memory of a dear wife, mum, Granny and Great-Granny, Peggy who died December 21, 2007.

Loved and remembered always.

- Donald, Archy and Family.

**MACINTYRE**

Remembering with love our devoted parents, Duncan, who died on December 19, 1981 and Betsy, on April 16, 1988.

Also dear ones gone before and after.

Those we love don't go away They walk beside us every day.

- Inserted by her loving daughter and son-in-law Ann and Cameron, Erskine.

**MACKAY** - Alex (Kaiser)

passed away on December 11, 2000.

10 years have passed but you are remembered with love every day. A special Son, Brother and Uncle. Joined in heaven by Ian (Sparks) on April 8, 2008. Till we all meet again.

- Love Mum, Mary, Aulay, Jamie and Scott xx

**MCKINNEY** - Marjorie.

In loving memory of a dear mum and granny, who passed away December 15, 2003.

As time goes by and life goes on

You're in our hearts you're never gone

Love Drew, Anne and Liam.

**McKINNEY** - In loving memory of our dear aunt Marjorie who died December 15, 2003.

Always in our hearts.

- Love James, Sandra and family

**MCKINNEY** - In loving memory of our dear sister Marjorie who died December 15, 2003.

Always in our hearts.

- Jessie and Pat.

**McPHEE** - In loving memory of my mother, Margaret Campbell, died December 21, 1970, father Donald McPhee died April 12, 1979.

Always in our thoughts.

- Katie and Ian, Bowmore, Islay

**YOUNG** - Cherished memories of Iain James, our beloved son, who died on December 27, 1997.

We love and miss you everyday.

- Mum, dad and all the family.

A constant wish that she was here For the hardest thing in life to bear

Is to need her so and she's not there.

- Inserted by her loving daughter and son-in-law Ann and Cameron, Erskine.

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- Katie and Ian, Bowmore, Islay

**YOUNG** - Cherished memories of Iain James, our beloved son, who died on December 27, 1997.

We love and miss you everyday.

- Mum, dad and all the family.

**WEDDINGS**

Lindsay Jane MacIver, only daughter of Elizabeth and the late Duncan MacIver of Tobermory and Daniel Zingg only son of Werner and Beni Zingg Switzerland were married on 6th August, 2010 at Tobermory Parish Church followed by a reception at Glengorm Castle. The ceremony was conducted by The Rev Angus William Duncan.



**MACKENZIE** - MEGAN - Kirsty MacKenzie, eldest daughter of Ken and Alison, Gallanach, Oban and Brian Megan, Bellshill, were married at St Conan's Kirk, Lochaline. The couple have made their home in Dunbeg.



**EMSLIE - SHOMACHUK**  
In October 2010 at Mount Norquay, Banff, Canada, Marc, son of Lynda and Alex Emslie, Lochgilphead, married Stacy, eldest daughter of Debbie and Danny S Shomachuk. Marc and Stacy reside in Auburn Bay, Calgary.

**GRADUATIONS**

Karen MacGillivray MacKenzie graduated from The University of the West of Scotland with a BA in Human Resource Management. Karen is the daughter of Meg MacGillivray and the late Gus MacKenzie, Acharee.

**A real treat for Oban pensioners**



# Squash club will get back on track when Lochaber Leisure Centre re-opens

LOCHABER Squash Club will make its long-awaited return to Lochaber Leisure Centre shortly following a major refurbishment of the popular venue.

The club has been effectively homeless over recent months during the work – but that didn't stop members travelling to the Atlantis Sports Complex in Oban to play games and practice.

If the absence of home courts weren't enough, weather woes also hit club schedules, with the recent Highland Masters at Inverness Lawn Tennis and Squash Club wiped out because of winter weather.

The Masters, seven tournaments held around Scotland between September and March, has four Lochaber members competing – Warren Cameron on the over 60s, Roslyn Stewart (over 55s) and Norma Gregory and Liz Merry in the over 50s.

