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Shameful vandals rendered new flood barrier 'useless'

by Kathie Griffiths
kgriffiths@obantimes.co.uk



Vandals who tampered with Oban's new flood barrier next to the Black Lynn burn have been branded 'shameful'.

A section of the interlocking barrier was removed leaving a big gap in the defence system and was spotted lying in the burn near Tesco.

'That people would deliberately pull up a barrier put there for flood protection, and further risk the safety of homes, is shameful,' said a

spokesperson for Argyll and Bute Council.

The missing unit was reported to The Oban Times by a concerned reader who said the barrier was left 'useless'.

The man, who did not want to be named, said the unit had been seen in the water further down the burn.

He also said the other remaining units had been 'messed with' and plugs meant to hold in ballast had been pulled out and thrown away - he found one on the path nearby.

'Goodness knows where the others are. This barrier would be useless if the waters rise. There's a big gap in it and what's left is too lightweight to hold anything back,' he said.

Stickers on the units say they are to be filled with sand and water but they are all empty.

The man also said he believed the units were the wrong way round and the flat side should be nearest the burn to give more resistance.

He also criticised the gaping height difference left between mounds of sandbags strategically placed as part of the defence line and the barrier.

However, the council insisted the barrier was installed as it should be.

'Alternate units in the barrier are filled with water, which was done. The others are left empty so that if flood water rises, it will fill the empty units. This is an ongoing piece of work to help support residents until such time as the results of Oban Flood Study - part of our Local Flood Risk Management Plan - offers suggestions for more



By any stretch of the imagination, the past year has been a huge one for Oban golfer Robert MacIntyre. After turning professional, the young Glencruitten player made a storming start to his career, earning a European Tour card in his first season and playing with some of the world's great, including Ernie Else. This week, Robert speaks exclusively to The Oban Times about his momentous year.



A gaping hole is left in the flood barrier after one of the units was removed.

permanent ways of improving future flood situations,' said the council spokesperson.

Oban councillor Jim Lynch said whoever removed the barrier unit was 'irresponsible'.

He said: 'It's irresponsible for someone to remove something that was specifically put in place to protect people, safeguarding them and their property.'

'I will speak to the relevant

council department to get assurance that the barrier is fitted properly. I'm not in a position to comment whether it was set up correctly in the first place or not.'

When The Oban Times checked the barrier on Tuesday, all of the units were found to be empty of water, including the ones which still had plugs in.

After contacting the council,

a later statement said: 'We went above and beyond the duty of a council to install this flood control measure. The barrier was checked today and there is water in the appropriate units. The missing unit was also replaced.'

Although the missing unit was replaced and more sandbags were added at either end of the barrier, all the units still appeared to be empty.

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Eternal flame comes to Oban for festive period

by David McPhee
dmcphree@obantimes.co.uk



The International Peace Light made its way to Oban over the festive period.

The 'eternal flame' was brought to St Columba's Cathedral on December 22 by the First Argyll Scouts.

From there, members of the public lit candles and took them home to spread the flame throughout the area.

Father James MacNeil gave readings at the ceremony, while Scout leader Jack Anderson provided the music. This was followed by everyone receiving Jelly Babies or 'Peace Babies' as they were known at the end of the First World War.

The International Peace Light originated from the Eternal Flame in Bethlehem.

In 1984, the Austrian Broadcasting Corporation launched a Christmas campaign called Light into



Light from the Eternal Flame was brought to Oban for Christmas. 17_T02_Peacelight

Darkness, where a child travelled to the birthplace of Christ and collected a flame to take back to Austria.

After spreading across the country, Guides and Scouts throughout Europe got

involved, and in 1995 the campaign reached the UK.

Speaking about the light travelling to Oban, Scout leader Malcolm Dear said: 'We collected the light from Glasgow from the distribution service

there. It's the message of peace. In this day and age, it's a major importance to spread the word of peace.'

Once it arrived in Oban, the eternal flame was transferred to a candle in St Columba's

Cathedral. 'It stays here until the twelfth night,' Mr Dear added. 'Then it is extinguished.'

Father James said the peace light was 'necessary' and encouraged people to take their own light from the flame.

New 81-bed hotel looks for staff

Oban's new Premier Inn opens its doors next month.

The first guests will be able to sign into the new hotel in Shore Street with its 81 bedrooms and restaurant on Thursday February 28.

The company, with support from Oban Jobcentreplus, is recruiting now for full- and part-time housekeepers, maintenance team members, night shift managers, reception, duty managers and kitchen staff. All the vacancies are on line at whitbreadcareers.com.

Staff from Premier Inn will be at Oban Jobcentreplus on Monday January 14 and Tuesday January 15 if anyone wants to drop in and have a chat with them about working for the company.

Ailsa Riva, the new openings project manager for Premier Inn in Scotland, said: 'The new hotel is being built to a high specification and we are looking forward to offering the levels of Premier Inn service, quality and prices to Oban.'

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At 106 years of age, Betty Paxton is believed to be Oban and Lorn's oldest resident. A congratulatory telegram from the Queen marked her special birthday celebration at North Argyll House in Oban. The day was spent with family and friends and a visit from Depute Provost Roddy McCuish and Councillor Elaine Robertson, who brought gifts and the good wishes of Argyll and Bute Council. Also there was the Reverend Dugald Cameron from Oban's Church of Scotland, who conveyed his best regards and that of Betty's former congregation, where she was a regular worshipper for many years. Betty credits her long life to 'hard work on the farm and the occasional wee sherry'.

Hotel's renovation is given green light

The owners of the Cameron House Hotel on the banks of Loch Lomond have been given the go-ahead to restore the building's facade and carry out other renovation works following a devastating fire which killed two guests.

Officials from the Loch

Lomond and the Trossachs National Park Authority have approved the hotel owners' planning application to demolish and replace parts of the main building.

Planning officer Craig Jardine said in a report that the park authority recognised the economic importance

of the work to restore the five-star hotel. The fire, in December 2017, claimed the lives of guests Simon Midgley and Richard Dyson.

The building was handed back to its owners in July, but an investigation into the cause of the blaze is still continuing.



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Cyclists take on 24-hour challenge

by Kathie Griffiths
kgriffiths@obantimes.co.uk



Cyclist Steven Groom is gearing up for a 24-hour mountain biking race to support a childhood friend battling Motor Neurone Disease.

So far Mr Groom, a self-employed joiner from Benderloch and member of North Argyll Cycle Club, has raised £1,200 in sponsorship for the legendary 2019 Strathpuffer endurance event that he and cycling pal Nick Charlton will be pairing up for on January 19.

Money raised will go to MND Scotland, the charity helping Mr Groom's friend, Ruth Williamson, who was diagnosed in November 2017 with the terminal illness that stops signals from the brain reaching the muscles.

In March last year, mum-of-one Mrs Williamson, a former Oban High School pupil whose maiden name was Gibson, told her story in The Oban Times to 'raise as much awareness as possible of this beast of a disease', she said.

Mr Groom's page at justgiving.com/fundraising/steven-groom1 has beaten his £1,000 target for MND Scotland and, to add to it, there is £96 in donations from a Boxing Day ride he organised round Loch Creran, attracting 60 riders.

He hopes more people will donate to his Justgiving page before the start of the Strathpuffer challenge which will take him and Mr Charlton on gruelling 10-mile loops of rugged hillside terrain. Despite being on the verge of pneumonia, Mr Groom managed one



Above, Steven Groom and son Jack, seven; and right, his friend Ruth Williamson with her daughter.

loop of the course last year but is fit and ready for a full-on 2019 attempt, clocking up the training miles and holding back on Christmas fare to keep weight off.

Earlier this year, he cycled 240 miles in just one day and it was while he was 'getting battered by lorries and eating pork pie' in the saddle that he thought about fundraising.

'It was something I had a crack at in Mark Beaumont style and, while I was doing it, I thought I should have been doing it for Ruth. So I decided to do the Strathpuffer for her and the charity supporting her, her family and others like them.

'Ruth has just written birthday cards up to her wee daughter's 21st, which is just heartbreaking.'

Back in March, Mrs Williamson, who has had to

give up work as an energy consultant, told The Oban Times: 'The most difficult thing for me is my daughter. I can't bear the thought of not being able to look after her any longer or not be there with her in the future.

'Like any mum, I utterly adore her and I have shed so many tears thinking about it. It's tricky, though, because the thought of not having her is so much worse - she keeps me smiling every day.'

Mrs Williamson, who now lives in Edinburgh with her two-year-old daughter and husband Scott, realised something was wrong about five months before she saw a doctor but had no idea that MND was a possibility - the rapidly progressing disease can cause someone to lose the ability to walk, talk, eat, drink or breathe unaided.

She said she found her dev-



astating diagnosis 'incredibly difficult to come to terms with' and was 'not sure' she ever would. Her symptoms have progressed so that speech and making herself understood is almost impossible. Eating and swallowing is also difficult.

A great back-up system of family and friends is a huge help but so has been the practical support of MND Scotland. There is currently no cure or effective treatment for MND, a condition more than 450 people are currently living with in Scotland.

To find out more, visit mnd-scotland.org.uk

Argyll residents sought for NHS Highland board

NHS Highland is looking for two new members to join its board to represent the public and hold the board to account for delivery of health services in this area.

Interested parties have until the end of play tomorrow, Friday January 11, to apply.

The non-executive members will be expected to play a central role in guiding the strategies which address the health and adult social care needs of the population and monitor the performance of the board.

Appointments will be for up to four years, with the possibility of re-appointment.

The role of a non-executive on average takes up eight hours a week - in exchange for £8,416 a year plus reasonable travel and subsistence costs, dependant-carer expenses and support required to help them carry out their duties effectively. The successful applicants will be offered any training they will need.

The board is keen to maintain a geographical balance in membership and for one of the

posts is looking for someone who lives or works in Argyll and Bute, who will participate immediately as a member of the Argyll and Bute Integrated Joint Board.

David Alston, chairman of NHS Highland, said: 'The NHS has an impact on everyone's life at one time or another and this could be your chance to get involved in improving, sustaining, and protecting the health of the local population.'

'This position would suit those who are interested in a challenging and rewarding role which will have a lasting impact on the delivery of healthcare and adult social care to the people served by NHS Highland. We're looking for people from across Highland and Argyll and Bute who want to make a difference.'

Anyone interested should visit the public appointments website - www.appointed-for-scotland.org - or by calling 0300 244 1898. For more information, contact Seonaidh Laing on 01463 704811 or by emailing Seonaidh.laing@nhs.net.

POLICE FILES

Shoplifting

At about 1.30pm on Thursday January 3, at Tesco in Oban, a man aged 63, stole a number of items. Police attended and the man was charged and issued with a recorded police warning.

Damage

At about 3am on Sunday January 6, on the A85 near Taynuilt, an unknown vehicle collided with a BT telegraph pole causing damage and disrupting communication services. The driver of the vehicle failed to stop.

Public urinating

At about 1.30am on Sunday January 6, in Stevenson Street, Oban, a man aged 20 urinated in the street. Police attended and the man was issued and with a recorded police warning.

Drunk

At about 8am on Sunday January 6, at McKelvie Road, Oban, a man aged 23 was arrested for being found in charge of a vehicle while under the influence of alcohol. The vehicle was also not insured and not registered for road use. The

man was later charged and a report will be sent to the procurator fiscal.

Theft of purse

About 10.20am on Monday January 7, at Tesco in Oban, a woman's purse was stolen from the bag packing area. Police are investigating the incident.

■ If any member of the public has information in relation to any incident, they can contact their police on telephone number 101, or anonymously through Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.

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Solo rower in record bid to round Scotland

by Kathie Griffiths
kgriffiths@obantimes.co.uk



Record-breaking ocean-goer Roy Finlay has dropped anchor in Oban ready to make 2019 a year of firsts.

The 57-year-old skipper and boat designer and builder, who already has 31 Guinness world records linked to his name, plans to be the first person to row solo around Scotland, achieving a long-held ambition covering 1,000 miles in two months and raising £40,000 for four Oban charities.

He will face the challenge in a 14ft modified dinghy and, although he will be taking a tent, will spend most nights on board as there will be very few landing places.

However, he is planning to stop off at his newly-adopted home town of Oban probably two weeks after setting off from the Solway Firth on April 20. He also plans to make



Roy Finlay has made Oban his adopted home town.

other stops en route, including Campbeltown and the Skye Bridge as part of the fundraising mission.

On completing that coastal challenge, Mr Finlay, who rowed from Crinan to Inverness through the

Caledonian Canal and kayaked around the north from Oban to Inverness raising £10,000 for a Romanian orphanage in the summer of 1997, will start work designing and building a 60ft trimaran which will set off from Senegal to South America in January 2020 attempting to set a new world record across the Atlantic.

Mr Finlay said: 'This year is very important to me. I've had major successes but also some monumental failures in my career. I've retired from ocean rowing but I still have a hunger for more firsts before I hang up my oars.'

He said being dubbed 'Captain Calamity' by the national press reporting a series of those 'monumental failures', including his first abandoned attempt at rowing the Atlantic in 1998 after a reported fall-out with his crew, had forced him to give up his ocean rowing career and had been deeply

frustrating. In November 2013, he and four crew also had to be rescued by helicopter when their £50,000 boat, the Barracuda, lost steering off Gran Canaria during another attempt to row across the Atlantic.

'I missed out on an Atlantic rowing world record by just a day in 2007 and a boat I designed in 2010 set a world record for the fastest crossing from the Canary Islands to the West Indies, so I wouldn't call that a calamity,' he said.

On Saturday, Mr Finlay was at the Corran Halls to launch news of his charity row around Scotland and to rally support. Charities set to benefit from the row include Hope Kitchen, Carr Gomm, Addaction and St Vincent De Paul.

Hope's service manager Lorraine MacCormick said: 'It's very kind of Roy to think of us and the other charities. We wish him the best of luck.'

Funding energises islands

A renewable energy project in Iona has scooped a £183,777 from a funding pot.

Iona Renewables is one of 15 UK-based charities allocated a chunk of £2.1million from the Energy Industry Voluntary Redress Scheme.

Also benefiting from a £202,809 share is The Energy Advisory Service SCIO for the Western Isles. The project will host a roadshow, conduct home visits and introduce a referral programme aimed at reducing fuel poverty in more than 1,000 remote households across the islands.

Iona Renewables is exploring ways of cleaning up heat. It will also be looking at how to deal with energy vulnerability in inaccessible areas such as the Inner Hebrides.

The successful projects include delivering energy advice to vulnerable households, working with the health sector to support people at risk from cold damp homes, installing innovative heat networks and developing software to enable low income homes to purchase discounted energy.

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ACHA wins right to evict Oban drug dealer

Argyll Community Housing Association (ACHA) has successfully secured a decree for eviction against a convicted drug dealer at Oban Sheriff Court.

The party concerned was an ACHA tenant, living in one of the association's properties in Miller Road, Oban, next to the high school, and the eviction was formally concluded on the December 17, 2018.

