

# The Oban Times

## & WEST HIGHLAND TIMES

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### your 2014 calendar

### Starting this week Review of the Year 2013



### Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year

AS THE year draws to a close *The Oban Times* would like to wish all readers a very merry Christmas and happy New Year with best wishes for 2014.

The *Oban Times* will hit the shelves a day later than usual over the next two weeks, so look out for your copy on Friday December 27 and Friday January 3.

We will return to Thursday as normal on January 9.

### Ciara Caskie Allan Appeal wound up

AN APPEAL that raised more than £82,000 for an Islay girl to get treatment for a brain tumour in the US has been wound up.

The Ciara Caskie Allan Appeal was set up in October 2012 to help support the Allan family while Ciara went through Proton Therapy at a specialist clinic in Oklahoma.

Ciara, aged 12, was offered the chance of the revolutionary treatment last year and islanders rallied behind the Allans with a number of fundraising activities.

Describing the youngster's bravery as 'inspirational', appeal co-ordinators said it was time to bring the appeal to a close after collecting £82,428.40 from donations worldwide.

The remaining funds of £56,428.40 will be turned over to Ciara to help provide additional care and support in the future and to support other charitable causes.

### Daytime A82 road closures for resurfacing

WORK to upgrade the A82 at Pulpit Rock meant two daytime closures this week, with the second taking place today (Thursday).

Recent inspections identified a 300m section that requires urgent resurfacing, which needs to be carried out prior to the next set of programmed closures in the New Year.

BEAR Scotland said that while night-time closures were considered, this was not possible on health and safety grounds.

The road will be closed south of Ardlui between 8am-4pm each day, but the road will remain open from Crianlarich and Tarbet for local access.



### All smiles as youngsters meet Santa in Oban

Santa's here! These two brother and sister duos couldn't wait to tell Father Christmas what they wanted under the tree after he took up Oban Lions Club's invitation to set up a grotto in the Royal Hotel on Saturday. Connor Blue, 4, was first on Santa's lap at the grotto, while sister Lucy, 6, cuddles one of St Nicholas' polar bears while waiting in queue. Carmel, 6, and five-year-old Marcus McHattie, front, couldn't hide their excitement as they patiently waited to hand over their lists. As with all Santa's visitors, they each received an early gift in return for good behaviour. Happily, for those that missed out, Santa will return to the Royal Hotel this Saturday between 11am-3pm. 16, 151santat

## Counting the cost of Oban parking free-for-all

PARKING enforcement in Oban 'must happen next year' after the cash-strapped local authority revealed it was £260,000 behind on its target for parking fees.

The quarter-million pound discrepancy of parking fees collected in the town was highlighted as a major concern during last week's meeting of the Oban, Lorn and Isles Area Committee, with councillors Roddy McCuish and Fred Hall both saying the lack of income gave the council a significant headache.

The reduction of income comes in a year when Police Scotland said it would no longer be enforcing parking in town centres and, while there was a pilot scheme where officers did enforce the restrictions, it has come to an end. Parking enforcement is now carried out among other policing duties, but on a reduced level.

At last week's meeting, elected members heard council officers

were looking at reducing parking income targets in light of the poor receipts so far, accepting that the current objective was 'not achievable' and would be revised down. A move to decriminalise parking enforcement, removing it from the responsibility of the police, should be complete next year, something Jim Smith, head of roads, said should result in a 'significant increase in enforcement'.

But Councillor McCuish said the figures were a concern now. Speaking at the meeting, he said: 'For parking income, I see we had a target of £371,416 - but what we took in was £110,704. That's a huge discrepancy. You say we'll be looking at the targets again and that fills me with some concern that we'll be looking to reduce those targets just so our performance figures get a green light.'

After the meeting, he added: 'The potential income from

parking in Oban is fantastic. The arrangement we set up with the police was very good because it was good value for money - plus it helped the public get used to parking enforcement.'

'It's a priority for me to get parking enforcement decriminalised as quickly as possible. It must happen next year. The less money that comes in the less we can spend.'

Currently, funds collected from parking charges are spread around the whole of Argyll and Bute, but Councillor McCuish said it should go back to the community it is gathered in.

'In my opinion, I think every area should keep what it makes.' Fred Hall also called for a fairer share of the pot once enforcement was decriminalised, saying: 'In the past, Oban was effectively penalised for being good at generating parking income. It should be distributed more fairly.'

### Maureen wins £500 hamper

BENDERLOCH'S Maureen Maitland received the perfect festive boost after winning a £500 Christmas hamper from Tesco by winning our seasonal competition.

Maureen correctly identified Rudolph as the reindeer with the red nose after collecting five tokens from previous weeks' *Oban Times*. She was selected at random from hundreds of entries, picking up goodies, including Tesco's Hudl tablet, champagne, chocolates, treats and a special turkey from the store's Finest range.

She said: 'I'm absolutely over the moon.'



Maureen Maitland can't hide her joy after collecting her £500 hamper of prizes from Tesco on Saturday. Handing over the bounty she won in *The Oban Times* and Tesco competition are store manager Neil Armour and personnel manager Lisa Bull. 16, 151compwinner1

### Isle of Coll fish farm plans shelved

PLANS to establish an open sea fish farm just off the isle of Coll have been shelved after Marine Harvest said conditions made it impossible - at the moment.

The company carried out an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) on the site to determine how plausible it would be to operate from there, with concerns raised about the sea current speeds.

The company has now confirmed the water speeds are too high for existing fish farm technology and that it will be concentrating instead on developing other farms, at Muck and Colonsay.

A spokesman for Marine

Harvest said: 'We're not developing the site for the time being but we may revisit it in the future.'

During the consultation period, islanders raised questions about possible pollution from the farm and the potential implications for the extensive numbers of basking sharks that visit the area every year.

The spokesman said:

'Everything relating to the environment around Coll is a consideration of course. That's why the production of an EIA was extremely important.'

'The environment and the technology has to be compatible and for those reasons we're

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## Mixed reaction as renewables firm pulls plug on £5.4billion wind farm off Tiree

PLANS for a controversial £5.4billion wind farm off the coast of Tiree were indefinitely postponed last week - but councillors still want the divisive scheme to go ahead.

ScottishPower Renewables (SPR), which is owned by Spanish company Iberdrola, announced last Friday that sea-bed conditions and environmental concerns - including large populations of basking sharks and the rare Great Northern Diver seabird - meant the 300-turbine project was not currently feasible.

While the decision prompted celebration from campaign group No Tiree Array (NTA), Oban councillors Roddy McCuish and Duncan MacIntyre both said they were disappointed, with the latter saying the project 'must' go ahead in future.

Confirming the company's decision not to take up the lease on the site, SPR's head of offshore

wind, Jonathan Cole, said: 'We believe it is possible to develop the Argyll Array site, it has some of the best wind conditions of any offshore zone in the UK.'

'However, it is our view the Argyll Array project is not financially viable in the short term.'

He added that the 'rate of progress in development of foundation and installation technology has been slower than anticipated' - estimating it could take 10-15 years before the required technology was available.

Opposing NTA's chairman Robert Trythall, who has worked tirelessly on opposing the project since it was announced, said: 'Had the Tiree Array been developed, it would have been an environmental disaster for Tiree and the west coast of Scotland.'

RSPB Scotland also welcomed the decision, saying it supported renewable energy, but it had

to be in 'the right place'. Oban councillor Duncan MacIntyre said the decision raised fresh questions over the Scottish Government's green energy plans, but said the development should progress.

'It is certainly a disappointment,' he said. 'From an economic perspective, it was part of the bigger picture not just for Oban but for the whole west coast.'

'It still has to happen though, because it's part of the renewables plan. We have to find a way to bring it back on track.'

Oban and Isles councillor Roddy McCuish agreed the decision was a blow.

He said: 'It is a huge blow, there's no doubt about it.'

'It's hard to see how we can mitigate against it, because there was nothing really in place for it.'

'I can only hope the Islay Array is brought forward apace.'

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**Oban office opens doors to Lord's Larder**

THE OBAN branch of a building society has joined forces with a local food bank to collect for people in the town who need it most.

Yorkshire Building Society on George Street has been named as a donation point for non-perishable items, which will be collected and then distributed to families and individuals struggling to make ends meet.

Sally Jackson, branch manager, said: 'We're really pleased to have been named as an official food donation point and are committed to collecting as much food as we can with the help of our generous customers and members of the public.'

'I really do hope people in the town will find the time to pop in and donate what they can to help people in our local area.'

To help the Lord's Larder, which is being run by places of faith in the local area, the Yorkshire has opened its doors to donations of items such as tins, pasta, biscuits, cereals, dried foods and toiletries.

**Kyle of Lochalsh harbour cash boost**

THE HIGHLAND Council-owned harbour at Kyle of Lochalsh has received £53,000 in the latest package of awards from the European Fisheries Fund (EFF).

Ten harbours across Scotland were awarded funding towards the costs to repair harbours, sea walls, and quaysides.

Scottish Fisheries Secretary Richard Lochhead announced the EFF grants during a fisheries debate in parliament last week.

**Mull musician to headline Celtic Connections**

A MULL musician is to headline at Celtic Connections 2014 in The Arches, Glasgow.

Colin MacIntyre, as part of Mull Historical Society, will perform his much acclaimed debut MHS album 'Loss' in its entirety.

He will also be releasing his first 'best of' album, 'The Supermarket Never Sleeps', comprised of tunes from his six albums to date.

It will come out in early 2014 and be fronted by the new single 'Keep Falling', a soaring Mull track which marks a progression.

MacIntyre said: 'I can recognise now that the past two years has been one of the biggest creative surges for me. It reminds me of the period leading up to my first album, 'Loss', when I first found an authentic sound and voice.'

'This should be a celebratory night following our headline show at Celtic Connections 2012. That was a special night.'

# Bad luck strikes Barra twice as turbine stalls

A £2.45 MILLION project to establish the first, 100 per cent community-owned wind turbine on Barra is all but complete - but for Murphy's Law.

The Barra and Watersay Community company watched the finishing touches put to the construction of the 900Kw turbine at Eoligarry, one of the last steps in completing a project first started in 2005.

Project lead Euan Scott had hoped to get the turbine up and running this month to take advantage of the winter winds and start generating funds for community projects, but bad luck struck the commissioning team, delaying the turbine's first turn until early next year.

The race is now on to get the turbine running by the end of March, to ensure it can still take

advantage of existing Feed in Tariff (FIT) rates.

Euan said: 'We've tried twice to get a commissioning team over. The first time, one of the guys pulled a back muscle fitting a doorknob in his kitchen, and the second time was the Wednesday before the storm so the ferry crossing was cancelled. It's very bad luck.'

'They've had to go back to Germany but it's really frustrating because everything is done but the commissioning. I'm keeping my fingers crossed it is commissioned by the end of January.'

'It's very frustrating. I feel like I'm banging my head against a wall here as there's been some ideal weather for it.'

'Hopefully Murphy's Law will have passed by the New Year.'

Erecting the 65m-high turbine was a unique challenge, given not only its size, but the logistics of getting the components on the island.

The base, blades and gears were moved across on a barge and taken onto the island via a specially created slipway, as was the heavy-duty crane required to build it.

Thankfully, that part of the operation went precisely according to plan - and that plan is set to be used as an exemplar for other islands looking to build a similar turbine.

There are more firsts - it is the first turbine built on government-owned land and could be described as Scotland's first 'wind croft', as the land does have crofting rights.

Once finally up and running,

the turbine will generate cash for community projects, echoing Tirez's highly successful Windfall Fund. Early estimates suggest £50,000-£100,000 per annum could be generated, although Euan thinks that sum is a conservative estimate.

He added: 'There's always a bedding in period and initial short-term debt to service but after that it will be generating for the community.'

'We're thinking of something similar to the Windfall Fund. We'd like a community fund that everyone can apply to, for example £50,000 per year, and an investment fund so we can bring forward bigger projects.'

'With funding, it's all about how you match it so it could give us leverage to unlock much larger funding pots.'



Barra's new wind turbine could generate an annual six-figure sum to develop community projects - but a delay has meant it won't be operational until next year.



Left to right, Rotarians Paula Dale and Terence Lee hand over the £1,000 cheque to Elizabeth Gow. Pupils Callum Nash, Kevin Cameron, Natalie Laing, Rebecca MacDougall, Molly Cameron and Liam MacPherson join Rotarians Donald Young and John Rosie for the presentation.

## Rotary Club's generous donation boosts high school parcel project

PUPILS of Lochaber High School received a generous donation last week towards their Christmas community project.

Children and staff of the school are busy delivering Christmas food parcels for senior citizens in the area and The Rotary Club of Lochaber handed over a cheque to help fund the scheme.

The packages contain Christmas food gifts such as mincecemeat pies, shortbread and mint thins and will be delivered until tomorrow (Friday).

Around two thirds of the project's funding was provided by the Rotary Club which donated

£1,000. Another £600 was raised by the pupils through a dress down day at the school. Acting deputy head of Lochaber High School Elizabeth Gow said: 'I would like to thank the Rotary club for its continued support with this project.'

The cheque was not all the club handed over as sixth-year pupil David Ashburner, 18, was given the Rotary Endeavour award for 2013.

John Rosie, president of The Rotary Club of Lochaber, presented David with the certificate, which was awarded for 'fortitude in dealing with difficulties following a serious operation on his back.'

## Mull fish farm sea lice problem revealed

A SEA lice problem has been revealed in fish farms on the west coast of Mull through a Freedom of Information (FOI) request.

Sites belonging to the Scottish Salmon Company (SSC) are experiencing a problem with the parasites - which can kill juvenile wild salmon.

An email sent from a staff member at the Scottish Association for Marine Science (SAMS) to Marine Scotland details a conversation between staff at SAMS and SSC about the west Mull sites.

The email states: 'Apparently they are having a lice problem at certain sites, but not at others, and they think the divide is between sites in different neighbouring lochs.'

'The key factor is a difference in temperature, they think (though they don't know what the salinities is).

'Interesting, though I guess it's too late to put in this one now. We will definitely be investigating further as we already have a decent hydro model of the area.'

The email was revealed to The Oban Times by Don Staniford, director of Protect Wild Scotland, who said: 'Sea lice infestations are exploding up and down the west coast of Scotland as chemical resistance renders the toxic treatments ineffective.'

'There are no magic bullets left to solve the sea lice problem - the salmon farmers are now shooting blanks and are shooting themselves in the foot

by expanding even further.' A spokeswoman for SSC added: 'Sadly it is becoming common that a small, irresponsible minority of single issue activists have sought to distort the on-going conduct of open and transparent discussions that we use to share knowledge and best practice.'

'Sea lice is a natural parasite and a challenge to aquaculture globally.'

'In Scotland, the salmon farming industry, including SSC, works closely and continuously with SAMS and Marine Scotland to share knowledge and best practice, while levels of sea lice are constantly monitored and reported to Marine Scotland on a quarterly basis.'

Mull has been discussed as a research centre as there are four sites in adjacent lochs that can be used for the academic study of sea lice in variable water conditions, as has been conducted elsewhere.

Marine Scotland stated in the FOI response: 'Fish farmers are required to maintain records of sea lice counts in association with both 'A Code of Good Practice for Scottish Finfish Aquaculture' (the industry CoGP) and The Fish Farming Businesses (Record Keeping) (Scotland) Order 2008.'

'Whilst Marine Scotland FHI inspect these records during routine and enhanced inspections under the Aquaculture and Fisheries (Scotland) Act 2007, sea lice count information and data is not routinely collected.'

## Mull Lines

STREET names in Tobermory are to change following an enquiry to Argyll and Bute Council by a single resident.

The query about a street in the town had a knock on effect on other properties and meant a consultation was carried out on all addresses in the Western Road and Strongarbh area of Tobermory on the Isle of Mull. Initial investigation indicated that there were different interpretations of the use of the street name Western Road in this area and the area



Dales Marine Services general manager and director Michael Milne beside the Isle of Mull ferry in the firm's dry dock at Aberdeen harbour.

challenge and a tight deadline, so they're enjoying it.

'We realise how vitally important this ferry is for the people of Mull so we're incredibly proud to have been given the opportunity for her annual refit.'

'She'll be in the harbour until just before Christmas and then, weather permitting, she'll be sailed back to the west coast to be put back into service - we hope we'll do the people of Mull proud for the annual refit.'

As part of the work the passenger areas of the vessel will be refurbished along with toilets and cabins. There was also engine work, electrical repairs and steelwork carried out during the refit period.

The 4,719 tonne, 90m long ferry was launched from Ferguson Shipbuilders on the River Clyde in 1988 and has a service speed of 15 knots.



A WORLD-renowned wildlife cameraman who hails from the Isle of Mull has won a Glenfiddich Spirit of Scotland Award for the Environment.

Gordon Buchanan, whose recent work includes BBC documentary series The Polar Bear Family and Me, received the award following a public vote.

The awards, now in their 16th year, recognises individuals who lead the way in various aspects of Scottish culture. Gordon is pictured receiving his accolade from gardening guru Jim McColl at a glittering ceremony held at Prestonfield House in Edinburgh on November 28.

Elizabeth Lafferty, from Glenfiddich, said: 'Gordon is a most worthy addition to our growing Spirit of Scotland Awards roll of honour. This year's ceremony was a wonderful event and real celebration of Scottish spirit and talent.'

## Countdown to school senior Jingles

CHRISTMAS spirit will be in the air tonight (Thursday) as senior pupils from Oban High School attend their winter dance. The annual Jingles is being held

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# Town centre speed cut plan sparks early public protest

PUBLIC opposition has already been voiced to proposed 20mph speed limits on trunk roads running through the town of Oban.

The move would affect Argyll Square, George Street, Bealach-an-Righ and the Esplanade, to the Corran Halls.

Oban is one of five towns selected for a pilot programme by Transport Scotland in a bid to improve safety in the town.

Transport Scotland says there were 13 accidents between 2008 and 2012 with eight of these involving vulnerable road users – pedestrians, children, cyclists, motorcyclists and horse riders. Two were serious accidents.

Transport minister Keith Brown said:

‘It is essential that speeds are appropriate to conditions and these pilot zones will help us establish the benefits of lowering speeds in towns and villages where it is reasonable to do so.’

‘The five trials being proposed will seek to improve road safety generally, but we expect them to bring specific benefits for vulnerable road users, such as older people and cyclists.’

He added: ‘The proposed pilot areas should not require significant engineering or police enforcement to support their operation and we hope to begin the wider consultation processes early next year.’

‘If these are completed successfully,

the 20mph zones will be in place by the spring or early summer.’

Alistair Davidson, Oban’s acting chief inspector, said: ‘Our focus this year has been in an effort to reduce the number of fatalities on the trunk roads in Argyll.’

‘We have been addressing high speed drivers on the main A85 road but that is not to say that driver behaviour in the town is not a concern.’

Chief Inspector Davidson also said the area of the town causing him most concern was around the high school – a site not addressed by the proposals.

Many readers who commented on *The Oban Times* Facebook page would rather

see potholes fixed and roads upgraded instead of a speed reduction, while others simply couldn’t see the benefit.

Yvonne Marjot said: ‘It shouldn’t make any difference – I can’t remember the last time I exceeded 20mph through the middle of Oban.’

Margaret McLellan added: ‘They should concentrate on the likes of Taynuilt where road markings and signs are ignored!’

But Michael Russell MSP for Argyll and Bute welcomed the plans, saying: ‘The 20mph speed limit trial in Oban will reassure local communities that every effort is being taken to improve road safety for our vulnerable road

users.’ A council spokesman added: ‘While Argyll and Bute Council has not been consulted directly at this early stage we continue to work closely with our partners in Transport Scotland to deliver our ambitious projects in the Oban area.’

‘A key aim of the CHORD project is to make Oban a better place to live, work and visit. As such, Argyll and Bute Council welcomes these proposals to improve safety in the Oban area.’

A consultation process, including discussions with Argyll and Bute Council and community groups, will now be held to develop more specific proposals for the town.

## Nine jobs axed at Glensanda

NINE jobs have gone at Glensanda Quarry with site owner Aggregate Industries being forced into one compulsory redundancy.

The company had told its 128 employees that it would accept voluntary redundancies from five departments at the Morvern site but only received eight.

The job cuts were to include at least one post from lab technicians, transport workshop, plant fitters, coxswains and secondary operators.

Aggregate Industries agreed the site restructuring with the GMB Union and insists no further redundancies will be required.

The company had denied in late 2012 that redundancies were being considered when the site ceased production for four weeks.

## High Court allows Oban man to walk free

AN OBAN man has escaped a jail sentence at the High Court in Edinburgh after breaching his probation by stealing from Tesco in Oban.

Brendan McGuckin, 30, of 49a Combie Street, Oban, was on probation for carrying out an armed robbery at Connel Post Office in October 2010.

But this was violated when he stole an iPod docking station worth £39.50 from the Oban store. He previously pled guilty to the offence at Oban Sheriff Court.

At the High Court, Lord Burns allowed him to walk free but warned him it was his ‘last chance’ and if he committed another criminal offence of any type between now and the end of his probation in 2015 he would send him to jail.

Sentence for the theft of the docking station will take place at Oban Sheriff Court on January 7.



The Oban High School staff choir. Photograph by Kevin McGlynn.

## High school staff choir hit the right notes in annual Christmas Cracker



Soloist Kyle MacKechnie. Photograph by Kevin McGlynn.

TEACHERS from Oban High School made sure their talented pupils did not upstage them at the annual Christmas concert when they performed in a staff choir.

The Christmas Cracker on Monday showcased the variety and depth of musical talent at the school, with traditional tunes to musical theatre performances and everything in-between.

While the staff choir raised a

smile among the sell-out crowd in the school games hall, musical theatre student Kyle MacKechnie left them spellbound with a rendition of Anthem from the musical Chess.

The school choir, the Traditional School of Music, wind band, musical theatre group, pipe band and soloists made up a high quality programme, put together by music teacher Morven McKeerrell. Miss McKe-

errell said: ‘Everyone was really impressed with the variety of the programme and the depth of quality demonstrated by our young musicians and singers.’

Oban High School is the first in the country to offer a National Progression Award in musical theatre and its School of Traditional Music is already producing accomplished musicians.

The following day the school offered a similar programme to

the town’s senior citizens at the annual Pensioners’ Treat.

Among the highlights was a vocal performance by Ali MacVicar, who was accompanied by her grandfather Colin Campbell, a well-known accordion player who was a guest at the afternoon event.

On Wednesday, the school choir was due to busk in George Street to raise money for Yorkhill Children’s Hospital.



TSL’s Andy Knight with Michael Russell and David Jardine at the opening of the new pier on Monday.

## New timber pier opens for business

A NEW £3 million timber pier on the Isle of Mull has officially opened for business.

Michael Russell, MSP for Argyll and Bute, declared the facility open at the start of this week and witnessed some of the first cargo being transported off the island.

The pier, based at Fishnish, is being operated by TSL Contractors on behalf of Forestry Commission Scotland (FCS).

It will reduce transport costs off the island and save around 800,000 lorry miles each year

on Scotland’s roads as more timber gets moved by boats.

Mr Russell said: ‘FCS’s new timber pier could act as a catalyst for stimulating business for the island’s woodland managers.’

‘Before the pier was built, the island was lacking a facility which could handle bulky cargo in great quantities. Up to 3,000 tonnes can be shifted through the pier at any one time and this will make a big difference.’

David Jardine, FCS’s district manager, added: ‘Most of the forests on Mull were planted

between the 1950s and 1980s and are reaching a stage right for harvesting. The current harvest is around 50,000 tonnes per annum and is expected to double to around 100,000 tonnes over the next 10 to 20 years. There is plenty of scope to grow the market from Mull and we are very happy for the commission’s pier to play a role in this.’

The pier will also be used by other timber suppliers on Mull, including the community-owned North West Mull Community Woodland

(NWMWCW). Colin Morrison, chairman of NWMWCW, said: ‘The new pier at Fishnish is a welcome development and demonstrates the Scottish Government’s confidence in and commitment to the forestry sector on Mull.’

‘While NWMWCW has already been keeping road miles to a minimum, shipping timber by sea across a temporary barge, the reduced costs associated with the new pier at Fishnish will allow us and others to move timber more efficiently.’

## Man reported on heroin charges

A MAN has been reported to the procurator fiscal for allegedly being concerned in the supply of drugs after being stopped by police officers in Oban.

The plain-clothed officers stopped and searched the 24-year-old at around 3.50pm last Saturday near to Lorn and Islands Hospital.

A large quantity of heroin was allegedly found on his possession.

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**INDOOR EVENT**

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## Plea for more teachers but good work being done

OBAN High School (OHS) repeated its plea for more teachers when it gave a presentation to councillors last week, but emphasised the quantity of good work being done at the school.

Giving a presentation at the Oban, Lorn and Isles Area Committee last week, deputy head teacher Louise Lawson said OHS compared poorly in terms of staff provision compared to other similarly sized schools in the Highlands.

Its pupils were praised for their good behaviour, volunteering and community spirit during the talk, which also saw pupils and fellow deputy head teacher Alison MacDonald address the members.

The message from Ms Lawson was, ‘we’re doing well, but we could do even better.’

‘For a school with 1,064 pupils OHS has a low number of teachers compared with schools of a similar roll,’ she said.

‘I’m not going to go into any more detail about that as I know councillors are aware of the need. The impacts of [low teacher numbers] are not always obvious, but more teachers means more development time and more time to share - and it also protects smaller class sizes.’

Among the strong points highlighted over the year were the school’s partnership projects with the likes of Skills Development Scotland, the Scottish Association for Marine Science and Ballet West.

Volunteering within the school is strong, with pupils regularly making use of free periods to help in the community, while recent charitable events run by pupils helped to raise £2,023 for Children in Need and a further £418 for the Philippines disaster recovery fund.

Pupils also praised the school for the number of extra-curricular activities it offered, saying they were spoilt for choice.

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## Lorn Lines

THE OBAN and Lorn District Seniors Club (OLDS) Christmas Dinner took place at the start of this week in the Oban Bay Hotel.

A total of 110 senior citizens turned out for the joyous affair, including a meal, live music and even a visit from Santa.

The event was presided over by Reverend Nicki MacNelly and funded by the Crerar Hotels Trust, MacQueen Bros Charitable Trust and the Rotary Club of Oban, which also provided a huge number of raffle prizes.

Frank Walton, treasurer of OLDS, thanked all those who made the evening possible and Alistair Borland, manager of the Oban Bay Hotel, delivered a goodwill message from Paddy Crerar, chairman of the trust. At the end of a memorable evening everyone was transported home by Rotary Club members clutching prizes, presents and a piece of boxed Christmas cake provided by the Oban Inner Wheel Club.

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**SANTA paid his annual visit to Arduaine Garden, near Kilmelford, last weekend, in spite of the fact strong winds and heavy rain were forecast for the area.**

Having first stabled his reindeer, he then inspected the grotto that staff had prepared for him and where he would meet the local children.

Unfortunately the weather prevented all but a few determined children – and their parents – from coming

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to see Santa, but those who struggled down the path in the strong wind had a great time.

Imagine Santa’s disappointment therefore, to find on Sunday morning that his cosy grotto was nothing more than a sodden heap on the ground, having fallen victim to gale force winds overnight.

Santa was not to be put off by a touch of windy weather, however, and promised to return next Christmas.

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OBAN photographer Cameron Harris was guest judge at Oban Camera Club’s most recent competition, Commercially Viable.

The aim was to produce an image that could be considered commercially useable and the response was excellent with 45 digital images and nine prints. Winners were: digital: 1 Maurice Wilkins; 2 David Williams; 3 Maurice Wilkins. Prints: 1 2 and 3 Nina Robertson. Overall winner of the trophy gifted by Cameron Harris was Nina Robertson with her print of Mince Pies in a Christmas setting.

A festive mood took over the final meeting of the year for Oban Camera Club.

The Subtle Humour competition saw 30 entries of digital images and prints judged in-house. The outright winner for the second time was George Chalmers, who was awarded the trophy gifted by the late Dougie MacIntyre.

The next meeting of the club will be on January 6 in the Regent Hotel at 7.30pm. New members welcome.

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**MEMBERS of Oban Speakers Club waited in vain for John Maclean to burst into song as he made his speech last week on The Road to the Isles.**

Despite their disappointment he made an excellent speech, as did the other speaker Willie Melville on Genghis Khan. Both they and their critics were introduced by the chairman Archie McPhail.

A light-hearted topics session was organised by

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Guido Faccenda who asked his speakers to answer topics on subjects as varied as cooking and modern art.

His speakers were Alec Clark, Jim Fraser, Tom Clegg, Peter Mills, Nick Maclean and Archie McPhail. Timekeeper for the evening was Donnie Graham and a brief and humorous general evaluation was given by Eamonn Arthur.

The next meeting will be held tonight (Thursday) at 8pm.

# Photo calendar winners celebrate in Kinlochleven

WINNERS and sponsors of the annual Kinlochleven Community Trust (KCT) calendar photo competition have gathered to celebrate the presentation of awards.

Usually local amateur photographers are invited each year to submit their snaps of Loch Leven scenes and wildlife with the best 12 picked for each calendar month.

But judge and KCT chairman Andrew Baxter asked for no new entries to be submitted this year - because so many high-standard photos had built up from previous competitions.

Little did I think back in 2008 after a flippant remark at a board meeting about organising a photo calendar competition that I would still be involved six years later," he told the gathering last Wednesday in the KCT's offices. "It has been immensely successful over the last few years - I don't know how much money it has raised but these calendars are a big talking point in Kinlochleven and South Lochaber.

"I see them across the post office counter going to Canada, New Zealand and across the world.

"The comments that I have been getting around the village have been really positive."

Winners: January - Ian Morrison; February - Ian Fraser; March - Lesley Woolfaccott; April - Graham Lawrie; May - Shannon Hartley; June - Allan Ferguson; July - David Collins; August - Alan Senior; September - Dougie McClymont; October - Nick McKeown; November - Mervyn James; December - Leslie Donald.



Left to right, KCT development officer Moira Hartley, Pre-'65 motorcycle trials committee secretary Anne Gordon, sponsor, Allan Ferguson, winner, Ali Smith of The Tavern Restaurant, sponsor, Shannon Hartley, winner, Harry Heskey of River Leven Ales, sponsor, Mervyn James, winner, and KCT chairman Andrew Baxter of Kinlochleven Post Office, sponsor, after the presentation. 20.15162101

## Morvern Lines

A FEW weeks ago I wrote about a number of Morvern's outstanding gamekeepers and deer stalkers.

One man I omitted, whose name deserves to be added to the roll, is Donald Cameron, better known to family and friends as 'Doiken'.

The Camerons were an old Ardnamurchan family who came to Morvern in the middle of the 19th century when they were evicted from the Glenborrodale area. Donald's grandfather, also called Donald, settled at Lurag, a lonely spot half way between Corrospine and Achagavel in the Black Glen where there was once a lead mine.

When old Donald died, his coffin was carried over the hill to Loch Sunart and taken by boat to Resipole. After refreshing themselves for the hard journey ahead, willing friends and relatives set off with it over the shoulder of Ben Resipole to Achnanellan where another boat was waiting to take them across Loch Shiel to St Finan's Isle. There, in that ancient graveyard, they buried 'Donald Lurag' among his ancestors.

'Doiken' was born on Christmas Day 1904 on Rahoy Estate where his father managed the farm for Commander Mark Newton. He attended Kinlochteaicus School, built by the old Argyll County Council to serve a once vibrant community before holiday cottages and second homes changed the way of life around the loch side forever.

Following a few years shepherding with his father at Kinloch, Donald moved to Lochaline in 1930. He married Jessie Mason and they settled at Kiel. That year Owen Hugh Smith sold part of Ardnornish Estate, bordering the Sound of Mull, to the Forestry Commission which they called Finuary Forest and Donald became their first head stalker or 'ranger'. Piper, caman and stick-maker par excellence, leading observer in the Royal Observer Corp, founder member of the Morvern Gun Club and its secretary for 32 years, local bard and a worthy exponent of the works of Robbie Burns, Donald was a popular and well kent figure.



Donald 'Doiken' Cameron at work in Finuary Forest, Morvern.

## Oban Sheriff Court

A FORMER Dalmally man was fined £300 at Oban Sheriff Court last week after assaulting his wife, leaving her slumped on the floor crying.

Stuart Saunders, 41, of 4 Breadalbane Mews, Breadalbane Street, Oban, previously admitted the two charges of assault.

The court heard he had grabbed his wife's arms, forcing her against a door on one occasion. The following day he picked up a pack of cards, throwing them into the woman's face, leaving her with scratches.

The incidents happened during the breakdown of the marriage, defence agent Jane Thomson told the court.

A YOUNG Oban man who has been in prison for most of the past four and a half years has been sentenced to another eight months inside after downloading child porn on the day of his last release.

Colin Penrose, 22, currently a prisoner in HMP Barlinnie, last week at Oban Sheriff Court admitted searching and downloading the explicit images from his laptop.

The court heard Penrose had seven images on his laptop, received from searches dating between January 18 and March 6.

Prosecutor Fiscal Eoin McGinty told the court police officers had discovered the content during a routine visit to Penrose's home.

Mr McGinty read out the graphic search terms to the court, and said one of the images was at level four - a very high level of offending against children while three were at level one, the lowest.

Defence agent Duncan Durbin said despite being on a waiting list Penrose had not received any treatment in prison for his behaviour.

Sheriff Douglas Small said while he accepted Penrose had downloaded the images and not taken them personally it was not a 'victimless crime'. He added: 'Somebody is the victim here - children.'

He also placed Penrose on the sexual offenders register for a period of 10 years.

Court last week.

Allan Kerr, 42, of Room 4, Donmore Lodge, Oban, previously pled guilty to obstructing police by swallowing a controlled substance.

Sheriff Douglas Small ordered him to remain on the programme for 18 months, with monthly tests.

A TEENAGER has been ordered to carry out 200 hours of unpaid work and be supervised for 12 months after he sent a picture of his genitals to a 14-year-old girl.

John Meney, 18, of 28 Finbracken, Sandbank, Dunoon, also previously admitted sending offensive messages to a further five people including a 15-year-old boy and 74-year-old man. Included in the messages were threatening remarks, swear words and threats of violence.

Sheriff Douglas Small said: 'I regard these as being very serious offences. If this sort of contact is repeated you will be considered for prison. You narrowly escaped that sentence today.'

THE ASSISTANT manager of Plumbing Trade Supplies (PTS) in Oban has been ordered to fork out almost £1,000 after being caught selling items stolen from his work on eBay.

Timothy McMahon, 47, of 7b Miller Road, Oban, was found out after an investigator from Travis Perkins, which owns PTS, saw the goods and traced them to the Oban branch, Oban Sheriff Court heard last week.

McMahon admitted stealing a quantity of electric showers and gauges worth £567.

He has been order to pay this amount in compensation and fined £400.

Defence agent Rosanna Chapman said the actions had been 'out of character' for McMahon during a period of financial difficulty. 'He appreciates his actions are stupid and totally reprehensible,' she added.

Travis Perkins refused to comment on the case.

THE DRIVER of a lorry involved in a collision with a van in Connel last year has admitted careless driving.