Players topping the Masters ranking system go on to represent Scotland in the

**EXCLUSIVE REPORT**  
by STEPHEN NORRIS  
snorris@obantimes.co.uk

annual home internationals against England, Ireland and Wales.

Warren is seeded No.5 in the country and is on track for selection to the Scottish squad. Roslyn is seeded No.4 in the over 45s, seventh in the over 50s and second in the over 55s, Norma third in the over 45s and over 50s and Liz Merry eighth in the over 50s.

## Prevail

In the recent West Highland Masters only three female competitors entered – all of them from Fort William. In the only women's game played, Norma came back from two games down against Roslyn to prevail.

Liz then beat both Norma and Roslyn at Fort William, but Norma took her revenge at the South of Scotland Masters in Dumfries last month – despite blood being spilled.

Norma was cruising to

## SQUASH

a win in the deciding fifth game when Liz swung her racket back and split Norma's eyebrow open. Fortunately, Liz is a doctor and the bleeding was soon brought under control and play resumed. At match point, Liz was obscuring Norma's view of the front wall so Norma called a stroke and won the match. Meanwhile, Warren, who had a very hard draw against the top players, was runner up in the plate competition.

With winter biting hard, Norma told *The Oban Times* squash was the ideal indoor sport for fitness and enjoyment.

She said: 'Players of all standards are welcome at Lochaber Squash Club, which recommences when the Leisure Centre opens on December 20. Anyone interested should contact me on 01397 700533, 07771620463 or normagregory1@aol.com.'

## Tennis club holds doubles challenge

LOCHABER Tennis Club's latest challenge doubles match saw saw shiny players Duncan Rodgers and Graham Irving score a 6-3 victory over Joe Tangney and Jordan MacPhee on the Nevis Centre indoor court.

The match got off to flying start with a powerful shot by Jordan MacPhee down the centre line between the shiny men – who were left looking at the empty space

in wonderment. The next rally set the scene for the rest of the game – the ball came over the net from the JJs, Duncan scrambled to make the shot, the ball clipped the net and went over – much to the JJs' surprise.

The match levelled at 2-2 then 3-3 and with not much between the teams all was still to play for – until controversy intervened. Graham served and Jordan

declared the shot out. A hot debate ensued over who was right before the diplomatic Joe called for a replay of the point – which the shiny players won.

The confrontation proved the turning point and Graham and Duncan proceeded to take the next three games without reply. Anyone interested in getting involved with the club can contact Ellen Irving on 013397 700024.

Graham served and Jordan



Wade Cup winners: captain Mark Fraser and his team celebrate their success. 10.f51wade01

## Lochaber High win Wade Cup

AN OUTSTANDING display of striking ability from Duncan MacKinnon helped Lochaber High School win the Wade Cup, the Scottish Schools' Under 16 Championship, for the third year in a row.

The champions opened the defence of the trophy with a 3-0 win over a resilient Inverkeithing side, with goals from Connor MacRae, Mark Fraser and Duncan MacKinnon finally breaking the resistance of the team from the Central Belt. Meanwhile, Kingussie started with a 2-0 win over Charleston but were then held to a 1-1 draw by Dingwall Academy.

A 5-0 win for Lochaber over Charleston, thanks to a hat-trick from MacKinnon and a goal each for the Fraser brothers, enabled them to go top of the league but the next match against the home team was going to be the title decider.

## Dominant

Confidence was high in the Lochaber ranks as Jack Fraser was in dominant form at centre but Arran MacPhee and Connor MacCallum were providing vital support in the wide areas, with Martin Munro displaying excellent stick work and providing his forwards with plenty of possession. However, Kingussie matched them all the way and scored a late goal to take the lead but just as it seemed the cause was lost, Duncan MacKinnon appeared at the back post to volley

a cross into the Kingussie net and secure a vital draw.

This result left Lochaber needing a win over Dingwall to retain the cup and having conceded their only goal of the tournament, goal keeper, Callum MacDonald and his defence of Cameron Grant, Jack Dignan, Barry MacDonald and Ryan Murphy were determined to keep a clean sheet in the final match.