Alastair MacGregor, ACHA chief executive, said: 'I am delighted that we have secured this victory. I would like to thank the association's staff who presented the case in court and stood up for our communities against drug dealers.'

Mr MacGregor added: 'I am



Alastair MacGregor.

also heartened that Sheriff Hughes outlined in his judgement, "It is clearly in the public interest to resolutely counteract the selling of controlled drugs, particularly in a residential area which

is adjacent to the local high school". This achievement vindicates the partnership we have developed with Police Scotland in Oban and our tenants, and the wider community to protect our people from this illegal activity.'

Oban South and the Isles Councillor Roddy McCuish said: 'First of all, I would like to thank ACHA on behalf of the community on the action they have taken on evicting this convicted drug dealer.'

'It sends a clear message: deal or allow drugs to be supplied from your home and you will lose your tenancy. I am delighted to support the action taken punishing the dealers who profit and prey on people's addiction.'

Clinical waste scandal will not impact Oban

The company contracted to dispose of NHS Scotland's clinical waste laid off its 400-strong workforce last week, although it is business as usual in Oban.

Waste from hospitals, GP practices, dental surgeries and pharmacists in the west of Argyll have always been collected in-house and taken to Lochgilphead.

Healthcare Environmental Services (HES), which made its

employees redundant, collected it from there. However, the government has put a contingency plan in place and a new contractor has been appointed.

HES lost its contracts with NHS Scotland and 17 NHS trusts in England after it was found to have been storing waste for longer than the permitted time limit.

Argyll and Bute Council's policy lead for health and social care, Kieron Green

said: 'The situation in the west of Argyll, Oban and Lorn, Kintyre and Lochgilphead, is pretty much business as normal. The waste has always been handled in-house and sent to a control point in Lochgilphead and at that point it will be transferred out of the area.'

'Within Oban, we have our internal services working as expected and have extended that cover to the east of Argyll.'

Curry shack has big plans on the menu for 2019

by Kathie Griffiths
kgriffiths@obantimes.co.uk

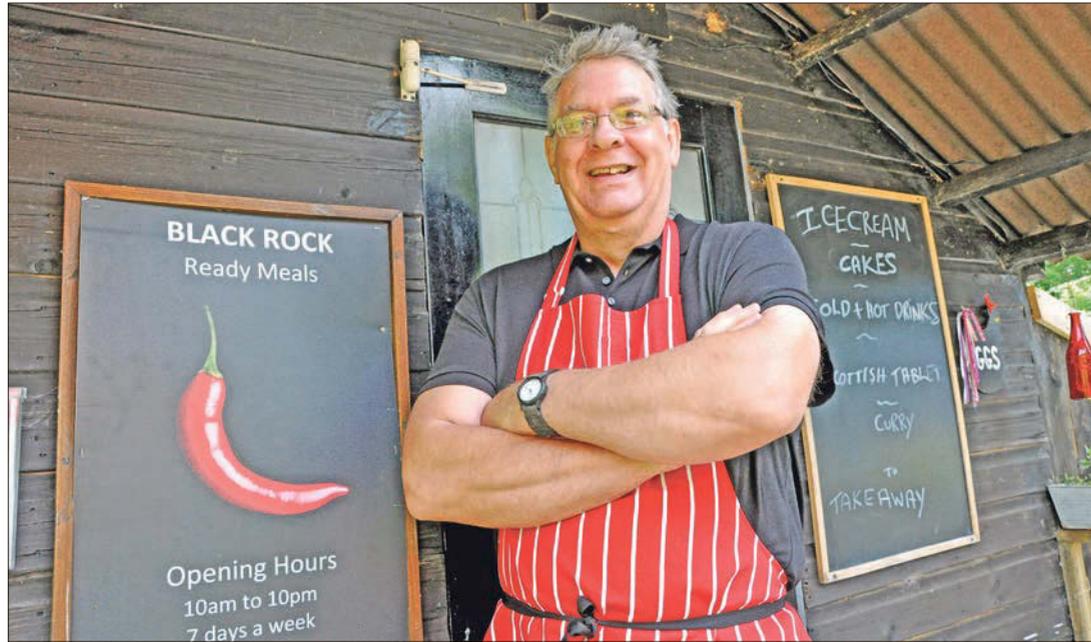


Curry shack couple David and Joanne Gill and are adding extra ingredients to their Inverinan tourist attraction with the help of fish waste and Argyll's plentiful rain supply.

Business at the Black Rock honesty-box shed, next to their home, which is filled with David's homemade frozen curries, is booming after a story in The Oban Times featured them as possibly being Britain's most remotest takeaway.

Life is hotting up for the enterprising pair, who are now planning to create an aquaponic system, which does not use soil, in their garden to feed Joanne's pond fish and plant hobby, and help David grow fresh herbs, including hard-to-get specialist chillis for his spicy dishes.

A system of floating tanks will be housed in a polytunnel, supplied by rainwater and using fish waste to nurture David's culinary crops. If all goes well, Joanne has other plans to sell on fish and plants to the public who will be able to a tour through the tunnel as part of their visit.



David Gill outside his Black Rock takeaway in Inverinan.

By Easter, they will have put benches, tables and weather-proof brollies out for visitors to sit and enjoy hot drinks, cakes and a curry of the day - new for 2019.

They have also just bought some land down to the beach at the side of Loch Awe to make a scenic

walkway from their garden and, for visitors' convenience, they are introducing an organic toilet.

David is also going to put up a bike rack so cyclists on the Route 78 National Cycle Network can park up when they take a break, and there will be a handy repair

area too. The success of Black Rock curries has seen the couple make tentative steps towards providing a delivery service to Oban and Campbeltown in the future, and their curries are already on sale in a freezer they run at Seaview campsite in Benderloch.

Mr and Mrs Gill are currently adapting one of the family cars to contain a special freezer unit to take bulk ordered curries door-to-door.

'Our social life has definitely improved since we opened the shack, considering we're in the middle of nowhere. We've gone from one customer or so a day to 20 or so a week, sometimes 20 a day in peak season.'

'We've been open three years now and have never shut once. People who've heard about us are coming from all over to visit.'

'We find that rather humbling. That was the inspiration behind our 2019 plans, we wanted to give people something else to do while they are here, rather than just getting a takeaway curry to take home for tea,' said David, who is extending his curry kitchen area to cope with demand.

'People make a big effort to come out here especially for us, so we wanted to expand their visitor experience. We will definitely have the seating area sorted by Easter, and the rest we will do as and when we have the resources and time. We are still a very small business, doing what we enjoy,' he added.

No increasing drug problem, says councillor

by David McPhee
dmcphree@obantimes.co.uk



Argyll and Bute Council's policy lead for health and social care does not believe there is an increasing drug problem in Oban.

This comes after a Freedom of Information (FOI) revealed a rise in clients using a needle exchange programme locally.

The request was carried out after construction workers found bags of used needles on a building site in the town.

Figures showed the number of clients using the needle exchange programme rose to 21 this August, up from 17 during the same period last year. In August 2015, there were 16 clients and 12 in 2014.

The figures do not mean that 21 different people used the service, as someone who is not registered is counted every time they attend, while a registered person is only

counted once, regardless of how often they use it.

Oban councillor Kieron Green said: 'The numbers are relatively small. I have not got the perception that there is an increasing drugs problem in the town.'

Mr Green said that when police reports include drug-related arrests at Oban Community Council's monthly meeting, he asks if it is a growing problem.

'Their general feedback is they have regular operations supported by intelligence. They will get people occasionally for dealing or possession.'

When asked about having a study of users in Oban, he added: 'When you are running a service like a needle exchange, the priority is to make sure people have access to needles.'

'I don't know how feasible it is to have a study of how many people are taking drugs. We would have to be

pretty intrusive and it would be a massive amount of work, and I don't think you could guarantee to be successful. There are always going to be some people who fall through the cracks.'

A spokesperson for Argyll and Bute Health and Social Care Partnership added: 'We provide a range of support mechanisms in Oban, and Argyll and Bute generally, for people who use drugs.'

'These include harm reduction nurses, needle exchange services and opioid substitution therapy such as the prescription of methadone.'

Anyone who finds a discarded syringe or needle in a public place should not pick it up but should alert Argyll and Bute Council's roads and amenities department on 01546 605522.

People worried about their own or someone else's drug use can get help at argylland-buteadp.info

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OT

Funding for Rockfield goal is nearly reached

by Kathie Griffiths
kgriffiths@obantimes.co.uk



People are desperate to know when work will finally start on Oban's new Rockfield Centre but there are still a few legal hurdles to complete first.

Oban Communities Trust chairman Gordon McNab says nothing can be confirmed until all legalities are concluded.

Only when the last part of the £3 million funding package is finalised can the trust complete the tender process and announce the successful contractor for refurbishing the former primary school's main building.

'We know people are desperate to know when the work will start but we have a few more legal hurdles to complete before we can confirm anything,' said Mr McNab.

Funds needed to reach the goal are mounting up, getting closer to the £3 million target.



Thumbs up for The Rockfield Centre at the community shares launch in 2018.

The project has just received a £70,000 boost from the Co-op Foundation's Community Spaces programme, the first scheme in Scotland to get its support.

Mr McNab said: 'This is excellent news which racks up our funding package further to the £3 million goal.'

Just before Christmas, Highlands and Islands Enterprise announced it was awarding £200,000 to the project, which has already brought in £210,000 from a community shares offer.

Since the community bought the building in May 2015 it has run a determined fundraising

campaign as well as a whole programme of community activities in huts in the playground promoting arts, culture, heritage and community wellbeing.

'Until the final pieces of the jigsaw are in place, work behind the scenes continues as usual. Decisions on the internal

fit-out plans have been working in parallel with the fundraising and the trust has established advisory groups for heritage, arts and culture, and wellbeing from existing volunteers,' said Mr McNab.

Building project manager Andrew Pinkerton has been toiling hard with the design team to get everything finalised for the works to begin, and the building is dry and stable.

Eleanor MacKinnon, project facilitator, said: 'One of the most amazing things about the whole project is the amount of volunteering that goes on behind the scenes to allow so many of our events to happen. This past year has seen more than 8,400 volunteers hours of time donated to progress this project. These are only the hours that have been recorded but I know of many, many hours that never make it to our tracking system. We are all very excited.'

Argyll primary one pupil registration

Children who turn five between March 1, 2019, and February 28, 2020, should be registered for primary school during the week beginning Monday January 14, 2019.

Parents should take their children to their local primary school to register during that week, between 10am and 3pm.

If your child is not already receiving pre-school education in Argyll and Bute, you will need to bring their birth certificate with you when you register.

Further information, including how to make a placing request and how to request early entry to primary school, can be found on the council website: www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/primary-school-registration-2019

Alternatively, you can contact the education team by calling 01369 704 000 or by writing to Community Services, Argyll House, Alexandra Parade, Dunoon PA23 8AJ.

There is plenty to look forward to

Around Oban

KAY MCDONALD

editor@obantimes.co.uk

WHERE IS THIS?



Happy New Year to everyone.

It has been a lovely start to 2019 with mild weather and little rain. I really hope that it is a sign of things to come and that the rest of your year remains like the weather: mild and peaceful but not so peaceful that it is boring.

Thankfully, the rain on Hogmanay stopped in plenty time for the fireworks from the tower which were spectacular this year. In fact, I think they were the best of the whole year – and the others were amazing too.

We have lots to look forward to this year, with January and February full of quizzes and ceilidhs, always an interesting mix, starting with a quiz for Oban Pipe Band in the Masonic Hall tomorrow (Friday January 11) at 7.30pm.

As you'll have guessed, I love quizzes and there are so many good ones in the town. I'm like a pig in clover, if you'll excuse the mixed metaphors. The Lorne has one every Wednesday, Markie Dan's on a Sunday, The Oban Inn restarts on January 17, as well as the many fundraising quizzes throughout the year to look forward to.

Of course the big event, as always, is Oban Live in June, with an amazing line-up

already announced and more to come. Ticket sales in the BID4Oban office were really busy before Christmas with lots of people getting tickets to give as presents, which was a great idea. If you have a birthday coming up, then you know what to ask for.

The last photograph just before Christmas was a really easy one of the steps at the cinema and this week's is quite easy too, as it is in a very busy wee street.

Young farmers set for stock judging event

North Argyll Young Farmers' Club is gearing up for its annual stock judging competition.

The event will be on Friday January 18 at Oban Livestock Centre.

The stock judging will begin at 7pm and there will be multiple classes and categories to participate in as well as a raffle and refreshments and a guess the weight of the calf class.

A spokeswoman for the North Argyll Young Farmers' Club said: 'The categories will be open, young farmers, under-14s and teams.'

'Come along to compete or just to enjoy the craic.'

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Deadline looms for consultation

by Kathie Griffiths
kgriffiths@obantimes.co.uk



A formal part of a consultation has begun on how a three-year health and social care plan could shape up for Argyll and Bute.

The Integrated Joint Board (IJB) of the Argyll and Bute Health and Social Care Partnership has just released its draft version of its new strategic plan.

The plan is now out for final consultation with the public and with local stakeholders before ending on February 11, ready to be presented to the Integrated Joint Board for approval in March.

Stephen Whiston, head of strategic planning and performance, said in the first three years since the IJB was established, significant progress has been made on a wide range of health and social care issues,

including the challenges of keeping the ageing population fit and well, providing the best possible start for children and young people as well as coping with the increase in chronic diseases such as diabetes and with tackling the difficulties in staff recruitment all within the context of a reducing budget.

Mr Whiston added that through the summer of 2018 there had been an extensive consultation and engagement exercise with the public and stakeholders to inform the new plan.

He said: 'We would like to thank everyone who got involved as this has greatly assisted us in the development of our new three-year strategic plan.'

'The clear message that came back to us was to continue with our vision and objectives and in fact

increase the pace of change so that we become a health and wellbeing service for all our communities.

'This means we radically transform the way we provide health and social care focusing on prevention of ill health and anticipatory care as a truly person-centred focused service.'

'We are now at the stage of formally consulting with the public and local stakeholders on our next three year strategic plan before it is presented to the Integrated Joint Board for approval in March 2019.'

The IJB's vice-chairman, Councillor Kieron Green, and said: 'We really appreciate the feedback from communities as to how we can better deliver the support and services they rely on.'

The formal part of the consultation runs out on February 11 and the IJB

wants to hear people's views on the plan and its objectives.

Electronic copies will be available and can either be downloaded from NHS Highland's website or by emailing nhs.abhscp@nhs.net. Hard copies will also be available on request.

Local groups and organisations throughout Argyll and Bute can also invite representatives from the plan go along to discuss what is in it. To arrange a meeting, email nhs.abhscp@nhs.net.

'We would like to thank the communities across Argyll and Bute for their help in developing our plan and look forward to working with you over the coming years as we plan to deliver our joint vision for health and social care helping the people in Argyll and Bute live longer, healthier, independent lives,' added Mr Whiston.