Thomas McLean, 54, of 12 Eppiestane Road, Whitburn, had his

plea entered by his solicitor at Oban Sheriff Court last week.

The accident, which happened in the village on July 13, 2012, saw McLean along with the driver and passenger of the Iveco van taken to hospital with injuries. The incident occurred when McLean's lorry crossed into the opposing carriageway colliding with the other vehicle.

Sheriff Douglas Small deferred sentence for McLean's personal appearance until January 7 next year.

A MULL man has been fined £400 and banned from driving for 15 months after getting behind the wheel while almost twice the legal drink drive limit.

Nigel Shannon, 53, of Torr Na-Craoibhe, Bunnellan, Mull, admitted the offence when he appeared at Oban Sheriff Court last week. The court heard Shannon had gone to meet his friend in the pub in Fionnphort and had anticipated getting a lift home. When this didn't happen he made the 'stupid decision' to drive. Shannon had 61mcg of alcohol in 100ml of breath. The legal limit is 35mcg.

A BUSINESSMAN from Dunbeg has been ordered to carry out 200 hours of unpaid work after being found with thousands of pounds worth of counterfeit DVDs.

Stuart Ashley, 38, of 8 Lochnell Road, Dunbeg, was found with 695 discs which breached copyright when police raided his property in March.

Ashley, who previously admitted a total of 11 offences, was also told, when he appeared at Oban Sheriff Court last week, he will face confiscation proceedings.

Prosecutor Fiscal Eoin McGinty said an investigation carried out by the Federation Against Copyright Theft (FACT) found the value of the counterfeit discs was £16,219 although there was also a 'significant amount of genuine discs' found.

He said: 'The loss to the industry is between £6,000 and £7,000.'

Confiscation proceedings are to take place on March 4, 2014.

Defending, Edward Gilroy said Ashley ran a legitimate business selling household items online. He told

the court of the 2,994 discs seized from the property, 695 were counterfeit with a retail value of £6,073.

Mr Gilroy said: 'He was tempted by the low wholesale value he could obtain from China. He was suspicious and when the discs arrived his suspicions were confirmed. He was clear in his mind they were not legitimate but he still decided to sell them on.'

He clearly regrets the upset this has caused to his family and it has also had a disruptive effect on his legitimate business.'

The offences, including having DVDs with fake trademarks to sell or rent, referred to titles including Paramount Pictures, 20th Century Fox and Disney.

POSSESSING heroin landed one Oban man with a £400 fine when he appeared last week at Oban Sheriff Court.

Carl Lutger, 31, of Room 3, Solas, Albany Street, Oban, had 0.3g of brown powder in his possession when police detained him in a supermarket car park on August 30, the court heard.

Lutger, who had previously pled guilty to the offence, is 'not a regular user of heroin', the court heard.

A MULL woman has been fined £400 and ordered to pay compensation of £250 to a woman she hit on the head with a camera.

Zoe Goodwill, 29, of 22 Struan Crescent, Tobermory, Mull, previously admitted the assault and appeared in Oban Sheriff Court last week for sentencing.

The court heard the incident happened on the night of Mull Highland Games, outside the Aros Hall on Tobermory's Main Street.

Goodwill's victim suffered three, two centimetre cuts to her head, which needed to be glued together as a result of the attack.

Defence agent Jane Thomson said Goodwill was 'completely disgusted at her actions that evening'.

AN OBAN woman has been placed on a deferred sentence for nine months after she hit her partner with a draught excluder.

Tracey Black, 35, of 11c Colonsay Terrace, Oban, previously admitted the offence and was told to be of good behaviour when she appeared last week at Oban Sheriff Court. She will be sentenced on September 16 2014.

A MAN will be spending Christmas and New Year in prison after repeatedly kicking the front door of his former partner's home, attempting to force it open.

Pawel Kuznicki, 34, of no fixed abode, pled guilty to the offence as well as shouting and swearing during the incident.

The court heard the woman was at home with her three children at the time. All four of them were 'terrorised' by the incident and hid in the bedroom.

Prosecutor Fiscal Eoin McGinty said the woman activated a panic alarm the police had issued her with as they were concerned for her safety.

Defending, Edward Thornton denied the couple had parted and said Kuznicki had returned home from work and was puzzled as to why he couldn't get in house.

He said: 'He opened the door and found a chain, he couldn't understand why. He admits shouting. He may have sworn, he can't remember.'

Sheriff Douglas Small deferred sentence on Kuznicki until January 7 next year for the preparation of background reports. He remanded him in custody.

A 64-YEAR-old man appeared in private at Oban Sheriff Court last week accused of two counts of lewd, indecent and libidinous practices and behaviour.

Torquil Charles Johnson-Ferguson, of Canobie, Dumfriesshire, made no plea or declaration during the petition hearing and the case was continued for further examination. He was released on bail.

AN OBAN man was fined £495 at Oban Sheriff Court last week for shouting, swearing and uttering threats while on bail.

Craig Hendry, 23, of 18 Combie Court, Oban, previously admitted the offence, which took place in Oban's Stevenson Street on April 14.

NOW YOU see it, now you don't! By sleight of bureaucratic hand yet another of Lochaber's well known landmarks has been consigned to the history skip.

For centuries The Nether Lochaber Inn provided shelter and sustenance to countless, stranded ferry-goers. Past landlords, the Macleans and the Mackintoshes, were known throughout the UK for their unfailing hospitality long before VisitScotland was invented. All gone, as if everything these early ambassadors for Lochaber gave to the community never mattered.

Only the old cellar now lying open and exposed to the elements remains. What next - the Commando Memorial at Spean Bridge or the West Highland Museum in Cameron Square? Officials in Historic Scotland and Highland Council charged with looking after Lochaber's past have been less than diligent. An enquiry should be held.

QUESTIONS also need to be asked about the way the Highland Council is carrying out the study it was forced to do following public unrest to determine the economic impact their massive increase in ferry fares will have on the communities it serves.

At the moment this is being done online. As not every ferry-user has access to a computer (or the time, the skill and experience required to complete forms online), the result is predictable. The timing too has raised eyebrows, coming as it does over the festive season when people are either out of the area or otherwise engaged.

Highland Council officials need to abandon their computer screens and over-heated offices for a few days - they need to head for the ferry queues with their clipboards. Nothing less will do. Where are our elected representatives? The survey period should be extended, done less grudgingly and with a greater degree of enthusiasm.

ONCE again, thanks to a few breezes, Morvern has been left without mail because CalMac's dedicated boats are too large to get on or off the link-spans in Oban and Craignure.

These wind-catching liners will have to be replaced by smaller vessels during the winter or Royal Mail will have to despatch the Morvern mail by road to meet their national delivery targets. Where are our Westminster MPs who can influence the government subsidies to ensure something is done?

Iain Thornber iain.thornber@btinternet.com

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**Trailer faults land Fort man with £140 fine**

A FORT William man was fined £140 after he was caught at Ben Nevis Industrial Estate in the town driving with a trailer without a registration plate or working lamps on May 16.

Mark MacPhee, 32, of Clisham, Fassfern Road, pled guilty to the charges at Fort William JP court stating that he "forgot" to put the registration plate back on to the trailer. The faulty lamps were said to be as a result of rusty electrical components.

**Fall prevention a priority**

A LOCHABER-based occupational therapist is to spearhead efforts to cut the number of elderly people falling in their homes or outdoors.

Sheila Morris has been appointed as NHS Highland's new community lead for falls prevention. Ms Morris said helping people to stay active was vital to reducing the risk of injury. She said: "Falls are the most common and serious problem facing older people, but they are not an inevitable part of old age."

**Driver pleads guilty to speeding**

A MAN from the Isle of Harris has been fined at Fort William JP Court for speeding.

James Morrison, 41, of 4B East Tarbet, pled guilty to driving at 71mph on the A82 around two miles north of Letterfinlay on the morning of June 26 when the speed limit was 60mph. He was fined £170 and given four penalty points.

**New director of pharmacy**

A NEW director of pharmacy has been appointed by NHS Highland.

Ian Rudd will take up the post on February 1 2014 following seven years as the organisation's principal pharmacist for clinical pharmacy.

Ian, from New Zealand, moved to the Highlands in 1991 to take up a post shared between Belford and Raigmore hospitals and was part of the clinical team which set up Scotland's first remote chemotherapy clinic in Fort William.



Nicole MacKinnon and five-month-old son Dale from Claggan, Fort William, enjoy their time with Santa in his ice grotto along with elves Rhona Allan and Mary Ellen Campbell. 20\_151kinlights01

**Hundreds flock to Leven Christmas Festival**

HUNDREDS of local people got into the festive spirit at the sixth annual Leven Christmas Festival at the Ice factor in Kinlochleven.

Attractions included Santa and his reindeer, around 20 gift, home baking and craft stalls, a tombola - and, of course, Santa in his ice grotto. The man from the

North Pole has a busy time as mums, dads and kids waited their turn to take into the chilly cave by his elves - Rhona Allan from Kinlochleven and community warden Mary Ellen Campbell from Fort William. Outside, the reindeer in their pen drew a steady stream of admirers and only the snow failed to put in an appearance, remaining high in the

mountains round the loch. Festival organiser Kay McDuff said £782.25 was raised on the day. The cash will go towards next year's festival and the public toilets refurbishment appeal. Local girl Shannon Hartley, who has to raise around £5,000 to fund her trip to Africa next year with the Project Trust, will also be a beneficiary, Ms McDuff said.

**Mull firm win place on home contest shortlist**

A MULL based firm has made it onto the shortlist of companies vying to create an affordable island home.

Thorne Wyness Architects, situated in Tobermory, is one of six firms which have progressed to the second stage of the Rural Housing Scotland Our Island Home competition.

The competition aims to design a house which is easy and affordable to build and heat to help young islanders make new homes in island communities.

Judging of the competition took place on the Isle of Mull last week and the successful projects were shortlisted from 50 entries.

The other five architects were Skye-based Rural Design, Arc Architects, Anta Architecture, Dualchas Architects and Simon

Winstanley Architects. Lesley Riddoch, chairwoman of the judging panel, said: "After a feisty and thorough judging session we were unable to separate six projects and decided to extend the shortlist by one."

Judging was anonymous with entries only identifiable by a serial number unknown to the judges. The shortlisted teams will now have until January 31 2014 to work on their design submissions with the announcement of the winning design to be made by Richard Lochhead MSP at the Rural Housing Scotland conference on February 28, 2014.

The Our Island Home competition aims to deliver a two bedroom house for less than £100,000.

**Increased fines for littering and fly-tipping**

HIGHLAND Council is backing Scottish Government plans to increase fixed penalties for littering and fly-tipping.

It agrees the littering fine should rise to £80 and the penalty for fly-tipping should increase to £200 from April 1 next year.

However, the authority wants tougher action taken against rogue contractors who try to avoid landfill costs by dumping materials indiscriminately and is demanding they should also pay council clean-up costs.

TEC services committee chair Graham Phillips said: "If fly-tipping saves an individual business £1,000 in disposal costs then the penalty should be commensurate with clean up costs plus the punishment."

**Another accolade for family-owned bakery**

A STORNOWAY family-owned bakery has added another accolade to its ever-growing trophy cabinet.

Stag Bakeries was judged best rural family business (fewer than 100 employees) at the Herald Scottish Family Business Awards, held in association with Business Gateway.

The dynamic company was recognised for the vital role it plays in providing employment and wealth in the local community.

Owner Charlie MacDonald said Stag Bakeries, founded in 1968, had its roots "firmly embedded" in the Outer Hebrides.

He said: "We are however, operating in a fragile island economy and therefore to sustain growth and invest in the future we needed to diversify our product range and develop new

market channels both off-island and overseas.

"Stag has ambitious plans to realise its potential and we have invested heavily in the company."

"As part of this, we are looking to develop our workforce and create employment opportunities and expand our premises to provide greater capacity for the growing demand."

Mr MacDonald, who was born in Kilmarnock and whose parents were from Oban, added: "We have overwhelming goodwill from local people and are indebted to our loyal workforce who have been instrumental in taking our business to the next level."

"We hope our success will encourage other local companies to invest beyond their local markets."



More Stag success: owner Charlie Macdonald and son Roddy with their latest award.

**Appeal to freeze council tax for seventh year**

HIGHLAND councillors will today be asked to freeze council tax for a seventh successive year as financial pressures look set to continue until at least 2019.

Savings found to balance the books for 2013-14 total almost £16 million - meaning the budget for 2014-15 can be set two months ahead of schedule, a report to the full council states.

Additional cost-cutting measures totalling up to £80 million - three per cent each year - will have to be found over the period to 2018/19.

That is because the ongoing council tax freeze and a Scottish Government grant allocation the same as last year take no account of inflation.

The budget of £563.697 million includes an estimated £451.444 million from the government, with income from the council tax of £112.253 million.

Speaking ahead of the meeting, finance, housing and resources committee chairman Councillor Dave Fallows, who has been leading the budget discussions, warned of "tougher times" going forward. Councillor

Fallows said: "Setting the budget for 2014/15 now allows additional time over the next 12 months for the council to consider options for addressing the substantial challenges ahead."

"Early consideration of future budget savings will be made whenever possible."

The report also recommends that responsibility for setting council house rents for 2014-15 should be delegated to the finance, housing and resources committee at its meeting on Wednesday 22 January.

**Arts cash up for grabs in new talent project**

SKYE and Lochalsh Arts organisations have joined forces to launch a talent development initiative for arts professionals.

Funded by Creative Scotland, the scheme will offer six artists awards of between £2,000 and £3,000.

Emerging artists will be able to bid for smaller awards for mentoring and skills development of between £500 and £1,000.

Partners Seall, Aros, Sabhal Mor Ostaig, Fèisean nan Gaidheal and ATLAS Arts are supporting the scheme

and, when selected, the successful applicants. Emma Nicolson, director of ATLAS, which is managing the fund, said: "Local talent will be given the opportunity to develop and share their work. It is also about developing the peer network and using the infrastructure of venues, organisations and expertise to support and contribute to the artist's development and offer opportunities to showcase and profile the artists being funded."

"This may involve appointing or acting as mentors, bringing expertise

to the island for master classes and providing opportunities that enable the artists to deliver their work to audiences in Skye and or beyond."

Applications are invited from residents in Skye and Lochalsh or those born there, or who have completed their secondary education in the area.

The closing date for the first round is Friday 10 January 2014. Applications and guidelines can be downloaded from www.atlasarts.org.uk.

Contact rosie@atlasarts.org.uk or call 7787551847 for more information.

**Teenager stole supermarket cash**

A ROY Bridge teenager has admitted stealing money from Morrisons supermarket in Fort William when he was an employee there.

Grant Matheson of East Park Lodge, pled guilty to embezzlement at Fort William JP Court after stealing £300 over two shifts last September.

Prosecutor fiscal Laura Ryan told the

court that Matheson first lifted £100 from the till at the cigarette kiosk on September 25 and moved it to the till at the checkout he was using. He then hid the money inside his sock until leaving the shop at the end of his shift. And four days later Matheson repeated the process on September 29, this time moving £200 from the cash float to the

kiosk till and then into his sock. The teenager stated in court that he had been working full-time for a while and was then cut back to his contract of 12 hours per week.

"I don't know why I did it, I can't believe I did," he said. The 19-year-old was fined £100. He has already paid back the £300 to the company.

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THÀINIG SEO...



...THIS IS NOW



Là na Sàbaid 22 Dùbhlachd / Sunday 22 December

A' Bhladhna

News Review 2013

Sùil air ais air 2013 le cuid de luchd-naidheachd BBC An Là.

A look back at the most memorable news stories of the year.

7t / 7pm

Diluain 23 Dùbhlachd / Monday 23 December

Trusadh: Eilean I - Dìleab Cholm Chille / Columba's Legacy

Bheil an t-eilean agus Colm Cille fhathast a' toirt buaidh air daoine ann an 2013?

Does Columba's legacy live on in 2013?

9t / 9pm

Là na Nollaig / Christmas Day

SWAGs

Le barrachd spionnadh na th' aig na cluicheadairean, seo na Shinty Wives and Girlfriends.

With even more passion and zeal than the players, it's The Shinty Wives and Girlfriends.

9t / 9pm

Michelle at the Mod

Michelle McManus a' feuchainn air sàr-dhuais an luchd-ionnsachaidh aig Mòd Phàislig.

Pop Idol winner Michelle McManus enters the 2013 Mod.

10t / 10pm

Hebridean Celtic Festival - Capercaille

Capercaille aig Fèis Cheilteach Inne Gall 2013.

Capercaille at Heb Celt 2013.

11.30t / 11.30pm

Dihaoine 27 Dùbhlachd / Friday 27 December

Cunnart

Beatha Dhòmhnail Dhòmhnallaich a bhios a' cur às do mhèinnean-talmhainn 's bomaichean.

Follow Donald MacDonald from Lewis as he disposes of landmines and bombs around the world.

9t / 9pm

Oidhche Challainn / New Year's Eve

Siubhal le Shepherd / Robbie Shepherd

Robbie Shepherd in language, music and dance.

8.25t / 8.25pm

Ceòl Dannsa

Scottish Dance Band music at its best.

9.30t / 9.30pm

An Lùib nam Boireannach

Seasaidh Lexy and our fascination with comedy actors dressing up as women.

10.30t / 10.30pm

Cèilidh na Bliadhn' Ùire

Beò / Live with Barbara Dickson, Mànrán, Glenfìnnan Cèilidh Band and many more!

11.30t / 11.30pm

Là na Bliadhn' Ùire / New Year's Day

Agus a-nochd...The Entertainers

A look at the Scottish pub entertainment scene.

9t / 9pm

Dà là san Dàmhair

Ishi and co. prepare for the Mod!

10t / 10pm



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**LISMORE**

ON A WET Sunday afternoon in November, Lismore Lumiere showed *We are Northern Lights*, a film about Scotland made by Scottish people which is now up for a BAFTA.

As usual the group added value with a complimentary dram as well as drinks and snacks.

The film was well received despite Lismore somehow missing out on contributing which led Lismore Lumiere to suggest the island does one of its own.

As *We are Northern Lights* was mainly shot on shaky phones in dreich weather, everyone agreed Lismore could certainly do as well, if not better.



VISITORS to Friends' Day at Lismore Gaelic Heritage Centre on November 24 heard speakers Bob Hay, Helen Crossan and Douglas Thorburn report on the progress made on the top three areas for development Friends had selected at last year's meeting.

Bob reported that, in conjunction with Lismore Church elders and Historic Scotland, funding had been acquired to lift and protect the unique gravestones in the churchyard.

Helen showed the films she had already made recording the memories of the older residents with an emphasis on Lismore Gaelic.

Douglas Thorburn spoke about the archaeological walkers which means that all ruins and notable sites in Killandrist, Portcharon and Balcevolan have been recorded. This will eventually be a digital

record and, with help from the MacQueens' Foundation, he will produce a leaflet for walkers with grid references.

The last speaker was John Randall from The Islands Book Trust in Lewis who talked about the difficulty small communities have not in getting initial funding to promote their history and culture but in then running an enterprise where profit is difficult to generate.

He is involved in the running of the Paic Estate in Lewis which the small community bought and where the Islands Book Trust is based.



THE *MV Eigg*, which has serviced Lismore since 1976, was deemed by Caledonian MacBayne no longer fit for the run as a result of restrictions in load weights, among other things.

After what felt like years of promises of a loch class vessel which would meet the island needs, few were sorry to see the *MV Eigg* sail away on November 16.

As it seems the loch class vessel we briefly enjoyed is needed elsewhere and the *MV Eigg* is back.



THE STORM which battered Scotland on December 5 knocked the island's power out for almost two days.

While there was, fortunately, no damage to life or limb, trees blocked roads, the power was off for almost two days and many ferries were cancelled.

At the Isle of Lismore Café there was considerable loss of freezer food and Beth Campbell has had to cancel the days she had planned to open. However her Christmas dinner night on December 21 will go ahead and places are still available.

**LOCHCARRON**

LOCHCARRON butchers S & M MacKenzie and Sons have been nominated as a Scottish finalist in the Countryside Alliance Awards

The firm will be invited to the Scottish finals to be held at Holyrood in March when a champion in each category - local food, village shop post office, butcher and start-up - will be announced.

**SMALL ISLES**

RESIDENTS on the Small Isles have been among those hit by disruption to ferry services because of recent bad weather.

Local development officer in the Isle of Rum Vikki Trefler said: 'We're pretty lucky that CalMac are very good at making the effort to come here - people on Muck and Canna have it much worse.'

'To be fair to the ferries, the weather has been pretty horrendous the last couple of weeks.'

'The ferry generally comes to Rum, but if the weather's bad it will often call once rather than allowing for a two-hour day visit - that means it's more disruptive for visitors and contractors than islanders.'

**CALLANDER**

AN INDEPENDENT charity supporting Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park has said securing the future of Callander's Rob Roy visitor centre is its top priority.

The chairman of the Friends of Loch Lomond and the Trossachs, James Fraser, has criticised the decision by Stirling Council to give notice to VisitScotland to vacate the ground floor so that they could sell off the building in Ancaster Square, with offers in the region of £100,000 being sought.

He said the success of the visitor centre - which has served the needs of around 3.5 million visitors since it opened in the early 1990s, as well as the local community with its intimate 90-seat theatre - meant it should be retained.

He said: 'I understand the level of interest from the private sector in purchasing the former church has been limited and, from a recent visit, I was pleasantly surprised how many overseas and UK visitors were still using the centre in the low season. This served as a reminder of the important role played by the centre in showcasing Callander and the Trossachs and it would be a real tragedy and setback for Callander if this asset is not saved. I earnestly hope the council has a re-think and works constructively with



Kirsty Burns and Sheree Kennedy present Maighsi Rough with a framed copy of her winning design.

**Acharacle pupil designs winning Christmas card**

AN ACHARACLE Primary School pupil has won a competition to design a Christmas card for Lochaber Housing Association (LHA) and Maighsi Rough, aged 8, and the rest of her class visited Printsmith to watch the card in production as part of her prize.

Maighsi said: 'When I was first told I had won the competition I was excited but a bit nervous. I am really happy that my design was chosen for the Lochaber Housing Association Christmas card.'

The club has only eight shares of £60 each left to sell to raise their total for the purchase of its own St Ayles Skiff kit.

If anyone would like to buy a share, contact treasurer Mike Barlow at Sunnybrae Caravan Park, South Cuan on Luings. To boost the funds, a Christmas carol anagram competition sheet is being sold locally, and the postage raised in the Christmas card community post on the island this year is being donated to the skiff fund.

Luings Sewing Group, which meets on a Monday afternoon,

The artistic youngster was presented with a framed copy of her design and a gift by LHA staff members Kirsty Burns and Sheree Kennedy in the association's offices in Fort William.

The class performed a Gaelic song in return. Teacher Margaret Ford said: 'The staff have been so kind to the children and we have all enjoyed ourselves.'

LHA chief executive Blair Allan thanked all the schools who took part.

has already donated to the club. John Blackwell, chairman of the Isle of Luings Rowing Club, thanked everyone for their great support. The next fundraising event is a Burns Night on January 25 in Toberonochy Hall.

**TIREE**

A DISUSED ferry terminal on Tiree is to be demolished and replaced with a smaller store.

The owner of the west coast's ferry infrastructure, Caledonian Maritime Assets Limited (CMAL), issued a tender for the demolition last week.

A spokesman for CMAL said: 'The building is currently in a dilapidated state and will be removed to improve safety and the visual appearance of the area. The building will be replaced by a much smaller store, which will house the main electrics for the pier, with the remainder of the site being landscaped.'

CMAL will also speak to Tiree Community Development Trust about the project.

Returns for the tender have to be in by January 14, with a programme of works to be agreed once a preferred bidder is identified.



BUDDING Gaelic speakers on Tiree can now register for Ulpan classes through Tiree Community Development Trust.

Based on speech pronunciation rather than writing and grammar, the classes start on January 13, with two grades of units available for beginner and intermediate students. Intensive courses are also available. To register, email donna@tireetrust.org.uk.

**FORT WILLIAM**

FORT WILLIAM WRI's last meeting of the year took the form of a members' night.

In a festively decorated hall, members took part in carol singing, crafts and quizzes. The evening ended with tea and seasonal goodies. The competition for a hand made Christmas card was won by Edythe Knowles, with Martine Young second.

The raffle winners were Edythe Knowles and Isobel McGavin. The next meeting is at 7.15pm in Inverlochey Hall on Monday January 6 2014. The subject for the evening is photography and the competition is a photograph of an animal.

**Down Your Way**

**Ballachulish**

BALLACHULISH is in for a barrel of laughs tonight (Thursday) when the first performance of this year's Christmas pantomime takes to the stage in the village hall at 7.30pm.

The sell-out show will run for three consecutive nights until Saturday, which will also see a matinee at 2pm.

Local thespians Drew MacFarlane-Slack and Tam McClymont will be transformed into the - very - ugly sisters, while writer and director Naim MacArthur will play 'Velcro' - a modern day Buttons.



Winners: the combined Ballachulish/Ardnamurchan West Lochaber under-17 team.

UP-AND-coming Ballachulish shinty players rarely get a chance to compete at under-17 level.

But this season they teamed up with their counterparts from Ardnamurchan to form a 'West Lochaber' under-17 team.

And success came early for the new venture when the clubs put two teams into the WJ Cameron Cup, which is now a trophy for developing teams.

All games were tight in the tournament, which saw Inverness and another fledgling club, Strathspey, compete.

Both the Ard/Balla teams were evenly matched and made it through to the final. 'Ardnachelish' won 3-0 to lift the cup.

The 2014 season will also see a joint Ballachulish/Ardnamurchan under-17 team compete in the under-17 leagues for the first time.



Ballachulish Primary School pupils gave two performances of their traditional nativity play in the school in the afternoon and evening. Children from the nursery also sang songs.



St Bride's children in full voice during their performance of the 'Shepherd Boy'.

PUPILS of St Bride's Primary School at North Ballachulish took to the stage at the Nether Lochaber Parish Church on December 9 and 10 - by candlelight.

The performances of the annual Christmas concert included their musical nativity 'Shepherd Boy' with P7 pupil Matthew Swingler playing the leading role.

The parent forum served refreshments and a wonderful spread of home-baking after each performance.

Head Teacher Susan Kemp said: 'We are so grateful to the church for providing this lovely venue for our Christmas celebrations and are delighted that our concerts were so well attended by parents, family and the village community.'



HOGMANAY celebrations will get underway in Ballachulish with the annual lantern parade at the village hall at 8pm. Everyone welcome.

**Next week Down Your Way visits Lochgilphead with reporter Edel Kenealy. You can contact Edel on 01546 602345**



Catherine Bloy at the Christmas Craft Fair with her many festive crafts.

**Christmas craft fair success**

SATURDAY November 23 was a beautiful day for the annual Christmas Craft Show which attracted visitors from on and off Lismore.

A variety of stalls included handmade bags, cards, original art works, soaps, purses,

candles, jewellery, a great variety of seasonal decorations and much more alongside Salen beef and Mogwai Textiles.

MacColl served soup, sandwiches and cakes which were popular throughout the day.

**GLENCOE/DUROR**

PUPILS from P4-7 at Glencoe and Duror primary schools enjoyed a trip to the Edinburgh Playhouse recently to see the hit musical *The Lion King*.

After their trip with teachers Mary Evans and Maria MacLeod, the children wrote up reports of their experience.

Ailsa Janzen, P4, said: 'The dancing, drumming, singing and acting was fantastic! I wish we could go again.'

Oli Leitch, P5, added: 'The show was one of the best I have ever seen. The costumes were good, so were the special effects.' And P7 Ross Blair said: 'I thought the costumes were brilliant, especially the giraffe, but I would hate to be the one inside it!'

Meanwhile, the P1-3 enjoyed



a trip of their own, travelling to Acharacle to join youngsters from the Ardnamurchan schools to watch M&M Productions version of the Christmas pantomime *Cinderella*.

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**LUING**

LUING Rowing Club raised more than £500 through a soup lunch to support the newly formed organisation.

The event, in Cullipool Hall, saw the £507.44 total contributed to by the Luings volunteer firefighters, who ran a car wash.

There was also raffle prizes and home baking, and the Isle of Luings Primary School ran a small stall with unsold stock from its Holly Tea.



Letters to Santa: James Gray, Primary 2, front, Mairi Hopkins, Delivery Office Manager, right, primaries one and two help with the post. 20\_150lochyside01

THE CHILDREN of Lochyside Primary school primaries one and two visited Fort William Post Office to see what happens inside the posting office.

The class visited as part of their enterprise project and have set up their own sorting office at school. Mrs Cameron, the class

**LOCHYSIDE**

teacher, said: 'It's good for the children to see how an important service in the community is carried out. They will be delivering the school's Christmas cards between now and Christmas.'

**JAMIE MCGRIGOR**  
Highlands & Islands MSP  
Contact Jamie at his Regional Office:  
61 Chalmers St,  
Ardrihaig, PA30 8DX.  
Tel: 01546 606586.  
or e-mail:  
Email: jamie.mcgrigor.msp@scottish.parliament.uk

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# Council amenity services cutback

GRASS will be cut less often next year and public toilets could be closed as cuts to the council's amenity services budget means a reduction in service.

However, councillor Fred Hall believes the council have approached the problems in the wrong way, saying a loss of service does not mark value for money.

Tom Murphy, amenity services manager at Argyll and Bute Council, said: 'Grass cutting, for example, will be reducing from 24 cuts to 21 cuts per year, changing from a five weekly cycle to a six weekly cycle.'

'We're also looking at the future of three public conveniences too.'

However, these could be run by the community, with the lease of the toilets at Arinagour on Coll already agreed. Taynult and Salen's toilets could be set to close, however.

Members of Oban, Lorn and Isles area committee said the proposals raised questions.

Councillor Elaine Robertson said: 'We see in the report this is to go to consultation, but this is due to happen in April so it's more to let people know; it's not a consultation is it?'

Mr Murphy said: 'We've already had a healthy consultation in Argyll and had meetings with the public before.'

'Cinderella services'

Councillor Roddy McCuish also fired a warning over the cuts, saying: 'In my view these are the Cinderella services and we get more comments about this than anything else.'

'We need to have a serious look at these areas to see how we can improve them.'

Meanwhile those who live on private roads may no longer see refuse lorries come to them, with the council considering proposals to either charge or change the collection method.

Mr Murphy said: 'Discussions with a number of private landlords have been taking place and we should have something in place by April.'

'We're also looking at how we market our services to bring more income in.'



Vivienne Hopperton-Dunlop, left, and Janis Hamill with Boyzone.

## I want a Picture of You, say Boyzone superfans

BABY Can I Hold You? was the question on the lips of two Boyzone superfans from Lorn when they met the Irish heartthrobs before their 20th anniversary concert in Glasgow.

Friends Janis Hamill, Oban, and Vivienne Hopperton-Dunlop, from Appin, had VIP tickets to the BZ20 gig in The Hydro on Sunday, allowing them a meet-and-greet with the boys before the concert.

'It was just incredible, a dream come true' said Janis, who has never missed a Scottish gig by the band, or her idol, frontman Ronan Keating.

And No Matter What the rules were, Janis was going to remember her first meeting with Mr Keating.

'Before we were taken into the dressing room to meet the band, we were told we could not touch them, hug or kiss them, unless they approached us,' she said. 'I thought, 'no chance' and just ran in and threw my arms around Ronan.'

'I would have happily been thrown out after that but we stayed for a bit of banter and a few photos.'

'It was an amazing experience.'

Despite having seen the band many times before, Janis said the 20th anniversary concert was the best yet.

Janis and Vivienne seem to have got a taste for celebrity meets and have already bought VIP tickets for Peter Andre in Inverness next year.

## Wife killer Webster loses appeal against murder

CONVICTED wife-killer, Malcolm Webster, has lost his appeal over his conviction for murder.

Webster, 54, originally from Surrey and once of Oban, was found guilty in 2011 of murdering his wife Claire Morris in Aberdeenshire in 1994. He was also convicted of making a similar attempt to murder his second wife, Felicity Drumm, in New Zealand. He was ordered to spend a minimum of 30 years behind bars.

His conviction included charges of attempting to fraudulently marry Simone Banarjee between August 2004 and January 2008, while still married to Felicity Drumm, pretending to have leukaemia and to alter her will to leave her whole estate to him in the event of his death.

Lawyers acting on Webster's behalf argued the trial that led to his conviction was flawed, but judges at Edinburgh's Court of Appeal rejected the claims.

However, two convictions of firearms were quashed.

An appeal on the length of the sentence will be heard at a later date.

## Lorry crash man in serious condition

A 66-YEAR-old motorist is in a 'serious but stable' condition in hospital after crashing into the back of a parked artic lorry.

The accident happened last Wednesday evening on Oban's Lochavullin Road, leaving the road closed for several hours.

The driver of the car suffered fractures to his neck and was taken to Lorn and Islands Hospital before being transferred to Paisley.

Specialist crash investigators from Lochgilphead attended at the scene and police say there 'would appear to be little or minimal braking' before the crash.

The driver of the lorry has been reported to the procurator fiscal for vehicle lighting defects.

## Praise for Inveraray community after £300,000 church works finish

INVERARAY Parish Church will be preserved for generations to come as a £300,000 project to make the building wind and water tight is completed.

Scaffolding that has surrounded the building since the start of the summer was due to come down this week - weather permitting - following repairs to the roof, beams and windows. The work, which was carried out by specialist contractors Laing Masonry, also included gold leafing the clock face, rough casting the building and painting its exterior.

The moment marks a huge milestone for the local community that raised £20,000 for the Church Refurbishment Project over four years after the building suffered serious storm damage. The overall cost of the project is expected to be in excess of £300,000, which was raised through grant funding and included £200,000 from Historic Scotland.

Douglas Gibson, property convener, said: 'Thank you to everyone for all their efforts on the project. A special thanks to Reverend Louis Bezuidenhout for all the work he has done on the project. No one knows the amount of paper work that went into getting the project complete.'

Members of the church will now focus on raising funds to refurbish the interior of the building.

## Large gathering attends Oban's Corran Halls to Light Up a Life



OBAN Hospice's biggest annual fundraiser, Light Up a Life, welcomed a large gathering to the Corran Halls last week to mark the memory of those lost in recent years.

This is the eighth year the ceremony has been held and it was both poignant and moving, giving people the opportunity to light a candle in respect of loved ones no longer with us.

While donations are gathered throughout the year, the event is the charity's biggest fundraiser, and helps pay for the range of services it offers, including running its day hospice at the Oban, Lorn and Islands Hospital.

Left: Pictured at the event are the Friends of Oban Hospice's Margaret MacLean, Anne May and Catherine MacKechnie.

## Audience turn out despite weather

DESPITE the terrible weather at the December meeting of Oban Accordion and Fiddle Club, a good turnout came to listen to Gordon Pattullo (accordion) and Gemma Donald (fiddle).

The duo were ably supported by club chairman Michael Garvin, Hector McFadyen, Archie Cameron, Seumas MacArthur and Caitlin Curran.

Hector gave a special mention to Calum MacDougall, who passed away recently and played a set of Gaelic Waltzes in memory of Calum, a great supporter of the club.



Guest artists Gordon Pattullo and Gemma Donald.