Lochaber enjoyed a lot of possession and attacked constantly but failed to find the breakthrough against a well organised Dingwall defence.

Playing their fourth match on the Dell was taking its toll but Connor MacCallum finally broke the deadlock with a fierce shot to ease the pressure before MacKinnon added a second to ensure that the cup was heading west.

Schools' Camanachd President, Graham Bell, praised all the teams for their sportsmanship and the quality of their play, before presenting the cup to Mark Fraser, the Lochaber captain.

Special mention needs to be made of Kingussie legend, Davie Anderson, who refereed all of the games over a four-hour period to ensure the smooth running of the tournament.

## SHINTY

LIVERCAOL remain top of the Ali Young Winter League after defeating All Trades 2-1 at the Nevis Centre on Sunday night.

A 3-1 victory over Caol kept Goon Squad just two points behind the leaders, and a hard fought 3-2 win against Achintore FC put Lochaber Leisure in third.

Meanwhile, Funky Five got their third win of the season, coming out on top 5-3 in a high-scoring match with Crazy Crofter and HW Energy were beaten 2-0 by Ballachulish.

Pogon are still rooted to the bottom of the table after suffering their ninth defeat in nine games, going down 3-0 to NGTW.

Fixtures for Sunday December 19: Achintore FC vs NGTW; All Trades vs Lochaber Leisure; Ballachulish vs Livercaol; Caol vs HW Energy; Crazy Crofter vs Goon Squad; Pogon vs Funky Five.

## New weights for Mallaig gym

## RUGBY

MALLAIG and District Swimming Pool is adding a set of free weights to its equipment in the gym.

The new equipment – part of a programme to constantly improve and develop the pool – is a valuable addition, says director Fiona Baker.

## Early start for West Highland Wheelers at Benderloch MTB race

THERE was a real rush for MTB race at Sutherland's Grove at Benderloch on Sunday.

Several Lochaber members seemed to have difficulty

calculating the travelling time south of Ballachulish Bridge, but they arrived in time on a cold and frosty December morning to find

that Nick Charlton and Lucy Haycock had set another exacting course.

Brutal hill climbs, ice rinks strategically placed on

bridges and near downhill-level of technical descents through the trees and off the dam all featured, with a marshall placed on the dam to make sure no one made a wrong turn – and to take photos of everyone coming adrift off the icy narrow descent.

The testing conditions produced several 'mechanicals' and lots of shredded tyres and punctures, as well as the usual spills and baking so everyone could have a hot drink and cake at the end of the race.

'At least one person I spoke to landed on their head because they forgot to let go

of the handle bars,' he said. 'Ed had a nasty laceration on his calf due to an ice skating incident trying to get past Davy, but the quote of the day has to come from John. When Hannah asked him why the gloves she had lent him were dirty, he replied: 'That was holding onto trees!'

'Thanks go to Roddy Wells and Erin for helping out with the timing and to Colleen and Andrew for filling flasks and baking so everyone could have a hot drink and cake at the end of the race.

'Thanks also for the support of the NACC members and

setting up and marshalling the course for us all. It was great to see such a good turnout on a cold winter's day.'

Times:  
55.03 Ben Miller (jnr); 55.55 Ben Thomson; 61.32 Alex Johnson; 61.41 Alasdair McLennan; 64.20 John Shirley; 64.39 Gregor Muir; 66.58 Nick Charlton; 68.02 Davy Gunn; 68.40 Andrew Foggo; 68.47 Lachlan Blair (2nd jnr); 69.28 Damien Foster (Foss); 69.41 Ed Daynes; 78.05 Nix Foster (1st Lady); 78.58 Hannah Barnes (2nd Lady); 81.47 Andy Rogers; 82.20 Fiona Thompson (3rd Lady); 86.54 Gordon Watson; 88.45 Marie Meldrum; 91.40 Ruari Wells; 41.21 Colleen Foggo; 47.57 Gavin Linfield; 49.52 Doug Little; 53.03 Kim Cameron; DNS Nigel Miller; DNF/timing Fiona Gunn.