Healthy Working Lives Award for Mid Argyll

Argyll and Bute Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP) has announced that its Mid Argyll locality has maintained its Healthy Working Lives Gold Award.

Alison McGrory, health improvement principal for the HSCP, said: 'I am delighted that the Mid Argyll locality has maintained its Healthy Working Lives Gold Award. This is good news for the Health and Social Care Partnership as it highlights our continued commitment to the health and wellbeing of staff.'

'To maintain this award, the locality held a series of activities and events to help promote and encourage a healthier workforce.'

'These activities included a Tea and Talk event to raise awareness of mental health

on Mental Health World Day, regular Zumba classes held onsite, an outdoor gym, a lunchtime walking club and staff participating in Wear it Pink day to promote breast cancer awareness.

'There is also the Blarbuie Woodland 66-day challenge which was launched in October. This is all about establishing new healthy habits such as walking, cycling and running. All of this helps people change their lifestyle habits and it is called the 66-day challenge as research highlights that it takes 66 days for a habit to embed itself thoroughly into a person's lifestyle.'

'The locality also has plans and ideas for the forthcoming year to ensure it continues to maintain its gold award for the foreseeable future.'



Oban Rotary helps Hazel in Chile

The Rotary Club of Oban is again supporting youngsters going abroad in their gap year to broaden their experience while assisting the education of children in developing countries. On this occasion the club is helping Hazel Smith, who has completed her final

year at Oban High School and is currently in Chile under the auspices of the Project Trust programme where she is teaching English. Those selected under the Project Trust initiative, which is based on the island of Coll, are required to raise £6,200

towards the cost of their year away and Oban Rotary has contributed £300 as part of its Youth Services Programme. Our picture shows Hazel on the left, who will go on to further education after her gap year, with children in a Chilean village.

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OT

MacPhail

ANGUS MACPHAIL

angusmacphail@yahoo.co.uk



As a change from my planned extension of last week's article, I'm taking a tack off piste to extol the virtues of a culinary delight I enjoyed for the first time at the weekend. It was an experience I had to brace myself for as it was not in the usual range of items I would voluntarily swallow.

The humble sea urchin is an ocean creature that's been familiar to me all my life but not until last weekend did I ever consider eating any part of one.

We had to do some online research to make sure we were eating the right bits and it did not whet my appetite at all to read that the parts to be consumed were in fact the gonads of this poor creature.

However, unlike the immediate image conjured by my immature mind and the common slang use of the word 'gonads', in an anatomical sense this just means any reproductive organ and therefore like the roe, melt or coral of many fish or shellfish which we eat regularly, such as scallop, cod or herring.

What was to be eaten were thankfully not akin to those of land living mammals and were much more palatable than what immediately came to mind when reading the description.

I am generally not keen on eating fish or shellfish raw except for oysters and occasionally scallops if they are just out the sea but, according to all the online sources we looked at, this was how best to consume the sea urchin. This one had come out the sea only a few hours before and was caught in the clear waters south of Gunna Sound, so at least we knew it was fresh and from a good home.

After having chopped the spiky shelled beast in two, we carefully found and extracted all the right bits and placed them on a plate ready for eating. The light yellow, slightly slimy mush did not look attractive and at this stage I almost certainly would have chickened out had it not been for my much more gastronomically adventurous wife, whose idea it had been to take

the sea urchin home to try it when my brother pulled it out one of his creels to show her.

Simultaneously, we both took a spoon and the taste was a total surprise. As expected, it was slightly salty but coupled with that sea-like effect was a deep sweetness that made it almost fruity. It was like eating a combination of sweet pear, cream and oyster together with a surprisingly satisfying and pleasant overall effect. The rest was soon eaten and very much savoured.

We were happy to move on to the much more familiar main course of crab claws and lobster after that, also taken home from the same very enjoyable short trip out.

While researching how to prepare the sea urchin, I read that it was a New Year tradition in Japan to exchange them as gifts as part of the festive celebrations and that made the eating of them at the start of the year all the more fitting.

Bliadhna Mhath Ur
Iapanach dhuibh uile!

Younger blood donors needed

by Kathie Griffiths
kgriffiths@obantimes.co.uk



Blood donors kept up supplies of all types over the festive break but more donations are always needed.

Lynne Willdigg, associate director of donor services, is also appealing for new and younger donors to start giving blood.

The Scottish National Blood Transfusion Service (SNBTS) needs 470 donors a day to keep supply levels safe.

The aim is to keep six days of stocks at any time to meet patients' needs across the country.

Mrs Willdigg said: 'We would also love to welcome new donors.

'Forty-seven per cent of active donors in Scotland are aged 45 or over, so it is important younger people start giving blood to meet the needs of our ageing population. As you can start giving blood at age 17, we are reaching out to



all younger people to encourage them to think about giving blood now.'

There are eight different blood groups but O Positive is Scotland's most common blood group – 191 people with that blood group are needed to donate every day.

O Negative is the only blood group that can safely be given to anyone in an emergency situation and is in demand so A&E wards can operate safely.

Ms Willdigg added: 'Our research shows 38 per cent of the population overall say they know their blood group. However, this rises to 61 per

cent within the population who are blood donors. We are asking donors to check their blood group, and make an extra special effort to attend if we write to you or text you. If you've never given blood, please come along and donate, and we'll write to you afterwards to let you know what your blood group is.'

Last year when the service came to Oban there were 206 donors on September 18 and 123 on October 23.

The service's next visit to Oban will be to the Corran Halls on September 5 and October 3 from 3.30pm to 7.30pm.

For anyone wanting to give blood before those dates, Glasgow Blood Donor Centre at Nelson Mandela Place is open Monday to Saturday. Call 0345 90 90 999 between Monday to Thursday from 9am to 7pm and between 9am and 5pm on a Friday to make an appointment or email nss.snbtsenquiry@nhs.net

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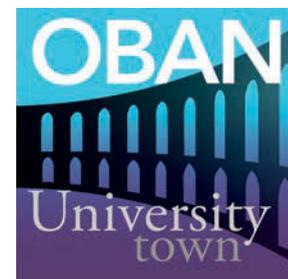
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Building a first experience in u

As this is the first article from the Oban: A University Town (OaUT) team this year, it is a chance to reflect on what the project achieved in 2018 since the successful launch event at the Corran Halls.

2018 was the Year of Young People, so launching the OaUT programme in the same year provided a platform from which to build a first-class student experience for Oban's current and future alumni. There were more than 1,000 students studying in the Oban area in the 2017-18 academic year, which has a significant positive impact on the local economy.

Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE) recently published its survey into the attitudes and aspirations that people aged 15 to 30 years have about the region. The encouraging headline message is that since 2015 there has been an increase in



the number of young people who want to live and work in the Highlands and Islands.

This is, of course, positive news for developing the university town, but there is still work to be done in raising awareness of the many opportunities available for school-leavers wanting to stay, as well as encouraging people into the area. The Young People theme has been at the forefront recently, with employer/student engagement taking centre stage.

The November Oban Times article was contributed by the project's

student representative from the Scottish Association of Marine Science (SAMS) UHI; a focus group of Oban High School students provided valuable insights into their expectations of a 'student town' and at SAMS UHI Careers Week, there was an opportunity to explore graduate employment opportunities.

Opportunity

The high school event provided a great opportunity to spend time with young people and talk through their perceptions around why they would or would not want to stay in Oban for further studies.

They were a great group with a diverse mix of aspirations from apprenticeships through to forensic science degrees.

Within the OaUT programme, an important focus is on making sure academic development aligns well with skills needs - such as



The Rotary Club of Oban recently covered the cost of an exercise parachute.

Oban Rotary boosts Friendship Club

The Friendship Club, which is run by volunteers operating from the Church of Scotland Centre in Glencruitten Road, brings together a diverse group of people, mainly elderly, for companionship and stimulation.

The group meets fortnight-

ly with a variety of activities available, including exercises, readings and communal singing with guest artists appearing and the group also attends local events.

The Rotary Club of Oban recently covered the cost of an exercise parachute for the club and president Iain

MacIntyre is seen here participating in a demonstration of how the parachute works.

The Rotary Club of Oban, through its fundraising activities, is committed to supporting its local area at all levels across a wide section of the community.

Earthquake shakes Mull

by Kathie Griffiths
kgriffiths@obantimes.co.uk



An early hours earthquake felt on Mull was strong enough to shake a whole house, according to reports.

The quake was felt in in Salen, Tobermory and Gruline on Mull, as well as on Lismore and in Morvern, where it was registered at Drimnin and Glenborrodale.

According to data recorded by the British Geological Survey (BGS), which is the UK's national earthquake monitoring agency, the earthquake happened at 2.20am on Thursday January 3.

The depth was 8km and the magnitude was 2.2.

Earthquakes of a 2.2 or less magnitude are not usually felt but can be recorded by a seismograph. In comparison, a magnitude of 8.0 or greater can totally destroy commu-

nities. Posts on Everything Mull Facebook page reported the quake was felt by a number of people.

Some thought the rumbling at first was thunder or a heavy lorry passing. It lasted for about 30 seconds, sent dogs barking in Pennyghael, while someone from Salen posted the 'whole house shook'.

The last recorded earthquake on Mull was on November 15 last year, measuring 0.8 magnitude just 2km below the earth surface.

In a list of British Isles earthquakes recorded over the past 100 days by the BGS, Islay also had one on November 3, rumbling 6km underground at a magnitude of 1.4. The Morvern one from January 3 was the second strongest magnitude of all on the list. The biggest was on November 12 last year at Leominster in Herefordshire

and measured a 2.3 magnitude from a depth of 14kms.

In an average year, BGS detects about 100 earthquakes around Britain. Only about 20 per cent of them are felt by people.

Last January, the new year got off to a shaky start for the shores of Loch Fyne when buildings were shaken and family pets left terrified by an earthquake that struck with its epicentre on the eastern side of the loch on a hillside north of Lephinchapel Farm opposite Lochgair. Its magnitude was 2.4. Some described it as 'muffled bang' while others said it was like a 'loud boom'.

In June last year, people living in Kintyre felt an earthquake twice, while in April 2012, Islay felt the earth move 10 times in just one month.

To find out more go to earthquakes.bgs.ac.uk

t-class student university town



2017-18 saw more than 1,000 students studying in the Oban area.

able in moving two of our potentially transformational projects forward.

'Graduates bring a fresh pair of eyes, coming up with new ideas and suggesting how things can be done differently or better. The ScotGrad programme helps to attract new talent into organisations and offers graduates an excellent opportunity to start their career in the region.'

Graduates

The OaUT project team is grateful to The Oban Times for providing us with the opportunity for these monthly updates and we look forward to keeping readers informed of progress in the coming year.

We would like to offer all our project partners and those of you in the wider community who have supported us our best wishes for the exciting 12 months ahead. #loveobanlovelearning!

the current emphasis on the requirements of the marine industry - and relevant employment opportunities for students and graduates who wish to stay and make their careers here.

One option which businesses, social enterprises and aspiring graduates could consider is graduate employment programmes, such as the ScotGrad Programme, which has provided many businesses and social enterprises in the Highlands and Islands with access to talented graduates, fulfilling business needs

and providing a vital first step on the careers ladder for graduates.

The student summer placement programme is another option which provides paid employment for undergraduates. More information on these options can be found at www.scotgrad.co.uk.

Morven Gibson, general manager of South West Mull and Iona Development (SWMID), said: 'SWMID takes an innovative approach to community development and employing a graduate with ScotGrad's support is proving invaluable

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OT

Oban parties as fireworks si



Entertaining on Hogmanay were The Hector McFadyen Band with Hector, front left, Alastair Currie, Kevin McGlynn and Craig McFadyen, Highland dancer Nicola McFadyen and piper Niall Jordan. Photograph: Kevin McGlynn

Oban saw in the new year in fine style last week with a spectacular fireworks display over McCaig's Tower.

Hundreds of people turned out to watch the pyrotechnics as 2019 arrived.

Pubs and hotels in the town

were packed with revellers who celebrated into the early hours.

Among the Hogmanay parties was a ceilidh in the Royal Hotel, with the Hector McFadyen Band entertaining into the small hours.



Photograph: Ewen McGlynn

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Photographs: Stephen Lawson



Children and parents enjoyed a Christmas party at Soroba Community Centre. Pictured are Ryan, Savana and Rachel Scott, along with Kourtney Darrah and Nicola Wilson. The centre's volunteers thanked everyone who went along, as well as Santa.

gnal explosive start to 2019



John Horne, right, Royal Hotel general manager, with his management team welcome guests for Hogmanay.
Photograph: Kevin McGlynn



Photograph: Ewen McGlynn

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OT

Prince Charles and First Minister

by Mark Entwistle
mentwistle@obantimes.co.uk

Prince Charles, in his role as Lord of the Isles, together with First Minister Nicola Sturgeon joined hundreds of people, some from as far afield as Canada, in Stornoway on New Year's Day to remember those involved in the tragic sinking of HMV Iolaire exactly 100 years after the tragedy.

The ship hit the Beasts of Holm rocks, around 20 yards from Stornoway's coastline, as it brought men home from the First World War. Of around 300 on board, more than 200 men from Lewis and Harris perished along with the crew.

Organised by WW100 Scotland in conjunction with Comhairle nan Eilean Siar (Western Isles Council), the national commemorative service, which was held at mid-day at the Iolaire memorial, was also attended by local people, Iolaire descendants, Scotland's most senior naval officer Rear Admiral John Weale and the Convener of Comhairle nan Eilean Siar Norman A Macdonald, each of whom laid a wreath.

Conducted by the Very Reverend Dr Angus Morrison, the service included a reading of Isaiah 43 1-7 by Prince Charles, The Iolaire Lament played by Stornoway piper Finlay Macleod and The Iolaire Centenary Prayer



HRH The Prince Charles, Lord of the Isles, and the First Minister of Scotland, Nicola Sturgeon, join hundreds at Iolaire memorial on New Year's Day to remember the Iolaire tragedy. All photographs: Warren Media 2018.

which was composed and led by the minister. The end of the two-minute silence was marked with reveille by Royal Marine bugler James Trowbridge.

A new sculpture to commemorate the Iolaire, adjacent to the memorial, was unveiled by Prince Charles.

Prince Charles and Ms Sturgeon met Iolaire descendants and the 29-strong Royal Naval Guard.

Descendants included Anne Frater, whose great-grandfather perished, and Malcolm Macdonald, whose grandfather also died in the disaster.

As the service took place

on land, a similar event, led by the Reverend James Maciver of Stornoway Free Church, was held on board Caledonian MacBrayne's MV Loch Seaforth ferry near where the Iolaire hit the rocks.

More than 500 people were on board, including school children from the Western Isles who threw 201 red carnations into the sea.

Ms Sturgeon said: 'As we welcome in the New Year, today in Stornoway we rightly look back 100 years and remember those lost on the Iolaire - a tragedy that involved so many, so close

to shore and, for most of the men, so close to home.

'We reflect on those who perished and how survivors, family, friends and the wider communities on Lewis, Harris and Berneray must have felt.