## Firefighter's festive safety warning

FIREFIGHTERS in Oban are urging residents to stay safe over the festive period - a time which traditionally sees a peak in deaths and injuries from house fires.

Martin Hill, station commander, paid a visit to Dunollie resident Margaret Pearson along with three of his colleagues to deliver a fire safety message.

Margaret had previously had a fire safety check carried out on her home and had three smoke detectors fitted free of charge.

She said: 'I'm very pleased with the service. I think it is great and it gives you peace of mind.'

'I feel more secure in my home and would encourage other people to get a check, I have mentioned it to a few people already.'

But the festive safety message also urges revellers not to cook after returning home from a night out - as cooking is the biggest cause of house fires in Scotland.

Station commander Hill said: 'We would encourage anyone attending Christmas parties



Firefighters Robert Woodcock, Colin Campbell, Martin Hill and Ian MacInnes deliver a fire safety message to Margaret Pearson at her home in Dunollie.

or socialising over the festive period to buy food on the way home rather than cook when they arrive home late at night.

'If people do feel hungry after they arrive home we would urge them to prepare cold food such as a sandwich as opposed to cooking after consuming alcohol.'

Station commander Hill is also encouraging people to ensure elderly relatives and neighbours are secure in their home by organising a free home fire safety visit.

These can be arranged by calling Oban Community Fire Station on 01631 569995. More information and advice can be found at firescotland.gov.uk.

## Drugs found in raid on Mull property

POLICE have recovered a large quantity of a class C drug from a property in Tobarmony.

As a result of the police raid on December 6 a 39-year-old man has been arrested in connection with alleged drugs offences.

## Co-op window smashed

A FRONT window at the Co-op in Oban was smashed overnight between last Saturday and Sunday.

The large pane of glass, measuring two feet in width by seven feet in height, will cost £2,000 to repair.

Police are looking to speak to anyone who may have witnessed the incident, or saw any suspicious activity in the area at that time.

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**Santa scales Ben Nevis to meet youngsters**  
Santa Claus made light of the wintry weather conditions when he scaled Britain's highest mountain last week to present youngsters with gifts at the Nevis Ski Centre at Fort William. With Ben Nevis well covered with snow and more forecast, staff are looking forward to a busy festive season. t50estwenty01



Chairmaine and Diane receive their certificates from regional councillor Olwyn Macdonald. t50estwenty06

**Top awards for students**  
TWO NEVIS Training Centre students have overcome their disabilities to achieve top education awards. Chairmaine Dodds of Lundy Gardens, Inverloch, and Diane Grey of Aonachan Gardens, Spean Bridge, have been studying at the Caol-based centre for 18 months. Both have achieved distinction in their first word processing examination and Diane has gained five modules in Business Administration NVQ Level 1.



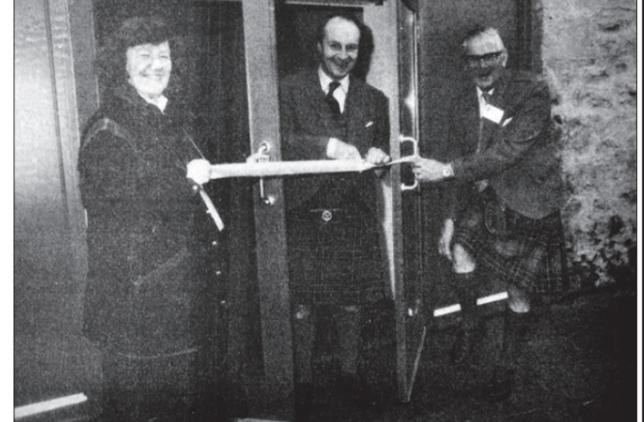
**Football a star attraction at bazaar**  
This football, signed by the Glasgow Rangers football team, provided a big attraction when it was raffled at the Christmas Bazaar in Oban's Corran Halls on Saturday. t50estwenty02



**Mobile grotto on tour**  
Yes, it's that man again. Courtesy of Oban and Lorn Lions Club, Santa Claus was busy at the weekend touring villages around Oban in his mobile grotto. Among the first to meet him when he visited North Connel on Sunday were sisters Lily and Louisa Copping who, like all Santa's visitors, each received a gift. t50estwenty04



**Sponsored cycle boosts hospital appeal by £1,000**  
The Belford Hospital's latest appeal has received a staggering £1,010 cash injection. Staff at Fort William Post Office raised the money by completing a 28-mile sponsored cycle from Banavie to Laggan. The donations will boost the hospital's recently launched Blood Pressure Recorder Appeal Fund. t50estwenty03



Sir Lachlan Maclean cuts the ribbon to open the new Tobermory Housing Development, assisted by Heather Sheerin OBE, of the Scottish Homes Board, and Dr James Maclean, chairman of Lorn and Mull Housing Association. t50estwenty05

**Warehouse transformed into homes**  
A FORMER bonded warehouse on Mull was officially opened last Thursday as 17 new homes. Dignitaries from Scottish Homes, Argyll and Bute District Housing Association looked on while Sir Lachlan Maclean, chieftain of the Clan Maclean, and Scottish Homes board member Heather Sheerin cut the ribbon to declare the new homes open.

Residents braced for another violent storm

WEST Highlands and Hebrides residents were bracing themselves for another violent winter storm last night.

A warning of hurricane force winds and heavy rain was issued by the Met Office for between late Wednesday afternoon and Thursday morning.

Gusts of 60 to 70mph were expected in exposed areas, especially around coasts. Gusts could exceed 80 mph in north west Scotland.

Coastal flooding, heavy rain and widespread travel disruption were also predicted.

The warning came just a fortnight after the last storm left widespread damage and power cuts in its wake, with Mallaig among the places hardest hit.

Robert MacMillan, Mallaig Harbour manager, said: 'We just need to batten down the hatches and make sure the boats are secure. It's just nature and if that's what happens then there's nothing we can do.'

Shop doors open late for festive jamboree

ALMOST every shop in Fort William will open late tonight (Thursday) for the High Street Christmas Gathering.

Hundreds of extra revellers and shoppers are expected in town for the festive jamboree from 6pm to 8pm.

Christmas carols, traditional music, mince pies, competitions and special prizes are among the attractions.

Rural trust holds annual Christmas service

LOCHABER Rural Education Trust will hold its annual Christmas service will be at An Clachan, Lochaber Rural Complex, on Sunday at 3pm.

The service will be led by Dr John Wallace and the readings will be done by pupils from Banavie, Caol, Lochside and Inverloch schools.

A afternoon tea will be provided and the collection will be taken for the work of the trust. Everyone welcome.

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Banavie primary youngsters' concert cheer

Banavie Primary School nursery and primary one pupils were in great voice in their nativity play, part of the school's Christmas concert last week.

Pier access row leaves ferry service stranded

A ROW over access to a pier has led to the suspension of ferry services to a remote west Lochaber hamlet.

Highland Council has halted sailings to Tarbet on the south shores of Loch Nevis after pier owners Nevis Estate raised health and safety concerns.

Knoydart-based firm Seabridge, which won the council contract in April for the triangular Inverie-Tarbet-Mallaig route, is currently running services between Mallaig and Inverie only.

It has a fleet of three boats of 13 metres or less, one a miniature landing craft.

Estate factor Andrew Aitchison said the vessels were 'not compatible' with Tarbet pier because it was being used for boat repair.

EXCLUSIVE REPORT by STEPHEN NORRIS

snorris@obantimes.co.uk

decide what they want to do. The service will almost certainly be resumed in the summer.

Caol and Mallaig councillor Allan Henderson said: 'The current operator just started using the pier without checking. The estate took umbrage and said 'hold on a minute, this is a working pier and jetty'.

'In the interests of fairness either the whole contract has to be re-tendered or a sum of money transferred from the contract to recompense for the non-delivery of the Tarbet service element.

'There is room for everyone to make a wee bit of concession and work together.'

Councillor Henderson added: 'This whole service for Loch Nevis is a vital part of the economy of the whole north Morar region as well

as Knoydart. It should not be looked at in parts but as a whole package.'

Tarbet still has a sea connection to Mallaig through the 'Western Isles' - the former ferry boat on the Inverie route - which is currently operating a Royal Mail service between the two destinations on Mondays and Fridays. However, the contract ends on December 31 and there is no guarantee it will be continued.

Highland Council confirmed the Seabridge service to Tarbet was suspended due to concerns about the difficulty of boarding and alighting from the 'very low' pier.

The tiny uninhabited settlement at the end of a core path from Morar is a popular destination for hikers, especially in summer.

Great Glen hydro project splits opinion

£800m power plant at Invergarry will be the first of its kind in Britain in 30 years

OPINION appears divided in the Great Glen after controversial plans for a giant hydro project near Invergarry were given the green light.

SSE's £800 million plant at Coire Glas would see Sean Mheall - a 2,900-foot mountain across Loch Lochy from the A82, partly hollowed out for an underground power station and tunnel.

A dam and reservoir would be built at a loch behind the hill, along with an outlet area on the loch-side.

SSE says visual impacts would be minimal because the corrie is hidden from view and most infrastructure is inside the mountain.

But some tourism interests argue that lorries carrying away rock over several years, together with a loss of scenic value would damage trade.

'Others, however, point to a boost to the local economy from hundreds of well-paid workers. Ewen Cameron from Balmagister near Invergarry,

By STEPHEN NORRIS snorris@obantimes.co.uk

welcomed the decision. The Glengarry shinty team coach, whose home is next to one of the main access routes to the site, told The Oban Times: 'We are all for it. There are no jobs in the village nowadays and when it's finished it could mean 10 or 12 jobs here.'

'I know there are some people against it but I think the majority are in favour. When it's getting built it will mean more money coming into the place.'

'When they were doing the Glendoe hydro scheme at Fort Augustus there was more money around - people were letting out their houses to workers and the hotels did well.'

He added: 'It will mean two or three years of disruption - but at the end of the day we will get a new access road out of it.'

One local hotelier, who asked not to be named, condemned the decision. She said: 'We put in an objection and it has not been

considered. There is nothing more we can do.'

Ian Smith of the Letterfinlay Lodge Hotel has also stated his opposition to the development, saying it has cost him business since application was lodged last year. Meanwhile, Invergarry Community Council secretary Marigold MacLennan was keeping her powder dry.

She said: 'We only got notification on Friday afternoon. We will discuss it at our January meeting.'

The pumped storage scheme could potentially supply 10 per cent of Scotland's electricity needs at times of highest demand, Scotland's energy minister Ferguson Ewing said.

The plant, the first of its kind in Britain in 30 years, will use cheap off-peak electricity generated by wind farms to pump water up from Loch Lochy to the Coire Glas reservoir.

The stored water would then be released down through turbines to provide power to the grid at peak times, effectively 'flattening out' periods of low and high demand.

Currently millions of pounds are paid out annually to wind farm owners to switch off turbines because too much power is being produced at the wrong time.

Jim Smith, managing director of SSE Renewables, said 'millions of households' and businesses could benefit from the project - but warned high transmission costs and minimal government subsidy put a question mark over the provisional 2015 start date.

MSP welcomes announcement

SKYE, Lochaber and Badenoch SNP MSP Dave Thompson warmly welcomed the Coire Glas announcement.

Mr Thompson said the massive scheme could mean the end of controversial cash hand-outs to wind farm operators - ultimately paid for by consumers - for shutting down turbines producing too much electricity for the grid when it was not needed.

'While these constraint payments will probably continue to more conventional generation methods, Coire Glas will mean constraint

payments for wind generated power should become a thing of the past,' he said on Tuesday. 'This is a huge plant, six times the generation capacity of the recently completed Glendoe hydro plant, but fortunately most of the plant will be underground.'

'The purpose of this plant is to absorb renewable generated electricity that would otherwise be lost. Coire Glas will smooth out some at least of the variability inherent in renewable energy technologies like wind and waves.'

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Advertisement for The Iona Shop, featuring a woman in a red dress and text about individuality and Christmas wrapping.

Advertisement for Arran Brewery, featuring beer bottles and text about a public share offer.

Advertisement for Corpach Boatbuilding Company, wishing customers a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

Advertisement for Forteith, Refrigeration & Heatpump Solutions, offering services for Christmas and New Year.

Advertisement for Coriander Indian Cuisine, featuring a logo and contact information for a Christmas party.

Advertisement for a whisky review, featuring a person in a yellow jacket and text about a 10% discount on collections over £15.

Advertisement for Argyll & Bute Council, providing budget communication and consultation information.

**The Oban Times**  
& WEST HIGHLAND TIMES

**Argyll Array decision disappointment for some but festive gift for others**

THE DECISION by ScottishPower Renewables (SPR) not to take up the option to develop the Argyll Array didn't really come as a surprise to many on the west coast, with the basking shark population alone seen as a stumbling block the Spanish-owned company could not overcome.

While the subsidiary of Iberdrola cited inadequate technology and environmental concerns as the two main reasons the project couldn't go ahead now, a glance at the company's recently downgraded credit rating perhaps provides more clues as to the thinking behind the decision - the development was set to cost in the region of £5.4billion.

However the move does raise several important questions, not least as to whether or not offshore wind energy is a viable solution to Scotland's fossil fuel reliance.

It also causes headaches for Outer Hebridean islands who may have been looking to follow the example of Tiree and Barra in erecting a community-owned turbine. Grid capacity is at its limit and the Array would have removed that bottleneck via a new interconnector.

Without, that glass ceiling may remain for several years to come.

Furthermore, several local companies had also invested heavily to take advantage of the potential the Array may have provided - and for those the hangover from the decision will surely be keenly felt for months yet.

For others, however, there is much to celebrate. Tiree's immaculate view of the Atlantic is preserved and the basking sharks and rare birds that visit the area won't be disturbed. While massive companies are quick to propose wind turbines to harness our natural assets, perhaps we should be trying to protect all our assets more in the first instance - and harness the potential they could unlock for the economy without causing anyone upset.

**GLASGOW LETTER**

**St Columba Church of Scotland**

NEARLY 250 years ago the many Gaels who moved to Glasgow in search of work and improved living conditions set up St Columba Church and for all of these years it has been a huge part of the history and the culture of the city and its people.

The important role of the Gaels in Glasgow over the years is well documented and at a time when Gaelic education is growing within the city, indeed the Gaelic School is but a short distance from the church, it seems incredulous that the Glasgow Presbytery of the Church of Scotland should take a decision that recommends closure of the church.

St Columba Church surely has a different role from other inner city churches. With city redevelopment people migrated to the suburbs and created their own churches there but with its Gaelic tradition, St Columba serves a city wide congregation.

For such a purpose its location close to the motorway system is ideal.

Only one year ago the congregation agreed to a period of guardianship for three years allowing the production of a sustainable plan for the building and yet now the Ministry of Council in Edinburgh will be charged with making a decision, on January 14 2014, which will close the church.

Surely the congregation, who have worked tirelessly to maintain the property so that it can serve the Gaels of Glasgow and many non Gaels of all different denominations, deserve to see this Presbytery decision reversed.

**Gaelic classes**

GAIDHLIG San Dhachaidh is the name of the enthusiasts who attend Gaelic classes in Rhuallan House, Montgomery Drive, Giffnock, G46 6PY with Mairead MacLeod at the helm.

Healthy numbers attend the classes, advanced on Tuesdays from 10.30am to 12.30pm and beginners on Thursdays also from 10.30am to 12.30pm, but they would be delighted if others could join them.

Each class costs £3 and for more information telephone Ian Kennedy on 0141 638 2218.

**Clydebank ceilidh**

THE DECEMBER ceilidh of the Clydebank and District Highlander's Association had the pleasure of welcoming Mark Wylie, farmer from Luss, as chairman for the evening.

Mark is well-known for his skills with sheepdogs and in particular the 'Drakes of Hazard' in which his dogs

exhibit their skills as they control about 15 ducks. He brought much of the humour used in these shows to the ceilidh, interspersing the items on the programme with his stories.

Piper Robert Wood opened proceedings at this friendly ceilidh where the singers were Sheena Walker, Anne Hepburn, Colin Fisher and Norman MacKinnon.

Susan MacFadyen played accordion selections and Kirsteen Grant was accompanist for the evening.

**Hogmanay Concert**

THE GLASGOW Royal Concert Hall is the venue at 5pm on Hogmanay for a new concert of the best in Scottish music to be hosted by Jamie MacDougall.

He will be joined by singers Alistair MacDonald and Cheryl Forbes and they will lead the audience through plenty of favourites backed by the Glasgow Youth Choir and with the added extra of the young talent from the Dance School of Scotland.

**Uist and Barra Association**

CONGRATULATIONS to the committee of the Glasgow Uist and Barra Association and to all those who contributed to the recent concert celebrating the 125th anniversary.

More than £1,200 was raised at the event, to be shared between Gemma Steele's St Jerome's Orphanage in Kenya and the Maggie Centre.

**Diary dates**

**Thursday December 19:** Phil Cunningham's Christmas Songbook.

**Friday December 20:** Carols by Candlelight, Glasgow Royal Concert Hall, 7.30pm

**Saturday December 21:** Tolbooth, Stirling, 8pm - Skerryvore, Highlander's Club Dance, Partick Burgh Hall, 8pm - Charlie Kirkpatrick's Band.

**Friday December 27:** Glasgow Uist and Barra Association Ceilidh Dance, Crawford Hall, Beith Street, Partick, 9pm to 1am.

**Tuesday December 31:** Hogmanay Celebration, Glasgow Royal Concert Hall, 5pm - see above. Hogmanay Family Ceilidh, Brunton Theatre, Musselburgh

**Pub scene**

TRAIL West will be playing in the Park Bar on Friday with Nicky McMichan/Martin Pottinger there on both Saturday and Sunday.

In the Islay Inn it will be Gunna Sound on Friday and Crooked Reel on Saturday. Nollaig Cridheil to all our readers.

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

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

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



**Christmas morning, County Hospital, Oban, early 1990s**

Reader John Hay submitted this week's flashback photograph which shows staff of Oban's County Hospital one Christmas morning in the early 1990s. Prints or emails must be accompanied by a caption, name, address and telephone number. Anyone wishing prints returned must supply a stamped addressed envelope.

**Letters to the editor**

PO Box 1, Oban, Argyll PA34 4HB  
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**New ferry won't change the weather**

Sir, I feel compelled to write in reply to the letter from Angus Campbell featured in the November 28 issue of your paper.

I would have thought locals would have more of a grip on the long-standing issue of ferry services and their limitations with regard to sailing in bad weather.

A new ferry is clearly not the answer. Apart from the fact that to build such a ferry would not give you much change from £50million, then dredging would be required at Mallaig as the entrance would be too shallow, there would then be the breakwater, necessary to allow the vessel to manoeuvre at slow speeds into the confined space at the link-span, especially as Mr Campbell would like the service to run in gales up to and including force nine!

In reality, the ferry is not the problem, the master has to consider some basic facts, his ship has passengers aboard, his car deck has trucks and cars aboard all of which are moveable in bad weather, on top of that there seems little point in ploughing through a three plus hour trip only to realise that getting alongside is not possible.

The fact that Oban has always been used as a destination for South Uist should not be lost on anyone.

Of course, we would like the ferries to be running all the time but we must face facts. Bad weather and exposed piers are difficult and dangerous places. I recently travelled to Tiree ploughing into a gale as far as Coll before the decision was taken to return to Oban.

These things happen and perhaps we should all think long and hard before we besmirch the ships, officers and crew of these vessels.

**Hector Neill, Balevullin, Isle of Tiree.**

**Read White Paper**

Sir, Regarding G W Stewart's letter, the White Paper is available at any time, online.

He does not appear to have read it but, like Darling, feels free to rubbish it.

He asks if 'this potential upheaval is really necessary'. The answer is yes.

I am pleased he is delighted. Now the people of Argyll might think what their options are in the face of such contempt.

**Eileen Clark, Balvicar, Isle of Seil.**

**Ferry survey shambles**

Sir, Your report of the Corran Ferry users' survey illustrates a scenario worthy of Sir Humphrey from 'Yes Minister.'

If you do little to advertise the fact of the survey, choose

a time when people are most distracted, restrict the period of reply, if there is to be a report by the end of January, the results of the consultation can be written beforehand.

These seem to underline the cynical way in which the communities of Ardnamurchan and Morvern have been treated over the whole saga.

The sooner the issue is taken from Highland Council and the ferry crossing recognised as a part of the national road provision, the better.

**Peter Boylan, Geit na Cleire, Lochaline.**

**'Open season' on Gaelic**

Sir, I see from contributions to your letters page, December 5, that once again it is 'open season' on Gaidhlig.

I have studied Gaidhlig - the language of my grandparents - over many years, most recently in Oban at Ulpian classes.

But don't panic Mr MacDougall, I am not costing you millions!

That figure includes the whole of the budget for Gaidhlig Medium Education and children's education is costly in any language.

Why is it that native speakers like Aonghas Eoghain would prefer that Gaidhlig dies?

He could more usefully help to pass on pronunciation and other aspects of 'true culture'.

Make a contribution to the survival of Scottish culture and not just carp from the sidelines.

Our bi-lingual road signs are no more confusing than those in many other European countries and anyone who is so severely and easily confused should not be in charge of a motor vehicle.

**Dot Macdonald, Arisaig, Crannag A Mhinisteir, Oban.**

**Used stamp charity appeal**

Sir, I'm asking you to help raise money for the wonderful Royal National Institute of Blind People (RNIB) this Christmas - and please believe me when I say that it won't cost you a penny.

I have aged related macular degeneration but, whilst my sight has been affected, I count myself as one of the lucky ones.

You can help change this by simply collecting your used stamps this Christmas for RNIB.

Your old stamps will then be transformed into urgently needed funds to help even more people with sight loss access the information, support and advice they desperately need.

Every day 100 people will begin to lose their sight and many will face a future without any help or support. It's heartbreaking to me that RNIB can currently only reach one in three people that need it most. By supporting this all year round campaign at Christmas, they can help more people. Please send your British and foreign stamps to: RNIB, PO Box 6198, Leighton Buzzard, England, LU7 9XT.

Please save your used stamps for RNIB and give people with sight loss the gift of a brighter future. Thank you.

**Dame Judi Dench, RNIB supporter.**

**Skye family photo mystery**

Sir, I am writing with regard to the flashback photograph in The Oban Times of October 3 2013.

I am aware that you have already spoken to my brother Richard Coard but thought the following might be of interest to the family who forwarded the picture to you for publishing.

My family and extended family spent two wonderful weeks every summer in Torrinn, Isle of Skye for many, many years. We usually stayed with the Andersons, Slappin View and the Fishers, Ashbank as we sometimes numbered in excess of 12 in our party.

I think that this picture was taken in August 1971. It was taken at Ashbank where I was staying with my cousins whilst my parents and brothers were with Shonag and Roddy Anderson at Slappin View.

From left to right: Mary Elsom, nee Coard, Sandy Fisher, Isabel Fisher, Andrew Cowie, Granny Fisher, Mick Elsom, James Cowie.

I am the person, first on the left and this was when I was 17 years old. Mick Elsom, to the right, was my boyfriend at that time and is now my husband of 38 years.

I think the most interesting factor about this picture is how we came to see it. My brother Richard went to see Shonag Anderson recently - he has only visited twice in the last 10 years - and she had a copy of this newspaper at the time.

As I understand it, an acquaintance of Shonag picked up this newspaper and was reading it while his wife shopped. When his wife had finished shopping, he popped it in her basket to purchase and finish reading.

Once read, he passed the paper on to Shonag although neither had spotted the photograph. I believe it was Shonag's son Ruarie Anderson who spotted the picture and this was at the time of Richard's visit.

**Mary Elsom.**

**Search on for big-spending children**

Sir, I'm working on a new documentary for a terrestrial television channel.

The documentary is going to meet a selection of Britain's biggest-spending children along with their parents, families and friends.

We are looking for children aged between eight and 16 years old to take part. Perhaps they love designer clothes or they must have the latest gadgets.

We are looking for engaging young people whose stories will help us to explore the spending habits, tastes and attitudes of young people today. We'll be exploring the role of advertising and social media and how this impacts on children's desires to purchase particular items.

Are you aged eight to 16? Do you love clothes and designer labels? Do your parents treat you to the latest designer gear, gadgets, games and luxuries? Maybe you know someone that fits the bill?

Do you have children aged eight to 16 who you find it difficult to say no to? Do you spend more on your kids than you do on yourself? Do your children love spending money on designer clothes, gadgets, parties and hobbies? Do you spend over £100 a week or more on your children?

If you're under 16 please seek permission from your parents or guardian before calling or emailing.

Contact us at Redhouse Television, email casting@redhousetv.co.uk or call 0203 189 3164.

**Janet Chute, Assistant producer, Red House TV.**

**Times Diary**

A TAYNUILT man, who now lives in New Zealand, returned to the village to be welcomed by the recent violent storm.

But Allan Beaton, aged 26, who has come home via Indonesia for the festive period, was patriotic in his Facebook update to friends in the southern hemisphere, as he heard of people getting on

with their daily business.

The proud Argyll man said on Facebook: 'Scottish West-Highland Weather for the day: Winds up to 193 km/h with heavy rain, flooding and snow on the higher grounds. If this was the weather when I was in Indonesia last week they'd be calling it a typhoon. In Scotland we call it Thursday! Loving being back!'

A COUPLE of weeks ago, our IT manager was left despairing after BT's customer service team claimed Connel was an island - as well as repeatedly having to ask to speak to a manager. Eventually, after *The Oban Times* made a press enquiry, the problems with some of our lines were fixed - but not without a delay of several weeks.

Other BT customers reported similar problems, with a lack of traffic lights blamed for one Connel resident being without a phone line for a month.

Readers can imagine then, the noise our IT manager made when he received the latest email newsletter from BT Business. First feature? Four ways to deliver great customer service. The irony was not lost.

A HEROIC CalMac captain was the toast of the internet at the weekend after the MV Caledonian Isles battled through stormy conditions to dock at Ardrassan on Saturday night.

A lone cameraman cried 'Jeez Oh!' as the ferry wobbled from side to side in choppy waters just after 6pm, but that wasn't enough to deter

the masterful captain safely steering the 94m vessel in to dock without much in the way of incident.

Just as impressive, however, was the confidence the harbour staff had in their CalMac colleague, idly chatting away as the boat spun itself into position for the linkspan.

Diary can't help but feel it wouldn't have been so brave!



**Beachd Ailein**  
Ailean Caimbeul

THA MI A' TUIGSINN carson a bhitheas mòran a' dèanamh toileachas às an naidheachd nach eil Argyll Array a' dol air adhart aig muir an iar air Tiriodh, ach tuigidh mi cuideachd an tàmailt nach bi cosnaidhean luachmhor a' tighinn dhan sgìre.

Feumaidh mi aideachadh gum bheil mise dualach a bhith a' fàgail air luchd-glèidhteachais gum bheil iad a' toirt a leithid de spèis dhan àrainneachd is nach eil smuain air fhàgail dha daoine. Gun teagamh 's e dùbhlam mòr a th' ann cothromachadh a dhèanamh eadar feumalachdan mac an duine agus iomlanachd luachmhor an t-saoghail air am bheil sinn beò. Agus nuair a bheir teòmachd sochair ùr gu bith a tha a' cur ri ar co-fhurthachd is dòigh-beatha, chan fhada chun am bi samnt airgid a' toirt buaidh, agus tha rudan mar cùram àrainneachd a' dol an dàrna taobh.

Thug cumhachd dealain atharrachadh do-chreidsinneach air ar beatha agus 's ann nuair a chailleas sinn e rinn droch thidhe na leithid sin a thuingeas sinn cho mòr 's a tha sinn na eisimeil! 'S neònach mura bheil duine neo dithis a' leughas seo aig am bi cumhne air mar a bha cùisean mun d' fhuair sinn dealain. Ged a dh'fhaodar sealltainn air ais le beagan cianalais air taigh-cèilidh le solas an Tilley is blàths teine-mòndh, cha bhi guth 's dòcha air luach an rothadair a tha an-dìugh a' cumail a' bhìdh ùr anns gach dachaigh agus a' luathadh inneal dealain eile a tha sinn a-mise a' cleachdadh gun smaointinn gach latha. Nuair a thàinig an dealain an toiseach, 's iongantach mura robh na h-ùiread de chroitearan mì-thoilichte a bhith a' call beagan talmhainn airson laraich phòlaichean ach b' f'hiach beagan a' chall airson sochair an dealain.

Ach mar as motha dh'fhàis iarrtas air dealain, 's ann as motha cuideachd a thug an t-seirbheis buaidh air sealladh na dùthcha le sreathan de chruinn-dealain mhòra a' bristeadh tro mhaise an àrainneachd. Tha mi fhìn làidir den bheachd gum bheil muilnean-gaoithe nas taitneiche na cruinn-dealain, agus tha mi air a bhith ag argamaid fad bhliadhnaichean gur còir cuideachadh a thoirt dha na coimhearsnachdan iomallach air an taobh an iar agus brath a ghabhail air a' ghniomhachas seo a chumadh cosnadh luachmhor riutha fad ghinealaichean. Ach nuair a tha àireamh agus àirde nam muilnean a sior fhàs, tha mi a' tighinn gu co-dhùnadh gum feum barrachd smachd a ghabhail air a' ghniomhachas ùr seo. Tha sinne a' pàigheadh gu math daor airson taic a chur ri cumhachd 'uaine' ath-nuadhachail agus 's e sin a tha ga fhàgail cho trairraigeach dha buidhnean mòra beachdachadh air leithid Argyll Array a thogail thairis air 360 cilemeatair ceàrnagach!

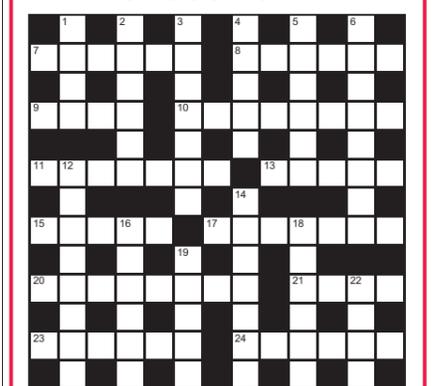
FROM the earliest development of alternative energy schemes I have argued that this industry has enormous potential for remote communities, and I have generally opposed conservationist lobbies.

However, when major companies plan marine wind-farm sites of 360 square kilometres I feel it is time to review the industry!

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

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| 7 Plant tissue which conducts synthesized food (6) | 1 Comparative word (4)            |
| 8 Matey (6)  | 2 Gruesome (6)                    |
| 9 One who puts his nose in the air (4)             | 3 Hide goods (7)                  |
| 10 Natural lighter (8)                             | 4 Grafting shoot (5)              |
| 11 Eagerly (7)                                     | 5 Bamboozle (6)                   |
| 12 Absolute (5)                                    | 6 On the way out (8)              |
| 13 Laugh at (5)                                    | 12 Please get out of my way (6,2) |
| 14 Kindliness (7)                                  | 14 Sun's spot (7)                 |
| 15 To kiss (8)                                     | 16 Establishes (6)                |
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**YOUR LETTERS**

THE EDITOR welcomes letters of approximately 200 words in length for publication on this page.

The editor also reserves the right to shorten, to amend or to refuse to print them. Names and postal addresses must be supplied, including on emails, to indicate good faith. A daytime telephone number is also required for verification.

Anonymous letters or those supplied without a contact telephone number will not be printed.

Please write or fax to: Letters page, The Oban Times, PO Box 1, Oban, Argyll, PA34 4HB. Fax: 01631 568001. Email editor@obantimes.co.uk.

Three injured in A82 car crash

THREE people sustained minor injuries after a car in which they were travelling plunged off the A82 near Fort William on Sunday night.

The road was closed for around 20 minutes from around 6.30pm as an ambulance, fire engine and recovery services attended the incident.

The vehicle had careered down a banking on the northbound carriageway around three miles north of the Corran Ferry. The driver and passengers were taken to Belford Hospital and released after treatment.

Police probe break-in

POLICE in Inverness are currently conducting enquiries into an alleged theft by housebreaking at a dwelling in the Invergarry area on December 10.

The incident is believed to have occurred between midnight and 7.45am on Tuesday December 10. Police would encourage anyone who has any information or who may have seen any suspicious activity to contact them on 101.

Pensioner fined £320 for crashing into stationary car

A PENSIONER was fined after crashing into a car that had already collided with a deer.

George MacNeill, of 22 Victoria Court, Belford Road, Fort William, pled guilty to driving without due care and attention at Lochelside on the A830 around 7.30pm on October 21.

The 82-year-old crashed into the stationary car, causing damage both to it and his own vehicle, but escaped uninjured.

Procurator Fiscal Laura Ryan told Fort William JP Court that MacNeill said he did not see the vehicle or the passengers beside it, who tried to wave him down. MacNeill was fined £320 and given six penalty points.

Pair cleared of parking on double yellow lines

TWO FORT William residents were cleared of parking on double yellow lines outside Lochaber Housing Association's offices in the town.

John Steel, 1 Grant Place, Claggan and Mary Campbell, 18 Maryburgh Court admitted parking on the lines on High Street on August 28.

But both claimed they had been told by housing association personnel they could park there and Mr Steel, 60 and Ms Campbell, 55, pled not guilty at Fort William JP Court.

Procurator Fiscal Laura Ryan agreed to take no further action on this occasion, provided the defendants understood that they cannot park there in the future.



The faces say it all: Frazer Coupland, third left, and fellow Living Lochaber steering group members after the result was declared on Friday. f51bid1no

BID backers stunned by comprehensive rejection

BACKERS of a controversial proposal to create a business improvement district (BID) in Lochaber have been left stunned after the scheme was comprehensively rejected.

At the declaration of the count in the Council Chambers in Fort William on Friday it was announced that 418 voted against the BID, compared to 135 in favour.

The figures represented a 55 per cent turnout of the 950 businesses eligible to take part in the postal ballot.

No breakdown of the results were available, but many observers believe the move foundered on strong opposition from outlying districts such as Mallaig and south Lochaber.

Many businesses in those areas felt an all-Lochaber BID was too unwieldy, would duplicate existing marketing efforts and be heavily slanted towards Fort

William-based projects such as a cinema and conference centre.

John MacMillan, manager of Mallaig Visitor Centre said: 'I'm not surprised at the result. I think this area is too rural for the BID. I think it was a good concept but wrong for this area.'

'I really would have liked to see it happen for Fort William but I think the feeling here was if businesses were getting out what they put in then fine - but people were wary that money would be going into a big pot with no guarantee of returns.'

Frazer Coupland, chairman of Living Lochaber, the steering group behind the proposal, said he was 'still reeling' days after the result showed businesses voted against the plan by a margin of three to one.

When asked whether the BID should have been tabled for Fort William only, Mr Coupland told The Oban Times: 'Some would

say that but some are of the view that Lochaber should be kept together and to have made the BID for Fort William would be further fragmenting the area.'

'We need to take time to reflect on what happened and see what can be done in the future. We will have a regular [Fort William] Chamber of Commerce meeting and discuss the next steps then.'

Opposition group Bid Farewell set up early in the campaign and ran a highly effective publicity operation to highlight what they saw as major flaws.

Local businessman Stewart MacLean, a leading member of the group, told The Oban Times: 'It is far from being a missed opportunity. I'm sure the volunteers both within the community and outwith will continue with the great work they have been doing.'