West Highland Wheelers get underway at Benderloch.

# Spot the SHINTY BALL Competition

**WIN £1450**

LAST WEEK'S SHINTY BALL WAS HERE...



This week's nearest the ball winners, who each receive £25 are:  
L MacLellan, Glenkingie Street, Caol and T Brown, Breadalbane Street, Oban

## All you have to do

We have removed the shinty ball from the photograph opposite. Now look carefully at the position of the players and use your skill and judgement to place a cross at the exact point where you think the centre of the ball was. You may have a maximum of 20 attempts on this coupon at a cost of £1.

If you wish to have more attempts, you must enter on separate coupons.

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. Prizes will be shared between those submitting correct entries. 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.

## 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 reach "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, mislaid or lost, and proof of posting cannot be accepted as proof of delivery.

The Company's decision is final on all matters relating to the 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 The Oban Times Limited, their immediate relatives and any person otherwise connected with the competition are ineligible to enter.



I enclose £1 (note) for 20 crosses (tick box)  The maximum number of attempts on this coupon is 20, but you may enter on separate coupons as many times as you wish. No photocopies allowed. You agree to abide by the rules.

How to enter: Mark your crosses using a ballpoint pen. Twenty crosses may be put on this coupon for £1.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Tel No. \_\_\_\_\_

Send to 'Spot the Shinty Ball' Competition, The Oban Times, P.O. Box 1, Oban PA34 4HB

## Young Gavin bowls them over

### TEN PIN BOWLING

THE HIGHEST scratch and handicap game in week 5 of the Lochaber Building Supplies 10 pin bowling league came from the league's youngest bowler, Gavin MacDonald, with a 165 scratch, 249 handicap effort bowling for the Likely Lads team.

Gavin saw off a close challenge from Alleycats' Pam Weller (163) and John Weller (161). Top scratch series went to John Weller with 295.

Gavin helped his team beat the Council 5-0 on handicap, but Alleycats remain top of both the scratch and handicap divisions, now the only team with maximum points in both, after beating Bowjax 5-0 both scratch and handicap.

They are closely followed in both divisions by Underdogs, who are only one point behind after beating Fairway Fillies by maximum points.

## Livercoal remain top dogs

### FOOTBALL

LIVERCAOL remain top of the Ali Young Winter League after defeating All Trades 2-1 at the Nevis Centre on Sunday night.

A 3-1 victory over Caol kept Goon Squad just two points behind the leaders, and a hard fought 3-2 win against Achintore FC put Lochaber Leisure in third.

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# Ice melts in time for fiery encounter in Oban

'Supersub' MacEwan changes the fortunes of misfiring backline

Scottish Hydro Electric West Division One

**Oban Lorne 24**

**Clydebank 5**

THE ICE may have thawed in time for Glencruitten to be declared playable on Saturday but the frosty on-field relationship between these teams was evident in a fiery encounter.

Always a competitive fixture, Oban Lorne and Clydebank had met once already this season, with the men in green losing out to a last-minute try.

However, a solid second-half display from Oban saw them record a fourth consecutive win and rise to third place in the league.

Oban handed young second row Calum MacLauchlan his first start in the green of Oban Lorne and reinstated Liam Burns to the front row.

The first half proved to be a very scrappy affair, with some poor discipline at the scrum from both sides meaning the game was never allowed to get going.

Oban did eventually wake up and went ahead with a well worked try from Struan Smith who scored out wide as a result of some

good rucking from the Oban forwards. However the visitors hit back almost immediately with a try of their own, helped by some costly mistakes from Oban in their own half.

Oban continued to impress in the opening minutes of the second half, creating some good chances with impressive running from man-of-the-match Liam Burns in particular.

However, bad discipline at the breakdown proved to be Oban's downfall as Clydebank were awarded numerous penalties to clear their lines.