'It may have been a century ago, but the legacy of the Iolaire will never be forgotten. I was honoured to be part of the commemorations and meet descendants.'

Convener of Comhairle nan Eilean Siar and chairman of the Iolaire Working Group, Norman A Macdonald, commented: 'This was a very poignant service that chimes



Top, the First Minister meets those attending the Iolaire service on January 1; the Last Post is played during the ceremony; Nicola Sturgeon lays a wreath at the memorial.

very much with the events that have already taken place and will continue to take place into the future, throughout the communities from the Butt to Barra, in memory of the men who lost their lives so close to shore.'

In the early hours of the morning of January 1, the comhairle's convener also led a small vigil at the memorial to the minute the Iolaire hit the rocks. And at 3pm on

December 31, at Kyle Railway Station where the sailors disembarked before heading for the Iolaire 100 years ago, a special commemoration was held by Legion Scotland.

Lord Lieutenant of Ross and Cromarty and Skye and Lochalsh, Mrs Janet Bowen CVO, unveiled a plaque and both she and Sir Alistair Irwin, president of the Royal British Legion Scotland, laid wreaths.

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Minister attend Iolaire service



Far left: Prince Charles offers a few words. He is pictured with the Very Reverend Dr Angus Morrison, who conducted the service; centre, Prince Charles meets members of the public at the memorial service on January 1; and left, a lone piper plays during the vigil at the monument.



Descendants of the Iolaire tragedy launch the centenary commemorations for the Iolaire at the memorial in Stornoway (above right), which overlooks the site of the wreck. Pictured above, Sharon Smith, great-niece of Malcolm Thomson with his picture.



Western Isles Convener Norman A Macdonald with descendants Anne Frater and Iain Maciver; and left, Ruairidh Moir, great-great-nephew of Kenneth Campbell.

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NHS Highland has new chief executive

NHS Highland announced this week that Iain Stewart has been appointed as its new chief executive.

Originally from Stornoway, Mr Stewart has an exceptional track record, with more than 30 years' experience in the public sector and has held a number of senior positions within the NHS in both England and Wales.

Mr Stewart, who will take up his post at the end of January 2019, said: 'Having lived in the Highlands for more than 40 years, with close ties to Argyll and the Scottish islands, the health and wellbeing of NHS Highland's population is exceptionally important to me and I am delighted to be appointed to this role and am looking forward to leading, innovating and improving health and social care services across the Highlands and Argyll and Bute.'

Mr Stewart, a resident of the

Black Isle, added: 'Living locally has given me the opportunity to experience first-hand the great care provided by some of my 10,000 plus new colleagues and I'm sure that working together we can all make a difference to our patients, carers and the wellbeing of our workforce. I am committed and focused on doing the right things for our patients and colleagues alike.'

Mr Stewart is currently deputy chief of commissioning of the NHS Mid-Nottinghamshire Clinical Commissioning Groups. In this role, he is responsible for the leadership, operational management and transformational improvement for a population of 330,000 with an annual budget of around £500 million.

He said: 'I have provided senior operational and transformational leadership to various NHS organisations,



Iain Stewart said: 'I am committed and focused on doing the right things for our patients and colleagues alike.'

managing multiple acute hospitals, mental health, community and strategic commissioning throughout England and North Wales. It is now time for me to consolidate

these experiences and together I believe we can continue to build a world-class health and social care service for the north of Scotland.'

Health Secretary Jeane Free-

man said: 'I am pleased that Iain Stewart has accepted the role of chief executive of NHS Highland. He has important experience in the public sector, including the NHS, and I wish him well in this critical leadership role. The priority, across NHS Scotland, is patient care, and I am confident that under Iain Stewart's leadership, people across the Highlands will receive the excellent level of service they deserve.'

NHS Highland chairman David Alston added: 'I am delighted that Iain has accepted this appointment. He brings a passion for the NHS and for improvement, and a personal commitment to the Highlands and its people.'

The outgoing chief executive officer, Elaine Mead, departed the role on December 31, and Dr Gregor Smith, the deputy chief medical officer for Scotland, has been appointed as interim chief executive.

Residents warned of online scam

Comhairle nan Eilean Siar (Western Isles) Trading Standards are advising residents to be aware of a mail scam currently in circulation, which claims to be from TV licensing.

The message states the recipient has either fallen behind with payments, or is owed a TV licensing refund.

A payment link on the message directs you to a fake version of the official TV licensing site, and there have been reports of bank accounts being emptied by the scammers – see <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-46765681>

A Trading Standards spokesperson advised: 'If you suspect an email might be from a scammer, do not click on any links or open any attachments in the email.'

'Scammers may trick you into installing viruses or giving away your personal and bank details.'

'If you have given any bank details you should contact your bank immediately.'

Eye to eye with John Wallace



Exam Fever

The Christmas and New Year festivities are now over for another year. If you have teenage children in fourth, fifth or sixth year thoughts are probably turning to the imminent prelim exams. I have noticed an upsurge in the number of teenagers who have suddenly started reading in preparation for the forthcoming exams and who are now struggling due to previously undiagnosed reading problems. These can be simply not seeing clearly when reading or can be more complex and can include losing their place when reading or unable to comprehend what they are reading.

Sadly children with reading problems are frequently ignored by the education service and are poorly understood by many in my



profession. One in five school children have some form of reading problem which can make studying extremely hard work and very tiring. Not exactly what is wanted just before exam season.

There is much more involved in reading than simply having light accurately focussed on the back of the eye, which is what glasses are typically prescribed for. As we have two eyes these must

work well both individually and together. Many of the youngsters I see at this time of year have problems maintaining clear comfortable vision when reading or using a computer or smartphone. They often find print very uncomfortable to look at despite wearing glasses.

All children should have regular eye examinations which should include a detailed assessment of reading skills and how well both eyes work together. For lots of teenagers the next few months at school can be life changing. We owe it to our children to help them achieve to their maximum potential in life. Basic eye examinations for children are funded by NHS Scotland and automatic help towards the cost of glasses is available from NHS Scotland.

John Wallace BSc (Hons), FCOptom, DipCLP

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By the look of this photo taken at the bottle bank at Tesco by Oban Times reader Mary Brown on December 28, the town had a very 'merry' Christmas indeed!

Argyll sees surge in electric vehicles

MSP Michael Russell has welcomed the news that Argyll and Bute has seen a significant rise in the number of ultra-low emission vehicles (ULEVs) since 2017.

Figures released by the Department of Transport reveal that the number of ultra-low emission and electric vehicles in Argyll and Bute has increased by 64 per cent since last year.

Across Scotland, the number of people driving

electric vehicles has almost tripled since 2016 – rising by 130 per cent in two years.

The Scottish Government has pledged to introduce low emission zones in Scotland's four biggest cities by 2020, and phase out the need for new petrol and diesel cars by 2032 – eight years ahead of the UK Government's target.

Argyll and Bute MSP Mr Russell said: 'I welcome the news that the number of ultra-low emission and electric vehicles in Argyll

and Bute is continuing to rise.

'These figures are testament to people's commitment to clean air and clean energy in Scotland, and will help to make our towns and cities more accessible – and are an important part of the fight against climate change.'

'Ultra-low emission vehicles give us the opportunity to set a path for less pollution and improve the quality of air in the places that we live, work and visit.'

Good response to gown appeal

by Kathie Griffiths
kgriffiths@obantimes.co.uk



A charity group in Oban helping baby loss families has received offers of help from Uist to Bute.

An appeal asking women to donate their wedding dresses or occasion gowns to be turned into beautiful outfits for babies who have died through miscarriage, stillbirth or from a neo-natal death received a fantastic response after an article appeared in The Oban Times.

One of the women, from Bute, who got in touch with the charity Zaagi said she had been married 50 years this year and wanted to donate her wedding dress to the special cause.

Susan Simpson, who is already the Highlands ambassador for SiMBA, another charity responding to the



Mum-of-one Gillian McLuckie from Oban donates her wedding gown to Susan Simpson from Zaagi.

needs of families bereaved through the loss of a baby, is behind the new Zaagi group in Oban. She has hired out a room at The Rockfield Centre on Saturday January 12 from 2pm to 4.30pm for women to go along and donate their dresses.

Mrs Simpson is also looking for a group of volunteer unpickers and sewers to help turn the dresses into the baby gowns. There are patterns ready to follow.

'I have had a really good response to the appeal, which is really encouraging. It would

mean so much to so many families in their time of need if people donate their gowns and have time to come and unpick and stitch for us,' said Mrs Simpson.

To find out more, go to Facebook.com/events/258101044855088/

The charity Zaagi was founded in 2015 by Nigel and Kim Shaw-Walker after the death of their baby Sarah at 35 weeks. To try to process her own grief and to bring some small measure of comfort to other parents, Kim started to make beautiful outfits for babies from donated wedding and bridesmaids dresses before being joined by other supporters.

Zaagi is an Ojibwe word from the language of the Native Americans in Michigan where Kim grew up, meaning 'to be loved and treasured'.

Recycling initiative hopes for cash windfall

Lorn and Oban Recycling Initiative (LORI) is hoping for a windfall grant from thrifty shoppers in 2019.

The community enterprise is asking shoppers in Oban and Lochgilphead to cast their vote in favour of the project which diverts unwanted household goods and furniture destined for landfill and puts it to good use.

The GRAB Trust, the local charity behind LORI, based in Oban and Lochgilphead, has been shortlisted for a grant under the Tesco Bags of Help scheme. Tesco shoppers in Oban and Lochgilphead can vote in support of the charity and its aims in-store until the end of February.

Trust manager Graham Love said: 'LORI is asking shoppers to vote for our project. Tonnes of household goods needlessly end up in landfill each year, while some households struggle to make ends meet.'

'LORI provides local solutions, gathering and grading furniture and household electricals for reuse from its showroom at the Moleigh

recycling centre near Oban. Everyone can play their part by donating goods or by considering purchasing quality pre-loved items from LORI.

'The charity works closely with the social housing sector, supports low income families and those in crisis to get back on their feet. We are a local employer and create volunteer opportunities to support the long-term unemployed and help people back into work.'

The charity, which diverts more than 55 tonnes of household goods from landfill annually, will use the Tesco grant to increase volunteering opportunities and further reduce the amount of household waste needlessly sent to landfill.

Shoppers in Oban and Lochgilphead have until the end of February to vote using tokens available in Tesco stores.

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The Christmas tree festival has been a huge success at St Conan's Kirk.

Grant will help open up historic kirk's crypt

Heritage funders have awarded St Conan's Kirk up to £5,000 towards allowing public access to its crypt.

Money from the Architectural Heritage Fund will help pay for planning permission and professional fees as part of a project to open up the Bruce Chapel basement room as an education facility for groups and visitors and to provide a new toilet area.

Earlier this year the kirk at Lochawe, recognised as one of Scotland's most unique architectural attractions, celebrated a £100,000 funding boost from Our Heritage National Lottery Fund

and Historic Environment Scotland to help secure its future. That funding will help with essential roof repairs expected to be completed by this spring. Additionally, a programme of heritage activities, exhibitions, events and guided tours during the repairs will help people find out more about St Conan's and how the award will safeguard Scotland's heritage.

Organisers of this year's Christmas tree festival hailed it the biggest and best in Scotland after 62 trees went on display, attracting a record number of visitors.

One of the festival organisers, Liz MacKay, joked that,

with bumper numbers of people wanting to display a tree, they needed more room.

'Once we get the crypt refurbished, we'll be able to extend into there,' she said.

In 2016, grade A-listed St Conan's was voted one of the top 10 Scottish buildings of the past 100 years in a public poll. Designed and built by Walter Douglas Campbell, the kirk's highlights include the Bruce Chapel, which contains a bone fragment belonging to Robert the Bruce. The church was gifted to The St Conan's Church Trust in 1884 and is now supported by the Friends of St Conan's Kirk SCIO.

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BUSINESS NEWS

IN BRIEF

■ A hotel on the banks of Loch Long in Argyll and Bute has been recognised at a prestigious tourism awards ceremony. Knockderry House in Cove was awarded the Best Eating Experience accolade, sponsored by Caledonian MacBrayne, at the Scottish Thistle Awards' regional west finals at Oran Mor, Glasgow.

The 15-bedroom hotel and restaurant was praised by judges for its focus on food provenance and for offering a 'very warm, welcoming and authentic quality Scottish experience' for guests. The business was also commended for its collaboration with local businesses, including Cruise Loch Lomond and Glegoyne Distillery.

■ A selection of popular camping and glamping sites across the UK have picked up prizes in the 2018 Campsites.co.uk camping and glamping awards, announced last month.

Popular choice award in Scotland 2018 (winner) went to Loch Lomond Holiday Park in Tarbet.

■ Best Western has announced the addition of The Inveraray Inn to its portfolio of more than 260 independent hotels.

The property overlooks Loch Fyne from the main street in Inveraray, making it the perfect base to explore this part of the country. Opened in 1755, the hotel is the oldest in Inveraray.

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email us at editor@obantimes.co.uk

Whisky celebrates 'Scottish Samurai'

He was the Scotsman who helped modernise Japan and whose story inspired a pioneering fusion of Scotch and Japanese whisky.

Now, just after the anniversary of the death of 'Scottish Samurai' Thomas Blake Glover, spirits business Fusion Whisky has announced it will be releasing another batch of its Glover whisky after overcoming a shortage of high quality Japanese whisky.

First launched more than three years ago, The Glover was an overnight success, with bottles of the rare £1,000, 22-year-old blend selling out in 24 hours to excited whisky fans and collectors.

Acclaimed for its flavour and innovation, The Glover was a ground-breaking dram that fused mature Scotch with ultra-rare whisky from the Hanyu distillery in Japan.

Fusion Whisky and its distillery partner Adelphi have revealed a temporary shortage of top quality Japanese whisky had prevented the partnership from following up quickly on their sell-out 18-year-old variant, released almost two years ago.

David Moore, director of Fusion Whisky, said: 'I am excited by the prospect of a new release of The Glover, the iconic whisky that celebrates the life and legacy of Thomas Blake Glover, a true Scottish legend who had a profound impact upon Japan.'

Glover was instrumental in the modernisation of Japan in the second half of the 19th century. He co-founded Mitsubishi and the brewery that became the Kirin Group and played a key part in the restoration of Emperor Meiji in 1868. He died, aged 73, on December 16 1911 in Tokyo and was the first non-Japanese person to be



David Moore and Alex Bruce.

Photograph: Tina Norris.

awarded the Order of the Rising Sun. His home in Nagasaki is now a major tourism attraction that draws in almost two million visitors a year.

Mr Moore added: 'We're not shy in saying we always wanted to make more of The Glover, though the odds of sourcing another Japanese whisky of that quality and rarity were stacked against us.'

'We hope whisky lovers will be eager to see the return of The Glover, which we expect to be available next summer.'

While The Glover is a blend of Scotch and Japanese whisky, the Edinburgh-based firm has produced other fusions of Scotch and world whisky, each one celebrating a great historical figure.