'I hope [Fort William] Chamber of Commerce can put

this error of judgement behind them and now move forward to truly represent the businesses of Lochaber.'

'Disappointed' Living Lochaber vice chairman Laurence Young said: 'It is a very solid defeat and a huge disappointment, but we equally recognise the strong will of

the businesses in Lochaber. We found because of the scale of the area and the number of businesses it was really difficult to go out and talk to people on a one-to-one basis.'

'What did come out was a strong sense of local identity as opposed to a strong sense of Lochaber identity.'

FORT William Chamber of Commerce chairman Don Hind defended the 100-member organisation's support of the failed Lochaber BID.

He said: 'It is a role of Fort William Chamber of Commerce to bring programmes and initiatives which may improve Lochaber's economic opportunities to the attention of the business community.'

'We acknowledge that on this occasion the majority have chosen not to support the business improvement district initiative and as a chamber we will continue to seek out and present ideas which Lochaber businesses may consider to be of benefit to enterprise and the area in general.'

'The chamber is committed to supporting our members and to enhancing the economic success of Lochaber for the benefit of everyone who lives and works here.'

Cash boost for new Skye Gaelic primary school

HIGHLAND Council is to receive £3 million over two years towards a new £10 million Gaelic primary school in Portree seen as key to reversing the decline of Gaelic on Skye.

Minister for Scotland's Languages Alasdair Allan announced the cash during a visit on Monday to the site of the new school, where building work will begin in 2015.

An additional £250,000 will be invested in Gaelic early years learning to boost the number of pupils going through Gaelic medium education.

Census language results released last month showed the number of Gaelic speakers on Skye falling from 74 to 46 per cent in the two decades to 2011.

The figures are particularly worrying as Skye is widely regarded as a 'heartland' of the language.

Allan Campbell, former chief executive of Gaelic development agency, Bòrd na Gàidhlig was confident that trend could be halted by investment in education. He told The Oban Times: 'The fact that the school is being built and that parents campaigned for it is indicative of a revival of Gaelic. The whole philosophy of children learning languages is to encourage greater use of language in all areas, in the home, workplace, everywhere.'

Eilean a' Cheò councillors

Drew Millar and Hamish Fraser joined Mr Allan at Elgin Hostel, where the early years education will be until the school is built.

Cllr Fraser said: 'Skye is a heartland of the Gaelic language in the Highlands and I have absolutely no doubt that the new standalone school in Portree will prove a great success and nurture many more Gaelic speakers.'

Cllr Millar told The Oban Times: 'Most people believe bilingual education is superior to monolingual. Parents want their children to have a bilingual education. Hopefully this will help the country because we are lacking in that and falling behind the many bilingual children in Europe.'

Mr Allan said: 'The new Gaelic school in Portree is being created as a result of extensive consultation and a continued demand for parents to offer children bilingual education. This funding recognises the growing interest in Gaelic medium education in the Highlands, and all across Scotland, and is part of our commitment to encourage a new generation of speakers.'

He added: 'What we have seen in the last year is that offering Gaelic to young people is making the greatest impact on halting the decline in the language with the most recent census figures showing an increase in all categories for the under 20s for the first time.'



Looking to the future: Left to right: Bòrd na Gàidhlig chair Ian Campbell, Councillor Drew Millar, Portree Primary School pupils Cameron MacPherson and Ian Cormack, Councillor Hamish Fraser at Elgin Hostel, the temporary site of early years Gaelic education.



Pupils from Carboist and Struan primary schools on Skye came together to stage their Christmas play 'Santa's on Strike' at the Christmas concert in Carboist school on Monday night. The nursery children sang a song at the start of the play. Clerical assistant Mina Bruce said: 'The night was a huge success. The parent council organised teas and coffees and we had a raffle and a sale of crafts which all the children made themselves.'



Instrumentalists and singers of Lochaber Music School entertained a large audience at St Margaret's on Sunday. 20\_f51music01

Packed audience enjoys music school concert

LOCHABER Music School performed its Christmas concert to a packed St Margaret's Church in Roy Bridge on Sunday as people piled in to listen.

Director Peter Rose thanked the audience, some of whom were sitting on the floor, for

coming despite the bad weather. The musicians then began the show with a rendition of 'O Come All Ye Faithful'.

Mr Rose thanked all sponsors for their support after the event. He said: 'Lochaber Music School's Christmas concert was without a doubt a most

memorable occasion. Not only was this event a great musical success, it was also a notable financial success with well over £1,000 being raised to help fund the music school's varied curriculum during the coming year.'

Lilian MacDonald, chair of Lochaber Music Festival in the tutor's memory.

Mr Rose thanked all sponsors for their support after the event. He said: 'Lochaber Music School's Christmas concert was without a doubt a most

Care crisis talks call

THE INDEPENDENT Group on Highland Council will today (Thursday) call for an immediate talks on what they see as a crisis in adult community care following a shake-up of the service in 2011.

Their motion, signed by all the group's 21 councillors states: 'Eighteen months ago, we entrusted adult community care services to NHS Highland. Our constituents are now telling us that they are struggling to get the services they need. The Independent Group asks for an urgent meeting for all members with the chief executive officer and Senior NHS Officers to discuss how they are to improve services to our constituents in the immediate future.'

The service includes home helps, day centres and care homes.

Christmas play

ROY BRIDGE Primary School pupils will perform their play 'Jesus' Christmas Party in St Margaret's Church tomorrow. Everyone is welcome to the show, which starts at 2pm.

Fort Augustus shop on award shortlist

FORT Augustus Newsagents and Post Office has been announced as a Scottish finalist in the Countryside Alliance Awards.

The outlet has been nominated in the village shop/post office category - but by whom is a mystery, owner Hazel MacDonald told The Oban Times.

Ms MacDonald, who has been sub-postmistress for 17 years, said: 'I have no idea

who nominated us. We are just a small local post office and we do what we can to make sure we stay open.

'We are on the breadline at the moment because it is very quiet.'

'Things are so expensive and you are in competition with carriers and online shopping - people are finding it very expensive to post things.'

She added: 'We have

been very fortunate for the past four or five years with having the workers at the Glendoe hydro scheme, but that's gone now.'

'It's not just us - the whole village, the pubs the hotels, are quiet too.'

'But we did have a good summer because the weather was great.'

The shop has been in Ms MacDonald's family for 60 years, she said.

Woman denies stealing debit card

A FORMER Knydart woman has denied stealing another person's debit card, using it on three separate occasions to withdraw cash and using it to obtain goods fraudulently.

Kimberley Mackay, 23, now residing at Flat 0/2, 1

Gilhill Street, Glasgow, pled not guilty at Fort William JP Court to stealing the card at Knydart or elsewhere in Lochaber between May 31 and June 3.

She also faces 10 separate charges of using the card without the owner's permission to withdraw £850 from cashline machines and fraudulently pay for products worth £406.91 with the card at various businesses in Mallaig, Knydart and the Isle of Eigg between May 31 and June 16. A further hearing will be held on February 26.

Advertisement for BT Sport, featuring images of football matches and text: 'Must-see double headers Free with BT Broadband', 'Get BT Sport for free with BT Broadband.', '0800 432 0738 bt.com/freesport'

Advertisement for Sabhal Mòr Ostaig, featuring a portrait of a man and text: 'SABHAL MÒR OSTAIG Ionad Nàiseanta Canan is Cultar na Gàidhlig'

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Chaidh an cùrsa seo a dhealbhadh airson duine sam bith a bhios a' sgrìobhadh, a' deasachadh no a' deànadh sgrìobhainnean Gàidhlig de sheòrsa sam bith. Thèid an cùrsa thairis air na sgìlean deatamach airson a bhith ag ullachadh agus a' deànadh sgrìobhainnean gnìomhachais, a' dèiligeadh ri ùghdaran, ag ullachadh teags airson foillseachadh agus a' deànadh leabhraichean agus sgrìobhainnean aig sàr ìre.

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Advertisement for Oban Stove Centre, featuring an image of a wood-burning stove and text: 'OBAN STOVE CENTRE', 'Wishing you a cosy Christmas and a toasty New Year', 'We look forward to seeing you in 2014', 'COMPLETE IN HOUSE FITTING SERVICE HETAS', 'Old Crofters Yard, Soroba Rd, Oban, Argyll, PA344HU', 'Tel: 01631564790 Fax: 01631562919', 'info@obanstovecentre.co.uk'



# Festive fun in the west Highlands



Nicola MacAulay helps Hugh MacCorquodale, right, and Duncan Campbell get into the Christmas spirit with a helping of Christmas pies at Oban Pipe Band's Christmas Soup Lunch on Saturday. 16\_1515oup1



## Smiles from Caol primary Christmas play stars

Pupils of Caol Primary School enjoyed their Christmas play in the school hall. The show 'It's a Baby' was a traditional Nativity from a new angle - performed from the perspective of the innkeeper, played by Archie MacNiven, P2 (middle). The cast was made up of P1/2 pupils with Jack Stephen P1, (left) as Joseph and Kirstin Dodds P1, as Mary. The whole school was involved last Tuesday and Wednesday as the show included songs from all of the other classes, string and woodwind instrument performances and a recital from Caol primary choir. The finale featured a rendition of 'We Wish You a Merry Christmas', sung by all classes. 20\_151caolnativity01



Rockfield Primary School's primary one, two and three classes performed their musical nativity last Wednesday morning to a packed and very appreciative audience. Teas and mince pies were served during an enjoyable afternoon.



Elves Kim MacRae and Eilidh Coghill were Santa's helpers at Kyle lifeboat.

ATROCIOUS weather couldn't dampen the Christmas spirit of families who turned out in force on Saturday to visit Santa at Kyle lifeboat station.

Teas, coffees, home baking, gifts and cards and face painting all helped to raise around £500 for Kyle of

Lochalsh Royal National Lifeboat Institution.

Kyle lifeboat spokesperson Andy MacDonald said: 'We would like to thank everyone who helped to make it such a success and we hope everyone has a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.'

## Auction raises £1,100

SUNART Community Company raised more than £1,100 at its Christmas auction on Saturday in Strontian Village Hall.

Despite stormy weather, around 50 people enjoyed an entertaining evening with

company chairman John Tyldsley as auctioneer.

Local people and businesses donated all items, including meals out, accommodation, venison and firewood. The cash will support projects in the area such as a hydroelectric scheme.



## Santa swaps sleigh for unicycle

Santa ditched the traditional sleigh to unicycle his way through Killin on Saturday, to help raise money for local charities. He was joined by another 150 Santas for the fun event, organised by Pete Waugh from Tay Fitness. Competitors ran from the Falls of Dochart to the Bridge of Lochay Hotel, where they were greeted by carol singers from Killin Choir. Photograph by The Studio, Killin.



Ballachulish children didn't let the downpour dampen their spirits as they reached the finish line. Back left to right: Naomi Hannah, 11, Daisy Baldwin, 9, Argyll Knox, 9, Liam Yard, 8 and Jude Pitt, 8. Front: Jasmine Hannah 9, (left) and Katie Higgins, 10. 20\_151santa01



Children from Happy House Christian Pre-School entertained residents at Lynn Court by bringing festive cheer, singing songs from their nativity play and Christmas carols. Their efforts were praised by the residents. The event comes after the children raised £81.15 for Children in Need.



Kilmuir Primary School pupils gave their version of the Christmas story when they performed the school nativity play in Uig Hall on Tuesday night.

## Rain fails to dampen Santa Dash spirit

BALLACHULISH was awash with soaking Santas on Saturday as people ran and walked round the village in aid of local good causes.

Pouring rain greeted the 'Santa Dash' from Ballachulish Visitor Centre when 55 participants, many in Santa costumes, raised money for Abbeyfield Integrated Care Home and Ballachulish Autism Support Group.

People of all ages, including mothers with babies in prams and 86-year-old Bill Sneddon - who was pushed round the route in his wheelchair - paid between £1 and £3 to take part in the

event. Folk didn't let conditions stop them and organisers said numbers were much higher than expected given the horrendous forecast.

Merriol Baldwin of Run Ballachulish/Glencoe told The Oban Times: 'Seeing the turnout shows what a kind community this is and what great causes we're raising money for.'

The Santa Dash raised £296.49 and organisers would like to thank the Ballachulish Shinty Club, 4th Lochaber Scout Group and Ballachulish Visitor Centre and Tourist Information, including the Quarry Cafe.

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**Festive holiday arrangements**

ARGYLL and Bute Council offices, including customer service points and libraries, will close for the festive period at 5pm on December 24 until 9am on January 3.

There will be some changes to bin collection arrangements during the festive season. Local information can be found at [www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/planning-and-environment/bin-collection](http://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/planning-and-environment/bin-collection).

If anyone needs to contact the council during the holiday period and is not sure what number to use, the general enquiries line - 01546 605522 - has recorded information to help find what they are looking for.

Full details of all holiday arrangements are available at [www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/christmas-and-new-year-arrangements](http://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/christmas-and-new-year-arrangements).

**Marion calls time on police office role**

BOWMORE Police Station will not be the same again after its charismatic force support officer called time on 36 years in the office.

Marion McGregor's role included secretarial and administrative duties but she became the familiar face of Islay's police service.

Her colleagues said she would be a big loss to the island's police service and to the community but they praised her for 36 years' service and wished her well in her retirement.

Speaking on her last day at work last Thursday, Marion said: 'I'm doing lunch with the gang and then no more police station for me. Very mixed emotions.'



Marion McGregor on her last day at Bowmore Police Station.



Kebabish owners Shaukat Chaudhry, right, and brother Hashmat Ali, next right, are joined by the take-away's staff in celebrating the third award the business has received this year.

**Third award for Oban take-away and restaurant**

OBAN take-away and restaurant Kebabish has become the first take away of its kind to claim a Healthy Living Award, as it announces plans to expand the business.

Brothers and co-owners Shaukat Chaudhry and Hashmat Ali, were delighted to claim the award, which comes after recently receiving Eat Safe Awards and two consecutive Scottish Curry Awards, for 2012 and 2013.

Now the business is looking to expand into Lochgilphead after agreeing to take over the premises formerly occupied by The Stables café to open a take-away and restaurant.

Kebabish received the Healthy Living

Award after demonstrating its freshly prepared meals contain as little salt and fat as possible, from using sunflower oil instead of ghee, to serving chapattis as a healthier alternative to nan breads.

Mr Chaudhry said: 'I was absolutely delighted, but to be honest I was more than half the way to meeting the criteria when I entered the award.'

'Providing healthy food with high standards of hygiene is important.'

Moves to expand into Lochgilphead come after the business agreed to take over the premises recently vacated by The Stables

on 48-50 Argyll Street. Mr Chaudhry says the building will receive an extensive renovation, with a new silent extractor-fan system to eliminate cooking smells to be installed.

He said: 'I want something nice for my local community, where I have lived for 10 years.'

'I've been working hard to serve good food to the people of Oban but now I want to do the same in Lochgilphead.'

It is anticipated that the restaurant will create four new jobs initially, with the possibility of more in the future.

**Campaigner's hope for change**

Argyll woman addresses conference on Freedom of Information after landmark victory

AN ARGYLL anti-wind farm campaigner, who won a landmark victory at the United Nations earlier this year, has told a conference how her achievement should inspire change.

Christine Metcalfe, from Loch Avich, recently spoke at the Freedom of Information (FoI) conference at Holyrood, where Deputy First Minister Nicola Sturgeon was among the audience.

Her invitation came after she convinced the UN in Geneva that the UK Government had failed to fully inform the public about the negative effects of wind farms; the United Nations Economic Commission Europe declared the UK flouted Article 7 of the Aarhus Convention, which states citizens must be allowed to fully participate in environmental issues.

Speaking at the FoI conference, the Avich and Kilchrenan community councillor told delegates FoI legislation was 'an important line of defence against governments abusing their power and imposing policies on their citizens that turn out to be harmful'.

She explained that her case had to be taken to Europe after Scottish and UK Government



Christine Metcalfe, with her husband Peter.

requests for help and information relating to a wind farm development near Kilchrenan were refused.

She has also challenged the UK Government's National Renewable Energy Action Plan (NREAP) and criticised the changing of Scottish Natural Heritage's consultee status on wind farm developments, meaning it can only object to applications in designated areas.

In closing her presentation, Mrs Metcalfe asked energy policy decision makers whether they would 'protect the clearly inadequate status quo, whatever the cost?'

Mrs Metcalfe told *The Oban Times*: 'What we hope to achieve is related to that which someone wrote, ie 'All progress depends on our ability to stop dead when we find that we are mistaken'.

'Not one, but many grave mistakes are being made by governments and the EU in respect of energy and wind power development. So there is also a need to achieve recognition that the complaints have exposed why it was necessary to hold authorities to account.'

'It would be illogical to argue against that now that committee findings have proven the opposite case.'

**Community councils plan for the worst**

SEVENTY per cent of community councils in Argyll and Bute have planned for the worst - creating an emergency plan to help them cope in the event of an incident.

Argyll and Bute Council is still encouraging the remaining communities to prepare the action plan to ensure they are ready for the worst winter can bring.

Councillor Donald Kelly said: 'Those community councils in the process of preparing a plan are receiving support from both the council and police and our progress has been nationally recognised.'

'It is vitally important that we continue to encourage all our community councils to engage with us in this process.'

'They are the key to uniting their community around them and with this in mind we would like to recognise the success of community councils which are now actively involved.'

A handbook and emergency kit have already been sent to community councils with instructions on how to prepare an emergency plan including information on roles and responsibilities, details on public safety information and key risks affecting the area.



Anchor Me from Mallaig High School: won prize at the Young Enterprise Christmas trade fair.

**Enterprising Mallaig High School team wins best branding award**

A TEAM from Mallaig High School won a special award at the recent annual Young Enterprise Christmas trade fair in Inverness.

Anchor Me took the prize for best branding for its anchor-themed products, which included leather belts, cards and jewellery.

Mallaig joined eight other schools from across the

Highlands and Moray to set up their sales stalls.

Linda Thomas, chairwoman of the Young Enterprise Highland and Moray Board, said: 'Once again this year our judges were immensely impressed by the talents and resourcefulness of the teams taking part.'

'The trade fair is a great way for young people to learn about marketing and selling their

products to the public and they certainly rose to the challenge.'

Highland Council and Lifescan (Scotland) sponsored the trade fair.

Teams from Portree High School and Plockton High School also took part.

The Young Enterprise company programme sees young people aged 16 to 19 years set up and run their own small business.

**Councillor denied chance to answer Kerrera question**

A COMMUNITY councillor stormed out of last week's meeting of Oban, Lorn and Isles Area Committee after being denied the opportunity to ask questions.

Neil MacIntyre sat through the whole four-hour meeting to hear all items on the agenda, but had wanted to ask a question at the end of the public items following a presentation on plans to upgrade Kerrera's infrastructure.

However, his question was refused by chairman Councillor Alistair MacDougall, as public questions had been moved to the start of the meeting in light of the long agenda to save people having to wait.

After being informed the question would only be allowed at the chairman's discretion - who subsequently refused - Mr MacIntyre said: 'How am I supposed to know what question

to ask before I've heard the report? I wouldn't ask questions on items I'd heard nothing about yet. You're telling me I've wasted hours for nothing?'

As he briskly left the meeting, Mr MacIntyre said the decision was 'absolute nonsense'.

A spokeswoman for Argyll and Bute Council said questions can normally be submitted in advance, although the decision on whether or not to take additional questions was at the chair's discretion.

She added: 'We understand that a member of the public was keen to ask a question at [the end] but, because the public session had already concluded, there had been previous opportunities for questions and the meeting had agreed to proceed with the exempt matters, it was not possible to accommodate this request.'

**Housing groups awarded energy cash**

TWO ARGYLL-based housing associations are to receive £5,000 each to help tenants become more energy efficient.

West Highland Housing Association and Argyll Community Housing Association will receive the cash after Calor Gas and Energy Action Scotland teamed up to help improve the thermal efficiency of housing stock. The funding is part of the Strategic Affordable Warmth Fund, which was created with the goal of helping communities most at risk of fuel poverty.

**Oyster firm looks to expand quickly after £40,000 win**

A NEW business building an oyster trade from the Isle of Barra is set for a productivity boost after winning a £40,000 grant in the Scottish EDGE competition.

From an initial entry field of 314 businesses, Isle of Barra Oysters successfully pitched for all of the £40,000 it needed for new equipment to feed and seed oysters better.

It means the company, co-

owned by Gerard MacDonald and his brothers, will be able to use smaller seed stock, decreasing the cost of the business and increasing yield.

Gerard says it will help grow the business rapidly.

'At the moment, we're in discussion with Highlands and Islands Enterprise and others to put together a major expansion of the farm,' he said.

'We have some investors

interested in coming aboard and part of their expertise is in the sales process and product development.

'This year has been very low productivity because we've been working hard on expansion. At the moment we're looking at 70-100,000 oysters.'

'The year after that we're looking at half a million oysters, with three million the following year.'

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Telephone: 01631 567938 / 07850 630961  
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# what's on

## THE OBAN TIMES FREE EVENT LISTING

- THURSDAY - December 19**  
 9.30am, Ramblers Scotland Glen Nevis walk, meet N Ballachulish PS or Fort William Woollen Mill at 9.50am.  
 10am, LORN Christmas Fayre, Victory Hall, Benderloch.  
 Christmas party night, Skipinnish, Oban.  
 9pm, John 'the box' Turnbull, The Lorne Bar, Oban.  
 10pm, Tequilla Thursday Disco, The Lorne Bar, Oban.
- FRIDAY - December 20**  
 11am, Crofters' Christmas, Crofters' Kitchen, Kintra, Mull.  
 Christmas party night, Skipinnish, Oban.  
 Christmas party night, The George Hotel, Inveraray.  
 Don't Stop Me Now, Columba Hotel, Oban.  
 9.00pm George Noble, Coasters, Oban.  
 9.30pm, PaulP, McCaig's Return, Oban.  
 10pm, Festive Friday Disco, The Lorne Bar, Oban.
- SATURDAY - December 21**  
 10am, Open weekend, Inverawe Smokery, Taynuilt.  
 11am, Santa's grotto, Royal Hotel, Oban.  
 11am, Crofters' Christmas, Crofters' Kitchen, Kintra, Mull.  
 4pm, Mull Film Club A Christmas Story, An Tobar, Tobermory, Mull.  
 Mistletoe Madness, Columba Hotel, Oban.  
 Christmas party night, Argyllshire Gathering Halls, Oban.  
 Christmas party night, The George Hotel, Inveraray.  
 Christmas party night, Skipinnish, Oban.  
 7.45pm, Ceilidh na Nollaig, Taynuilt Village Hall.  
 9.00pm George Noble, Coasters, Oban.  
 9.30pm, Eriskay Lilt, McCaig's Return, Oban.  
 10pm, Rox Revival Disco, The Lorne Bar, Oban.
- SUNDAY - December 22**  
 9am, Ramblers Scotland Loch Creran walk, meet Oban's Longsdale road car park or Ballachulish tourist info.  
 10am, Open weekend, Inverawe Smokery, Taynuilt.  
 12.30pm, Santa Dash, start Tobermory Lifeboat Station, Mull.  
 3pm, Carols for All, Tobermory Parish Church, Mull.  
 7pm, Karaoke, McCaig's Return, Oban.  
 Christmas party night, Skipinnish, Oban.  
 10pm, Mistletoe Madness, The Lorne Bar, Oban.
- MONDAY - December 23**  
 7pm, Disco, McCaig's Return, Oban.  
 Christmas party night, Skipinnish, Oban.  
 10pm, Christmas Ceilidh with Ceol an Aire plus DJ, The Lorne Bar, Oban.
- TUESDAY - December 24**  
 9.30pm, Kevin Fraser, McCaig's Return, Oban.  
 10pm, Christmas Eve party, The Lorne Bar, Oban.
- WEDNESDAY - December 25**  
 9pm, Disco, McCaig's Return, Oban.
- THURSDAY - December 26**  
 8.10am, Ramblers Scotland Glen Etive walk, meet Oban's Longsdale Road car park, Fort William Woollen Mill at 8.20am or Glencoe Village at 9am.  
 9.00pm George Noble, Coasters, Oban.  
 10pm, Boxing day Disco with Rox Revival, The Lorne Bar, Oban.  
 10pm, PaulP, McCaig's Return, Oban.
- FRIDAY - December 27**  
 9pm, Disco, McCaig's Return, Oban.  
 10pm, Everything Chart, Cheese, 80's, 90's & 00's, The Lorne Bar, Oban.
- Send your events to [whatson@obantimes.co.uk](mailto:whatson@obantimes.co.uk).



Gloria Young looks at her painting of late husband Derek, who is her inspiration for raising money for Cancer Research with her latest calendar.

# Gloria releases second charity calendar

BENDERLOCH artist Gloria Young is once again releasing a calendar of her stunning paintings to help raise money for Cancer Research UK.

Renowned for bringing astonishing character, humour and life to her subjects, Gloria last year decided to release her first ever calendar in memory of her late husband Derek, who died eight years ago.

While she has sold nearly 2,000 paintings in her career, Gloria's calendar last year was the first time she'd used her back-catalogue to create a 'commercial' work.

She was persuaded to do the calendar by friend and neighbour Steve Eccles and such was the reception, she's decided to do it all over again.

The pictures selected for this year's calendar, all hand-drawn and painted by Gloria, once again showcase some of Argyll's best known locations, including local highlights Tralee Bay, Mull and Ardcattan Priory.

Gloria said: 'I think this calendar is better than last year's, although that did rather well and it raised £400 for the charity.'

'I might print another 200 this year, we'll have to see how it goes.'

Two pounds from each calendar will go towards Cancer Research UK, with 200 printed in the first run.

Copies are available from CGL in Oban and Munro's Supermarket in Benderloch.

# Big hearted Carley's birthday wish is a gift to other children

BIG HEARTED Carley MacKay had a special request for those attending her seventh birthday party on Saturday, each guest make a donation to charity.

Carley wanted to do something for Save the Children after seeing what the organisation does with the funds it raises on TV, and wanted

nothing more than to help the cause along.

So the Dunbeg Primary School pupil decided her roller-blading party at Atlantis Leisure would be complete by taking part in the charity's Christmas Jumper Day too, with each guest donating at least £1.

In the end, she raised £128.

Mum Vicky said: 'She watched the Save the Children advert on TV, which isn't nice, and it caught her eye. It really hit her and she said 'can we do something at my party for them?'

Carley even opened a text line for anyone else that wants to donate £1 to the charity. To do so, text teamweec to 70050.



Carley MacKay, centre back, is surrounded by her friends, who all helped raise money for Save the Children to fulfil a her seventh birthday wish. 16\_t51stcbirth1

# Charitable children help raise money for those in need



Bun-sgoil Phort Rìgh children were star performers at the charity event on Saturday.

A CHARITY event in a Portree store has raised almost £1,000 to help people in need across the world.

And stars of the show at Jan's on Saturday were Bun-sgoil Phort Rìgh (Portree Primary School) pupils who sang carols for two hours.

The children also treated shoppers to a selection of tunes on the bagpipes, fiddle, clarsach and drums.

Santa, meanwhile, battled through horrendous weather conditions to welcome children to his grotto.

Donations poured in and by the close of play £990 had been raised.

The Isle of Skye Rotary Club, who are distributing the funds, will use £590 to pay for a 12-people shelter for homeless victims of the Philippines typhoon disaster.

The remaining £400 will go towards Polio Plus, a charity campaigning to eradicate the disease worldwide.

Shop owner and Rotarian Jan Nicolson told *The Oban Times*: 'We really appreciate the support we got from the community - and the talent of the kids was absolutely amazing.'

# Christmas carol concert is a cracker

TIDINGS of joy filled the Corran Halls on Sunday, with the Rotary Club of Oban's annual charity carol concert deemed a 'cracker'.

President Alan Johnston welcomed a large crowd to the venue, heralding in a host of the area's talented musicians and singers for a concert full of community spirit.

From readings and traditional carols to rousing choir pieces, a warm

Christmas feeling filled the hall to shake off the wintry chill.

Dunbeg Primary School kicked off the musical numbers with terrific performances of Tell out the Christmas Story and Christmas Bells, before The Boogies choir sang three lively numbers.

Rockfield Primary School got one of the biggest cheers of the afternoon though after a terrific performance

despite the backing music skipping throughout Walking in a Winter Wonderland. Credit was due to the pupils and teacher Joanie Garvie for powering through regardless - complete with a few wry smiles.

Musical performances also came from Oban Bach Orchestra with the Kilmore and Oban Church of Scotland Recorder Group, Oban Gaelic Choir, Oban High School and Lochnell

Primary School, before the Spotlight Musical Theatre finished the singing from the stage with two numbers, It's Beginning to Look a Lot Like Christmas and It's the Most Wonderful Time of the Year.

Rev Ken Hunter, who offered the opening prayer, concluded the event with the final blessing - wishing everyone who attended well for their festive celebrations.



Firefighters in Oban hit the streets recently to raise money for The Fire Fighters Charity. The annual fundraiser sees shifts from Oban Fire Station collect donations on George Street. This year the fire fighters collected £854.35. 16\_t50fremen01

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**OBAN WINTER FESTIVAL**

Oban Winter Festival Committee would like to thank everyone who took part in the festival and helped to make it such a tremendous success. We wish you a Happy Christmas and prosperous 2014. We look forward to seeing you 21st Nov - 30th Nov 2014.

**COMMUNITY NOTICEBOARD**

An Comunn Gaidhealach MEUR CHRUAICHAIN (Cruachan Branch)

**Cèilidh na Nollaig**  
 Saturday 21st December in Taynuilt Village Hall at 7.45pm  
 Joy Dunlop (Mod Gold Medalist), Robert Robertson (2013 Mod Gold Medalist)

Rockfield Primary School Gaelic Choir - Conductor Joannie MacLachlan  
 The Band - Oban High Traditional Musicians  
 Piper - James MacPherson, The Isla Sinclair Dancers  
 Fear an Taigh - Duncan Mackel

Stovies and home baking - Raffle includes Christmas hamper.  
 Admission including Members £4.00 - Children (5-16 yrs) £2  
 (Funds collected promote The Gaelic Language, Music and Culture)

A Merry Christmas from  
 OBAN & LORN LIONS CLUB

**SANTAS GROTTO**  
 SATURDAY 21ST DECEMBER  
 11am - 3pm  
 ROYAL HOTEL, OBAN

This is your last chance to meet Santa before he sets out to deliver his presents on Christmas Eve



Serene: 'Five in One' captures the magic of the isles as seen from Knoydart. Photo courtesy of Andy Tibbetts and Community Land Scotland.

## Knoydart residents successful in national photography competition

COMMUNITY-owned Knoydart showed it has plenty of photographic talent when local residents scooped several prizes in Community Land Scotland's (CLS) photography competition.

Focusing on images of the land and people of CLS membership areas, over 200 entries came in from all over the west of Scotland, north to Durness, east to Findhorn and south to Macrihanish.

Andy Tibbetts won the adult members' category for Knoydart with 'Five in One' a beautiful image showing Knoydart in the foreground with Eigg, Rum, Sleat and South Uist behind.

And in the under-16s category, Knoydart youngsters Struan Robertson was land runner up with his shot of Knoydart and Kira Holroyd people runner-up with 'Horsing Around'.

Also in the under-16s, members' winner was Ollie

MacArthur from Tiree with 'My Homeland', land winner was Josh Nelson from Stornoway with 'Black Sandy from Sheshader Bay', people winner was Joan Macleod from Harris with 'Shepherd in the Hills' and other winner was Lois Morrison from Breascleite on Lewis with 'Peatstack and Tractor'.

Elsewhere, other category adult winner was Chris Murray from Lewis with 'Moonlit stones at Callanish'.

CLS chair David Cameron said: 'Our photography competition has given people the chance to express through images land which is owned, or looking to be owned, by Scotland's communities, and the people who live and work on land which they can call their own.'

Thanks go to all who entered the competition and Skye-based photographer Cailean Maclean, who judged the competition. The competition was supported by Carnegie UK Trust.

## Festive fun at Inverawe

ROMANO Capucci and Sam Reed helped bring in the festive 'season' at Inverawe Smokehouse at the weekend at the first of its two Christmas open weekends.

A host of treats was on offer for visitors, including some of the company's delicious smoked fish, while the café proudly displayed the artistic efforts of local pupils following their colourful competition.

All entrants received

chocolates, while the winners had their efforts put on display as well as vouchers.

P1, 2 and 3 winner was Keiron Brightly of Dalmally Primary School's P3 class, the P4/5 award went to Iona MacKay of Dalmally Primary School and Ellis Hunter, P6 at Taynuilt Primary School, won the P6/7 prize.

The second Inverawe Smokehouse open weekend starts at 10am this Saturday. 16\_t5inverawe1



Oban Phoenix Cinema	The Hobbit: The Desolation Of Smaug		
	Thurs 19th	19.00	HFR 3D
	Fri 20th	16.00	HFR 3D & 20.00
	Sat 21st	16.00 & 20.00	HFR 3D
	Sun 22nd	15.00	HFR 3D & 19.00
	Mon 23rd	15.30 & 19.30	HFR 3D
	Tues 24th	15.30	HFR 3D
	The Hunger Games Part 2: Catching Fire		
	Thurs 19th	18.30	Screen 2
	White Christmas		
Thurs 19th	14.00		
Miracle on 34th Street			
Sat 21st	13.30		
Elf			
Sun 22nd	12.30		
Muppet Xmas Carol			
Mon 23rd	13.00		
Its A Wonderful Life			
Tues 24th	13.00		

**The Hobbit: The Desolation Of Smaug (12A)**  
The dwarves, along with Bilbo Baggins and Gandalf the Grey, continue their quest to reclaim Erebor, their homeland, from Smaug. Bilbo Baggins is in possession of a mysterious and magical ring. This is the highly anticipated second part of Peter Jackson's incredible trilogy, once again starring Ian McKellan as Gandalf and Martin Freeman as Bilbo Baggins. This is not a film to be missed by any Tolkien fan.

**The Hunger Games Part 2: Catching Fire (12A)**  
Katniss Everdeen has returned home safe after winning the 74th Annual Hunger Games along with fellow tribute Peeta Mellark. Winning means that they must turn around and leave their family and close friends, embarking on a "Victor's Tour" of the districts. Along the way Katniss senses that a rebellion is simmering, but the Capitol is still very much in control as President Snow prepares the 75th Annual Hunger Games (The Quarter Quell) - a competition that could change Panem forever. (Screen 2)

**Christmas Films (55/£3)**  
**White Christmas (U)**  
Bing Crosby stars in this classic christmas film about good will and love. Having left the Army following WWII, Bob Wallace and Phil Davis team up to become a top song-and-dance act. Davis plays matchmaker and introduces Wallace to a pair of beautiful sisters (Betty and Judy) who also have a song-and-dance act. When Betty and Judy travel to a Vermont lodge to perform a Christmas show, Wallace and Davis follow, only to find their former commander, General Waverly, as the lodge owner. A series of romantic mix-ups ensue as the performers try to help the General save his falling Lodge.