The first score of the second half came from a superb individual effort from player/coach Corrie Louw. Louw found himself with the ball in open play 10 yards from the line and continued to trundle forwards holding off at least four of the opposition to just touch the ball over the line. Stand-off Angus MacCallum scored the conversion and gave Oban a 12-5 lead.

Confidence was now growing in the Oban team but they spurned several more chances over the next 10 minutes. With a quarter of

the game to go Oban made a tactical switch with Robert Wright moving to stand-off allowing MacCallum to move into scrum half.

Wright was replaced by 'supersub' Gary McEwan who changed the fortunes of the misfiring Oban backline, helping them to score two further tries to secure the game and bonus point.

The first try came from Chris MacDonald and the second from McEwan himself.

After this result Oban Lorne will travel to play Loch Lomond this Saturday, weather permitting, full of confidence.

Oban Lorne: M. Downie, R. MacQueen, L. Burns, C. MacLauchlan, C. Nicholson, A. MacDougall, S. Smith ©, C. Louw, F. Matheson, A. MacCallum, A. Beaton, C. Smith, C. MacDonald, A. Wright, R. Wright.

Subs: A. Park, J. Sayer, G. McEwan

Tries: Struan Smith, Corrie Louw, Chris MacDonald, G. McEwan

Conversions - A. MacCallum (2).

## RUGBY



Oban's front row of Liam Burns, Robin MacQueen and Malcolm Downie get ready for battle with the Clydebank forwards. 08\_t51rug01

## Lorn Carpet Bowling League

### BOWLS

	P	pts
Kilmore	3	20
Benderloch	4	20
Cairnbaan	4	18
Easdale	3	18
North Connell	4	10
Connell	3	8
Taynuilt	3	2

Through to the second round of the Knockout Cup are Benderloch, Kilmore, Easdale and North Connell. The draw is this Saturday at North Connell.

The Lorn Championship was played at Cairnbaan last Saturday. Winners: Singles - Colin Campbell, Easdale, beat Angie MacFadyen, Kilmore.

Doubles - Adrian MacKay and Iain MacDougall, Cairnbaan, beat Sandy Carr and Marion Fisher, Connell.

The team of 'Three Men in a Boat' fame raced Ross Ryan's classic eight-metre

'The Truant' from Craobh to Oban winning second place in Class 7.

The trio thoroughly enjoyed the preceding

## 'Three Men' competing in West Highland Week to be screened this month

THE TV screening of 'Three Men Go to Scotland' at Craobh Marina which featured filming of the Mid Argyll Pipe Band playing at the Lord of the Isles pub and restaurant.

The 'Three Men' take on a whistle stop tour of the Highland and Islands reaching Skye and Harris inspired by the trip undertaken by Dr Johnson and Samuel Boswell in the late 1700s.

The latest series of two one-hour programmes features the adventures of the three sailing 'heroes' with their own particular brand of humour and the calamities

that befall them. As well as competing at West Highland Yachting Week as a unique sailing event, the three intrepid mariners also cruise aboard the puffer Vic 32 from Crinan.

This will be the fifth series of this popular BBC programme and will include other activities in the Oban area including Dara competing at the Kilmore and Kilbride Highland Games.

Both programmes will be available on iPlayer and there is a write up in the Christmas Radio Times on the programme.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
<b>A' League</b>							
<b>St Columba</b>	12	5	6	1	22	14	28
<b>Park</b>	12	4	4	4	19	19	23
<b>Achadh Na Creige</b>	12	2	6	4	12	15	22
<b>Rockfield</b>	12	3	4	5	14	19	12
<b>B' League</b>							
<b>St Columba</b>	8	6	0	2	12	6	20
<b>Taynuilt</b>	8	4	0	4	11	6	16
<b>Lochneil</b>	8	2	0	6	5	16	12
<b>C' League</b>							
<b>Ben Lora</b>	12	9	3	0	15	6	33
<b>Rockfield Rovers</b>	12	8	2	2	19	4	30
<b>Park Sparkies</b>	12	6	3	3	17	7	27
<b>St Columba</b>	12	6	3	3	15	10	27
<b>Taynuilt</b>	12	2	3	7	5	10	19
<b>Rockfield Rockets</b>	12	2	1	9	3	18	17
<b>Salen</b>	12	1	1	10	5	22	15

## Oban Saints youth fixtures and results

### FOOTBALL

ALL league and cup games involving Oban Saints youth teams were called off last weekend due to the weather.