Late last year Fusion Whisky and Adelphi released 400 bottles of their Winter Queen

whisky, a 19-year-old blend of Scotch and Dutch whisky in honour of the Scottish princess Elizabeth Stuart. It followed the release earlier this year of The Brisbane, the first whisky in the world to deploy blockchain technology for end-to-end trust and traceability, and its Indian fusion, The E&K.

Alex Bruce, managing director and master blender of Adelphi, explained: 'We took the fusion concept and partnered with great distilleries in India, Australia and the Netherlands.'

'As well as The Glover, we also produced The E&K, The Brisbane and The Winter Queen, each one celebrating a Scottish hero and each one acclaimed for its stunning flavours and innovation.'

While credited with driving the fusion concept, Fusion Whisky and Adelphi also pioneered the use of blockchain in whisky, a hi-tech innovation that is increasingly used in food security and quality control.

Mr Bruce added: 'As well as being able to tell the story of each character effectively and show the incredibly complex process that goes into each fusion, our use of blockchain allows us to demonstrate the provenance of each whisky, giving buyers the all-important confidence in the uniqueness of their whisky and a bulwark against counterfeit.'

'We're particularly proud the Australian fusion, The Brisbane, which was made in collaboration with the acclaimed Starward Distillery, was the first whisky in the world to employ blockchain, following on from the innovative use first seen in Adelphi's own releases of its AD spirit.'

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Elixir applies for permission to build distillery

A planning application has been submitted for a new distillery on Islay.

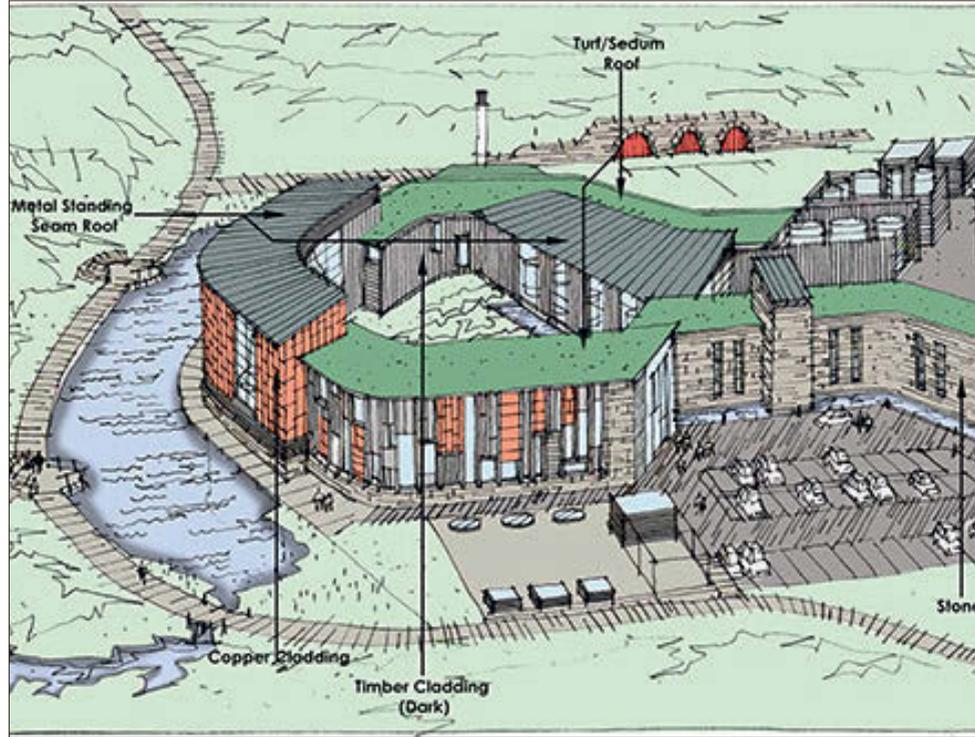
Elixir Distillers, which produces Elements of Islay and Port Askaig, has moved a step closer to building a new Scotch whisky distillery on Islay after submitting a planning application.

Elixir Distillers submitted the planning application to Argyll and Bute Council on November 21 last year and it was validated on December 6.

The application seeks permission to build a distillery on the island, complete with maltings, a vaulted maturation warehouse, visitor centre with shop, restaurant, meeting rooms and a tasting lodge.

The plan also a car park, sewage treatment plant and pumping station, new junction, access roads, car parking, tankfarms, a retention pond, reservoir and a sea water intake.

The distillery will be built on a plot of land located to the south-east of Farkin Cottage near Port Ellen. Plans for the distillery were first revealed in April last year.



Aerial view of the proposed Islay distillery by Elixir Distillers.

Oban gets new HGV test station

Oban's first drive-through MOT testing station for HGVs has been approved by the Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA).

HGVs, buses, trailers and large mini buses, which are required to be tested by a DVSA-approved firm, can now be done at the Argyll Testing Station in Lochavullin Road.

Previously, HGV operators had to travel to Glasgow or Lochgilphead to be tested, causing firms to lose a day's business as well as having an impact on the environment.

Willie Bonniwell is the man behind Argyll Testing Station, a state-of-the-art, drive-through MOT centre. Willie also has an MOT testing station for cars on Quarry Road, a body shop in Benderloch and Flit Self-Drive in Oban.

Willie said: 'At the moment we have two days a month testing but we are going up to four from this month and, if the demand is there, more can be added.'

'On the days HGV tests are not being carried out, the station can be used for cars.'

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New accolade for Culloden site

The National Trust for Scotland's Culloden Battlefield and Visitor Centre has stepped into the new year with important industry recognition.

The site of one of Scotland's most important historical events has been awarded the coveted Museum Accreditation status by Museums Galleries Scotland, the national development body for the museum sector in Scotland.

The accreditation has taken a year to achieve and means the battlefield site can now make claim to any archaeological discoveries found on the site. Previously, any archaeological finds on the battlefield have been managed by Highland Council.

Culloden Visitor Centre, which stands beside the battlefield, features artefacts from both sides of the battle and interactive displays that reveal the background to the conflict, and explain the complexities and tragedy of this battle which was such an important 18th century event.

National Trust for Scotland operations manager at Culloden Raoul Curtis-Machin said: 'This is a magnificent achievement for Culloden Battlefield and the team here is thrilled with the news. We are always working towards a vision where Scotland's heritage is valued by everyone and protected for future generations and this is a significant step forward in achieving that.'

Raoul added: 'This accreditation will help us to raise standards of collections management, which involves the development, storage and preservation of our collection, as well as provide important access to funding for our visitor facilities. This is vital as we progress our plans to protect the landscape of Culloden Moor for future generations.'

'We hope this accreditation will help us to encourage visitors to connect with the things that make Scotland unique, through our exhibition, our guided battle tours and our fascinating events programme.'

'We are open all year and our dedicated team of staff and volunteers all do what we do for the love of Scotland, knowing we are helping to protect it for future generations.'

Scots have plenty of pl

Morvern lines

IAIN THORNER

ian.thorner@btinternet.com



There is no doubt casual clothes are much brighter than they used to be, but do their colours last?

Not really. As most of today's dyes are synthetic, they soon fade no matter what it says on the washing-powder box.

Textile dyeing dates back thousands of years. Throughout history, people have dyed their clothes using common, locally available materials. Early dyes were obtained from animal, vegetable or mineral sources, with nil to very little processing.

By far the greatest source of dyes is the plant kingdom, notably roots, berries, bark, leaves and wood. The first synthetic dye, mauveine, was discovered serendipitously by a British chemist, Sir William Henry Perkin (1838-1907), who was looking for a treatment for malaria.

Eighty years ago there was a revival of the ancient art of natural dyeing and dye-making for the tweed and kilt industry. When it began, manufacturers were surprised to learn just how many plants were suitable and the range of colours they produced. To find them, our forebears must have deliberately experimented with every plant that grows on our native hills, straths and glens with every part of the plant examined for its properties.

There were more than 80 native Highland dyes of almost every procurable shade of the dominant colours which were used and valued. They consisted of no fewer than 14 different yellows, 10 reds, seven purples, nine browns and as many greens, and of every colour there is a certain range of choice.

The weak point in natural Highland colour production was blue. There were only two sources, the blue blaeberry and elder berries, both requiring the addition of alum or copperas (iron sulphate) as a fixative.

Today most tartans and tweeds are produced under commercial and industrial conditions and are dependent on commercial makers for their dyed yarns. Perhaps one day the old industry of dye-making will be revived: there must surely be a market for tartans and tweeds made from natural dyes collected in the Highlands and islands from native plants by local folk?

Colours and plants from which dyes are extracted:

Black: iris root, alder, oak bark and acorns; **blue-ish black:** red bearberry, blackthorn; **finest black:** blackthorn and root of the common docken; **brown:** common yellow wall and dark crottle lichen, dulse, black current, walnut root, before rising of sap, water-lily root; **dark brown:** blaeberry with gall nuts; **yellowish brown:** crottle lichen; **drab or fawn:** birch bark; **flesh colour:** willow bark; **green:** whin or gorse bark, iris leaf, buckthorn bark; **dark green:** heather with alum, heather, just pulled before flowering from a dark shady place; **lively green:** common broom; **grey:** yellow iris root; **magenta:** dandelion; **orange:** ragwort, barberry root; **dark orange:** bramble; **purple:** sundew, cup-moss; **red:** rock lichen, white crottle, alder with copper, blaeberry, tormentil [also used in tanning]; **fine red:** yellow bedstraw root; **purple red:** blaeberry with alum; **scarlet red:** privet, ripe berries with salt; **scarlet:** cud-bear crottle mixed with ammonia, limestone lichen; **violet:** wild cress, bitter vetch; **yellow:** apple tree, ash, buckthorn berries, poplar, elm, bog myrtle, ash tree root, teasel or Fuller's thistle, bracken root, monk's rhubarb; **bright yellow:** sundew with ammonia; **dirty yellow:** peat soot; **rich yellow:** St John's Wort.

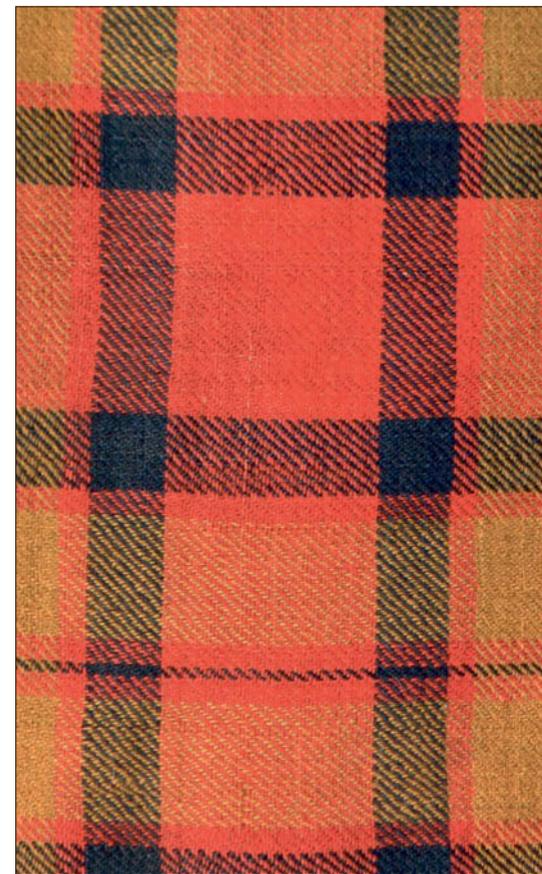
Alder bark, when boiled with iron sulphate, makes a beautiful black. The wood, notoriously difficult to burn, has the peculiarity of splitting best from the root, hence the old Gaelic saying: 'Gach fiodh o'n bharr 's am fearna o'n bhun' - every wood splits best from the top, but the alder from the root. The shoots of the alder cut off in the spring make a crimson dye, and the fertile flowers a green one. The bark is also used by tanners.

Birch bark used to be burned as a light; smooth inner bark was used before the invention of paper for writing on and the wood for various purposes. The sap, as it rises before the leaf, makes a delicious white wine.

Blaeberry berries are astringent and were formerly used for relief of diarrhoea and dysentery. They were also made into tarts and jellies, which was mixed with whisky as a relish for strangers.

Bog myrtle is used for making a yellow dye. It was also a substitute for hops, for tanning and for destroying fleas and bed bugs. Boiled and given to children as juice or tea to kill 'the worms'.

Bracken is used for thatching and bedding for humans as well as cattle and goats. It is



also considered a good remedy for rickets in children and also for curing worms.

Buckthorn grows among heather and birch and produces large black nuts which are nauseous and a violent purgative. The bark dyes yellow and, with iron, black.

Carmelee (heath-pea) roots were very popular among old folk. Apparently they dried and chewed them to give a better taste to the whisky. They were also said to have been good against most diseases of the throat and to suppress hunger and thirst for a long time. In some parts of Scotland, they used to bruise and steep them in water to make fermented liquor giving them a liquorice taste. When food was scarce they were served as a substitute for bread. It seems that to prevent hangovers, the natives of Mull used to chew a piece of its root before having another drinking bout.

Dandelion produced magenta dye and its blanched leaves were recommended as a winter salad.

Elder berries are used for making wine.



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ants to dye for



Samples of tartan showing the difference between muted vegetable (red) and the harsher synthetic (black and green) dyes. Photograph: Iain Thornber

Iris roots were dried out and powdered for snuff or to produce salivation on the mucous membrane.

Cudbear lichen is used extensively to make purple and crimson dyes. It was first dried in the sun, then crushed and steeped, usually in urine in an airtight bottle for three weeks before being boiled in the yarn selected for colouring. Crimson dye was also made from another lichen, *Lecanora tartarea*, and alkali and was first manufactured in Glasgow. In many Highland districts, people got their living scraping this lichen off the rocks and sending it to Glasgow.

Iain Mac Fhearchair (John MacCodrum) (1693–1779) was a Gaelic poet from North Uist. Later in his life, he served as the official poet to Sir James MacDonald of Sleat. One of his close friends was another famous Gaelic poet, Alasdair mac Mhaighstir Alasdair.

MacCodrum alludes to the value of the lichen in his line: 'Spreigh air mointich, Or air chlachan' – cattle on the hills, gold on the stones.

Monk's rhubarb is a naturalised plant. The roots were used medicinally and the leaves as a cooking herb.

Privet berries produce a rose-coloured dye and a bland cooking oil. In Belgium, the dried and powdered twigs were used for tanning.

Rue root produced red dye but picking it was discouraged where there were sheep and cattle as it tended to spread rapidly and inhibit better fodder.

Sundew was used by early Celtic tribes for dyeing the hair of both sexes.

Ling (heather) is used for thatching, dyeing yarn and tanning leather. A kind of ale was made from the tender tops which has become popular again.

DOWN MEMORY LANE

We delve into The Oban Times archives to bring you faces and places from yesteryears



This week we turn the clock back to 1997 and a photograph of Oban High School pupils at a video conferencing session, which included this link with the Inverness UHI office.