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A Christmas fair at Caol Youth Centre raised £731.38 for Lochaber 1730 Air Squadron on Saturday. A raffle, stalls and teas and coffees - together with generous support from the local community - helped boost the sky-high total. Above, air cadets Morvern Harper, Shaun MacEachan, Connor Laverty, Lewis Wells and Emily Connolly, elves Morgan, Scott and Elle Bissett, and civilian instructor Debbie Donaldson, front right, line up with Santa for The Oban Times. 20\_f5air01

## Primary pupils perform Christmas play in Fort William

PUPILS at Fort William Primary School played their part in the Christmas nativity play in the school hall.

The performance of 'Hosanna Rock' was a tradi-

tional production involving the whole school.

The play featured Zoe Hough, primary three, as Mary, Liam MacCrimmon primary seven, as Joseph.

Jenny MacHugh and Louise Knox both primary five, featured as angels and Reinis Cameron and Kerri Watson both primary seven, as narrators.



Dressed to impress: The primary pupils were ready for their audience. Back left to right, Reinis Cameron, Liam MacCrimmon and Kerri Watson. Front left to right, Jenny MacHugh, Zoe Hough and Louise Knox. 20\_f5nativity01

## Limo is the highlight of Soroba Young Families fundraiser

SOROBA Young Family Group evoked the festive spirit to help raise money for its annual Christmas party.

The playgroup also requires funds for visits to Atlantis Leisure and Oban Phoenix Cinema in the

lead up to Christmas.

At Glencruitten Church Centre last Saturday families took part in games, crafts and face painting and enjoyed teas and cakes.

But perhaps the biggest thrill for the youngsters

was getting a tour of Oban in a limousine owned and driven by James Strachan.

Soroba Young Family Group has thanked WH Smith, which has given the group a 25 per cent discount on books for its Santa's Grotto.



Children line up to go for a spin around Oban in James Strachan's limousine. 16\_t5soroba01



Overnight film event a success

OBAN High School pupils, Fergus McGowan, Thomas Smith and Allan Colthart settle in for the night at Oban Phoenix Cinema as they prepared to watch extended editions of the Lord of the Rings

trilogy back-to-back on Friday night - 800 minutes worth of film. The boys, who organised the overnight event for the community, were joined by 110 other viewers, including school technician

Kieron Green, who came dressed as Gandalf for the occasion. The community-owned cinema was staffed overnight for the event and Carol Devine said similar events would be possible in future. 16\_t5cinema01

Local Origins Rural Network LOCAL PRODUCERS

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# Your Christmas messages

**MRS ANNIE MACINNES**  
would like to wish all family and friends a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

**MERRY CHRISTMAS & HAPPY NEW YEAR**  
to all my family, friends and neighbours from Norma Burnett and Fearless Fred.

**MERRY CHRISTMAS & HAPPY NEW YEAR**  
to all my relatives and friends from Jean Whyte, Benderloch.

**MERRY CHRISTMAS & HAPPY NEW YEAR**  
to all all our relatives, friends and neighbours from Mary, Iona and Ashley

**PETER CAMERON**  
formerly of Duror, would like to wish all his relatives and friends a Merry Christmas and a Happy New year.

**Coll MacDougall, 10 Torosay Court, Oban**  
is unable to send Christmas cards this year but wishes all friends the Compliments of the Season.

**MERRY CHRISTMAS & A HAPPY NEW YEAR**  
to all our relatives and friends. Chrissie and Hamish Yeoman, Oban.

**SEASONS GREETINGS**  
Helen MacBean wishes her friends and family a very happy and healthy Christmas and New Year. Victoria Court, Fort William

**ALASDAIR BOYD**  
wishes all relatives, friends and neighbours a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

**SEASONS GREETINGS**  
Alistair and Ros MacDonald would like to wish all their friends a Happy Christmas and a prosperous New Year

**BRENDA, POACHER, FLIP AND FAMILY**  
would like to wish everyone a good Christmas and all the best for 2014. xXx

**MERRY CHRISTMAS & HAPPY NEW YEAR**  
to all relatives, friends and neighbours from Iain MacKechnie, Selma, Erray Road, Tobermory.

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# Review of the Year 2013

The Oban Times & WEST HIGHLAND TIMES

## JANUARY



### Stella wins Angel of the Year award

A tireless volunteer within the village of Taynuilt was unanimously chosen as *The Oban Times* Angel of the Year. Stella Huntingford, pictured receiving her trophy from *The Oban Times* editorial director Stewart MacKenzie, was a favourite with the judges, who were impressed by the number of organisations she is involved with and her continuous fundraising efforts.



A young clarsach player became the first Oban High School pupil to take up a place on the prestigious traditional music course at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland. Becky Hill, from Connel, was accepted to study a BA Hons in Scottish traditional music after securing one of only two clarsach places on the course.



### Stranded dad finally meets baby daughter

Doting dad Sean Rowan finally made it home in mid-January to see his new daughter Ava - after he was stranded offshore at the time of her birth. The first-time father was thwarted in his efforts to get home to wife Tammy as the weather saw him stuck on the North Sea Balmoral platform. Ava was the first baby born in Lorn and Islands Hospital, Oban in 2013 when she came into the world on January 3 - five days before her due date.



### Oban school book prize fun

This primary one pupil at Park Primary School in Oban was delighted to receive his copy of a Myro storybook after classmate Ruby Smith, five, won *The Oban Times* Myro competition with her fantastic artwork and gained prizes for all of the children in primary one and an educational pack for class teacher Alison Johnston.



### Lifeboat crew in 11-hour rescue

An arduous eleven hours at sea saw the volunteer crew of Tobermory lifeboat struggle to tow a fishing boat to safety - after it broke free twice. Coxswain Andrew McHaffie said: 'This was a difficult and long service and we had to establish several tows with the fishing boat in very rough conditions. We're all extremely pleased that there was a good result at the end of a very long day.'

### Dream trip a 'fantastic surprise' for Ciara

A young Islay girl celebrated completing an intense course of therapy with a trip to Disney World in Florida. Ciara Caskie Allan received the 'fantastic surprise' from the Make a Wish Foundation in Oklahoma where she has been receiving proton therapy in the hope of defeating a brain tumour. Here, Ciara is ringing the celebratory bell to signify the end of her treatment: 'Ring this bell three times well its toll to clearly say, my treatments done, this course is run and I am on my way,' its ode to the children leaving the centre.



### Four friends killed in avalanche

FOUR friends were killed after an avalanche tragedy in the hills in Glencoe. Oban student Chris Bell, 24, a member of three West Highlands cycling clubs, died after getting caught in the 1,000-foot avalanche on 3773-foot Bidean nam Bian. His friends Dr Rachel Majumdar, 29, a doctor at Harrogate District Hospital; Hull University PhD student Tom Chesters, 28, also from Leeds; and County Antrim woman Una Rachel Finnegan, 25, a junior doctor living in Edinburgh, were also killed in the incident. A woman was taken to hospital in Glasgow in critical condition, while one man from the six-strong group managed to escape harm and raised the alarm.



Lochaber Artistic Roller Skating Club were among the prizewinners. Hazel Currie, left, and Marjorie Currie, right, are pictured with coach of the year Freida Alexander.



From Mallaig to London Fashion Week: designer Kayleigh MacBeth.

### Kayleigh's fashion designs make London catwalk

A FORMER Mallaig High School pupil turned fashion designer was invited to take part in a prestigious show at this year's London Fashion Week. Kayleigh MacBeth was asked to enter the 'Fashion's Finest' event after organisers saw her hand-made collection 'Alba' at a show in Glasgow. The 22-year-old then made it through a selection round against a number of other entrants. She said: 'When they said they wanted my collection in the show I just couldn't believe it. It's mind boggling to be selected for something this.'



### Fort William Falcons finally net court cash

Fort William Falcons celebrated receiving final funding to line a full-sized netball court at Lochaber High School. For three years the Falcons' training has been complicated by a combination of basketball, football, and badminton markings. But now the club can play home games against their rivals, with the junior team playing Oban once the court is ready next month.

### North Uist singer's Oscar honour

NORTH Uist Gaelic singer Julie Fowles was nominated for a best song Oscar after performing 'Touch the Sky' on the soundtrack of the Disney Pixar film Brave. Highlands and Islands MSP Rob Gibson lodged a motion in parliament congratulating the Hebridean star and praising her contribution to promoting Scotland's native language. The nomination, said Mr Gibson, was 'a great achievement'.

### Sports association awards night success

SOME of Lochaber's finest sporting performances from 2012 were remembered and honoured at a ceremony on Saturday night. Lochaber Sports Association's second annual awards evening saw an audience of members from various sports groups from pack out Lochaber Rugby Club in Banavie. Hill runner Finlay Wild was named individual of the year, while Lochaber Camanachd took home the trophy for team of the year. Lochaber Artistic Roller Skating Club stalwart Freida Alexander was named coach of the year, and young sailer Ruairidh Mills of Glencoe Boat Club fought off tough competition to take the Youth Endeavour Award.



Lochaber no more: DE Shoes manager Mike Brown consoles staff members Stella Colburn, left and Jackie MacDonald.

### Doors close on town's last shoe shop

FORT William's last remaining shoe shop announced it was to close with the loss of seven jobs. Manager of DE Shoes on High Street Mike Brown and his six staff received letters from the company's managing director Robert Sinclair announcing the shock news. Mr Brown, 55, who had been nine years in charge at the shop, said: 'It is an incredibly sad day not just for the employees of the company but also for the town.'

### Dedicated Jessie's delight at MBE

ONE OF Lochaber's most dedicated health professionals spoke of her delight after receiving an MBE in the Queen's 2013 New Year Honours List. Jessie Colquhoun, from Kilchoan, received the honour for 'services to healthcare in Ardnamurchan, Argyll.' Jessie officially retired in February 2012 after 55 years of dedicated service, the last 36 of those as district nurse in West Ardnamurchan. She said: 'I am very honoured. To me nursing is more than just a job - it's a vocation, looking after people from the day they were born to the end of their lives.'



Destroyed: Helen Ferguson's holiday accommodation next to the Sonachan Hotel.

### Blaze destroys Kilchoan holiday homes

THE OWNER of an Ardnamurchan holiday property destroyed in an inferno thanked local fire crews for their professionalism and the Kilchoan community for their support. Helen Ferguson lost precious family possessions in the blaze on Wednesday January 2 at Bealach Ruadh next to the Sonachan Hotel, which Mrs Ferguson also owns. The dwelling, formerly the Fergusons' home, provided high-quality self-catering accommodation for visitors. By good fortune no-one was inside when the blaze took hold. Mrs Ferguson said: 'We built it 13 years ago and my three children were brought up in there. We lost a lot of stuff in the attic such as musical instruments and old photographs - that's been very difficult for us. But the main thing is no-one got hurt.'

The Oban Times & WEST HIGHLAND TIMES

# Review of the Year 2013



## Port expansion plans unveiled

KISHORN Port Ltd (KPL) unveiled major expansion proposals at a public open day in Lochcarron Village Hall. The ambitious masterplan allows for full-scale manufacture of concrete bases for offshore wind turbines, reclamation of the foreshore to create more industrial space and full services for the growing offshore wind, wave and tidal energy market. In what KPL director and Ferguson Transport boss Alasdair Ferguson describes as 'the best scenario', up to 2,500 jobs could be created on site, along with accommodation for 1,500 staff, storage, warehousing, berthing and workshops – potentially transforming the Wester Ross economy.

## Church future in spotlight

ARDNAMURCHAN residents were consulted about the future of a 180-year-old church near Kilchoan. Ardnarmurchan Parish Church urgently needs extensive renovation if it is to remain open, prompting local minister Rev Fiona Ogg to ask the local community if they think the costs are worth it. It is thought more than £100,000 is required just to weatherproof the building.

## Geology student's lucky find

A WOMAN who found two silver rings washed up on the shores of Loch Linnhe was allowed to keep them after their rightful owner could not be traced. Geology student Ellen Phillips found the cubic zirconia bands in a water-damaged ring box in amongst rocks just south of Cuil Bay while researching her dissertation on the formation of the Duror and Kentallen peninsula in July 2012. Glencoe police appealed for information about where the rings came from but could not source the original owners. Ellen said: 'I'm really happy to have them. I wear one of them daily, and the other one stays at home. They are a really nice reminder of my trip to Scotland.'



Blanka and her shorn ponytail, with Anne Mulhern from Lochaber Together and hairdresser June MacLeod. 20\_f09hair01

## Blanka's close shave boosts charity

A CAOL woman had her long dark hair shaved off to raise money for a cancer charity. Blanka Maclean, originally from Poland, decided to raise money for Lochaber Together for Cancer Research UK after her mother died from lung cancer. Blanka admitted to feeling 'a bit stressed' before the electric razor was turned on, but afterwards was a bit more relaxed. She said: 'I feel fine. I quite like it actually. I wanted to do this because my mum died of cancer in 2010, and Dr Craig MacMillan and everyone at Glen Mor Medical Centre was really good with us.' The shorn hair will be sent to the charity and used to create a wig for cancer patients.



Rev Adrian Fallows, left, led the ceremony. Clan Donald Isle of Skye general manager Stephen McKeown, right, was among those laying wreaths. 20\_f08glencoe03

## Glencoe Massacre remembered

A BLIZZARD engulfed survivors of the Glencoe Massacre on February 13, 1692 – and conditions were little different for the annual commemoration of the notorious deed. Driving sleet pelted 50 hardy souls huddled round the Celtic cross at Upper Carnoch for the memorial ceremony as higher up the glen heavy snow swept across the mountains. Rev Adrian Fallows, the Rector of St Mary's, led proceedings at Upper Carnoch as wreaths were laid in memory of the 38 MacDonalds killed by order of the Crown.

## Residents demand action over icy steps

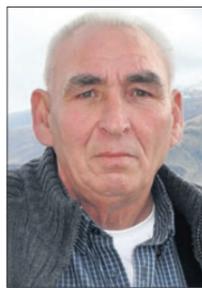
RESIDENTS of a Fort William housing scheme demanded action from Highland Council over ice-bound steps. Local man Vincent Duncan fell on ice coming down the steps from his Argyll Terrace home bruising a bone in his back. Mr Duncan, better known locally as Rusty, said old folk and children going to school were particularly at risk. He told *The Oban Times*: 'I have been phoning the council for months. The water has been running down the hill for a year. When the frost comes people can't use the steps, yet there's nothing being done about it.' 'There's an 84-year-old woman next door and when her daughter comes to take her out she can't use the stairs.'



Bomb site: Willie Burke's caravan pitch after being dug up with earth moving equipment. 20\_f07dig01

## Outrage after caravan pitch is dug up

LOCHABER residents expressed outrage after a traveller's caravan pitch was 'vandalised' with earth moving equipment. Kilbirnie grandfather William Burke brings his caravan to Camusnagaul, across Loch Linnhe from Fort William, every spring and summer. The 62-year-old grandfather had enjoyed a trouble-free 25 years before one householder began complaining about litter to Conaglen Estate, which allows Mr Burke to use the site. Local people said the claims were completely without foundation. The same man, said locals, dug up Mr Burke's site in an attempt to prevent his return.



Willie Burke: heartbroken 20\_f07dig02

Mr Burke said: 'I have tried everything, but I can't win. Last year the guy [Conaglen estate factor] said as long as there was just one caravan there was no problem. 'Me and my wife were happy there for years.'



Lochaber Curling Club member Jo Cowan shows just what it means to be curling again on outside ice for the first time in 35 years. 20\_f09curling02

## Curling returns to Glen Nevis

'THE ROARING Game' returned to Fort William as Lochaber Curling Club enjoyed a match on outside ice for the first time since 1979. The restored curling ponds in Glen Nevis regularly hosted curling games in years gone by - and echoed once again to granite stones rumbling up the 30-metre rink. Club members piped water up from the nearby River Nevis hoping for a hard overnight freeze – and were rewarded with a solid two-inch layer of perfect ice by morning.



Don Hind presents the chamber prize to Jane Gill and her two-year-old daughter Lily.

## Family win brings festive cheer

ONE Fort William family received a special late Christmas present, winning a weekend break for two donated by Fort William Chamber of Commerce. Jane Gill, of Kennedy Road, entered a prize draw at the High Street Christmas Gathering on December 20 and was presented with her prize by chamber chairman Don Hind.



Grateful: Allan and Tanya Ross attended the Star for Harris gig and thanked local people for their support. 20\_f06star01

## Delight as Star for Harris charity gig raises £1,300

IT WAS a full house at the BA Club in Fort William for a live music night which raised £1,300 for local charity Star for Harris. Around 250 partygoers paid £5 entry to hear a number of local bands perform free. The gig was set up by 'Jeff Presents', the collective promotional name for a group of event planning students at West Highland College in Fort William. Corpach couple Allan and Tanya Ross set up the charity after their 17-month-old son Harris died from aggressive brain cancer in September 2010. Tanya said: 'Allan and I were humbled to see how many people took part or helped out and are overwhelmed by the support the community continues to give to Harris's charity.'



## Young handler Dougie steals the show

Ten-year-old Dougie MacDonald hit the headlines in February after *The Oban Times* featured him on the front page. Dougie, from Tyree, Benderloch, was one of the youngest local handlers at the Highland Cattle Society Show at Oban Livestock Centre. He aims to have his own farm when he's older. Photograph by Kevin McGlynn.

## Rob's recipe causes quite a stir

A recipe submitted by Isle of Coll crofter and former Scotland rugby international Rob Wainwright to the National Farmers Union Scotland's (NFUS) Centenary Cook Book caused quite a stir. Rob's tangy barbecued butterflied shoulders of lamb came about after his wife Romayne retrieved a ewe hogg which had been hit by a school bus. Rob told *The Oban Times*: 'I am proud to say that Romayne, on being informed, scooted up the drive on the quad, collected the casualty and - island-style - soon had it cleaned and hanging in the game larder.'



## First resident doctors on Jura in two years

Jura gained its first resident doctors in two years when a new husband and wife team took up post. Dr Martin Beasall, above, and wife Dr Abby Beasall responded to a campaign by islanders to find a new GP, which began after traditional methods of advertising the post proved unsuccessful.



## Curtain up on story of 'Half-hung Archie'

A sell-out crowd at Strachur's Memorial Hall thoroughly enjoyed the dramatised version of the story of Archie McPhunn, or 'Half-hung Archie' as he is known on Loch Fyne-side. Strachur and District Local History Society was behind this gripping story in its dramatised form. 06\_a099socialstru07



## Blood donor's 100 pints

Oban man Bill Murray, who saw the benefit of blood donation first hand when his mother was ill with cancer, donated his 100th pint of blood in February. The 65-year-old former civil engineer said: 'I first donated in Glasgow and a lot of people in my office were signing up to give blood. I thought it was a good idea that day but that was 35 years ago and I am still donating.' 15\_t07blood01



## Shepherd calls on Royal Navy training when boat capsizes

A 74-year-old shepherd called on his National Service training to save his life after his boat capsized on Loch Linnhe. Shepherd Ernie Ripley, who was in the Royal Navy between 1957 - 59, was hauled from the freezing water on February 1 by Nicky Zvegintzov, who worked at the nearby Linnhe Marine. Ernie had been taking four Cheviot tups from Shuna Island to the mainland near Appin, alongside colleague Niall Bowser and their dogs – a journey Ernie has made regularly over the past nine years.



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## Ladies learn how to change a tyre

Female drivers were offered the chance to dispel the stereotype once and for all that women can't change car tyres. Oban garage owner Kerrie MacPhail provided free instruction in March during a Ladies Afternoon after the majority of her female customers admitted they were 'clueless' when it came to the task. Kerrie MacPhail of Kerrie's Tyres is pictured with staff members, from left: Kenny Ahmed, Brian Todd and Neil O'Hara. 15\_110kerrie02



## Mull pupils take charge of new playground

Children at Lochdoon Primary School on the Isle of Mull took charge of the redevelopment of their school playground during March. The youngsters planned, resourced, gained funding and oversaw the development of the area, creating a story glen, based on an old Gaelic tale, Iolairie Loch Treig.



## Youngsters push shops to support Fairtrade

Two primary school children took up a campaign for shops to respect Oban's status as a Fairtrade town after struggling to buy fairtrade products in March. Amy Jones, aged 12, left, and Caitlin Cooke, aged 11, pupils at the Fairtrade-registered Park Primary School, wrote to *The Oban Times* and the four supermarkets in Oban after two events the school organised during Fairtrade Fortnight were hampered by a lack of variety on the shelves. 15\_113fairtrade02



## Couple abandon city life for Kerrera

A YOUNG couple abandoned city life and took over their own little slice of paradise on the island of Kerrera. Aideen Gallagher and Martin Shields opened Kerrera Tea Garden and Bunkhouse on March 29. 'It is very hard to eke out a living on any island so many people are forced into commuting but we would hate to have to commute when we have all this right here. Even arriving in the middle of winter we can really see the beauty in the place,' said Martin. 'I've spent all my life living and working in a city and Aideen has travelled to near every city in the western world with her work. Neither of us have ever lived somewhere like this and it is very exciting.'

MARCH



WINTER weather wreaked havoc early in the year with the worst spell in March seeing roads blocked, ferries cancelled and power lines downed. Kintyre was among the worst hit areas - cut off from the outside world - but that didn't stop residents banding together to get through the cold snap. One Campbeltown woman certainly wasn't going to let the weather get in her way. Lynn McKay hitched a 10-mile lift on a tractor so she could head to New York with her old schoolfriends. This unseasonal character, above, was spotted in Campbeltown as authorities battled to re-open Kintyre.



## Wild fires sweep across West Highlands

Wild fires swept across the West Highlands and islands during March with a raging heath fire stretching for more than a mile along the hillside between Oban and Connel. The blaze even had families in their homes preparing for evacuation. Fire crews were occupied for more than 16 hours - including over night - trying to get the fire under control, as it changed direction and threatened livestock and homes. 07\_111fire01



## Mallaig Red Nose Day fun

Red Nose Day in Mallaig was a hair-raising experience for local school 'jannie' Peter who had his beard shaved off in aid of Comic Relief. And removing Peter's whiskers proved to be no easy matter, as Jane Eddie found out!

## John tops volunteer poll

LOCAL entertainer Paula MacAskill had a gig with a difference - presenting Shopmobility Lochaber's Volunteer of the Year Award to John MacLeod. Shopmobility committee members and volunteers overwhelmingly voted for Inverlochy man John, who joined the charity as a volunteer 10 years ago through the Shirlike project. He attends the office every week to do admin duties including the client booking sheet to register all equipment usage over a weekly period. Shopmobility co-ordinator Billy Ward said: 'This is a great example of someone that even though confined to a wheelchair, can get out and provide an input into a local organisation.'



Paula presents John with the Volunteer Of The Year award. 20\_111paula01



Auction Me Out: The brave men and women who were auctioned off on the night, with some of the event organisers and volunteers. 20\_113auction01

## 'Human auction' raises £3,500 for charity

A 'HUMAN auction' of topless men and glamorous women in Fort William raised more than £3,500 for charity. Around 400 people packed out the raucous 'Auction Me Out' in the Nevis Centre to see nine men and four women sell services including a date, personal training session and carpetlaying. Accordion-playing shinty star Gary Innes even offered the chance to name a new tune. The event was organised by Caol woman Dawn Harper and friends in aid of Goldenhar Family Support Group UK. Co-organiser Nicola MacPhee said the night had been 'fantastic'.



## Manager Rosie's fish farm career milestone

THE ONLY female fish farm manager in the country celebrated reaching a major milestone in her career with Marine Harvest Scotland in Ardnamurchan. Rosie Curtis was presented with £500 by managing director Alan Sutherland for clocking up 15 years with the aquaculture company, Scotland's largest. Rosie joined the business in 1997 and is now manager of the salmon farm at Loch Sunart - a role almost exclusively an all-male preserve given the physical labour involved. She said: 'Fish farms are wonderful places to work. But it is out in the open air in all weathers - and we certainly do have 'weather' here so it can be a very tough job.'



Kay McDuff's son Mark, aged eight, presents Martin Glenesk and Moira Hartley with the cheques. 20\_113wee01

## Shop boost at the double

KINLOCHLEVEN'S 'wee charity shop' handed Kinlochleven Community Trust and local boxing club the Claymores a total of £2,400. The voluntary enterprise, run by Kay McDuff and her band of helpers, raised the cash through selling homebaking and second-hand items. The cash gifts were part of an annual giveaway of all profits to local good causes. Mrs McDuff, whose homemade tablet has achieved legendary status locally, said: 'We get a huge amount of support from the community and from Glencoe, Ballachulish and Oban as well. We are always looking for donations.'

## Public backs sports plan

THE GROUP behind a bold bid for a sports and recreation centre near Dunvegan received strong public support for its plans. At North West Skye Recreational Association's AGM in Dunvegan Castle around 40 people backed proposals for the development at Lonmore, two miles south of the village. The envisaged hub and sports pitches, costed in a feasibility study at between £1.6m and £1.8m, would potentially save local residents from Edinbane to Glendale from travelling up to 25 miles to Portree to access sports and leisure facilities. NWSRA chairman John Hermes said: 'We were delighted with the meeting and the reaction from the local community.'

## Hurricane force winds tear through Lochaber

HURRICANE force winds tore through Lochaber leaving forest roads and public paths blocked by fallen trees. A gust of 93 mph was recorded by a weather station at Bunree, Onich, as local people reported trees snapping 'like gunshots'. Police were forced to close Fort William High Street because of flying debris. A windchill temperature of -6C was recorded and several local residents reported losing ridge tiles and slates from roofs. At Roy Bridge, a man sustained a suspected broken wrist and ankle after being blown off scaffolding while working on a house. And on Skye, a yacht broke its moorings at Armadale and ended up on rocks.



Premier Scots Traditional Award winner Hannah MacRae with finalists Rona Nicolson, Syeda Chowdhury and Liam Stewart. 20\_111music04

## Music festival entries up again

ENTRIES were up once again for the Lochaber Music Festival, with nearly 500 youngsters from across Lochaber displaying their musical talents in Fort William. The 39th annual event kicked off with local participants singing, playing, reciting or dancing in a number of different classes in venues in and around the town. Hannah MacRae, 15, picked up the coveted Premier Scots Traditional Instrumental Award after her performances in the Scots violin open solo category. Festival chairperson Lillian MacDonald said the number of youngsters getting involved bodes well for the future of the festival.

## Boxing gold for teenager Igor

LOCHABER got a new national boxing champion after teenager Igor Sliwinski fought his way to gold in the Scottish Open Championships. The Lochaber Phoenix boxer was the underdog as he took on the four-time champion Jordan Beveridge of Irvine Vineburgh at the Meadowbank Stadium in Edinburgh, but managed a narrow points victory after three hard rounds. The bout ended with both boxers drenched in the blood from Beveridge's nose, and after an agonising wait the decision was announced as 14 points to 13 in favour of Sliwinski.



**Arisaig cemetery space fears**

FEARS were raised about the future of burials in Arisaig after it emerged the local cemetery was running out of space. Highland Council officials were looking at ways to expand the Arisaig cemetery, but their options are limited by rocky terrain, with the nearest burial ground five miles up the A830 Road to the Isles at Morar. Arisaig Community Council secretary Maureen McColl said being laid to rest in the village was important for locals. She said: 'We're quite a tight knit community here. Morar is only three or four miles away but I don't think people would be happy with local people being buried there.'

**No Tesco until 2015 at the earliest**

TESCO confirmed its new superstore planned for Fort William would not open until 2015 at the earliest. Rumours began to circulate around the town after work on the 60,000ft store at Blar Mhor failed to get underway at the end of last year as previously planned. And a spokesperson for the supermarket giant confirmed the store will open 'no earlier than 2015'. Local councillor Bill Clark said he was 'sorely disappointed' to hear about the delay. He said: 'This is a big, big disappointment. We were told the new store would be open by Christmas last year.'

**First revenue from wind turbines**

COMMUNITY-owned wind turbines on South Uist began generating revenue for the first time. And cash from Loch Carnan Community Windfarm is set to pump-prime regeneration projects across Benbecula, Eriskay and South Uist. The three 2.3MW turbines on Iochdar Hill common grazings comprise Scotland's largest wholly publicly owned renewables project. Net income will vary, but *The Oban Times* understands that initially around £600,000 will flow to community landowners Stòras Uibhist annually, a figure expected to rise over time.



Raging inferno: the wildfire approaching local homes.

**Hero firefighters stop wildfire reaching homes**

HERO firefighters stopped a massive wildfire just yards from homes near Fort William on Monday April 1. Corpach residents closest to the raging inferno were packed up and ready to leave as the blaze approached. But fire crews and beaters, aided throughout the day by accurate helicopter waterbombing, managed to prevent flames from reaching properties in Badabrie and Pobs Drive. The wildfire burnt three square miles of moorland along a four-mile front as it swept down Banavie Hill and Druim Fada towards nightfall. Artist Felicity Nightingale, 55, who lives in Pobs Drive with her two daughters, told *The Oban Times*: 'The fire reached the line of trees and pine woods at the end of Pobs Drive but the fire crews saved them. I did pack up the car and had the garage doors open so we could drive away in case the flames leaped across. But the fire crews were wonderful and stopped it. We are just so grateful to them all.'

**Green light for Broadford sports field**

A SKYE village's sporting facilities got set for a major upgrade after plans to develop its sports field were given the go-ahead by councillors. Broadford playing field, behind the local primary school, will be extended to a 90-metre by 50-metre football pitch with an adjacent 54m by 20m training area. Local youth football coach Roddy Macleod said: 'A new playing field would not only benefit a few individuals, but the community as a whole.'

**Charity fun run a great success**

A CANCER charity fun run and family day in Fort William proved a great success, raising nearly £9,000. The Lochaber Together 5k run attracted a large field of competitors, with Craig MacLean taking first place. Innes Orr - aged just eight - was second while Stewart MacLean took third. Other crowd pleasers at the BA Club included Upper Achintore children's cheerleading group the Ben Nevis All Stars. Event manager Adam Ramsey said a further £5,000 was still to come from Cancer Research UK charity shop sales.



They're off: The Lochaber Together 5k run gets underway. 20\_181run02

**Royal visitor plants distillery tree**

THE FIRST legal whisky distillery in Ardnamurchan got a special visitor on Monday April 8 - Prince Albert II of Monaco. His Royal Highness and his wife Princess Charlene of Monaco visited the site of Adelphi's new distillery at Glenbeg, where construction work started in January. The Prince planted a Royal Birch tree during a ceremony to mark the completion of ground works for the multi-million pound project, following a gala dinner at nearby Glenborrodale Castle. Adelphi Distillery chairman Keith Falconer said: 'We are honoured and indebted to HRH Prince Albert for his visit and taking time to plant a commemorative tree.'



HRH Prince Albert II of Monaco marked the completion of ground works at the Ardnamurchan distillery by planting a tree.



**Fundraising ceilidh**

A Fort William teenager's attempts to raise funds to allow her to teach English to underprivileged youngsters in India for a year received a boost with a fundraising ceilidh. Lochaber High School senior Holly Fraser organised a series of events to help towards the total of £5,500 she needed to take part in Project Trust. Music on the night was provided by five of Holly's school mates. Right: Holly with friends Jemma Halford and Rebecca Gilles. 20\_177holly01

**APRIL**

**Teenager tees up golf scholarship**

A LOCHABER High School pupil teed up a golfing scholarship in the United States after impressing a US college. Sixth year student Alastair Ross secured a provisional place at Union College in Barberville, Kentucky. The Fort William Golf Club member from Tomonie plays off a handicap of one and has impressed on the Scottish junior circuit. The talented 17-year-old said: 'It's a dream I have had since I was about 11 I found out you can go to the States. That captured my imagination - and has been a goal for me ever since.'



Driving for success: Fort William golfer Alastair Ross. 20\_171alastair01

**Award-winning band's anniversary delight**

AWARD winning Arisaig wedding band *Wonderland* marked its 20th anniversary by netting another nomination - after being named as finalists at the inaugural Scottish Wedding Awards. The band, led by Steve Brown, was shortlisted in the wedding entertainment category for the North West Region. Mr Brown said: 'We are absolutely delighted to be in the final - all thanks to our wonderful brides and grooms for voting for us. The past 12 months have been our busiest to date with 54 weddings alone.'



**Easter weekend fun and frolics**

Youngsters across the West Highlands enjoyed some Easter weekend fun and frolics. Creative young Banavie Primary pupils spent the last few days before the break creating different kinds of Easter crafts. The P2/3 class all made their own Easter objects, from painted eggs to wax pictures. 20\_144banavie01



**Crowds gather in Oban to glimpse whale**

THE UNEXPECTED arrival of a 40-foot sperm whale into Oban Bay, above, delighted locals and delivered a welcome boost to the start of the tourist season in April. Crowds gathered on the North Pier and along Corran Esplanade to catch a glimpse of the whale, the largest predator on the planet. The creature, named Bob, Jonah or Oor Willie depending on who you spoke to, swam off to Lismore after more than a week - but picked a fight with North West Marine's barge on its way out the bay. The whale even attracted a parody Facebook account called Oban Whale which posted status updates such as 'keep thinking the lighthouse is a giant lollypop. Continually disappointed when I remember that it's not'. Photograph by Chris Jackson of Chalice Charters.



**Mull's Mishnish back to its shiny best**

Described as a missing tooth in a pearly smile when it was painted black in 2006, a Mull pub went back to its shiny best in April. The Mishnish Hotel, in Tomernory's Main Street, was painted yellow - a switch back to its former colourful glory. Local painters Dodo and Donald are pictured hard at work bringing the 'Mish' back to its best.



**Oban Lorne Rugby Club win RBS National Bowl**

Murrayfield turned green at the end of April as Oban Lorne lifted the RBS National Bowl. The victory, in the club's 50th anniversary season, was Oban Lorne's first ever major trophy. Captain Robin MacQueen is pictured lifting the cup as he celebrates with teammates.



**All change at Oban police office**

It was all change at Oban police office in April as area police commander for Oban, Lorn and the Isles, Brian Auld, left his post. Chief inspector Auld said he left the area in good hands, having made huge strides in the battle against drugs and violence. Alistair Davidson, right, took over the role. 15\_113chief01

**Cross returns to Iona**

THE WORLD'S first Celtic High Cross returned to Iona in time for Easter and ahead of a special anniversary later in the year. St Oran's Cross, which dates back to the eighth century, was returned to the island after undergoing reconstruction work in Selkirk. This was the first time in centuries the 4.4 metre cross stood upright at Iona Abbey. The cross is encased within a specially constructed steel structure. Stephen Gordon, Historic Scotland's head of applied conservation, returns the Mary and Jesus section of the Cross to Iona Abbey. Picture by Donald MacLeod.



**Familiar faces at Taynuilt Hotel**

The new staff at the Taynuilt Hotel, above, had a familiarity about them, as all the recruits were already residents of the village. Owners John McNulty and Rachael Bromelow, who re-opened the hotel after it had gone into administration under the previous owners, said it was important to have local staff for their business venture. 15\_116hotel01

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## Market reports

ALL RECORDS were broken at Oban Livestock Centre's Christmas Sale, with a record turnover, record prices and record numbers sold since Caledonian Marts took over the lease of the centre in 1997.

An excellent selection of cattle forward for quality, which sold to a packed ringside of buyers. The show was judged by Blair Duffton, 2 Bogie Street, Huntly.