However, the Under 15s took on the Under 14s in a friendly match last Sunday on the community pitch with the older boys winning 5-1 in a great game of football.

The game was evenly balanced at 2-1 until the last fifteen minutes when the strength of the older boys began to tell.

Netting for the Under 15s were Rory Bruce (2), Aidan Campbell, Joseph Darrah and Rhuiradh Cain. The best goal of the game was scored by the Under 14s Zak Straub.

This weekend's fixtures, weather permitting - Under 13s no game; Under 14s v Seafar Villa; East Kilbride v Under 15s; Under 16s no game.

### Regional trial called off

### FOOTBALL

THE second trial for the Argyll and Bute Regional Under 13 squad due to take place in Lochgilphead last Saturday was called off due to the weather.

Argyll and Bute football development officer Martin Rae will be organising a new date early in the New Year.

### Islay Golf Club

### GOLF

DECEMBER Medal: 1 Graeme Hamilton, 86 less 17 net 69; 2 Brian O'Neill, 83 less 13 net 70; 3 Donald Logan, 90 less 19 net 71. Ciss 70

### Over-35s Indoor League

### FOOTBALL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Taynuilt	4	3	1	0	10		
Trialists	3	3	0	0	9		
Hydro	4	3	0	1	9		
Teachers	4	1	1	2	4		
Emergency	4	1	1	2	4		
Seil	2	1	0	1	3		
Spartak	3	1	0	2	3		
West Coast Massive	2	0	1	1	1		
Owen Sails	2	0	0	2	0		
Clan Trees	2	0	0	2	0		

Scores: Spartak 6, Trialists 9; Hydro 5, Seil 2; Owen Sails 3, Spartak 6; Emergency 3, Taynuilt 3; Hydro 7, Teachers 2.

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## the weather

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Thursday

Heavy snow showers.

Winds moderate, north, north westerly.

Temperatures 0°C to 0°C

Friday

Heavy snow showers.

Winds moderate, north, north westerly.

Temperatures 1°C to -3°C.

Weekend Outlook

Sunny intervals.

Winds light, east south easterly.

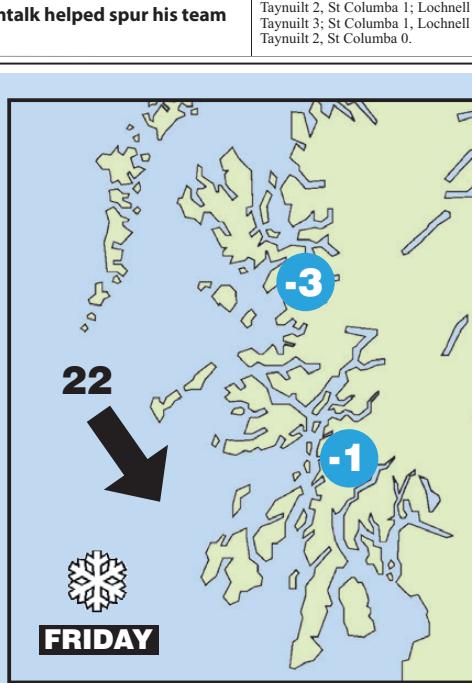
Temperatures 0°C to -5°C.

Ferry Crossings/Sea States

Oban to Barra/South Uist - Moderate

Oban to Coll/Tiree - As above

Kennacraig to Islay - As above



## Tides

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Tide tables for Oban during the week from

Thursday, December 16, 2010

are listed below with differences

for major ports listed beneath.

All times are GMT (add one hour BST)

Date	am	pm



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