Lochaber Mountain Rescue Team. Photograph: Roamer, courtesy of Alex Gillespie.

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LETTERS

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A very positive start to what should be a good year for Oban

As is often the case, The Oban Times this week is replete with upbeat stories about many kind-hearted people doing their best to help others, particularly those less fortunate than themselves.

From the First Argyll Scouts who brought the 'eternal flame' to Oban as a gesture of peace, to the marathon charitable cycle challenge being undertaken by Steven Groom in support of a friend from Oban who has Motor Neurone Disease, the willingness to go the extra mile is manifest.

Then there is also Roy Finlay, the ocean-going oarsman who plans to row right around the coast of Scotland to the benefit of four local charities.

Economically, the good news continues with our report that the new Premier Inn in Oban is scheduled to open next month and that the firm is actively recruiting staff ahead of the February 28 big day.

In the wider Argyll area, the Black Rock curry takeaway, thought to be the most remote in the country, has been such a success that its owners are planning various forms of expansion.

Back in Oban, the hugely ambitious renovation programme for The Rockfield Centre is inching tantalisingly close to its funding target.

It seems that 2019 is off to a flying start. We can only hope the good news continues.

Saints have a chance for sporting glory

Oban Saints endured a gruelling 350-mile round trip last Saturday to rural Aberdeenshire to play a Scottish Amateur Cup tie. They emerged with a highly creditable draw which means the replay is this Saturday at Glencruitten with a 1.30pm kick-off. Go along and cheer on the team as they bid for cup glory.

Morvern hydro project poses threat to native wildcats

The statements made to the Lochaber Times recently by spokespersons for Wildgenes Lab and the Woodland Trust about Scottish wildcats are as confusing as they are astonishing (Highland 'tiger' may now be extinct in wild, December 27).

Confusing because these groups suggest all cats in the wild are probably hybrids. Astonishing because Scottish Natural Heritage and Scottish Wildcat Action care to ignore their existence in an area which the Scottish Government says is one of the last few wildcat strongholds in the UK. Why? Because their presence may halt or delay a non-essential development.

The Highland Council Planning Committee has an application before it for a large hydro electric project on Forestry Commission land in west Morvern. This industrialisation of a peaceful haven will involve pipelines, intakes, powerhouse and switchhouse buildings, outfall, compounds, access tracks and a two-mile long overhead power-line linking it to the national grid. Wildcats are present in the glen and have been seen consistently for a number of years. But, as these shy animals have not been photographed by camera traps or caught live for DNA testing, their existence and pedigree is being pushed aside.

The isolated site, which was abandoned when the last resident crofter left more than a half a century ago, comprises ancient woods, dense scrub cover, old buildings and an abundance of small mammals and ground-nesting birds. It is perfect wildcat habitat which, of course, accounts for their presence today.

If there is one place where there are likely to be wildcats with the purest ancestry in Scotland, it is here. The Scottish wildcat is a priority species under the 2007 UK Biodiversity Action Plan. It is protected under UK and European law and the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species.

The need to reduce our dependency on fossil fuels and the benefits of green energy are clearly understood. However, they should not be allowed to jeopardise a native and critically endangered animal already on the edge of extinction. The small Morvern peninsula has the highest concentration of renewable schemes in Scotland. This particular development, if approved, risks pushing them over the brink.

Iain Thornber,
Knock House, Morvern.

YOUR PICTURES



We know our readers love to take photographs so we are happy to create this space to showcase people's images each week. If you have a photograph you would like to see published here, send

it to editor@obantimes.co.uk, post it to The Editor, PO Box 1, Oban, PA34 4HB or hand it in to our offices in Crannog Lane, Lochavullin Industrial Estate, Oban, or in High Street, Fort William.

Partnership is delivering hundreds of new houses

I was rather surprised to see the letter from the ex-housing convener of Argyll and Bute Council, George Freeman, in The Oban Times of December 20 criticising the low level of investment in affordable housing provided by the Scottish Government.

The Scottish Government can obviously respond to Councillor Freeman's analysis if it

so wishes but I struggle to recognise the doom and gloom he portrays; 50,000 new homes are a commitment in the lifetime of the current parliament.

Grizzled old campaigners like me have welcomed that on the record because our message about the importance of affordable housing has now been recognised as a priority by the Scottish Government.

I am not aware of any housing associations in Argyll and Bute raising concerns through the Strategic Housing Forum about not being able



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This week's image was emailed in by Neil Lea, a reader from Dunoon, who said this atmospheric photograph shows the Firth of Lorne south of Connel.

the time that deal was struck in 2006 and should take some credit for it.

I am also somewhat puzzled by Councillor Freeman's criticism of the council investing money in affordable housing through its Strategic Housing Fund. That is precisely what the fund was set up for and, again, Councillor Freeman should take some credit because, if my memory serves, he was the housing convener at the time.

Councillor Freeman also refers to a £21.9 million record investment 12 years ago. If my memory serves, that was as a result of slippage elsewhere in Scotland, which Argyll and Bute was able to take advantage of, and was a one-off.

I can only speak for ACHA but the sum of our partnership between the Scottish Government, Argyll and Bute Council and ACHA has built 365 new homes and we hope to deliver a further 220 by 2021. That involves three-way funding from ACHA, Argyll and Bute Council and the Scottish Government.

I am sure Councillor Freeman, with his interest in housing, will welcome the good news that we in ACHA got this week of approvals to build new homes in Kilmartin and Cairnbaan from the Scottish Government and I look forward to inviting him to view our 32 new homes as they come offsite in his part of the world in Helensburgh and Lomond in the new year.

There is work still to be done, particularly in relation to waiting lists in some areas and some aspects of homelessness. However, I think we are in a far better place than we were in 2006, both in terms of housing investment generally and new homes in Argyll and Bute.

The Scottish Government and Argyll and Bute Council should take some credit for that.

Alastair MacGregor,
Chief executive, Argyll Community
Housing Association.

So many people are living in isolation in this day and age

A person has to realise that life is not all about money. To that end, if tourism does bring in money to a section of the islands, it also has a damaging effect.

However, we do not really communicate with visitors as such because we do not have a common denominator and, as we don't know each other's background, we struggle to converse.

We have never had so much by way of communication tools but nor have we ever had so many living in isolation, with no daily human contact.

Aonghas Eoghainn Mhoir.

Beachd Ailein

ALLAN CAMPBELL

editor@obantimes.co.uk



Siolpadh! Facal a bha bitheanta ann an dual-chainnt na sgìre san do dh'fhàs mi suas air taobh an iar an Eilein Sgitheanaich. Tha an aon chiall aig an fhacal seo ri "éaladh" ach dhomhsa co-dhiù tha am fuaimneachadh a' toirt dealbh nas fheàrr air seòltachd agus tomhas den olc.

Chan eil mi cinnteach an gabh olc cur às leth an liuthad buidheann choimearsalta a tha a' sniagadh àrdachadh chosgaisean air luchd-ceannach gun fhiosta dhaibh, ach tha cleachdadh den t-seòrsa seo a' fàs bitheanta a rèir choltais agus 's fhiach aire a thoirt dha na rabhaidhean a tha a' nochdadh ma dheidhinn.

Bidh cuimhne aig mòran air àm san robh dilseachd ga mheas cudromach eadar neach-libhrigidh seirbheis agus an fheadhainn a bha a' ceannach bhuaithe agus bha luach air an earbsa a bha a' fàs eatarra. Gu mì-fhortanach 's e glè bheag den t-seòrsa càirdeis sin a chithear a-nise eadar gnìomhachas agus luchd-cleachdaidh agus gu ìre mhòr 's coma dè an raon obrach air an smaoinich thu tha na ceanglaichean pearsanta priseil a b' àbhaist

a bhith ann a' sìor dhol à sealladh.

Mar eisimpleir cò mheadh agaibh dhan aithne manaids-sear a' bhanca a tha sibh a' cleachdadh, neo marsanta bho bheil sibh a' ceannach? Gu dearbh tha iomadach neach an-diugh dha nach aithne ainmean an cuid nà-baidhean, agus nach bochd an suidheachadh sin.

'S ann air leithid cosgais cumhachd, dealan agus gas, agus àrachas thaighean agus charbadan as trice a tha daoine gan glacadh le àrdachaidhean mì-reusanta cosgais, agus anns a' bhithiantas tha seo a' tachairt ri linn dilseachd dhan aon chompanaidh bliadhna às dèidh bliadhna.

Gun teagamh tha riaslaidh ann a bhith a' sìreadh phrìsean ùra agus 's dòcha gluasad gu seirbheis nas saoire agus gu cinnteach tha mòran bhuidhnean a' gabhail brath air an t-suidheachadh sin. Far am b' àbhaist luchd-ceannach dileas a bhith a' faotainn nam prìsean as fheàrr, an-diugh tha cùisean tric an rathad eile agus bargain gan tairginn dha luchd-ceannach ùra.

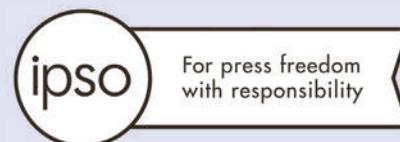
Cluinnear tric mu fheadhainn a tha a' faicinn

shanasan a tha a' tairginn phrìsean nas fheàrr air leithid àrachas càr neo cùmhnant fòn-làimhe na tha iadsan a' faotainn bhon aon chompanaidh an dèidh a bhith cuide riutha fad ùine. Mar sin 's e deagh chomhairle a th' ann stùil a thoirt air na roghainnean a tha ri an lorg ma choinneimh sheirbheisean de sheòrsa sam bith agus dearbhadh follaiseach ann glè thrìgur fhiach sin an t-saothair is caomhnadh luachmhor ri bhuinnig às.

One of my personal resolutions in 2019 is to make more effort to check price options for as many as possible of the services which I must buy annually.

This will be particularly true for things like household energy contracts and motor insurance where the 'best available renewal offers' are frequently even more costly than what these companies are offering to new clients. Caveat emptor (let the buyer beware) is as relevant as it ever was, and for all purchases.

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



The editor welcomes letters of approximately 300 words in length for publication on this page. However we reserve 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 phone number is also required for verification. Anonymous letters or those supplied without a contact phone number will not be printed. Please email: editor@obantimes.co.uk or write to: Letters page, The Oban Times, PO Box 1, Oban, Argyll, PA34 4HB. Fax: 01631 568001.

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DISTRICT NEWS

SEIL

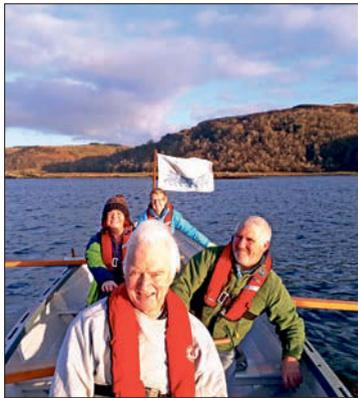
Isle of Seil coastal rowers had an 'oar'some start to New Year.

The row took to the water on New Year's Day with two new members onboard.

They left Balvicar Boatyard passing through Seil Sound towards Clachan and the Bridge over the Atlantic before a refreshment break thanks to Sue Fenton. The rowers then turned back, enjoying a glorious sunset.

James Fenton was cox with crew Ewan Kennedy, Jean Ainsley and new members Chris Bennett and Kathie Griffiths.

To find out more about the club, go to facebook.com/seilskiff/ or seilskiff.org.uk



Great start to 2019, Seil Coastal Rowing club members Ewan Kennedy and Jean Ainsley out with new crew recruits in the middle Kathie Griffiths and Chris Bennett.

OBAN

Oban lifeboat's fundraising group was busy throughout December engaging with the local community and running its first pop-up shop within McCaig's Warehouse.

The stall, open every Saturday in December, had plenty on offer, including Christmas cards, calendars and souvenirs, with all takings going towards the running of Oban's RNLI lifeboat station.

On Saturday December 22,

fundraisers were joined by carol singers drawn from local choirs, led by Joy Mills and accompanied by accordion and fiddle, adding festive cheer. Oban lifeboat Mora Edith MacDonald stood by to show its appreciation and support during the afternoon.

Phil Hamerton, from Oban lifeboat's fundraising team, said: 'The four days of sales in McCaig's Warehouse brought December's total sales to just over £1,000. The combination of carol singing and the lifeboat's presence on December 22 added to the festive cheer and, again, visitors and residents generously added to the collection.'

Phil added: '2019 is looking like an exciting year for our fundraising team with lots of events scheduled throughout the year.'

'Our thanks go to everyone who kindly donated or bought from our pop-up shop. All donations are gratefully received and will contribute to the running of Oban's lifeboat station, ensuring the volunteer crew can continue to save lives at sea.'



CONNEL

Two Connel sisters took The Oban Times to new heights while on holiday.

Breagh, aged eight, and Iona, aged six, showed off the newspaper at 9,126 feet at the Colorado Mountain Granby Ranch ski resort.



The apprentices before heading out on a team walk and canoe trip at Bunarkaig.

Argyll apprentices 'go wild' at Loch Eil

Six apprentices from Argyll Community Housing Association and three from West Highland Housing Association took part in a five-day course with the Outward Bound Trust at Loch Eil, Fort William.

The aim of the course was to help them build their team working, leadership and communication skills.

They learned how to embrace change by swapping their usual place of work for the outdoors and build-

ing their confidence in taking on different projects as a team. Feedback from the apprentices following the course late last year included 'learning to work better in a team and contribute more' and 'meeting new people and completing challenges I never thought I would do'. The majority felt they had gained skills that will make a positive difference to their performance at work.



LOCH LOMOND

There was a large turnout of people, left, at the Lauder Monument at Inveroaden on Friday December 28 to commemorate the 102nd anniversary of the death of Captain John Lauder.

Captain Lauder was shot and killed by a sniper in France during the First World War.

The day also marked the completion of a three-year project to restore the monument that was originally unveiled in 1921 by world famous entertainer Sir Harry Lauder in memory of his son.

The £25,000 project, which was



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co-ordinated by conservation charity Friends of Loch Lomond and The Trossachs, also involved the creation of a new car park, a new path link, upgrading an existing steep path with stone steps and safety railings and installing two story boards and signs.

SEIL AND EASDALE

Porpoises are no strangers to the seas round Seil and Easdale but the arrival of this unexpected 'first finner' in a quarry pool directly behind Ellenabeich's Oyster pub and restaurant stirred up plenty of interest over the New Year.

According to some villagers, it was the first time a porpoise had ever been spotted in the pool.

Originally it was thought there were two of them but over the new year period just one was coming into view, said Dawn Singleton from The Oyster: 'There has been lots of porpoise-spectating from our decking over the New Year. We think there were two at first but then there was only one. The other one must have got out. We think the one remaining may have been stuck.'

Dawn said they had been in touch with the Hebridean Whale and Dolphin Trust which asked to be kept informed. However by Monday this week it was thought the porpoise had safely made its own way out to wider seas.