Overall Champion was a 320kg Limousin bullock Ewan McGillivray, Barcaldine Home Farm, by Oban which realised £1,220 to the judge. Reserve Champion again from Barcaldine Home Farm scaled 300kgs and made £1,200 to the judge.

Champion Pen of four calves in the yard went to Duncan Semple, Dippen, Carradale with four Charolais scaling 365kgs which made £1,280 to Willie Paul, Newbigging, Carnock, Dunfermline.

Reserve Pen of four went to Bob Cunningham, Neriby, Bridgend, Islay with 4 British Blues scaling 330kgs made £900 to Michael Nicholson, Gill Brow, Blackford, Carlisle.

Other results:  
Single Bullock Mainland Bred: 1st & 2nd (Champion & Reserve); 3rd DW Semple, Dippen, Carradale 420kgs £1250 to Willie Paul.

Single Heifer Mainland Bred: 1st Robert Currie, Low Dunasherry, Tayinloan 290kgs £1120 to Blair Duffton; 2nd Duncan Semple 340kgs £1100 to Murray Lyle, Cambushinnie, Dunblane; 3rd Duncan Semple 375kgs £1020 to Willie Paul.

Single Bullock Island Bred: 1st 2nd & 3rd Ian McInnes, Ruais, Tiree 275kgs £980 to Michael Nicholson 290kgs £920 to Tom Faulder, Houghton Home Farm, Carlisle 290kgs £980 to Michael Nicholson.

Single Heifer Island Bred:  
1st Bob Cunningham 530kgs £1750 to Blair Duffton; 2 & 3rd Ian McInnes 260kgs

£1,200 to Robert Currie, Low Dunasherry, Tayinloan 280kgs £1010 to Murray Lyle.

Bullocks averaged 250p per kg (up 28p per kg on the year) selling to a top of 400p per kg for a 300kg Limousin from Barcaldine Home Farm and to £1,300 for a 570kg Simmental from D McKendrick, No 5 Tomaig, Campbeltown.

Heifers averaged 234p per kg (up 33p per kg on the year) selling to 462p per kg for a 260kg Limousin from I McInnes, Ruais, Tiree and to £1750 for a 530kg Limousin from R Cunningham, Neriby, Islay.

Leading Prices:  
Bullocks:  
Up to 250kgs £780 Low Tiferburg, 324p Shennavaillie.

251-300kgs £1,200 Barcaldine Home Farm, 400p Barcaldine Home Farm.

301-350kgs £1,300 Barcaldine Home Farm, 388p Barcaldine Home Farm.

351-400kgs £1,240 Dippen, 340p Dippen. 401-450kgs £1,280 Dippen, 305p Dippen.

451-500kgs £1,210 Rhoin, 252p Rhoin. 501-550kgs £1,280 No 8 Killeonan, 248p No 8 Killeonan.

551-600kgs £1,300 No 5 Tomaig, 231p No 5 Tomaig.

Heifers:  
Up to 250kgs £700 Achnacreebeg, 292p Achnacreebeg.

251-300kgs £1,200 Ruais, 462p Ruais. 301-350kgs £1,100 Dippen, 324p Dippen.

351-400kgs £1,020 Dippen, 272p Dippen. 401-450kgs £1,250 Achnaba, 294p Achnaba.

451-500kgs £1,160 Keppoch, 232p Keppoch.

Breeding Cattle sold to a top of £1,250 for a shorthorn heifer in calf from I Dougall, Ardriona.

Other Leading Prices:  
Stock BB cow in calf £1,150 (x3), £1050

Tirfuir, Lismore. Stock Lim cow in calf £1,100 (x2) £950 (x3) Barbreck, Lochgilphead. Stock Lim cow in calf £1,020 Fiart, Lismore. Stock Lim cow in calf £1,000 South Ardnachlach.

OTM cattle sold to a top of £1,100 for a Lim bull from H McMillan, South Ardnachlach and £800 for a Shorthorn cow from Scammadale.

ISLAY SALE - MONDAY 9th DECEMBER 2013

UNITED AUCTIONS END 2013 SALES ON A HIGH AT ISLAY AUCTION MART

UNITED Auctions held their last sale for 2013 at Islay Auction Mart last Monday when they sold 2,765 lambs and sheep.

All classes sold at very keen rates with the overall sale average recording a rise of £10.87 per head on the corresponding sale last year.

Texel Cross Lambs from No6 Bayview sold to £87.50 per head and the same home sold Texel Cross Cast Ewes to £95. A consignment of Texel Cross Lambs from Balaclava led the day's top price per kilo at 202pence.

From the annual consignment of 350 Lambs from Kilchiaran came an exceptional pen of Blackface Wedder Lambs which realized £66.50 per head. This concluding sale for the year put Islay consignors in a festive mood and they wished that they had more Lambs and Ewes to sell.

Principal Lots and Prices:  
Top Prices Per Head:

Lambs:  
Suffx: £75.50 - Coille Farm - £71.50 - Balaclava - £71.00 - Carrabus - £66.50 - Kilchiaran & Duich - £63.50 - Coull - £62.50 - Kilchiaran - £61.50 - Coille Farm - £60.50 - Uiskenteuie & Ardberg.

TEXx: £87.50, £81.50, £78.50 & £78.00 - 6 Bayview - £74.50 - Tallant - £72.00 - 6 Bayview - £70.50 - Carrabus - £68.50

- Carrabus - £65.50 - Balaclava - £64.50 - 6 Bayview & Balaclava - £62.50 - Lossit - £61.50 - Coull - £60.50 - Ardberg. CHARx: £64.50 - Ardalla Estate. CHEV: £62.50 - Coull (D Jones) - £61.50 - Keppols.

CROSS: £71.50 - Ballmartin & Duich - £67.50 - Leorin & Duich - £66.50 - Coull (D Jones) - £65.50 - Glenevedale Lotts - £64.50 - Coull (D Jones) - £63.50 - Glenevedale Lotts - £62.50 - Lossit - £61.50 - Carrabus & Coille - £61.00 - Kinnabus - £60.50 - Duich.

MULE: £64.50 - Ballachlaven - £61.50 - Coull (D Jones) - BF: £66.50 - Kilchiaran - £64.50 - Keppols - £59.50 - Uiskenteuie & Carn - £58.50 - Coull, Keppols & Kilchiaran - £56.50 - Kilchiaran, Lossit, Braigo & Duich.

EWES:  
SUFFx: £83.50 - 24 Laoigan Place - £77.50 & £76.50 - 6 Bayview. TEXx: £95.00, £86.50 & £82.50 - 6 Bayview - £73.50 - 44 Stanalane - £71.50 - Carrabus. CROSS: £64.50 - Lossit.

MULE: £53.50 - Ardalla Estate. BF: £46.50 - Kilchiaran & Lossit. Top Prices Per Kilo:

Lambs:  
SUFFx: 184p - Smaladh - 178p - Coille & Kilchiaran - 175p - Ardberg, Ballachlaven & Duich - 170p - Kilchiaran. TEXx: 202p & 201p - Balaclava - 194p - 6 Bayview - 185p - 44 Stanalane - 181p - Duich.

CHEV: 195p - Kilbride. CROSS: 185p - 7 Shore Street - 181p - Coille. BF: 175p - Lossit - 172p - Kilchiaran & Duich - 168p - Leorin - 166p - Coull - 163p - Uiskenteuie - 162p - Kilchiaran & Ceannacroic - 161p - Kilchiaran - 160p - Keppols.



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## Large turnout for Kintyre Agricultural Winter Show

DESPITE the wet and windy weather there was a large turnout to the Kintyre Agricultural Society's Winter Show at the weekend.

Normally held in October, the date of the show was changed this year as December was a month better suited to a large number of exhibitors.

Held at Machrihanish Air Base and sponsored by KW Feeds, there were a number of exhibitors in both the dairy and horse sections.

Trophy winners: County Garage Cup for overall champion in dairy section: Lindsey Armour,

West Trodgal; SAI Cup for Ayrshire champion: Archie Millar, Ballygreggan; Duncan McKerral Cup for Holstein champion: Lindsey Armour; Levers Cup for best calving/calved Ayrshire heifer: J and M Barr, Clochkiel; Davidsons of Shotts Cup for best calving/calved Holstein heifer: A and J Pirie, Machrihanish; James Barr Memorial Cup for best Ayrshire bred by exhibitor: Archie Millar; Society Cup for the best calf: Jennifer Wylie, Machrihanish; President's Cup for the best Ayrshire calf: Robin Barr,

Clochkiel; Holstein Breeders Cup for best Holstein calf and handler: Jennifer Wylie; McKerral Cup for champion Clydesdale: David and Callum MacPhail, Garcaifra; Gigha Cup for best foal: David and Callum MacPhail.

Results: Ayrshire section: Calf exhibited by secondary pupil - 25 years old: 1 Robin Barr, Clochkiel, 2 Andrew Millar, Ballygreggan; Handler: 1 Robin Barr, 2 Andrew Millar; Calver heifer: 1 J and M Barr, Clochkiel, 2 Thomas Cameron, Gartvaigh, 3 J and M Barr, Clochkiel; Cow in milk: 1

Archie Millar, Ballygreggan, 2 J and M Barr 3 J and M Barr. Holstein section: Calf exhibited by primary pupil: 1 Alison Wylie, Machrihanish, 2 Josh Barbour, Dalrioch, 3 Jane Scott, Killgruer; Handler: 1 Jane Scott, 2 Alison Wylie, 3 Josh Barbour; Calf exhibited by secondary pupil - 25 years old: 1 Jennifer Wylie, Machrihanish, 2 Neil Littleton, Killgruer, 3 Jenny Semple, Kilkeddan; Handler: 1 Neil Littleton, 2 Jennifer Wylie, 3 Christina Smith, Drumalea; Calved heifer: 1 A and J Pirie,

Machrihanish, 2 Peter Littleton, Killgruer, 3 John Ralston, Kilkivan; Cow in milk: 1 Lindsey Armour, West Trodgal, 2 Gavin Semple, Kilkeddan, 3 Gavin Semple.

Horse section: Colt or filly foal (Clydesdale): 1 David and Callum MacPhail, Garcaifra; Clydesdale one year old and over: 1 David and Callum MacPhail, Garcaifra, 2 John McLatchie, Moy, 3 Malcolm McFadyen, Kilarbie;

Any other breed one year old and over: 1 Kerry Hopes, 2 Caitlin Ronald, 3 Erin Ralston.

A and J Pirie, Machrihanish, won a number of prizes, including the Davidsons of Shotts Cup for best calving/calved Holstein heifer. 20\_c51show11



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**COLIN KENNEDY**, Area Commissioner of Argyll & South Inverness Crofting Commission, is wishing crofters everywhere a Happy Christmas and a Prosperous New Year. Would like to take this opportunity to thank all the crofters for their support over the year and would like to say that he is available to be contracted throughout the festive period.  
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### MOTORS AND DRIVE TIMES



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11 FORD TRANSIT 350 115 TDD, 15 Seater Minibus, 6 speed, E-pack, White	£10,750
10 FORD TRANSIT 350 115 HD, LWB, High Top Van, 6 Speed, SLD, E-Pack, Ply Liner, White	£7,450
09 FORD TRANSIT 350, LWB, High Top Van, Rear Fibre Workshop, SLD, Plat, 80K	£7,350
09 FORD TRANSIT 350, SWB, Semi High Top Van, 115HP CD Player, SLD, Blue, 10K	£7,350
58 FORD TRANSIT 350 SWB Crew Van, Essate, E-Pack, CD, SLD, White	£5,950
58 FORD TRANSIT 350 LWB crew Van 115hp, 6 speed, E-pack, Essate, White	£5,850
57 FORD TRANSIT 350, MWB, Drop Side Tipper, Manual, Towbar, CD Player, White 60K	£7,350
07 FORD TRANSIT 350 TDD Crew Cab Tipper, One Stop, Removable cage sides, White	£7,350
05 FORD TRANSIT 350, LWB, Hi Top Jumbo Van, 115 HP Twin rear wheels, White	NO VAT £5,750
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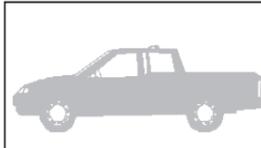
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5dr, Silver, Petrol, MOT Sept 14, Tax Jan 14, FSH, Approx 46,000 mls, VW Warranty to 26/02/14.

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Please send a brief CV together with a short email explaining why you are interested in this opportunity to [ian@aquatic.as](mailto:ian@aquatic.as) Interviews will be held in early January.

Customer Services Centre Agent

£17,793 - £18,906 17.5 hrs per week 01546 604334

Campbeltown Ref: CTC00032

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www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/jobs

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We have a vacancy for a mechanical maintenance engineer based at Ormsary Estate, near Lochgilphead. The successful candidate will report to the Engineering Manager and be involved in all aspects of plant maintenance...

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An experienced Head Keeper is required for the 93,000, community owned crofting estate. Must be experienced in, or have knowledge of, stalking, wildfowling, vermin control, angling (salmon, sea-trout, brown trout) and sporting management.

Professional Housekeeper with cooking skills

Required for beautiful Lodge, with 2 separate cottages, in the Highlands. Duties include: cleaning, laundering, maintaining stock, occasional cooking and general administration.

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Landcatch Natural Selection Ltd Bookkeeper

Suitably qualified and experienced Bookkeeper required in busy office. 35 hours per week. Training opportunities available but preferred candidate will have excellent numerical skills...

MARINE (SCOTLAND) ACT 2010 MARINE HARVEST (SCOTLAND) LTD: MARINE FARM

Notice is hereby given that Marine Harvest (Scotland) Ltd has applied to the Scottish Ministers of the Scottish Government, under Part 4 of the Marine (Scotland) Act 2010, in respect of installation of a marine farm at:

Table with 4 columns: Location, Cost, Latitude Co-ordinates, Longitude Co-ordinates. Lists locations like Isle of Colonsay with coordinates.

Plans showing the position of the works may be inspected at Oban Library, 77 Albany Street, Oban. Objections relating to safety of navigation or environmental issues in respect of the application should be made in writing to: Licensing Operations Team, Marine Scotland...

Oban Times RECRUITMENT RECRUITMENT

PUBLIC NOTICES

To find out more about living and working in argyll & bute visit us @ www.argyll-bute.gov.uk

PLANNING

These applications listed below together with other related documents may be inspected at Municipal Buildings Albany Street Oban PA34 4AW, Monday to Friday 9am to 12:30pm and 1:30pm to 5pm. On Wednesdays, the Customer Service Points will open at 10am.

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT PROCEDURE (SCOTLAND) REGULATIONS 2008 REGULATION 20(1) ADVERT STATEMENT

Table with 4 columns: Ref, Proposal, Site Address, Location of Plans. Lists planning applications like 13/01831/PP, 13/02694/PP, etc.

These applications listed below together with other related documents may be inspected between 09:00 - 17:00hrs Monday to Friday at 67 Chalmers Street Ardaraigh PA30 8DX, at the alternative locations detailed below during their normal opening times...

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT PROCEDURE (SCOTLAND) REGULATIONS 2008 REGULATION 20(1) ADVERT STATEMENT

Table with 4 columns: Ref, Proposal, Site Address, Location of Plans. Lists planning applications like 13/02649/PP, 13/02675/PPP, etc.

Argyll and Bute Council encourages planning applications to be made on-line through the Scottish Government website: <https://planning.scotland.gov.uk>

DEVELOPMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE

THE ARGYLL & BUTE COUNCIL (QUEENS PARK PLACE, STATION ROAD AND RAILWAY STATION ACCESS ROAD, OBAN) (HOGMANAY EVENT) (TEMPORARY PROHIBITION OF TRAFFIC) (NO.3) ORDER 2013

On Monday 16th December 2013, Argyll and Bute Council in exercise of the powers conferred on them by Section 16(A) of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 as amended, with the consent of the Scottish Ministers under Section 16B (6) of the said Act, made the above named Order, the effect of which will be that for a temporary period it will be unlawful for any person to drive or cause or permit to be driven any vehicle...

Jim Smith, Head of Roads & Amenity Services, 1A Manse Brae, Lochgilphead, PA31 8RD

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (SCOTLAND) ACT 1997, AS AMENDED

ADVERTISEMENT UNDER SECTION 67(2) OF THE MAKING OF A REVOCATION ORDER OR MODIFICATION ORDER

PLANNING PERMISSION FOR THE DEMOLITION OF AN EXISTING DWELLINGHOUSE AND STEADINGS AND THE ERECTION OF A REPLACEMENT DWELLINGHOUSE AND 3 STEADINGS AT ROSE COTTAGE TAYNUILT, ARGYLL AND BUTE

REFERENCE NUMBER: 11/01803/PP

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that Argyll and Bute Council have made an order under section 65 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 to revoke the above planning permission.

The Council have been notified by the owner or lessee (if any); the occupier of the land, and all persons who in the Council's opinion will be affected by the Order and who do not object to the Order.

Any person who will be affected by the Order and who wishes for an opportunity of appearing before and being heard by a person appointed by the Scottish Ministers, must give notice in writing to the Scottish Ministers, The Directorate for the Built Environment, Victoria Quay, Edinburgh, EH6 6QU not later than 16 January 2014.

If no such notice is given by that date the Order will take effect by virtue of the provisions of Section 67(7) of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 on 30 January 2014 without being confirmed by the Scottish Ministers.

Date 19th December 2013

Charles Reppeke, Head of Governance and Law, Argyll and Bute Council, Kilmory, Lochgilphead

ARGYLL & BUTE COUNCIL'S THIRD SECTOR GRANTS 2014/15

Application forms for grants to third sector organisations for 2014/15 are now available at local area community learning offices.

They can also be accessed using the following link: [www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/community-life-and-leisure/funding-and-support](http://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/community-life-and-leisure/funding-and-support)

Proposed Let of a Croft

Mrs Gillian Barton is applying to the Crofting Commission for consent to let the tenancy of the croft at Ichraichan No2 to Mrs Christine Provan of An Sabhal, Musdale Road, Kilmory, Argyll, PA34 4XX.

If you are a crofter, shareholder or owner of a croft in the township or if the Commission consider that you have a direct interest in this application, you may submit comments on the proposal in writing or other permanent form to the Crofting Commission, Great Glen House, Leachkin Road, Inverness IV3 8NW (e-mail: [info@crofting.scotland.gov.uk](mailto:info@crofting.scotland.gov.uk)) within 28 days from the date of publication of this advert.

Please note that any comments you provide are part of an open process and will be made available to interested parties. Your comments would also be released under a Freedom of Information enquiry.

MARINE (SCOTLAND) ACT 2010

Notice is hereby given that Mr Clive Edwardes has applied to the Scottish Ministers of the Scottish Government, under Part 4 of the Marine (Scotland) Act 2010, in respect of mooring installation at Achnacriche, Sound Of Mull:

Table with 4 columns: Location, Latitude Co-ordinates, Longitude Co-ordinates. Lists Achnacriche, Sound Of Mull with coordinates.

Plans showing the position of the works may be inspected at Drimmin Post Office, Drimmin, Morvern, Argyll, PA80 5XZ. Objections relating to safety of navigation or environmental issues in respect of the application should be made in writing to: Licensing Operations Team, Marine Scotland, Marine Laboratory, 375 Victoria Road, Aberdeen, AB11 9DB within 28 days of the date of this notice or by email: [MS.MarineLicensing@scotland.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:MS.MarineLicensing@scotland.gsi.gov.uk), quoting reference: FKB/J261

Mr Clive Edwardes

MARINE (SCOTLAND) ACT 2010 DREDGING WORKS: THE POOP COMPANY LTD

Notice is hereby given that the Poop Company Ltd has applied to the Scottish Ministers of the Scottish Government, under Part 4 of the Marine (Scotland) Act 2010, in respect of dredging works at:

Table with 4 columns: Location Co-ordinates, Latitude Co-ordinates, Longitude Co-ordinates. Lists Tobermoray Bay with coordinates.

Plans showing the position of the works may be inspected at Oban Library. Objections relating to safety of navigation or environmental issues in respect of the application should be made in writing to: Licensing Operations Team, Marine Scotland, Marine Laboratory, 375 Victoria Road, Aberdeen, AB11 9DB within 28 days of the date of this notice or by email: [MS.MarineLicensing@scotland.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:MS.MarineLicensing@scotland.gsi.gov.uk), quoting reference: FKB/D472

The Poop Company Ltd

Steffi care about... Steffi that's nearby... Steffi that's far away... Includes a circular logo and contact information for Steffi.

CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR REFUSE COLLECTION ARRANGEMENTS

OBAN, LORN AND THE ISLES OBAN AND LORN MAINLAND

Refuse and paper/card recycling collections due on 25th, 26th and 27th December will be collected on the following day i.e. 25th will be collected on 26th, 26th on 27th and 27th on 28th December.

Refuse and paper/card recycling collections due on 1st, 2nd and 3rd January will be collected on the following day i.e. 1st will be collected on 2nd, 2nd on 3rd and 3rd on 4th January.

Moleigh Recycling and Civic Amenity Site will be closed on 25/26th December and 1st/2nd January.

LISMORE

Refuse collections due on Wednesday 1st January will be collected on Tuesday 31st December.

MULL AND IONA

Blue bin recycling collections due on Wednesday 25th December will be collected on Tuesday 24th December.

Glass recycling collections due on Wednesday 25th December will be collected on Tuesday 31st December.

Refuse collections due on Wednesday 1st January will be collected on Tuesday 31st December.

Glass collections due on Wednesday 1st January will be collected on Tuesday 31st December.

Glenorm Recycling and Civic Amenity Site will be closed on 25/26th December and 1st/2nd January.

TIREE

Refuse collections due on Thursday 26th December will be collected on Friday 27th December.

Blue bin recycling collections due on Thursday 2nd January will be collected on Friday 3rd January.

To find out more about living and working in argyll & bute visit us @ www.argyll-bute.gov.uk

ARGYLL & BUTE COUNCIL

To find out more about living and working in argyll & bute visit us @ www.argyll-bute.gov.uk

ARGYLL & BUTE COUNCIL

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (SCOTLAND) ACT 1997 PLANNING (LISTED BUILDING AND CONSERVATION AREAS) (SCOTLAND) ACT 1997

The applications listed below, along with plans and other documents submitted with them, may be examined between the hours of 9.30am - 4.30pm Monday to Friday (excluding public holidays) at the SERVICE POINT, LOCHABER HOUSE, HIGH STREET, FORT WILLIAM, PH33 6EL and online at <http://www.highland.gov.uk>

Written comments should be made to the EPC at the contact details below within the time period indicated from the date of this notice. Anyone making a representation about this proposal should note that their letter or email will be disclosed to any individual or body who requests sight of representations in respect of this proposal.

Table with 3 columns: Reference Number, Development Address, Proposal Description. Lists planning applications like 13/04502/FUL, 13/04525/FUL, etc.

Time period for comments is 14 days. ePlanning Centre, The Highland Council, Glenurquhart Road, INVERNESS IV3 5NX Email: [epanning@highland.gov.uk](mailto:epanning@highland.gov.uk)

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12" RALEIGH BOYS BIKE Ollie football crazy bike with stabilisers, red and yellow colour. Comes with helmet size S (48-54cm), in great condition, £30 Telephone 07840 885812.

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WOOL KILT HOSE beautiful new hand-knitted kilt hose, cream, thistle borders, 2x2 rib, Patons Diploma Gold 55%wool. Fit shoe size 8-9. Lovely gift, £45 Telephone 01631 563317.

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PERSONAL

To Anne MacLean

A the nights are fair drawing out. C. x

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Happy 50th Birthday Duncan Muat

Love from Ruth, Hannah, Even and Mum xxx

Oban Times PERSONALS Oban Times PERSONALS

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GRADUATIONS

Naomi MacKay graduated with a BA(Hons) Adventure Tourism Management from University of the Highlands and Islands. A former pupil of Caol Primary and Lochaber High School, Naomi is the youngest daughter of James and Helen MacKay.

Kate Campbell BA History (York) graduated from the Royal Agricultural University Cirencester with a MSc Property Agency and Management. Kate is the elder daughter of Roddy and Caroline Campbell and granddaughter of Norma Campbell and the late Sir Niall Campbell. Kate is a former pupil of Barcaldine and Lochelln Primary Schools and Fettes College, Edinburgh. She is presently working for Savills in Farnham, Surrey.

The Oban Times & WEST HIGHLAND TIMES bonnie babies competition 2014 in association with The co-operative membership Here for you for life Child's name..... Child's date of birth..... Tel:..... Subscription No: (if applicable)..... Address:..... Name of parent/guardian..... Signature of parent/guardian..... I agree to all terms and conditions applied to this competition (please tick) [ ] Please post to The Oban Times, Bonnie Babies Entry, PO Box 1, Oban, Argyll, PA34 4HB.

The Oban Times Bonnie Babies competition is back for 2014. Enter your little bundle of joy today for your chance to win a whopping £500 worth of vouchers to spend at The Co-operative Plus, this year we will have £150 of vouchers for a second place winner and £100 of vouchers for third place. Just think how handy that would be after Christmas and New Year. The Co-operative Group is the UK's largest mutual business, owned by nearly eight million members. It is the UK's fifth biggest food retailer operating across the country with almost 2,800 local, convenience and medium-sized stores, and is also one of Britain's leading farming operations. Further information is available at www.co-operative.coop HOW THE COMPETITION WORKS The competition will take place in weekly rounds where readers are asked to vote for that week's bonniest baby. For example, if your child is in week one and gets the most votes out of all the entries in that issue they will be entered into the grand finale. The baby who has the most votes from the grand finale, which will be held early next year, will be crowned the Bonniest Baby of 2014. It doesn't matter which round your baby appears in, you can keep voting every week from the date your child appears until the voting deadline, which we will announce in a future issue. Voting for your wee one every week after they appear gives them the best chance to be crowned their week's bonniest. We won't count the votes to decide who goes into the grand finale until the voting deadline has been reached. Readers will be able to vote by text or by coupon, details of which will be printed when the weekly rounds begin. HOW TO ENTER We are now open for entries! The Oban Times Bonnie Babies 2014 is open to babies and toddlers born on or after February 1, 2011. Entrants must live in Argyll or West Highlands. You may also enter a child if you are a subscriber living outside this area. By entering the competition and by filling in the parental consent form that is provided with your entry, you - the parent or guardian - consent to the reproduction of your child's photograph in The Oban Times Bonnie Babies features in the paper and online and in any other related Oban Times Bonnie Babies promotions. If you do not wish for your child's photo to appear in the newspaper or online then you should not enter the competition. The Oban Times cannot take responsibility for the safe delivery and safe return of the entrant's photograph. Photos posted in without an enclosed stamped addressed envelope will not be returned. Poor quality photographs, which are out of focus, difficult to see the child's face, ripped, torn or folded, will not be accepted as an entry and will be returned to the sender providing a stamped addressed envelope is supplied by the entrant. By sending us your photograph, you agree that Wyvex Media Ltd and The Oban Times have the right to publish the image and details of the entrant without payment for the purpose of promoting The Oban Times Bonnie Babies campaign(s). The winner must take part in publicity. Employees of Wyvex Media Ltd and their immediate family are not eligible to enter. Good luck!

**BIRTHS**

**JONES/SCUDDER** - Pat and Ken (Seil), are delighted to announce the safe arrival of their granddaughter Megan Eilidh, on December 4, 2013 at Wishaw General. Congratulations to Gillian, Damien and big sister Orla.

**ENGAGEMENT**



**McAULEY - MACKAY** - Both families are delighted to announce the engagement of Ryan, eldest son of Myles and Cathy McAuley to Alison Elizabeth, daughter of Stuart and Mary Mackay. Love and congratulations to you both x.

**DIAMOND WEDDING**

**MUNN - CAMERON** - On December 17, 1953 by the late Rev. William MacDonald, Angus to Nella, Heanish, Pulpit Drive, Oban.

**DEATHS**

**BROWN** - Henrietta, (née Donn), passed away on December 14, 2013 aged 89 at her home in Sussex. Much loved mother, grandmother and great-grandmother.

**DAVIES** - Margaret Davies (née Kain) passed away peacefully at Lorn and Islands District Hospital on Saturday, December 14, after a short illness. Memorial Service to be held at the Church of Scotland, Tobermory on Thursday, December 19, 2013 at 12.00 noon.

**GALBRAITH** - Peacefully at home with her family on December 17, 2013, age 54 years, Katherine, dearly beloved wife to John, much loved mum to J.J., Paul & Katie, a dear sister and aunt.

**LESLIE** - Peacefully, at the Lorn and Islands Hospital, Oban, on December 13, 2013, aged 87 years, Henry, of Torosay Court, Oban, formerly of Scotstoun, Glasgow, youngest son of the Lobster King, Wee Horseshoe, Kerrera, much loved husband of Mary, who passed away in 2007, pop to Alex and Moira and wee grampa to Caitlin and Rowan. Family and friends are invited to a service at Oban Parish Church, on Friday, December 20, 2013 at 1.00 p.m. Flowers welcome but donations if preferred, to Oban Hospice.

**MACDONALD** - Sandy. Suddenly on November 28, 2013 loving son of Sandy and Margaret, Gortan, Arisaig, dotting dad of Iain, brother of Stephen, Colin and Catriona. So sorely missed.

**MACKINNON** - Katie A. Peacefully in the care of the Mains Nursing Home, Newtonmore on Friday, December 13, 2013, Katie, aged 96 years, beloved wife of the late Dugald MacKinnon, Bayview, Isle of Egg, dear mother, grandmother and great-grandmother. Sadly missed.

**MACLEOD** - Peacefully at Abbeyfield Care Home, Ballachulish on December 11, 2013, Neil Bell Rose passed away. Beloved husband of Ruth Lawrie and the late Peggy Shields, a much loved stepfather to Pauline, step-grandfather to Nicholas and Phillipa and loving brother of Isobel. Interred at Kinlochmore Cemetery on December 18, 2013.

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

**BELL** - Blair Atholl. Ann and family would like to thank family, friends and neighbours for all the cards, letters and flowers they received following their sad loss. £938.53 was donated for Diabetes UK in remembrance of William (Charles). Many thanks.

**MEMORIALS**

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**HARPER** - Dorothy and all the family would like to thank most sincerely everyone who sent kind messages of sympathy, cards and flowers. Special mention to all the nurses in Ward B who we can't thank enough for the care they gave to Donald. Thanks also to Dr Glen, Ian at D & A Munn and Rev Dugald Cameron for their care and attention. The retail collection raised £1,416.75 for Oban Hospice.

**MACLACHLAN** - The family of the late Olive wish to thank most sincerely all relatives, friends and neighbours for their great kindness and support during their recent sad time. Also many thanks for cards, letters, phone calls and all those who paid their last respects at the church and cemetery. Our thanks to Rev Valerie Watson for the lovely service and to Eileen MacKenzie for playing the organ. Grateful thanks to all doctors, district nurses, Macmillan Nurse, ambulance medics and all staff at Islay Hospital for all their care and attention. Special thanks to all carers and to Craig and Jean MacAffer and Donnie MacKinnon for conducting the proceedings in their usual efficient and sympathetic manner. Thanks to all who accompanied us to the interment at Kilchoman and to Kate for the wonderful purvey we enjoyed at Taigh-a-Mhulinn, Conisby. A huge thank you to everyone for phone calls, flowers and cards from far and wide. Support of friends and family was invaluable, with a special mention to Effie, Archie Neil, Fiona, we Donald, Angus and Yasin.

**MORRISON** - Catriona, Margaret, Christina, Lorraine and families would like to thank everyone for their love and support following the sad passing of their beloved dad Hector. Thanks for all the cards, telephone calls and expressions of sympathy. Special thanks to Donald MacKinnon for the lovely service and to D and A Munn for funeral arrangements and also Lorn Medical Centre for all their care and attention over the years. Thanks also to Royal Hotel for catering and to all who contributed to the sum of £637.60 which was donated to ABCD. Dad you were made in Scotland from Girders and you will be sadly missed and loved by us all.

**McDONALD** - Lily and family wish to express their sincere thanks for all the kind expressions of sympathy and support they received on their sad loss of John (Ian). Thanks to Donald MacKinnon for such a comforting service and the compassion he showed towards the family. Thanks to D & A Munn for their caring and efficient handling of arrangements. Thanks to the staff of Ward B for all their care to Ian and all at Lorn and Islands District General Hospital.

**McKECHNIE** - Fiona and Alex would like to thank family, friends and neighbours for the cards, letters and flowers sent following their sad loss of Nancy. Thanks to the Rev. Dugald Cameron for a comforting service, to Ian at D & A Munn for efficient and professional funeral arrangements and to Moreen

Gracie for the beautiful flowers. Thanks to the staff, both present and past, at the Lynn of Lorne Care Home for the care and attention given to mum over the last 5 years, also to Connell Surgery and finally to all those who paid their respects at the church and graveside. The sum of £300 was divided between Oban Hospice and ABCD.

**McLEAN** - Following the sudden sad loss of Don, Margaret would like to thank the ambulance crew, the doctors and staff both at the Rhinns Medical Centre and the Islay Hospital for their professionalism and caring. To Rev Valerie Watson for the moving service at Caisteal a Ghlinne and to the staff afterwards. To Jean Campbell, the organist and Jean and Craig McAffer and Donnie MacKinnon for conducting the proceedings in their usual efficient and sympathetic manner. Thanks to all who accompanied us to the interment at Kilchoman and to Kate for the wonderful purvey we enjoyed at Taigh-a-Mhulinn, Conisby. A huge thank you to everyone for phone calls, flowers and cards from far and wide. Support of friends and family was invaluable, with a special mention to Effie, Archie Neil, Fiona, we Donald, Angus and Yasin.

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**CLARK** - In loving memory of a dear husband, father, grandfather and great-grandfather Alexander (Tom) who died December 26, 2012. Gone but not forgotten.

**CLARK** - Kirsty. This Christmas we quietly remember a wonderful mum and granny who passed away on December 22, 2012, also Graham, a beloved dad and grandpa, who passed away on August 7, 2006. So greatly missed by us all. Such happy memories.

**CAMERON** - In loving memory of Alastair a dear husband, father and grandfather, who died December 18, 1990, also

remembering loved ones gone before and after. Dear are the memories Precious they stay No passing of time Can take them away.

**CAMPBELL** - Treasured memories of Marion McKenzie, who died December 19, 2009, a much loved and missed wife, mother, grandmother and great-grandmother. We little knew that morning that God Would call your name. In life we loved you dearly In death we do the same It broke our hearts to lose you you didn't go alone For part of us went with you the day God called you home You left us peaceful memories, Your love is still our guide and though we cannot see you you are always by our side. Our family chain is broken, and nothing seems the same but as God calls us one by one The chain will link again.

**CAMPBELL** - With many treasured memories of a beloved husband, dad and gen. Iain, who died December 27 1994, remembering also with much love our adored son, brother and uncle Iain, who died December 16, 2007. In the sorrow of our loss We treasure the joy at you being united forever in eternity Until we meet again With our love always. - Seonaid, Anmarie, Marion and families.

**CLARK** - In loving memory of a dear husband, father, grandfather and great-grandfather Alexander (Tom) who died December 26, 2012. Gone but not forgotten.