DRIMNIN

Residents and businesses in the remote village of Drimnin are enjoying faster broadband.

The village was not included in plans to receive an upgrade, however, Scottish Sea Farms was looking to enable remote feeding to its farms around the Sound of Mull for when weather makes it unsafe to travel by boat. By joining forces, the two have successfully overcome the challenges of the local geography to deliver the more reliable broadband.

They did this by using a 'complex system of wireless radio links and repeaters'.

As well as this, more than 40 of the village's 57 homes and businesses signed up to a two-year subscription, enabling Drimnin Community Broadband CIC to place the order for its own leased line from BT.



Balvicar House Practice Sessions entertained the crowds at Seil's festive dance party.



Sam Dods and Aaron Maclarty opened Seil's festive dance on the pipes and drums.

Festive dance raises community hall funds

Live music got Seil up on the dance floor as part of the island's festive celebrations which raised £1,298 for the community hall development fund.

Oban High School pupils Sam Dods and Aaron Maclarty, both aged 12, opened the event on the pipes and drums, followed by tunes from

Balvicar House Practice Sessions before the Hector MacFadyen band kept the party going.

Community hall chairman Seamus Anderson said: 'Thanks to all the troopers on the committee for organising the night, to all those who gave us music and everyone who turned up to have a great night.'



Top and above: Scenes from the Easdale panto.

Fun, ferries and frolics at Easdale panto

Easdale Very Amateur Dramatics pulled off another panto smasher with Robin Hood and His Ferryman – oh yes, they did!

Queues lined the harbour at Ellenabeich on Bank Holiday Wednesday to make the short crossing over to the island to watch this year's fun-filled offering at the packed community hall. The record breaking audience helped the cast, who only had a few rehearsals, raise £457 for the island charity Eilean Eisdeal.

Woolly hats off to the high-spirited cast for getting together to stage such a rollicking heart-warming treat on a January day. The show was hailed 'the best yet'.

The story began once upon a time in the far distant lands of Argyll and Bute and beyond the great forest in a tiny kingdom known as Easydale.

The kingdom was in a perilous state under the rule of the Sheriff where the once prosperous and happy community were now downtrodden peasants struggling to get by as the Sheriff imposed even further taxes on them to fund his corrupt regime.

Would the community survive? Its fate rested on the shoulders of a young lad called Robin Hood and his pal Little John the Ferryman who took part in daring hold-ups as highwaymen robbing the rich to feed the poor. The net closed in as the Sheriff plotted to catch them but it all ended happily with plenty of hoorahs, huzzahs, boos and 'more booze' throughout the show that was brilliantly hilarious in a 'Easdale Very Amateur Dramatics' kind of way.

Entry to the family production was free with donations welcomed.

At random

MARTIN LAING

mllaing@obantimes.co.uk



Bus shelters needed

Regular readers may recall that last summer I wrote lamenting the lack of a bus service between Oban town centre and Ganavan on Sundays.

Now I have been contacted by a correspondent, who wishes to remain anonymous, about a similar problem.

The letter-writer says: 'There are no bus shelters anywhere on the way from Oban station to the war memorial and Ganavan.'

'And when you have completed a walk to Ganavan, the toilets are shut.'

'First, people are being encouraged to keep fit and walk, but when they get to Ganavan there is no bus shelter in which to wait for the bus back, if it is raining. It is the same all the way from Oban station: there is nowhere to rest out of the rain while waiting for a bus.'

'What we need, in the following order, is: 1: a bus shelter at Ganavan, 2: a bus shelter at the war memorial, 3: a bus shelter at Wee Ganavan (half way), 4: a bus stop at Dunollie Castle.'

'We have waited years for the council to give us some shelter on that road. What a difference it would make.'

What about it, Argyll and Bute Council?

Return to normality

At risk of painting myself as a festive season miserabilist, I'm glad to return to something resembling normality following the holiday period.

While I am, in fact, a great fan of Christmas, I'm always rather pleased when it's all done and dusted, the decorations are down and the tree put away for another year.

It has been a brilliant winter break, with countless parties and children's shows, Oban looking very festive with its decorated windows at a large number of businesses and a splendid panto in the Corran Halls. Top marks go to those involved in organising the numerous events.

Perhaps the biggest vote of thanks, however, should go to Lorraine MacCormick and her team at Hope Kitchen who turned out on Christmas Day to provide a fantastic dinner for the less fortunate among us.

What do you think?

Write to me at mllaing@obantimes.co.uk or The Oban Times, Crannog Lane, Oban, PA34 4HB, or call 01631 568021.

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OUTDOORS

St Kilda's sea caves are in top condition

St Kilda's special reefs and sea caves are in good condition, a new report concludes.

The findings of a wide-reaching survey carried out in 2015 by a team of divers have now been published by Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH).

Almost 90 years after St Kilda's last 36 residents were evacuated to the mainland, the islands remain vitally important for the wildlife they support.

The World Heritage Site hosts huge seabird populations, including the world's second largest colony of North Atlantic gannets, and the waters around St Kilda are part of Scotland's Marine Protected Areas (MPA) network, designated a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) for their reefs and sea caves, which attract a wealth of spectacular sea life.

Crucial to the management of the MPA network, as with protected areas on land, is monitoring.

The purpose of the St Kilda survey was to judge the current condition of the site and to establish a baseline against which future assessments of its special features could be made.

Weather conditions severely interrupted the team's plans but it managed to survey four caves at St Kilda, returning with valuable data and a collection of stunning photographs, which can be viewed and downloaded at <https://bit.ly/2QSoeQ2>

The full report on the survey can be read at <https://bit.ly/2V8SuEK>



Lee is the new Active Nation Commissioner

Former professional mountain bike rider and co-founder of The Adventure Syndicate, Lee Craigie, has been appointed the new Active Nation Commissioner for Scotland.

The Scottish Government committed to appoint an Active Nation Commissioner, through the 2017 Programme for Government, to help encourage an active nation, where more people can enjoy the benefits of accessible walking and cycling.

With the doubling of the active travel budget to £80 million, Lee's role is to act as a national advocate for walking and cycling across the country, raising the profile of these inclusive and sustainable modes of travel while promoting their health, environmental, social and economic benefits to everyone who lives, works in or visits Scotland.

The Active Nation Commissioner reports to the Cabinet Secretary for Transport, Infrastructure and Connectivity, but works independently of government to help progress the recommendations of the Active Travel Task Force Report and ensure walking and cycling are accessible and inclusive for everyone.

Lee said: 'A large part of my mountain bike racing career has been about taking risks. My present work with The Adventure Syndicate is all about encouraging and enabling young people, particularly young women, to take their own risks – to step out of their comfort zone and do something different to make them feel healthier, happier and more in control of their lives. Adventure is everywhere.'

'It doesn't take much to help people realise that.'

'The ambitious vision of the Scottish Government is what attracted me to this role, but it's clear to everyone in the active travel community that there is a need to take a few more risks to achieve greater outcomes, faster than ever, so that even more people can connect and engage with lifelong walking and cycling – benefiting their personal health and the health of the planet.'

'I feel excited and privileged to be the new



Lee Craigie, inset, and with Active Travel delivery partners.

Active Nation Commissioner for Scotland and I am looking forward to building new relationships across the country so that we can collectively push the current boundaries of thinking in how we travel.

'I'm committed to promoting the idea that by placing our own health needs, the needs of our communities and our environment ahead of single-occupancy car journeys, we can all live more sustainable and fulfilled lives.'

Commenting on the appointment, Cabinet Secretary for Transport, Infrastructure and Connectivity Michael Matheson added: 'I'm delighted to have appointed Lee to the role and I am confident she will not only be an inspirational advocate for active travel, but also progress high impact policy development. Working with our Active Travel delivery partners and local authorities, Lee will help promote new infrastructure to achieve the

shift towards walking and cycling that this government is determined to achieve.

'Walking and cycling as a form of transport can be incredibly beneficial to our individual health and help protect our environment but it cannot be a solution that only some can benefit from. We are determined to ensure walking and cycling is accessible and inclusive for everyone.'

'Our funding of active travel projects aims to significantly improve our public realm, creating segregated cycle lanes in our towns and cities, support behaviour change projects and make walking and cycling the natural and easy choice for everyday short journeys. Lee Craigie will play a big part in this journey alongside our partners to help develop an Active Nation in Scotland.'

For more information, visit www.transport.gov.scot/activenation

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This week's walks



Creag Meagaidh NNR is the complete mountain experience.

Explore Scotland's National Nature Reserves

Scotland's National Nature Reserves (NNRS) are the perfect places to clear away the cobwebs and walk-off the festive season excess, says Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH).

SNH welcomed more than 650,000 visitors to its NNRS last year and some of the most popular are highlighted here.

Flanders Moss (20 minutes north-west of Stirling).

Flanders Moss is one of the largest remaining intact raised bogs in Britain.

Take a moment to savour this wild and ancient landscape which has hardly changed for thousands of years. On a clear winter's day, you can enjoy the awe-inspiring solitude of the reserve from the viewing tower.

There is often a scenic backdrop of snow-capped mountains. Listen out for wintering geese flying over at dusk to roost at Lake of Menteith.

Craigellachie, Aviemore (45 minutes south of Inverness).

Only a few minutes from Aviemore, the birch woods of Craigellachie NNR sit just above the A9. The reserve has several footpaths that meander through the woodlands and past lochs, perfect for a leisurely after-lunch stroll. There is also a longer route leading to a viewpoint where you can enjoy superb views of the snow-capped Cairngorm Mountains. The crags (or steep cliff faces) which give the reserve its name are home to peregrine falcons.

Beinn Eighe and Loch Maree Islands, near Kinlochewe (one hour and 10 minutes west of Inverness).

Beinn Eighe is the UK's oldest NNR, designated in 1951. The reserve covers 48 sq km, stretching from loch-side to mountain top, offering a variety of trails including sheltered woodland walks as

well as exposed mountain routes. The woodland here is ancient Caledonian pine forest, with very old 'granny pines' found on the lower slopes. More fragments can be found on the 60-plus islands scattered across Loch Maree.

Keep an eye out for deer and white-tailed sea eagles and golden eagles.

Creag Meagaidh, near Laggan (one hour and 30 minutes south-west of Inverness).

Creag Meagaidh NNR is the complete mountain experience. From its wild mountain plateau to woodland that is slowly returning to life, Creag Meagaidh feels like the Highlands compressed into one reserve. The dramatic scenery here includes Munro summits, an exposed whaleback ridge and icarved gullies.

Look out for black grouse, golden eagles and red deer. Foxes, pine martens, badgers and otters are all found here too.

LOCHABER AND LORN RAMBLERS

The walk leader is to be contacted beforehand for meet-up and start times. Car sharing usually possible and people can try before they buy. Further information at www.lochaberand-lorn-ramblers.org.uk. Lochaber and Lorn Ramblers Group can be contacted by email on info@lochaberandlorn-ramblers.org.uk

Sunday January 13: Gèarr Aonach and Coire Gabhail, Glen Coe

A delightful, easy scramble up the nose of Gèarr Aonach followed by a switchback ridge and descent through the 'lost valley' Coire Gabhail.

Park at the Glencoe Viewpoint car park at NN170568. Head off SE and follow the path down to cross the River Coe on a bridge just below the Meeting of Three Waters. The path rises to a point where it enters the gorge cut by the Allt Coire Gabhail. Take the right fork, which is indistinct at first due to erosion, and scramble up easily. Follow the path SW for about 150m to WP NN169559.

Leave the path and head W up a grassy slope towards the foot of the nose of Gèarr Aonach to reach the start of a path at WP NN168560. This zig-zags up the cliffs. At each turn of the path, there is a short but easy scramble, none of which is exposed. The path leads to the top of the spur overlooking Glen Coe. Head up SW to the summit of Gèarr Aonach, 692m, and continue to a small plateau at the foot of the NE ridge of Stob Coire nan Lochan at NN156551.

From here, a broad ramp leads down SW below the crags on the right, and above the crags on the left. The route crosses a stony couloir and continues a descending traverse until the crags on the left give way to a steep grassy hillside. Continue the traverse to reach a burn at about NN154544 and follow it down to the Coire Gabhail path below. Follow this out NE to join the outward route back to the A82.

Grade: M+; distance: 7km; height to climb: 674m; map(s): LR41, EX384. Meet at Glencoe village car park at 9.15am, for start of walk at 9.30am. Leader: Ian Moir 07973 836498.

Thursday January 17: Old Inverloch Castle to Nevis Range, Fort William

A walk from the town to the ski centre, and back by a different route.

Start from the CP just E of Inverloch Castle at NN121754. Walk back to the A82 and cross opposite the entrance to the aluminium smelter. Cross the railway

on the approach to the factory then fork left on a track to pass around the perimeter of the works on the N side. Follow the track E until it passes under the power lines, then take the right fork and climb up the hill to the surge chamber track. Follow this NE and cross the Allt a' Mhulinn. Head S for 150m, then turn NE again and follow the cycle tracks to the Aonach Mor SC.

Leave the CP at its NW corner, cross the burn on a bridge and follow the track W to Torlundy. Join the minor public road and continue over the railway and cross the A82 into the housing scheme. Follow the road SW to pass W of the Inverloch Castle Hotel and continue on a track that rejoins the A82 at Inverloch Castle Fm. Cross the main road to reach the cycle track and follow it W to the Lochy Bridge roundabout. Cross the roundabout and rejoin the cycle track alongside the River Lochy, which leads back the start.

Grade: L; distance: 14km; height to climb: 250m; map(s): LR41, EX392. Meet at Fort William WM at 9.45am, for start of walk at 10am. Leader: Denise Jones 07823 779713 or 01397 772768.

NEVIS HILLWALKING CLUB

Full walk details at www.nevis-hillwalking.club. If anyone would like to go out on the walk please contact club secretary Suzanne Theobald on 01397 701783 or email enquiries@nevis-hillwalking.club.

Saturday January 12:

Fraoch Bheinn, Sgurr Mhurlagain, Loch Arkaig

Two Corbetts easily accessed from Strathan at the head of Loch Arkaig. Do one, or both if you are quick enough on a short winter's day.

Start from the end of the public road at the head of Loch Arkaig, NM987916, where limited parking is available. Head W on the track into Glen Dessarry for 1km. At NM978916, just W of the Dearg Allt, turn N up a path and follow it up towards the S ridge of Fraoch Bheinn. Continue up to the summit, 858m. Turn E and descend steep rough ground to reach a broad col at NM994937, 458m. A path leads SW from the col down to the track in Glen Dessarry. For the 2nd Corbett, continue E up the flank of the SW ridge of Sgurr Mhurlagain to its crest. Turn NE and head up to the summit. Return to the col and descend SW on the path to the track in Glendessary. Head E back to the start.

1st Corbett 9km, 798m ascent. Suggested and coordinated by Jane Ollerenshaw.

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Clothes in good condition, no stains, no rags,
no underwear, no wet clothes,
and good quality shoes and bedding.

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Time to refuel?