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(MacGregor) Clark, who passed away December 22, 2012. Your memory is a keepsake Of which I'll never part God has you in his keeping I have you in my heart. - From sister Alice and brother-in-law John.

**DUFF** - Remembering our son Stuart, who died December 18, 2000 aged 26. Love and miss you always. - Mum and Dad x

**MACALLISTER** - In loving memory of David Mercer MacAllister, Tobermory, Zambia, and Symington, Ayrshire who died December 21, 2004. - Rosemary and family.

**MACCOLL** - Archie Duncan. Treasured, loving memories of the work and happy times we spent together. Sadly missed at Kilmornivaig. - June Anne and David.xxxx

**MAITLAND** - In loving memory of our dear brother and brother-in-law James, who passed away on December 23, 2012. Close in our hearts you will always stay Loved and remembered every day. - Catherine and Alasdair

**MAITLAND** - James. Sadly missed, remembered always. - Christina, Banny and family.

**MAITLAND** - In loving memory of a dear brother-in-law and uncle James Maitland who died on December 23, 2012. Memories are like leaves of gold They never tarnish or grow old. Remembered with love. - Paul, Lorraine, Jill and Kyle.

**McKIERNAN** - Loving memories of a special dad, Jim, who died on 21 December 2007. Always in our hearts. - With love, Catherine, Diane & Alan.

**McTAGGART** - With treasured and loving memories of our dear dad and granpa John, who died December 25, 2005. Also our precious mum, nana and sister Mary (née Nicolson), who died August 23, 2011. No matter how life changes No matter what we do A special place within our hearts Is always kept for you. Loved and missed dearly.

**MAITLAND** - In loving memory of James, who died December 23, 2012. James - Nothing compares to you. A man lives for as long as we

carry him inside us For as long as we carry the harvest of his dreams For as long as we ourselves live Holding memories in common, a man lives. Love you forever. - Teeny. Remembering you is easy We do it every day But missing you is heartache That never goes away Love you. - Jim and Marie. Miss you Shenair each and every day Kisses and cuddles. - James and Isla. We think of you in silence We often speak your name What would we give to hear your voice And see your face again. - Love Ross, Claire and Ben

**NICOLSON** - In loving memory of our dear mother and grandmother Christina (née Stewart), who died December 19, 1985. Also our dear sisters and aunts Mima MacAulay who died December 30, 1989 and Mary McTaggart who died August 23, 2011. Precious are the memories silently kept Of the ones that we loved And shall never forget. - Sadly missed by all the family.

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01631 571009

**CHURCH NOTICES**  
**SCOTTISH EPISCOPAL CHURCH ANGLICAN COMMUNION**  
Thursday 19 December 2013  
St John's Cathedral, Oban  
Nine Lessons and Carols.....19:30  
Sunday 22 Dec 2013  
Advent 4  
St John's Cathedral, Oban  
Holy Communion.....08:00  
Sung Eucharist.....10:15  
Sunday School and Crèche  
Loop System  
Large Print Hymn Books  
All Welcome  
Nicki McNelly, Provost  
(01631) 562323  
St Columba, Gruline, Mull  
Nine Lessons and Carols.....11:00  
St Columba, Bishop's House, Iona  
Holy Eucharist.....09:30

**Oban Hospice**  
CARING FOR THE FUTURE  
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Birch Hill  
Northcreebeag  
North Connel, PA37 1RE

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North Avenue, Clydebank  
Business Park, Clydebank G81 2DR  
Tel 0800 100 6000  
In memory of Dawn Joyce

Monday 23 Dec 2013  
St John's Cathedral, Oban  
"Silent Night, Holy Night" (an hour of words, music, and reflection).....19:30  
Tuesday 24 Dec 2013  
Christmas Eve  
St John's Cathedral, Oban  
Fancy Dress Crib Service.....15:00  
Midnight Mass.....23:15  
St James, Ardbrecknish, Cladich  
Family Eucharist.....11:00  
St Columba, Bishop's House, Iona  
Holy Eucharist.....18:00  
Wednesday 25 Dec 2013  
Christmas Day  
St John's Cathedral, Oban  
Holy Communion.....08:00  
Family Sung Eucharist.....10:15  
St Columba, Gruline, Mull  
Holy Communion.....11:00  
St Columba, Bishop's House, Iona  
Holy Eucharist.....08:00

**Oban Times**  
BIRTHS, MARRIAGES, DEATHS

O' come all ye faithful

A full guide to your local church services this festive season



**Thought for the week**

When Christmas comes along, a lot of important ideas and themes can get lost in the middle of everything else. One thing that almost never gets lost though is the idea of gifts. Even for people who don't follow the Christian faith, Christmas is a time to give and receive presents. It's a great way to share love between families and friends, and for a lot of people it's one of the nicest parts of Christmas. This year we will all hopefully be giving and receiving presents, but

maybe as well as that, there is another way we can look at the whole idea of gifts... We all give and receive gifts all the time, and we all see the gifts that God gives. Every single one of us has been given amazing things by God and every single one of us has so many things that we can give to other people. This Christmas as you give and receive beautifully wrapped presents, remember the gifts God has given us individually and the biggest gift of all, the Christ child.

**Christmas Services in Oban & Lorn**

**St. John's Episcopal Cathedral**  
The Cathedral Church of St. John the Divine  
George Street, Oban  
**Thursday 19th December**  
Nine Lessons and Carols 7.30pm followed by mince pies and wine  
**Monday 23rd December**  
Silent Night, Holy Night 7.30pm an hour of words, music and reflection  
**Christmas Eve**  
3.00pm, Fancy Dress Crib Service, 11.15pm, Midnight Mass by candlelight  
**Christmas Day**  
8am Said Eucharist  
10.15am Family Sung Eucharist

**Oban Congregational Church**  
Mon 23rd and Tues Christmas Eve church will be open between 11-2pm.  
**Christmas Eve**  
Watchnight service by candle light 11.30pm, Christmas morning  
Short thanks giving service at 11am  
Wishing everyone a happy and peaceful Christmas and hope to see you.  
Rev Ken Hunter

**Oban Baptist Church**  
Albany Street PA34 4LG  
**CHRISTMAS SERVICES**  
Sunday 22 December 6.30pm  
Carols and candlelight  
Christmas Eve 11.30pm  
Carols, Candles and Communion  
Christmas Day 10.30am- 11.15am  
Family Service  
www.obanbaptist.org.uk

**The Fort William Baptist, Belford Road**  
**Sunday 22nd**  
Services as usual, 11am Children's Church 6.30pm Reflective Communion.  
**Christmas Eve**  
11:15 Watch light Services followed by Bible Lessons and Carols  
**Christmas Day**  
10:30-11:30 Family Service  
Reverend David White

**Fort William & Lochaber**  
**ST ANDREWS EPISCOPAL CHURCH**  
High Street, Fort William  
Tuesday 24th December  
11.45pm Midnight Mass  
And Blessing Of Crib  
Wednesday 25th December  
10.45am Family Eucharist  
All Are Welcome

**St Mary's Fort William**  
**Mass of Christmas Night**  
Christmas Eve 10pm (carol service 9.45pm)  
(No Midnight Mass)  
**Christmas Morning**  
Mass 10.30am

**ST MARY'S ARISAIG.**  
Tues 24th  
Carols at 11.40pm followed by Midnight Mass  
Christmas Day  
Family mass 10.30am  
**GLENFINNAN**  
Tues 24th  
Ecumenical carol service 6pm  
7pm Vigil



**KILMORE & OBAN CHURCH OF SCOTLAND**  
**Christmas Services**  
**Sunday 22 December**  
Nativity  
10.30am Parish Church  
**Tuesday 24 December**  
Christmas Eve  
7.00pm Parish Church  
9.00pm Kilmore  
Watchnight  
11.30pm Parish Church  
**Wednesday 25 December**  
Christmas Day  
10.30am Parish Church  
For more information please contact the Church Office, Mon-Fri 9am-1pm  
Tel:01631 562405  
E Mail:obancofs@btinternet.com  
Website:www.obanchurch.com

**VISITATION AT TAYNUILT**  
Canon Fraser wishes you all a peaceful and Happy Christmas & New Year  
Tuesday 24th December  
Carols at 11.30pm followed by midnight mass  
Wednesday 25th December  
10.30 a.m. Christmas Mass  
ALL WELCOME

St James' Episcopal Church  
Ardbrecknish  
Christmas Day  
11am Family Eucharist

# Busy week for Oban Pool League

## Markie Dans 'A' go two points clear at the top

WITH games being played on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday it was a busy week in the Oban Pool League.

In the first of the re-arranged matches league leaders Markie Dans 'A' hosted Lochnell, looking to continue their excellent start to the season. In contrast the North Connell outfit arrived more in hope after some inconsistent performances of late.

Unfortunately for Lochnell despite a much improved effort, the Corran Esplanade side's resilience at the business end earned them the crucial two points.

The following evening the Gluepot ventured into Oban to face basement boys Outreach, mindful that two points would propel them up the league standings. Despite a sluggish start the villagers eventually grabbed a hold of proceedings to briefly catapult themselves up into fifth position.

On Thursday night the Gluepot squared off against fourth placed side Lancaster 'B'. However any dreams of reeling in their counterparts were dashed in the doubles and realistically a top six finish would now be considered a fruitful campaign.

Lancaster 'B', having consolidated their position, could still yet prove to have a considerable say in the destination of the championship.

Lochnell once again made the short round trip to Oban's seaford, this time to play Outreach in a contest between two sides hoping to register some points at the second time of asking.

Outreach made a fast start, only for their lead to evaporate just as quickly, and Lochnell ran out comfortable winners to occupy sixth spot.

Foley's Bar finally picked up their first points of the season after seeing off Creagan Inn courtesy of an impressive doubles performance. The victory closes the gap between the sides to three points, although the Appin team do have a game in hand.

Oban Pool League is sponsored by the Creagan Inn		
	P	Pts
1 Markie Dans A	8	16
2 Cellar Bar	8	14
3 Lancaster A	7	12
4 Lancaster B	8	12
5 Lochavullin	8	8
6 Lochnell	8	7
7 Claredon	8	6
8 Gluepot	8	5
9 Markie Dans B	8	5
10 Creagan Inn	7	5
11 Foleys Bar	8	2
12 Outreach	0	0

The Lochavullin hosted the Claredon in a keenly contested top-six battle and on this occasion it was the home side which prevailed, although they did have to come from behind with the Claredon having the initiative after the singles section.

Defending champions Cellar Bar maintained their title challenge, overwhelming Markie Dans 'B' in the most convincing win of the week. After suffering a devastating defeat to bitter rivals, Lancaster 'A', a couple of

### POOL

weeks ago the title holders have responded with two thoroughly professional victories and with a clash against pace setters Markie Dans 'A' looming on the horizon after the festive break all is still to play for.

In the game of the week Lancaster 'A' welcomed Markie Dans 'A' as the league's only two undefeated sides went head to head in the biggest clash of the season to date.

The Lancaster 'A' started like an express train threatening to blast their rivals away in the singles, but they had to settle for a slender lead heading into the doubles as a spirited Markies fought back from the brink to keep the tie alive.

An unlikely clean sweep of the doubles means Markies now sit two points clear at the summit of the table. Results week nine: Markie Dans A 6-4 Lochnell; Outreach 3-7 Gluepot; Lancaster A 4-6 Markie Dans A; Foleys Bar 7-3 Creagan Inn; Markie Dans B 2-8 Cellar; Outreach 3-7 Lochnell; Gluepot 3-7 Lancaster B; Lochavullin 6-4 The Claredon. Week 10 fixtures (December 19): Markie Dans A v Foleys Bar; Creagan Inn v Cellar; Outreach v Lancaster A; Lancaster B v Lochnell; Claredon v Gluepot; Lochavullin v Markie Dans B. The Oban Filling Station Cup (to be played January 16): Markie Dans B v Lancaster B; Lancaster A v Gluepot; Markie Dans A v Claredon; Cellar v Lochnell.



After the grading, from left, are: Colin Campbell, John Georgeson, Shihan Wullie Rodger 6th Dan, Andrzej Pytka and Craig MacLachlan. Not pictured, Liam Roberts.

## Oban kickboxers gain black belts

FIVE members of Senshi Do Kickboxing in Oban recently undertook the gruelling test for their 1st Dan Black Belt Grading. Colin Campbell, John Georgeson, Andrzej Pytka, Craig MacLachlan and Liam Roberts completed a two-and-a-half-hour session of hard training, followed by 30 one-minute full contact fights.

**Physical endurance**  
Shihan Wullie Rodger (6th Dan) said: 'The students pushed themselves above and beyond the bounds of normal physical endurance to gain the coveted prize and status of 1st Dan Black Belt.'

Senshi Do Kickboxing is on Wednesday evenings, 6.30pm for under-14s and 7.30pm over-14s.

Contact Wullie at shihanwill@gmail.com or 07588 513 618 for more details.

### KICKBOXING

## Ryder Cup star gives his backing to junior golf membership offer

### GOLF

EUROPEAN Ryder Cup captain Paul McGinley is backing ClubGolf's bid to get more children across Argyll and Dunbartonshire into golf.

The Irishman has given his support to the ClubGolf national junior programme's £20 Junior Membership Offer. Funded by the Scottish Government, the scheme - which returns for a second year - offers youngsters involved in ClubGolf coaching a money-saving voucher.

This can be redeemed at ClubGolf clubs against the cost of the child's first membership to help boost junior numbers around the country.

McGinley said: 'Becoming a member of a golf club offers children so many things; not least the chance to play this great game and have fun out on the golf course, but also the opportunity to learn the etiquette and manners, which sets our sport apart from so many others.'

First Minister Alex Salmond added: 'Scotland is the home of golf - we want to ensure this sport has a bright future, which means generating and sustaining an interest in golf from an early age.'

## Scottish Amateur League results and fixtures

### FOOTBALL

LAST Saturday's results: West of Scotland Cup 4th round - Blochairn Star 'B' 4, Lochgilphead Red Star 1; Premier Division - Oban Saints v Haldane United, postponed; Premier Division One - Campbelltown Pupils v Centre, postponed; Premier Division Two - Goldenhill v Dunoon Athletic, postponed; Division 1A - Tarbert v Millbeg Villa, postponed.

The SAFL now takes a winter break with games returning on Saturday 11 January.

## Green Machine take on Clydebank

### RUGBY

OBAN Lorne's scheduled match away to Stewartry last Saturday was cancelled last weekend because of the weather conditions.

The Green Machine, however, was out in force with a few players helping out neighbours Isle of Mull RFC away to Paisley.

Unfortunately for the travelling squad that game ended in a 21-3 defeat in some shocking conditions.

Clydebank are the visitors to Glencairn this Saturday for Oban Lorne's last game of a very successful 2013.

Oban defeated Clydebank 31-5 earlier in the season and will be hoping for another bonus point win to keep up the pressure on promotion-chasing Garnock and Carrick. Kick off is at 2pm.

## Oban Athletic home to Cardross

### FOOTBALL

OBAN Athletic will be hoping to end the year on a winning note when they play host to Cardross Amateurs in a West of Scotland League match on Saturday. Kick-off is 2pm

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EckO's international representatives, from left: Tom Lines, Roanne Lilley, Eilidh Shearer, Briony Kincaid and Callum Hunter.

## Taynuilt girl picked for Scotland

A TAYNUILT girl is the latest member of Argyll's EckO Orienteering Club to be called up for international honours.

Eilidh Shearer is one of two girls in her age group from across Scotland who has been selected for the Scottish Junior Orienteering Squad (ScotJOS).

She will join fellow club members Briony Kincaid, Callum Hunter, Roanne Lilley and Tom Lines, who have also been selected for the Scottish Squad.

**Very unusual**  
Kate Hunter of EckO Orienteering Club said: 'It is very unusual and a huge achievement for a small club like EckO to have five of our junior members in the national squad.'

The winners of the 'wee pool gala' were: Under-7 winner - Lola MacIntyre and Over-7 winner Isla Berry.

Trophies and prizes were handed out at the Argyllshire Gathering Halls last Tuesday evening.

Cup winners: MacLean Cup - Rosie Dairon; MacKay Cup - Andrew Nicol; Spence Shield - Freya MacKechnie; Hutchison Cup - Matthew MacDonald;

Larchfield Trophy - David MacPherson; Dychem Trophy - Daniel Teape; Columbia Hotel Trophy - Evie Turner; MacCracken Cup - Calum Bichener; Tyndrum Cup - Ella MacKechnie; Intermediate Shield - Emily Hunter; Bank of Scotland - Sam Coates; Iona Shop - Jamie Jordan; Hannah's Shield - Jack Fletcher; Hunter Cup - James MacIntyre;

## Ella breaks 25-year-old butterfly record as Oban Otters pick up their prizes

A HOST of prizes and a celebration of breaking a 25-year-old club record made for a memorable occasion for members of Oban Otters swimming club. Ella MacKechnie broke the club record for 50m butterfly by three seconds, surpassing a time that had stood since 1988. She was the winner of the Tyndrum Cup this season for her efforts. The winners of the 'wee pool

gala' were: Under-7 winner - Lola MacIntyre and Over-7 winner Isla Berry. Trophies and prizes were handed out at the Argyllshire Gathering Halls last Tuesday evening.

Cup winners: MacLean Cup - Rosie Dairon; MacKay Cup - Andrew Nicol; Spence Shield - Freya MacKechnie; Hutchison Cup - Matthew MacDonald;

### SWIMMING

Beaver Timber Shield - James MacIntyre. Individual Medley 4 x 25m winners Girls 10 and under - Evie Turner; Boys 10 and under - Calum Bichener; Girls 11yrs - Ella MacKechnie; Boys 11yrs - Sam Coates; Girls 12 yrs - Emily Hunter; Boys 12 yrs - Jamie Jordan; Boys 13yrs - Jack Fletcher.

week 1 of 2

# SPOT THE SHINTY BALL

COMpetition

WIN £800

**To allow for the Christmas holidays spot the ball will run for 2 weeks**  
**Entries must be in by 12noon Monday 30th December**

**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. 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 'Spot the Shinty Ball' Competition, The Oban Times, PO Box 1, Oban, Argyll PA34 4HB by 12noon Monday 30 December.  
 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 Wyvex Media, their immediate relatives and any person otherwise connected with the competition are ineligible to enter.

**This week's nearest the ball winners, who each receive £25 are:**

**M McFarlane, Bridgend, Isle of Islay**

**C Parlett, Beecraigs, Linlithgow**

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## Inter-school basketball tournament held in Oban

'Basketball is a great way to encourage teamwork among school pupils'

TEAMS from four Argyll schools came to Oban's Atlantis Leisure to contest the annual inter-school basketball tournament and it was the hosts that were celebrating after winning two of the three titles.

Oban High School won the senior boys event after seeing off competition from Lochgilphead, Dunoon and Tobermory.

### Two teams

Such was the interest in the sport at the Oban school, that it fielded two senior teams: Oban A emerged as overall winners.

There was also success for Oban High in the girls' competition.

Karen MacCorquodale, Oban High School's Active

Schools co-ordinator, organised the tournament alongside Lochgilphead colleague Innes Paterson, who accompanied the Mid Argyll side to Oban.

She said: 'Basketball is a great way to encourage teamwork and fitness among school pupils, which is why this is a popular annual tournament.'

'It is also an opportunity for the schools to come together in competition.'

'I would like to thank umpires Aaron Johnson and Christopher Campbell and the three visiting schools for taking the time to come to Oban.'

Lochgilphead High School was represented in the junior boys section of the competition and the tournament proved to

### BASKETBALL

be a great learning curve for the young team.

They did, however, end the day on a bright note with their best performance in a 9-4 victory over Oban High School.

### Performance

Innes said: 'Many of the boys have only just started attending the high school's after school club and on this performance the future's bright for basketball at the school.'

Tobermory High School brought across a large contingent from Mull, fielding a team in all three events.

Their junior boys took top honours in their age group.



Liam Donn, Oban High School, drives to the basket in the match against Dunoon in the senior boys' section. 16\_151basketball01

## Weather wins as amateur football takes a hammering

### FOOTBALL

SCOTTISH amateur football in the west of Scotland took a hammering last weekend with hundreds of matches falling foul of the horrendous weather.

Oban Saints were due to play Haldane United in a Premier Division league match at Glencruitten but after checking the weather forecast the Oban club decided to call the game off.

Secretary David Buchanan said: 'I checked the pitch at 8am and it was perfectly playable, but we couldn't take the risk of asking Haldane to travel.'

'Thankfully it was the right decision to call the game off as by 11am the pitch was flooded and you could hardly stand up in the wind.'

The games involving Campbeltown Pupils, Dunoon Athletic and Tarbert were also postponed. The only Argyll team to play was Lochgilphead Red Star, but they lost 4-1 away to Blochairn Star 'B' in the 4th round of the West of Scotland Cup.

Saints were due to play the winners of the Jordanhill v Giffnock North game in the 4th round of the West of Scotland Cup this Saturday, but that game fell victim to the weather as well, so the Oban boys have no fixture this weekend.

Saints' next official game will be away to Dennistoun Vale in the 5th round of the Fosters Scottish Amateur Cup on Saturday 11 January.

The club would like to wish their supporters and sponsors the compliments of the season.

## Oban Saints youths results and fixtures

### YOUTH FOOTBALL

LAST weekend's results: Blair Thistle v Under 13s, postponed Under 14s no game; Blair Thistle v Under 15s, postponed Balloch Eastfield 1, Under 17s 3. Scoring for Saints were Zak Straub and Alan Buchanan (2).

This weekend's fixtures Broomhill Sports Club v Under 13s; Under 14s no game; Under 15s no game; Under 17s no game.

## Full points for D&K Lafferty

### OVER 35s FOOTBALL

LATEST scores from the over-35s six-a-side indoor football league - Sail Trim Coach 2, Taynuilt 9; Clements 8, Teachers 6; Emergency 1, Trialists 0; Teachers 3, D&K Lafferty 4.

The league will now take a break until after the festive holidays

	P	W	D	L	Pts
D&K Lafferty	3	3	0	0	9
Emergency	4	2	0	2	6
Clements	2	2	0	6	6
Trialists	2	1	0	1	3
Taynuilt	2	1	0	1	3
Teachers	4	1	0	3	3
STC	3	0	0	3	0

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Oban High School won the girls' tournament. 16\_151basketball05



Oban A won the senior boys' section. 16\_151basketball04



Tobermory won the junior boys' tournament. 16\_151basketball06

## Former Scotland goalkeeper hands out the prizes at Glencruitten club



Glencruitten's Player of the Year Michael Kelly received his award from Alan Rough.

### GOLF

FORMER Scotland goalkeeper and keen golfer Alan Rough presented the awards at this year's Glencruitten Golf Club prizegiving. The popular after-dinner speaker was staying in the area and was invited by the club to hand out the season's silverware.

The prizegiving, which was held at the golf club on December 6, marked the unique achievement of David MacCuish, who won his seventh club championship in a row and his 15th in total.

Jean Ainsley won the ladies championship, Kenny MacCallum won the senior championship and Aiden MacCuish won the junior championship.

John MacKinnon snr won the Order of Merit Award. Michael Kelly was given the club's Player Of The Year Award against tough competition for his outstanding success throughout the season. Michael won four competitions during the year, including the handicap championship.

Alan Rough gave a very entertaining speech and question and answer session after the prizegiving ceremony. See next week's Oban Times for the full list of prizewinners.



This year's prizewinners at Glencruitten Golf Club's end-of-season awards.

## Weather

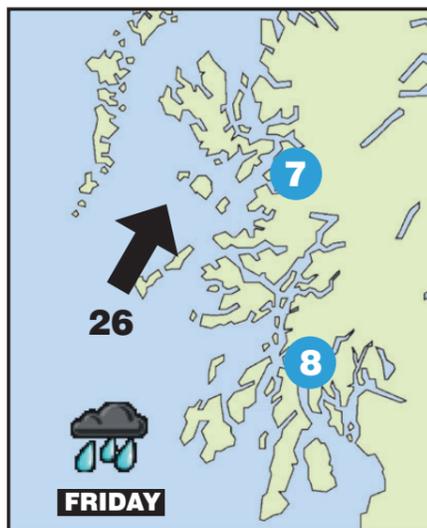
**Thursday** Rain showers  
Winds strong south westerly  
Temperatures 4°C to 5°C

**Friday** Heavy rain  
Winds strong south south westerly  
Temperatures 6°C to 8°C.

**Weekend Outlook** Heavy rain showers  
Winds moderate southerly  
Temperatures 6°C to 8°C.

### Ferry Crossings/Sea States

Oban to Barra/South Uist Moderate  
Oban to Coll/Tiree Moderate  
Kennacraig to Islay Moderate



## Tides

Tide tables for Oban during the week from **Thursday, December 19, 2013** are listed below with differences for major ports listed beneath.

All times are GMT (add one hour BST)

Date	am	pm
Thur	00.35 1.1 06.30 4.0 13.13 1.4 18.54 3.9	
Fri	01.13 1.1 07.05 4.0 13.48 1.5 19.29 3.8	
Sat	01.49 1.2 07.39 3.9 14.23 1.6 20.03 3.7	
Sun	02.24 1.4 08.13 3.8 14.58 1.8 20.37 3.5	
Mon	02.59 1.5 08.47 3.6 15.33 1.9 21.13 3.4	
Tues	03.36 1.6 09.25 3.5 16.14 2.0 21.55 3.2	
Wed	04.21 1.7 10.11 3.4 17.11 2.0 22.49 3.1	

Tidal Constants: (Add or deduct from High Water at Oban)

Ardrisaig	-5.35	Mallaig	+0.25
Campbeltown	-5.30	Portree	+0.55
Crinan	-0.47	Tobermory	+0.16
Islay Port Ellen	2.00	Dover	+5.30
Lochboisdale	+0.30		

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**Starting this week Review of the Year 2013**



**Residents braced for another violent storm**

WEST Highlands and Hebrides residents were bracing themselves for another violent winter storm last night. A warning of hurricane force winds and heavy rain was issued by the Met Office for between late Wednesday afternoon and Thursday morning. Gusts of 60 to 70mph were expected in exposed areas, especially around coasts. Gusts could exceed 80 mph in north west Scotland. Coastal flooding, heavy rain and widespread travel disruption were also predicted. The warning came just a fortnight after the last storm left widespread damage and power cuts in its wake, with Mallaig among the places hardest hit. Robert MacMillan, Mallaig Harbour manager, said: 'We just need to batten down the hatches and make sure the boats are secure. It's just nature and if that's what happens then there's nothing we can do.'

**Shop doors open late for festive jamboree**

ALMOST every shop in Fort William will open late tonight (Thursday) for the High Street Christmas Gathering. Hundreds of extra revellers and shoppers are expected in town for the festive jamboree from 6pm to 8pm. Christmas carols, traditional music, mince pies, competitions and special prizes are among the attractions.

**Rural trust holds annual Christmas service**

LOCHABER Rural Education Trust will hold its annual Christmas service will be at An Clachan, Lochaber Rural Complex, on Sunday at 3pm. The service will be led by Dr John Wallace and the readings will be done by pupils from Banavie, Caol, Lochyside and Inverlochyside. Afternoon tea will be provided and the collection will be taken for the work of the trust. Everyone welcome.

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**Banavie primary youngsters' concert cheer**

Banavie Primary School nursery and primary one pupils were in great voice in their nativity play, part of the school's Christmas concert last week. The children sang a Christmas version of 'My Fair Lady' accompanied by class teacher Dierdre Beck on piano. All pupils starred in the sell-out show in the school hall. See more West Highlands festive photos, page 12. 20\_151banavianativity01

**Pier access row leaves ferry service stranded**

A ROW over access to a pier has led to the suspension of ferry services to a remote west Lochaber hamlet. Highland Council has halted sailings to Tarbet on the south shore of Loch Nevis after pier owners Nevis Estate raised health and safety concerns. Knoydart-based firm Seabridge, which won the council contract in April for the triangular Inverie-Tarbet-Mallaig route, is currently running services between Mallaig and Inverie only. It has a fleet of three boats of 13 metres or less, one a miniature landing craft. Estate factor Andrew Aitchison said the vessels were 'not compatible' with Tarbet pier because it was being used for boat repair.

**EXCLUSIVE REPORT** by **STEPHEN NORRIS** [snorris@obantimes.co.uk](mailto:snorris@obantimes.co.uk)

He told *The Oban Times*: 'Seabridge started using the pier but we were concerned we had boats up in cradles and winch gear there which people had to clamber across to get on and off. 'I find it astonishing why the council awarded the contract when they had not even seen Tarbet and to see why the boats Seabridge intended to use were so unsuitable.' Seabridge owner John Sellers told *The Oban Times*: 'All the council have said is they have suspended the service because the estate says the pier is too dangerous. 'I am waiting for everybody to decide what they want to do. The service will almost certainly be resumed in the summer.' Caol and Mallaig councillor Allan Henderson said: 'The current operator just started using the pier without checking. The estate took umbrage and said 'hold on a minute, this is a working pier and jetty'. 'In the interests of fairness either the whole contract has to be re-tendered or a sum of money transferred from the contract to recompense for the non-delivery of the Tarbet service element. 'There is room for everyone to make a wee bit of concession and work together.' Councillor Henderson added: 'This whole service for Loch Nevis is a vital part of the economy of the whole north Morar region as well as Knoydart. It should not be looked at in parts but as a whole package.' Tarbet still has a sea connection to Mallaig through the 'Western Isles' - the former ferry boat on the Inverie route - which is currently operating a Royal Mail service between the two destinations on Mondays and Fridays. However, the contract ends on December 31 and there is no guarantee it will be continued. Highland Council confirmed the Seabridge service to Tarbet was suspended due to concerns about the difficulty of boarding and alighting from the 'very low' pier. The tiny uninhabited settlement at the end of a core path from Morar is a popular destination for hikers, especially in summer.

**Great Glen hydro project splits opinion**

£800m power plant at Invergarry will be the first of its kind in Britain in 30 years

OPINION appears divided in the Great Glen after controversial plans for a giant hydro project near Invergarry were given the green light.

By **STEPHEN NORRIS** [snorris@obantimes.co.uk](mailto:snorris@obantimes.co.uk)

SSE's £800 million plant at Coire Glas would see Sean Mheall - a 2,900-foot mountain across Loch Lochy from the A82, partly hollowed out for an underground power station and tunnel. A dam and reservoir would be built at a loch behind the hill, along with an outlet area on the loch-side. SSE says visual impacts would be minimal because the corrie is hidden from view and most infrastructure is inside the mountain. But some tourism interests argue that lorries carrying away rock over several years, together with a loss of scenic value would damage trade. Others, however, point to a boost to the local economy from hundreds of well-paid workers. Ewen Cameron from Balmaglasser near Invergarry,

welcomed the decision. The Glengarry shinty team coach, whose home is next to one of the main access routes to the site, told *The Oban Times*: 'We are all for it. There are no jobs in the village nowadays and when it's finished it could mean 10 or 12 jobs here. 'I know there are some people against it but I think the majority are in favour. When it's getting built it will mean more money coming into the place. 'When they were doing the Glendoe hydro scheme at Fort Augustus there was more money around - people were letting out their houses to workers and the hotels did well.' He added: 'It will mean two or three years of disruption - but at the end of the day we will get a new access road out of it.' One local hotelier, who asked not to be named, condemned the decision. She said: 'We put in an objection and it has not been considered. There is nothing more we can do.'

lan Smith of the Letterfinlay Lodge Hotel has also stated his opposition to the development, saying it has cost him business since application was lodged last year. Meanwhile, Invergarry Community Council secretary Marigold MacLennan was keeping her powder dry. She said: 'We only got notification on Friday afternoon. We will discuss it at our January meeting.' The pumped storage scheme could potentially supply 10 per cent of Scotland's electricity needs at times of highest demand, Scotland's energy minister Fergus Ewing said. The plant, the first of its kind in Britain in 30 years, will use cheap off-peak electricity generated by wind farms to pump water up from Loch Lochy to the Coire Glas reservoir. The stored water would then be released down through turbines to provide power to the grid at peak times, effectively 'flattening out' periods of low and high demand. Currently millions of pounds are paid out annually to wind farm owners to switch off turbines because too much power is being produced at the wrong time. Jim Smith, managing director of SSE Renewables, said 'millions of households' and businesses could benefit from the project - but warned high transmission costs and minimal government subsidy put a question mark over the provisional 2015 start date.

**MSP welcomes announcement**

SKYE, Lochaber and Badenoch SNP MSP Dave Thompson warmly welcomed the Coire Glas announcement. Mr Thompson said the massive scheme could mean the end of controversial cash hand-outs to wind farm operators - ultimately paid for by consumers - for shutting down turbines producing too much electricity for the grid when it was not needed. 'While these constraint payments will probably continue to more conventional generation methods, Coire Glas will mean constraint

payments for wind generated power should become a thing of the past,' he said on Tuesday. 'This is a huge plant, six times the generation capacity of the recently completed Glendoe hydro plant, but fortunately most of the plant will be underground. 'The purpose of this plant is to absorb renewable generated electricity that would otherwise be lost. 'Coire Glas will smooth out some at least of the variability inherent in renewable energy technologies like wind and waves.'



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**Cloutie dumplings in festive mix at Kilmallie Christmas fair**

Caol and Mallaig councillor Allan Henderson and Cathy MacColl from Insh, Spean Bridge, had the enviable task of judging the cloutie dumpling competition at Kilmallie Community Centre Christmas Fair. Entries were submitted from Fort William, Roy Bridge, Ballachulish - and even Glasgow. Organisers had hoped to receive two or three from the Isle of Skye - but power cuts caused by storms meant mixtures were never baked. 20\_151dumpp01



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**Three injured in A82 car crash**

THREE people sustained minor injuries after a car in which they were travelling plunged off the A82 near Fort William on Sunday night.

The road was closed for around 20 minutes from around 6.30pm as an ambulance, fire engine and recovery services attended the incident.

The vehicle had careered down a banking on the northbound carriageway around three miles north of the Corran Ferry. The driver and passengers were taken to Belford Hospital and released after treatment.

**Police probe break-in**

POLICE in Inverness are currently conducting enquiries into an alleged theft by housebreaking at a dwelling in the Invergarry area on December 10.

The incident is believed to have occurred between midnight and 7.45am on Tuesday December 10. Police would encourage anyone who has any information or who may have seen any suspicious activity to contact them on 101.

**Pensioner fined £320 for crashing into stationary car**

A PENSIONER was fined after crashing into a car that had already collided with a deer.

George MacNeill, of 22 Victoria Court, Belford Road, Fort William, pled guilty to driving without due care and attention at Lochelside on the A830 around 7.30pm on October 21.

The 82-year-old crashed into the stationary car, causing damage both to it and his own vehicle, but escaped uninjured.

Procurator Fiscal Laura Ryan told Fort William JP Court that MacNeill said he did not see the vehicle or the passengers beside it, who tried to wave him down. MacNeill was fined £320 and given six penalty points.

**Pair cleared of parking on double yellow lines**

TWO FORT William residents were cleared of parking on double yellow lines outside Lochaber Housing Association's offices in the town.

John Steel, 1 Grant Place, Claggan and Mary Campbell, 18 Maryburgh Court admitted parking on the lines on High Street on August 28.

But both claimed they had been told by housing association personnel they could park there and Mr Steel, 60 and Ms Campbell, 55, pled not guilty at Fort William JP Court.

Procurator Fiscal Laura Ryan agreed to take no further action on this occasion, provided the defendants understood that they cannot park there in the future.



The faces say it all: Frazer Coupland, third left, and fellow Living Lochaber steering group members after the result was declared on Friday. f51bid1no

**BID backers stunned by comprehensive rejection**

BACKERS of a controversial proposal to create a business improvement district (BID) in Lochaber have been left stunned after the scheme was comprehensively rejected.

At the declaration of the count in the Council Chambers in Fort William on Friday it was announced that 418 voted against the BID, compared to 135 in favour.

The figures represented a 55 per cent turnout of the 950 businesses eligible to take part in the postal ballot.

No breakdown of the results were available, but many observers believe the move foundered on strong opposition from outlying districts such as Mallaig and south Lochaber.

Many businesses in those areas felt an all-Lochaber BID was too unwieldy, would duplicate existing marketing efforts and be heavily slanted towards Fort

William-based projects such as a cinema and conference centre.

John MacMillan, manager of Mallaig Visitor Centre said: 'I'm not surprised at the result. I think this area is too rural for the BID. I think it was a good concept but wrong for this area.'

'I really would have liked to see it happen for Fort William but I think the feeling here was if businesses were getting out what they put in then fine - but people were wary that money would be going into a big pot with no guarantee of returns.'

Frazer Coupland, chairman of Living Lochaber, the steering group behind the proposal, said he was 'still reeling' days after the result showed businesses voted against the plan by a margin of three to one.

When asked whether the BID should have been tabled for Fort William only, Mr Coupland told The Oban Times: 'Some would

say that but some are of the view that Lochaber should be kept together and to have made the BID for Fort William would be further fragmenting the area.'

'We need to take time to reflect on what happened and see what can be done in the future. We will have a regular [Fort William] Chamber of Commerce meeting and discuss the next steps then.'

Opposition group Bid Farewell set up early in the campaign and ran a highly effective publicity operation to highlight what they saw as major flaws.

Local businessman Stewart MacLean, a leading member of the group, told The Oban Times: 'It is far from being a missed opportunity. I'm sure the volunteers both within the community and outwith will continue with the great work they have been doing.'

'I hope [Fort William] Chamber of Commerce can put

this error of judgement behind them and now move forward to truly represent the businesses of Lochaber.'

'Disappointed' Living Lochaber vice chairman Laurence Young said: 'It is a very solid defeat and a huge disappointment, but we equally recognise the strong will of

the businesses in Lochaber. We found because of the scale of the area and the number of businesses it was really difficult to go out and talk to people on a one-to-one basis.'

'What did come out was a strong sense of local identity as opposed to a strong sense of Lochaber identity.'

FORT William Chamber of Commerce chairman Don Hind defended the 100-member organisation's support of the failed Lochaber BID.

He said: 'It is a role of Fort William Chamber of Commerce to bring programmes and initiatives which may improve Lochaber's economic opportunities to the attention of the business community.'

'We acknowledge that on this occasion the majority have chosen not to support the business improvement district initiative and as a chamber we will continue to seek out and present ideas which Lochaber businesses may consider to be of benefit to enterprise and the area in general.'

'The chamber is committed to supporting our members and to enhancing the economic success of Lochaber for the benefit of everyone who lives and works here.'

**Care crisis talks call**

THE INDEPENDENT Group on Highland Council will today (Thursday) call for an immediate talks on what they see as a crisis in adult community care following a shake-up of the service in 2011.

Their motion, signed by all the group's 21 councillors states: 'Eighteen months ago, we entrusted adult community care services to NHS Highland. Our constituents are now telling us that they are struggling to get the services they need. The Independent Group asks for an urgent meeting for all members with the chief executive officer and Senior NHS Officers to discuss how they are to improve services to our constituents in the immediate future.'

The service includes home helps, day centres and care homes.

**Christmas play**

ROY BRIDGE Primary School pupils will perform their play 'Jesus' Christmas Party in St Margaret's Church tomorrow. Everyone is welcome to the show, which starts at 2pm.



Instrumentalists and singers of Lochaber Music School entertained a large audience at St Margaret's on Sunday. 20\_f51music01

**Packed audience enjoys music school concert**

LOCHABER Music School performed its Christmas concert to a packed St Margaret's Church in Roy Bridge on Sunday as people piled in to listen.

Director Peter Rose thanked the audience, some of whom were sitting on the floor, for

coming despite the bad weather. The musicians then began the show with a rendition of 'O Come All Ye Faithful'.

During the concert, a tribute was paid to the late Rosemary Galer, a violin tutor for the music school. A trophy was presented

to Lilian MacDonald, chair of Lochaber Music Festival in the tutor's memory.

Mr Rose thanked all sponsors for their support after the event.

He said: 'Lochaber Music School's Christmas concert was without a doubt a most

memorable occasion. Not only was this event a great musical success, it was also a notable financial success with well over £1,000 being raised to help fund the music school's varied curriculum during the coming year.'

**Fort Augustus shop on award shortlist**

FORT Augustus Newsagents and Post Office has been announced as a Scottish finalist in the Countryside Alliance Awards.

The outlet has been nominated in the village shop/post office category - but by whom is a mystery, owner Hazel MacDonald told The Oban Times.

Ms MacDonald, who has been sub-postmistress for 17 years, said: 'I have no idea

who nominated us. We are just a small local post office and we do what we can to make sure we stay open.'

'We are on the breadline at the moment because it is very quiet.'

'Things are so expensive and you are in competition with carriers and online shopping - people are finding it very expensive to post things.'

She added: 'We have

been very fortunate for the past four or five years with having the workers at the Glendoe hydro scheme, but that's gone now.'

'It's not just us - the whole village, the pubs the hotels, are quiet too.'

'But we did have a good summer because the weather was great.'

The shop has been in Ms MacDonald's family for 60 years, she said.

**Woman denies stealing debit card**

A FORMER Knydart woman has denied stealing another person's debit card, using it on three separate occasions to withdraw cash and using it to obtain goods fraudulently.

Kimberley Mackay, 23, now residing at Flat 0/2, 1

Gilhill Street, Glasgow, pled not guilty at Fort William JP Court to stealing the card at Knydart or elsewhere in Lochaber between May 31 and June 3.

She also faces 10 separate charges of using the card without the owner's permission to withdraw £850 from cashline machines and fraudulently pay for products worth £406.91 with the card at various businesses in Mallaig, Knydart and the Isle of Eigg between May 31 and June 16. A further hearing will be held on February 26.

**Cash boost for new Skye Gaelic primary school**

HIGHLAND Council is to receive £3 million over two years towards a new £10 million Gaelic primary school in Portree

as key to reversing the decline of Gaelic on Skye. Minister for Scotland's Languages Alasdair Allan announced the cash during a visit on Monday to the site of the new school, where building work will begin in 2015.

An additional £250,000 will be invested in Gaelic early years learning to boost the number of pupils going through Gaelic medium education.

Census language results released last month showed the number of Gaelic speakers on Skye falling from 74 to 46 per cent in the two decades to 2011.

The figures are particularly worrying as Skye is widely regarded as a 'heartland' of the language.

Allan Campbell, former chief executive of Gaelic development agency, Bòrd na Gàidhlig was confident that trend could be halted by investment in education. He told The Oban Times: 'The fact that the school is being built and that parents campaigned for it is indicative of a revival of Gaelic. The whole philosophy of children learning languages is to encourage greater use of language in all areas, in the home, workplace, everywhere.'

Eilean a' Cheò councillors

Drew Millar and Hamish Fraser joined Mr Allan at Elgin Hostel, where the early years education will be until the school is built.

Cllr Fraser said: 'Skye is a heartland of the Gaelic language in the Highlands and I have absolutely no doubt that the new standalone school in Portree will prove a great success and nurture many more Gaelic speakers.'

Cllr Millar told The Oban Times: 'Most people believe bilingual education is superior to monolingual. Parents want their children to have a bilingual education. Hopefully this will help the country because we are lacking in that and falling behind the many bilingual children in Europe.'

Mr Allan said: 'The new Gaelic school in Portree is being created as a result of extensive consultation and a continued demand for parents to offer children bilingual education. This funding recognises the growing interest in Gaelic medium education in the Highlands, and all across Scotland, and is part of our commitment to encourage a new generation of speakers.'

He added: 'What we have seen in the last year is that offering Gaelic to young people is making the greatest impact on halting the decline in the language with the most recent census figures showing an increase in all categories for the under 20s for the first time.'



Looking to the future: Left to right: Bòrd na Gàidhlig chair Ian Campbell, Councillor Drew Millar, Portree Primary School pupils Cameron MacPherson and Ian Cormack, Councillor Hamish Fraser at Elgin Hostel, the temporary site of early years Gaelic education.



Pupils from Carbost and Struan primary schools on Skye came together to stage their Christmas play 'Santa on Strike' at the Christmas concert in Carbost school on Monday night. The nursery children sang a song at the start of the play. Clerical assistant Mina Bruce said: 'The night was a huge success. The parent council organised teas and coffees and we had a raffle and a sale of crafts which all the children made themselves.'

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**Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year**

AS THE year draws to a close *The Oban Times* would like to wish all readers a very merry Christmas and happy New Year with best wishes for 2014.

The *Oban Times* will hit the shelves a day later than usual over the next two weeks, so look out for your copy on Friday December 27 and Friday January 3.

We will return to Thursday as normal on January 9.

**Ciara Caskie Allan Appeal wound up**

AN APPEAL that raised more than £82,000 for an Islay girl to get treatment for a brain tumour in the US has been wound up.

The Ciara Caskie Allan Appeal was set up in October 2012 to help support the Allan family while Ciara went through Proton Therapy at a specialist clinic in Oklahoma.

Ciara, aged 12, was offered the chance of the revolutionary treatment last year and islanders rallied behind the Allans with a number of fundraising activities.

Describing the youngster's bravery as 'inspirational', appeal co-ordinators said it was time to bring the appeal to a close after collecting £82,428.40 from donations worldwide.

The remaining funds of £56,428.40 will be turned over to Ciara to help provide additional care and support in the future and to support other charitable causes.

**Daytime A82 road closures for resurfacing**

WORK to upgrade the A82 at Pulpit Rock meant two daytime closures this week, with the second taking place today (Thursday).

Recent inspections identified a 300m section that requires urgent resurfacing, which needs to be carried out prior to the next set of programmed closures in the New Year.

BEAR Scotland said that while night-time closures were considered, this was not possible on health and safety grounds.

The road will be closed south of Ardlui between 8am-4pm each day, but the road will remain open from Crianlarich and Tarbet for local access.



**All smiles as youngsters meet Santa in Oban**

Santa's here! These two brother and sister duos couldn't wait to tell Father Christmas what they wanted under the tree after he took up Oban Lions Club's invitation to set up a grotto in the Royal Hotel on Saturday. Connor Blue, 4, was first on Santa's lap at the grotto, while sister Lucy, 6, cuddles one of St Nicholas' polar bears while waiting in queue. Carmel, 6, and five-year-old Marcus McHattie, front, couldn't hide their excitement as they patiently waited to hand over their lists. As with all Santa's visitors, they each received an early gift in return for good behaviour. Happily, for those that missed out, Santa will return to the Royal Hotel this Saturday between 11am-3pm. 16\_151santa1

**Counting the cost of Oban parking free-for-all**

PARKING enforcement in Oban 'must happen next year' after the cash-strapped local authority revealed it was £260,000 behind on its target for parking fees.

The quarter-million pound discrepancy of parking fees collected in the town was highlighted as a major concern during last week's meeting of the Oban, Lorn and Isles Area Committee, with councillors Roddy McCuish and Fred Hall both saying the lack of income gave the council a significant headache.

The reduction of income comes in a year when Police Scotland said it would no longer be enforcing parking in town centres and, while there was a pilot scheme where officers did enforce the restrictions, it has come to an end. Parking enforcement is now carried out among other policing duties, but on a reduced level.

At last week's meeting, elected members heard council officers

were looking at reducing parking income targets in light of the poor receipts so far, accepting that the current objective was 'not achievable' and would be revised down. A move to decriminalise parking enforcement, removing it from the responsibility of the police, should be complete next year, something Jim Smith, head of roads, said should result in a 'significant increase in enforcement'.

But Councillor McCuish said the figures were a concern now. Speaking at the meeting, he said: 'For parking income, I see we had a target of £371,416 - but what we took in was £110,704. That's a huge discrepancy.'

'You say we'll be looking at the targets again and that fills me with some concern that we'll be looking to reduce those targets just so our performance figures get a green light.'

After the meeting, he added: 'The potential income from

parking in Oban is fantastic. The arrangement we set up with the police was very good because it was good value for money - plus it helped the public get used to parking enforcement.'

'It's a priority for me to get parking enforcement decriminalised as quickly as possible. It must happen next year. The less money that comes in the less we can spend.'

Currently, funds collected from parking charges are spread around the whole of Argyll and Bute, but Councillor McCuish said it should go back to the community it is gathered in.

'In my opinion, I think every area should keep what it makes.'

Fred Hall also called for a fairer share of the pot once enforcement was decriminalised, saying: 'In the past, Oban was effectively penalised for being good at generating parking income. It should be distributed more fairly.'

**Maureen wins £500 hamper**

BENDERLOCH'S Maureen Maitland received the perfect festive boost after winning a £500 Christmas hamper from Tesco by winning our seasonal competition.

Maureen correctly identified Rudolph as the reindeer with the red nose after collecting five tokens from previous weeks' *Oban Times*. She was selected at random from hundreds of entries, picking up goodies, including Tesco's Hudl tablet, champagne, chocolates, treats and a special turkey from the store's Finest range.

She said: 'I'm absolutely over the moon.'



Maureen Maitland can't hide her joy after collecting her £500 hamper of prizes from Tesco on Saturday. Handing over the bounty she won in *The Oban Times* and Tesco competition are store manager Neil Armour and personnel manager Lisa Bull. 16\_151compwinner1

**Isle of Coll fish farm plans shelved**

PLANS to establish an open sea fish farm just off the isle of Coll have been shelved after Marine Harvest said conditions made it impossible - at the moment.

The company carried out an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) on the site to determine how plausible it would be to operate from there, with concerns raised about the sea current speeds.

The company has now confirmed the water speeds are too high for existing fish farm technology and that it will be concentrating instead on developing other farms, at Muck and Colonsay.

A spokesman for Marine

Harvest said: 'We're not developing the site for the time being but we may revisit it in the future.'

During the consultation period, islanders raised questions about possible pollution from the farm and the potential implications for the extensive numbers of basking sharks that visit the area every year.

The spokesman said: 'Everything relating to the environment around Coll is a consideration of course. That's why the production of an EIA was extremely important.'

'The environment and the technology has to be compatible and for those reasons we're

postponing.' The farm would have been one of the largest permitted in Scotland at present and, including moorings, would have been nearly one kilometre long and nearly half a kilometre wide, growing one million fish.

This farm would have been attached to Coll on the coast at Eileanan na h-Aornan, a significant seal haul out midway between The Meall and Sorisdale.

The proposal was divisive on the island; while some wanted new jobs, others felt the possible environmental impact would be detrimental to tourism, to Coll Sailing Club and to the local wildlife.

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**Argyll & Bute COUNCIL**

**BUDGET COMMUNICATION AND CONSULTATION**

• Please play a part in securing a prosperous future for Argyll and Bute

Argyll and Bute Council will set a 'preserve and prepare' budget for 2014-2015 and 2015-2016. It will use the next two years of relative financial stability to preserve jobs and services and prepare for supporting communities with significantly reduced funding expected from 2016 onwards.

The council's financial planning will be shaped by the overall challenge for Argyll and Bute's economic success - growing our population.

People keep communities thriving. Please take a few minutes to answer our survey on council priorities at [www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/budget](http://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/budget) by 24 January 2014.

# Town centre speed cut plan sparks early public protest

PUBLIC opposition has already been voiced to proposed 20mph speed limits on trunk roads running through the town of Oban.

The move would affect Argyll Square, George Street, Bealach-an-Rìgh and the Esplanade, to the Corran Halls.

Oban is one of five towns selected for a pilot programme by Transport Scotland in a bid to improve safety in the town.

Transport Scotland says there were 13 accidents between 2008 and 2012 with eight of these involving vulnerable road users – pedestrians, children, cyclists, motorcyclists and horse riders. Two were serious accidents.

Transport minister Keith Brown said:

‘It is essential that speeds are appropriate to conditions and these pilot zones will help us establish the benefits of lowering speeds in towns and villages where it is reasonable to do so.’

‘The five trials being proposed will seek to improve road safety generally, but we expect them to bring specific benefits for vulnerable road users, such as older people and cyclists.’

He added: ‘The proposed pilot areas should not require significant engineering or police enforcement to support their operation and we hope to begin the wider consultation processes early next year.’

‘If these are completed successfully,

the 20mph zones will be in place by the spring or early summer.’

Alistair Davidson, Oban’s acting chief inspector, said: ‘Our focus this year has been in an effort to reduce the number of fatalities on the trunk roads in Argyll.’

‘We have been addressing high speed drivers on the main A85 road but that is not to say that driver behaviour in the town is not a concern.’

Chief Inspector Davidson also said the area of the town causing him most concern was around the high school – a site not addressed by the proposals.

Many readers who commented on *The Oban Times* Facebook page would rather

see potholes fixed and roads upgraded instead of a speed reduction, while others simply couldn’t see the benefit. Yvonne Marjot said: ‘It shouldn’t make any difference – I can’t remember the last time I exceeded 20mph through the middle of Oban.’

Margaret McLellan added: ‘They should concentrate on the likes of Taynuilt where road markings and signs are ignored!’

But Michael Russell MSP for Argyll and Bute welcomed the plans, saying: ‘The 20mph speed limit trial in Oban will reassure local communities that every effort is being taken to improve road safety for our vulnerable road

users.’ A council spokesman added: ‘While Argyll and Bute Council has not been consulted directly at this early stage we continue to work closely with our partners in Transport Scotland to deliver our ambitious projects in the Oban area.’

‘A key aim of the CHORD project is to make Oban a better place to live, work and visit. As such, Argyll and Bute Council welcomes these proposals to improve safety in the Oban area.’

A consultation process, including discussions with Argyll and Bute Council and community groups, will now be held to develop more specific proposals for the town.

## Nine jobs axed at Glensanda

NINE jobs have gone at Glensanda Quarry with site owner Aggregate Industries being forced into one compulsory redundancy.

The company had told its 128 employees that it would accept voluntary redundancies from five departments at the Morvern site but only received eight.

The job cuts were to include at least one post from lab technicians, transport workshop, plant fitters, coxswains and secondary operators.

Aggregate Industries agreed the site restructuring with the GMB Union and insists no further redundancies will be required.

The company had denied in late 2012 that redundancies were being considered when the site ceased production for four weeks.

## High Court allows Oban man to walk free

AN OBAN man has escaped a jail sentence at the High Court in Edinburgh after breaching his probation by stealing from Tesco in Oban.

Brendan McGuckin, 30, of 49a Combie Street, Oban, was on probation for carrying out an armed robbery at Connel Post Office in October 2010.

But this was violated when he stole an iPod docking station worth £39.50 from the Oban store. He previously pled guilty to the offence at Oban Sheriff Court.

At the High Court, Lord Burns allowed him to walk free but warned him it was his ‘last chance’ and if he committed another criminal offence of any type between now and the end of his probation in 2015 he would send him to jail.

Sentence for the theft of the docking station will take place at Oban Sheriff Court on January 7.



The Oban High School staff choir. Photograph by Kevin McGlynn.

## High school staff choir hit the right notes in annual Christmas Cracker

TEACHERS from Oban High School made sure their talented pupils did not upstage them at the annual Christmas concert when they performed in a staff choir.

The Christmas Cracker on Monday showcased the variety and depth of musical talent at the school, with traditional tunes to musical theatre performances and everything in-between.

While the staff choir raised a

smile among the sell-out crowd in the school games hall, musical theatre student Kyle MacKechnie left them spellbound with a rendition of Anthem from the musical Chess.

The school choir, the Traditional School of Music, wind band, musical theatre group, pipe band and soloists made up a high quality programme, put together by music teacher Morven McKeerrell. Miss McKe-

errell said: ‘Everyone was really impressed with the variety of the programme and the depth of quality demonstrated by our young musicians and singers.’

Oban High School is the first in the country to offer a National Progression Award in musical theatre and its School of Traditional Music is already producing accomplished musicians.

The following day the school offered a similar programme to

the town’s senior citizens at the annual Pensioners’ Treat.

Among the highlights was a vocal performance by Ali MacVicar, who was accompanied by her grandfather Colin Campbell, a well-known accordion player who was a guest at the afternoon event.

On Wednesday, the school choir was due to busk in George Street to raise money for Yorkhill Children’s Hospital.



Soloist Kyle MacKechnie. Photograph by Kevin McGlynn.



TSL's Andy Knight with Michael Russell and David Jardine at the opening of the new pier on Monday.

## New timber pier opens for business

A NEW £3 million timber pier on the Isle of Mull has officially opened for business.

Michael Russell, MSP for Argyll and Bute, declared the facility open at the start of this week and witnessed some of the first cargo being transported off the island. The pier, based at Fishnish, is being operated by TSL Contractors on behalf of Forestry Commission Scotland (FCS).

It will reduce transport costs off the island and save around 800,000 lorry miles each year

on Scotland’s roads as more timber gets moved by boats. Mr Russell said: ‘FCS’s new timber pier could act as a catalyst for stimulating business for the island’s woodland managers. ‘Before the pier was built, the island was lacking a facility which could handle bulky cargo in great quantities. Up to 3,000 tonnes can be shifted through the pier at any one time and this will make a big difference.’ David Jardine, FCS’s district manager, added: ‘Most of the forests on Mull were planted

between the 1950s and 1980s and are reaching a stage right for harvesting. The current harvest is around 50,000 tonnes per annum and is expected to double to around 100,000 tonnes over the next 10 to 20 years. There is plenty of scope to grow the market from Mull and we are very happy for the commission’s pier to play a role in this.’ The pier will also be used by other timber suppliers on Mull, including the community-owned North West Mull Community Woodland

(NWMWCW). Colin Morrison, chairman of NWMWCW, said: ‘The new pier at Fishnish is a welcome development and demonstrates the Scottish Government’s confidence in and commitment to the forestry sector on Mull. ‘While NWMWCW has already been keeping road miles to a minimum, shipping timber by sea across a temporary barge, the reduced costs associated with the new pier at Fishnish will allow us and others to move timber more efficiently.’

## Man reported on heroin charges

A MAN has been reported to the procurator fiscal for allegedly being concerned in the supply of drugs after being stopped by police officers in Oban.

The plain-clothed officers stopped and searched the 24-year-old at around 3.50pm last Saturday near to Lorn and Islands Hospital.

A large quantity of heroin was allegedly found on his possession.

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Chaidh an cùrsa seo a dhealbhadh airson duine sam bith a bhios a' sgrìobhadh, a' deasachadh no a' dèanamh sgrìobhainnean Gàidhlig de sheòrsa sam bith. Thèid an cùrsa thairis air na sgìlean deatamach airson a bhith ag ullachadh agus a' dèanamh sgrìobhainnean gnìomhachais, a' dèiligeadh ri ùghdaran, ag ullachadh teags airson foillseachadh agus a' dèanamh leabhraichean agus sgrìobhainnean aig sàr ìre.

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Bidh am modal Sgìlean Deasachaidh a' tòiseachadh san Fhaoilleach 2014.

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## Plea for more teachers but good work being done

OBAN High School (OHS) repeated its plea for more teachers when it gave a presentation to councillors last week, but emphasised the quantity of good work being done at the school.

Giving a presentation at the Oban, Lorn and Isles Area Committee last week, deputy head teacher Louise Lawson said OHS compared poorly in terms of staff provision compared to other similarly sized schools in the Highlands.

‘The pupils were praised for their good behaviour, volunteering and community spirit during the talk, which also saw pupils and fellow deputy head teacher Alison MacDonald address the members.’

The message from Ms Lawson was, ‘we’re doing well, but we could do even better.’

‘For a school with 1,064 pupils OHS has a low number of teachers compared with schools of a similar roll,’ she said.

‘I’m not going to go into any more detail about that as I know councillors are aware of the need. The impacts of [low teacher numbers] are not always obvious, but more teachers means more development time and more time to share - and it also protects smaller class sizes.’

Among the strong points highlighted over the year were the school’s partnership projects with the likes of Skills Development Scotland, the Scottish Association for Marine Science and Ballet West.

Volunteering within the school is strong, with pupils regularly making use of free periods to help in the community, while recent charitable events run by pupils helped to raise £2,023 for Children in Need and a further £418 for the Philippines disaster recovery fund.

Pupils also praised the school for the number of extra-curricular activities it offered, saying they were spoilt for choice.

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## Top teams win to open up a gap on bottom sides

### INDOOR FOOTBALL

IT IS as you were in the Ali Young indoor football league at the Nevis Centre after round 11 of fixtures on Sunday night.

All top six teams won to strengthen their positions and open up a gap on the bottom half-dozen sides.

AFC Distillery were the pick of the bunch, thumping the Janis B Team 13-5 while Portocwy powered past With Ourselves 10-2.

Lochaber Leisure also had a convincing win, 8-0 against HWEnergy while leaders Goon Squad had to dig deep to pull off a 2-1 victory over a battling Ballachulish side.

Elsewhere, Caol United overcame Kentallen 6-4 and Caol Cosmos were handed a 3-0 win over Mallaig.

Team	Pts
Goon Squad	30
Portocwy	27
Lochaber Leisure	24
AFC Distillery	23
Caol United	22
Caol Cosmos	20
Ballachulish	15
The Janis B Team	14
With Ourselves	9
Kentallen	8
HWE Energy	6
Mallaig	3

## Three way tie at the top of the winter league

### GOLF

FORT WILLIAM Golf Club has a three way tie for the top spot after the latest round of games in the winter league.

Neil Feggans, Alan Overend and Eric Wallace are all share top spot with 155 points after Neil won with 15 points on Saturday.

Ian Robertson was a point further back 14 points with Sinclair Gunn coming in third with 13 points.

Toby Richardson won Sunday's game with 18 points, his best inward three holes beating Neil Feggans who also had 18 points.

David MacPherson was just one point behind in third with a score of 17.

## Lochaber travel to take on Moray

### RUGBY

LOCHABER Rugby Club will play Moray Rugby Club away on Saturday.

Players will be hoping to continue their strong record after drawing 17-17 in their last game against RAF Lossiemouth and winning the two before, 60-5 against Stornoway and 32-5 against RAF Lossiemouth.

Lochaber are currently in 5th place in the RBS Caledonia League Division 2 North.

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Packing a punch: Claymores' head coach Martin Glenesk is delighted the club was recognised for its work in the community. 20\_151claymores01

## Claymores narrowly miss out on prestigious award

CLAYMORES Amateur Boxing Club narrowly missed out being named as Local Sports Club of the Year at the recent Sunday Mail and sportsScotland Scottish Sports Awards 2013 in Glasgow.

The club made the final out of hundreds of clubs nominated from all over the country and were shortlisted along with two others, including eventual winners North Ayrshire Table Tennis Club.

Head coach Martin Glenesk said: 'It was a fantastic night. We were introduced to a wealth of sporting greats - Walter Smith, Alan Wells, Colin Montgomery, Brendan Foster and Ricky Burns to name but a few of the sports stars that were there.'

'This award shows that people recognise all the hard work that goes on behind the scenes. It also raises the profile of the club and gets people talking about us, so the publicity generated by reaching the final is fantastic.'

'This has been a quiet season for us, competitively speaking, with the coaches concentrating on bringing new boxers through for the new year.'

The Claymores thanked Kinlochleven High School head teacher John McGilp for their nomination.

Mr Glenesk said: 'Mr McGilp is a tireless supporter of the club and has been since our foundation in 2008.'

'The school plays a very big part in the club and we are giving something back by running

a non-contact boxing academy as part of the school's health and well-being programme for all first years.

We also run a free boxing class for all the school's pupils on Tuesdays just after school finishes.'

The club runs non-contact

### BOXING

boxing sessions for all ages on Wednesdays from 4pm to 5pm at its base in Kinlochleven Business Park. Regular boxing training is on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays from 6.30pm to 8pm.

## Owen and Zoe win the Fraser MacPhee Trophy

### SPORTS AWARD

TWO Lochaber High School pupils have been announced as joint winners of a memorial trophy awarded annually for commitment to sport.

Zoe Smith and Owen Cairns were presented with the cup by Fort William solicitors Duncan and Rosemary MacPhee, whose son Fraser sadly died when he was a third year pupil at Lochaber High.

'Outstanding contribution' Both pupils were honoured for their 'outstanding contribution' to their respective sports.

Zoe takes part in many sports including football, shinty, gymnastics and dance, while

Owen is an all-rounder but has particularly excelled at football.

Their selection was because of their positive attitude, for promoting a sporting ethos and encouraging others to do their best.

Both were part of the sports

coaching group and have been heavily involved in supporting

sporting events in the school. Head teacher Jim Sutherland

said: 'Both are very worthy winners.'



Duncan and Rosemary MacPhee present Owen Cairns and Zoe Smith with their awards.

# First home win of the season is top of Fort William's festive wish-list

REPORT BY **STEPHEN NORRIS**  
snorris@obantimes.co.uk

A FIRST home win of the season will be top of Fort William's wish-list to Santa when they welcome Huntly to Claggan Park.

The Fort fielded a somewhat weakened squad in last weekend's 4-0 defeat at title-chasing Formartine - but manager Danny Conlon should have more ammunition at his disposal for Saturday's clash.

Midfield dynamo Darren Quigg, burly striker Duncan Campbell and centre back Willie Gemmell should all be available, although midfielder Sean Grant and hit-man Gordy MacCarroll remain sidelined.

Forward Iain 'Mackie' MacLellan is likely to feature after posting a solid performance against Huntly without getting on the scoresheet.

Andy 'Zoomer' Martin, a stalwart in defence all season, will again be a key man in putting the shackles on the visitors' forward line.

Conlon told the Oban Times: 'We are certainly going to be in a far stronger position than we were last Saturday.'

'We played well against them up there earlier in the season and although we ended up losing 3-2 we felt we should have beaten

them. We were winning 2-1 for a long period of the game then they scored a fluky couple of goals. We had a trialist keeper too and we paid the price for that.'

'Huntly have maybe lost a bit of attraction with a lot of players going to the newer teams such as Turriff, Formartine and Inverurie Locos.'

'But we have got to play well and if we have everybody available it should be a good game.'

'I would settle for a point but I would be over the moon with three - a win would see us close the gap on the teams above us.'

### Double

At Formartine, a quickfire double from McKeown and Even mid-way through the first half put paid to Fort's chances of pulling off an upset. A Park double either side of half-time sealed the win.

Fort made few real chances of note but Conlon at least could console himself with a more disciplined showing after his side lost three goals inside 40 minutes.

He told The Oban Times after the game: 'We did not do ourselves justice in the first half but we did a lot better in the second.'

'We lost two goals one after another, the first from a free kick which was disappointing. We still seemed to be in shock from that and they scored again seconds after that. They were a big, solid, skilful outfit.'

Fort William FC's 300 Club draw took place on Saturday, 7th December. Winners were: £200 - R Collins; £50 - E Pake-

### FOOTBALL

man; £25 - J & E Rosie; £25 - W Kelly.



Andy Martin: key man in defence. 20\_151fort01

## Alleycats are still the top dogs

### TEN PIN BOWLING

AFTER week 11 of the Lochaber Building Supplies 10-pin bowling competition at the Nevis Centre in Fort William Alleycats remain the leaders in the scratch division with 51 points after beating British Legion Scotland 5-0.

Council move into second place on 39 points with Bandits in third also on 39 points. Previous second placed team Rock and Bowl drop to fourth place after losing 5-0 to Likely Lads.

In the handicap division Bandits stay at the top with 43.5 points after beating Ard-toe/Nevis Radio 5-0. Alleycats remain in second place with 38 points with Council in third on 36 points.

There were a rash of good individual scratch games again this week with Manuel Costas (Bandits) rolling a 193, Gus Fraser (Council) had a 181, George

Band (Bandits) had a 177 as did Brian Stewart (Council).

John Weller (Alleycats) had a 171. Manuel Costas swept the board with the top handicap game of 248, top-two game scratch series of 341 and the top two-game handicap series of 451.

Bandits swept the board with this week's top team scores with the highest scratch team game of 620, the top handicap game of 843, the top scratch two-game series of 1193 and the top two-game handicap team series of 1639.

The highest scratch average is held by Pam Weller (Alleycats) on 163 followed by Tony White-locke (Alleycats) on 157 and Martin Faryma (Likely Lads) next on 147.

## Weather

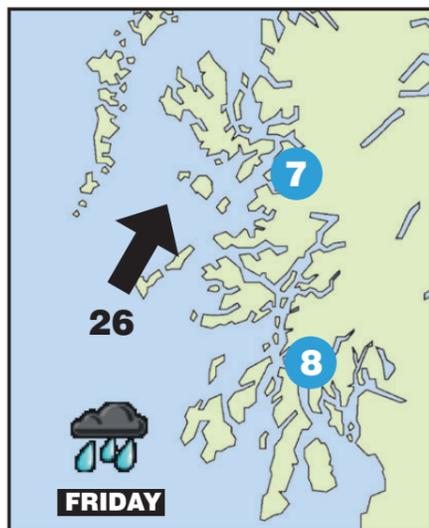
**Thursday** Rain showers  
Winds strong south westerly  
Temperatures 4°C to 5°C

**Friday** Heavy rain  
Winds strong south south westerly  
Temperatures 6°C to 8°C.

**Weekend** Heavy rain showers  
**Outlook** Winds moderate southerly  
Temperatures 6°C to 8°C.

### Ferry Crossings/Sea States

Oban to Barra/South Uist Moderate  
Oban to Coll/Tiree Moderate  
Kennacraig to Islay Moderate



## Tides

Tide tables for Oban during the week from **Thursday, December 19, 2013** are listed below with differences for major ports listed beneath.

All times are GMT (add one hour BST)

Date	am	pm
Thur	00.35 1.1 06.30 4.0 13.13 1.4 18.54 3.9	
Fri	01.13 1.1 07.05 4.0 13.48 1.5 19.29 3.8	
Sat	01.49 1.2 07.39 3.9 14.23 1.6 20.03 3.7	
Sun	02.24 1.4 08.13 3.8 14.58 1.8 20.37 3.5	
Mon	02.59 1.5 08.47 3.6 15.33 1.9 21.13 3.4	
Tues	03.36 1.6 09.25 3.5 16.14 2.0 21.55 3.2	
Wed	04.21 1.7 10.11 3.4 17.11 2.0 22.49 3.1	

Tidal Constants: (Add or deduct from High Water at Oban)

Ardrisaig	-5.35	Mallaig	+0.25
Campbeltown	-5.30	Portree	+0.55
Crinan	-0.47	Tobermory	+0.16
Islay Port Ellen	2.00	Dover	+5.30
Lochboisdale	+0.30		

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