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Saturday: 7am - 2pm
Sunday: 8am - 2pm

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Dunbeg, Oban PA37 1PX Tel: 01631 562784 Open 24 hours

OT



University of the
Highlands and Islands
Argyll College

Glenshellach Business Park
Oban
PA34 4RY



New year, new opportunities!

We have a great range of courses starting this January. To find out more visit our website, contact us or come along to our centre and speak to our staff about our courses and available funding.

@ACObanCentre@uhi.ac.uk ☎ 01631 559 500

www.argyll.uhi.ac.uk

NEW YEAR – NEW OPPORTUNITIES!

What's more important than a choice about your future? This is a great time of year to plan ahead and set yourself some ambitious targets for 2019. At Argyll College UHI we've got some great new courses that can help you unlock new and exciting career opportunities.

Available at any of our learning centres, the new, 18-week, Entrepreneurial Skills NPA will give you a great introduction into running a small business and could set you on the road to self-employment. You'll develop personal attributes such as interview skills, customer service and IT skills, which will prepare you for work in any field. The course will also promote entrepreneurial skills such as developing a business idea, business planning, job costing and cashflow planning – skills and knowledge that could help you start your own business, or provide underpinning knowledge for further study in a business-related subject.

The part-time Introduction to Childhood Practice is perfect for anyone wanting to make a career working with small children but who doesn't yet have entry requirements for full-time courses.

Over 18 weeks you'll gain the basic knowledge which will allow you to progress to a full-time Early Years course in September. This is a great stepping stone which will give you more time devoted in class to develop your knowledge, at a pace that is achievable for those who've been away from education for a while.

We have a Maritime Skills course available in Oban or Lochgilhead. This combines SQA and RYA/MCA certification so you'll receive a comprehensive introduction to the maritime industries, as well as gaining internationally recognised certificates.

As an academic partner of the University of the Highlands & Islands, Argyll College also gives you access to a wide range of part time and full-time degree programmes many of which can be started at the end of January.

We also have a range of part-time courses which can help improve your skills and enhance your chances of getting a job.

Visit our website or call us to find out what's available at your local Argyll College centre. Your future is just a click away.



HAPPY NEW YEAR, HAPPY NEW YOU!

As the bells rang out at Hogmanay to welcome in the New Year, we all made resolutions to make 2019 a year to remember.

And the best way to do that is to resolve to make this the year you improve the quality of life for you and yours by being the best that you can be!

**BE YOUR BEST,
IN YOUR BEST
YEAR EVER**

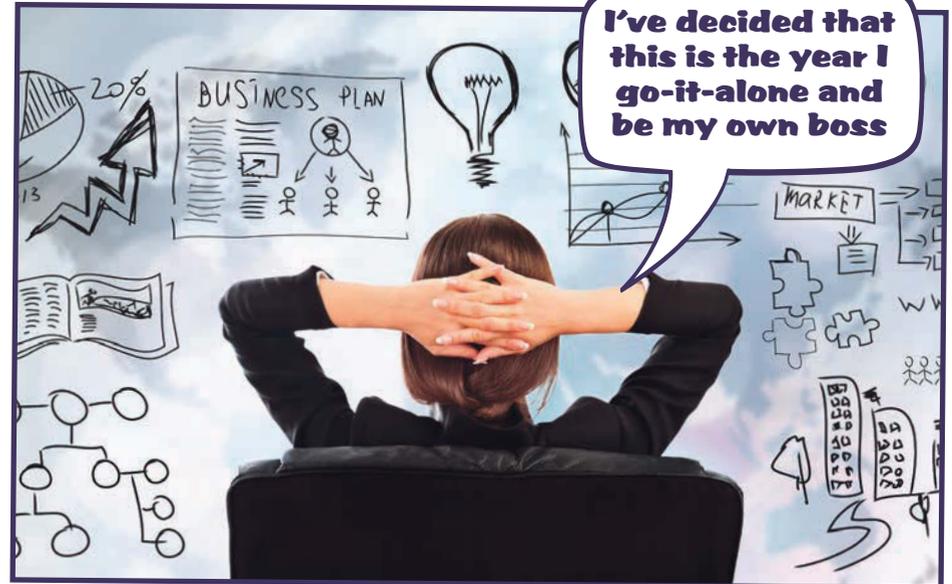
The festivities and fireworks have fizzled out and here we are in early January, with

2019 stretching out before us just as blank as the pages of our brand new diaries, ready and waiting to be filled in.

Ask yourself: with what are you going to fill the coming months? Right now is the time to get planning the best way to turn those resolutions into reality.

And the best thing is that you don't have to do any of this alone! There are so many people out there who are ready and willing and able to help make your resolutions come true.

So, what are you waiting for?



BUSINESS START-UP WORKSHOP

A workshop for anyone looking to start-up a business. During the workshop you will learn the need for a business plan, how to manage a profit and loss account, produce a cash-flow, identify customers and the role of marketing in business.

Wed. 23 Jan (0930-1630hrs) & Thu. 24 Jan (0930-1230hrs) Oban

DOING MORE WITH SOCIAL MEDIA

Do you want to take your social media marketing to a new level or been using social media to market your business? This workshop will help you grow your presence, improve your reach and become more effective and efficient in social media marketing.

Thu. 24 Jan, 0930 - 1330hrs, Mull

TWITTER AND HOOTSUITE

Understand how Twitter and Hootsuite fit in with your digital marketing strategy and learn how to use both platforms effectively, create promoted posts for Twitter and understand the benefits of 'social listening' and stay safe on Twitter and Hootsuite.

Thu. 31 Jan, 1300-1630hrs, Lochgilhead

To book on a workshop or arrange an appointment to meet with one of our business advisers contact the Business Gateway team on

01546 604030 or email
bg@argyll-bute.gov.uk



AN CÙRSA COMAIS GAELIC IMMERSION YEAR

'S e cùrsa cànan air fad a th' anns a' Chùrsa Chomais a tha deasachtaiche airson luchd-ionnsachaidh eadar-mheadhanach leis an amas a bhith fileanta sa Ghàidhlig. 'S e adhartachadh sgilean labhairt is sgrìobhaidh prìomh amas a' chùrsa, ach thèid cuspairean eile a thoirt a-steach mar a thèid an cùrsa air adhart. Nì oileanaich trì seachdainean de ghreis dhreuchdail ann an Gàidhlig an lùib a' mhodail Greis-gnìomhachais.

Tha e na chùrsa fad bliadhna làn-ùine aig a' Cholaiste is tha e co-ionann ris a' Chùrsa Adhartais a tha ga teagasg air astar fad dà bhliadhna. Ma shoirbhicheas le oileanaich anns a' Chùrsa Chomais bidh cothrom aca airson gluasad gu dàrna bliadhna prògram a' cheuma.

An Cùrsa Comais is an intensive language learning course designed for intermediate level learners whose aim is fluency in the language. The major focus is on language skills, both speaking and writing, but other subjects will be introduced as the course progresses. Students on An Cùrsa Comais undertake a three week work placement within a Gaelic setting as part of the Greis-gnìomhachais module.

The course is a one year full-time course at the College that is the equivalent to An Cùrsa Adhartais that is taught over 2 years long distance. If students successfully complete the Cert HE Cùrsa Comais they have the opportunity to progress to the second year of the degree programme.

WWW.SMO.UHI.AC.UK | iarrtas@smo.uhi.ac.uk - 01471 888 304

OT

YOUR BEST BODY EVER!

The human body is an incredibly complex and wonderful creation, so resolve that this year you will take good care of it!

Want to enjoy better moods, concentration, sleep and be a good weight? Then start to take better care of your body.

All those other resolutions of losing weight, giving up smoking and cutting stress levels will all be so much easier if you start by looking after the body you are doing all those things to.

Take better care of your physical health and you will be surprised how many other things just slip into place in your life.

Were you one of those people who went: 'RIGHT! New Year's Day, turn over a new leaf, I am going to jog/walk/lift weights/start each day with an exercise video, THIS IS IT PEOPLE!'

Chances are that by now you have probably come to a grinding halt!

Revisit that resolution and resolve to turn 2019 into your turn-around year. You got into bad shape slowly but surely over a number of years, you will stand a far better chance of succeeding in getting back into good shape slowly but surely.

The good news is that serious-hand. ly good help is at

Did you realise that here in Oban, Atlantis Community Leisure is one of the best places to go to in Scotland to get fit?

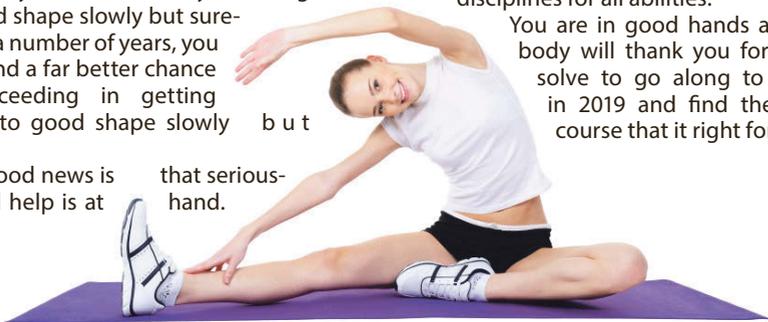
The way this venture has grown and developed over the past two decades is a credit to everyone involved and something all of Oban, Lorn and wider Argyll and Bute should be proud of.

It is run as a social enterprise and is a registered charity; any profits made are re-invested into the business to make continuing improvements in the centre and to train staff.

There are more than 60 fitness classes a week including Les Mills, Zumba and Pilates, giving Oban the largest selection of fitness and dance classes anywhere in the west of Scotland.

Zumba has become a firm favourite and now Atlantis has added the Les Mills range of courses to its portfolio. Les Mills was a New Zealand athlete, coach and politician; he represented the country at the Olympics and won a Commonwealth gold medal. The Les Mill selection of classes ranges across several disciplines for all abilities.

You are in good hands and your body will thank you for it – resolve to go along to Atlantis in 2019 and find the fitness course that is right for you.



LES MILLS GRIT

A 30 minute High Intensity Interval Workout (HIIT).

Considered one of the quickest ways to take your fitness to the next level. The idea being that you go as hard as you can for a short time, rest and do it again.

Atlantis COMMUNITY LEISURE

Check out www.atlantisleisure.co.uk/classes for class times and more details

THINK YOU KNOW MACLEODS THE BUILDER?

We'll think again and think employment

Everyone knows about MacLeods the builder: been around for ever in Argyll and Bute and built loads of homes. We all know someone who works for the firm or someone who knows someone who does.

But have you ever thought how large this business is and its importance as a local employer? It's one of the biggest there is.

MacLeod Construction is based in Lochgilphead. In the 40-plus years it has been in business the company has been one of the pioneers in the manufacture and assembling of timber-frame buildings across the West Highlands and islands and Highland region.

The family firm builds within its own developments and for clients of all shapes and sizes, from family homes to commercial and community structures.

The company sells and rents properties and has a workforce engaged in quarrying materials, plumbing and electrical, roofing and scaffolding services along with joinery and refurbishment, and the manufacture of conservatories and windows.

The company is also actively involved in the use of renewable energy and always looking out for the next innovation; researching and testing new technologies as they come onto the market.

At present MacLeods is working on air-

source heating and researching web-linked heating control systems which will allow users, maintenance teams or housing associations to monitor, review and control a building's heating system remotely via a secure link.

This makes the firm one of the biggest employers in the region; not just for the traditional building trades and professions but a wide range of administrative and support roles, including IT.

At MacLeods the company 'grows its own' with a firm commitment to apprenticeships and training to grow within your job. If you are looking for a new job or to learn a new skill, one of the smartest resolutions you could make in 2019 is to go along and talk to their recruiting team and keep an eye on its job advertisements.



Calling all trades in Oban Your career is here

www.Macleodconstruction.co.uk

01546 602989 jobs@mkmacleod.co.uk

Oban's Slimming World members lost 683 stone in 2018

As soon as a member walks through the doors of any Slimming World group, be they fathers, mothers, husbands, wives, children or friends, they can all be assured of a warm welcome from their consultant and fellow members – a group of really friendly people all at various stages of their weight loss journey.

Before they decide whether to join, their consultant will explain Slimming World's programme and they'll be invited to observe a group session – and join in if they wish. If they decide to join, they'll be weighed and enrolled by the consultant at the end of the group.

Our group support system combines individual attention and group participation in a carefully structured forum. Group discussions range from practical sharing of tips and ideas to a deeper understanding of each individual's danger zones and slimming pitfalls. On a practical level, there is a strong emphasis on sharing favourite recipe ideas and discussing local stores and special offers on healthy foods. There is also a focus on basic cooking skills rather than reliance on convenience foods, and general cooking tips are shared. Our advice and literature take cost, cultural preferences, cooking ability and time constraints into consideration.

For those in need of a deeper level of support, our consultants have a number of methods and tools to help members become aware of individual obstacles

Slimming World - Not just for women



and barriers to change and through carefully facilitated discussion, develop personal strategies to overcome them.

All sessions last for around 1hr 30mins, with additional support provided between groups in the form of a series of 'lifelines':

- Telephone, email and text support from the consultant and other group members
- Free online support from the Slimming World member website
- Slimming World magazine and recipe books

Free2GO - 11 to 15 year olds

It's no secret that young people are eating less healthily, have a less active lifestyle and are suffering from weight-related problems like diabetes at a much earlier age.

To help young people in the very best way it can, Slimming World has launched Free2Go – a specially devised healthy eating plan, which focuses on the power of Free Food and Healthy Extras and encourages the step-by-step reduction of less healthy foods like burgers, chocolate and confectionery.

Individual dietary needs

Food Optimising caters for members with special dietary requirements or conditions affected by diet, including diabetes, Coeliac disease, lactose intolerance and IBS.

Consultants and members have access to a variety of health fact sheets to help incorporate their dietary needs into Food Optimising, for example, highlighting gluten and dairy free products.

Pregnancy and Post-natal support

Slimming World is the only national weight management organisation in the UK to provide healthy lifestyle support to pregnant women and breastfeeding mums.

Our aim is not to encourage weight loss or dieting during pregnancy but to support women in eating a health diet and prevent excess weight gain.

MEET THE TEAM



Gillian MacCorquodale, consultant

Hi, I'm Gillian, I joined SW as a member in 2006 and lost three stone. I have been a consultant now for seven years and absolutely love my job. SW Oban has over 300 members, many of whom who have achieved their targets and many more well on the way. We look forward to welcoming you into group and helping you achieve your goals.



OBAN

Glencruitten Church Hall,
Glencruitten Road
Wednesday 9.30am,
11.30am, 5.30pm & 7.30pm
Tel: Gillian 07796 040 803

FORT WILLIAM

Starts Thursday 24th January
Salvation Army Hall
16 Belford Road,
Fort William
Tel: Gillian 07796 040 803

LOCHGILPHEAD

Lochgilphead
Baptist Church
Union Street/ Argyll Street
Mondays 5.30pm & 7.30pm
Tel: Rhona 07880 878 906

CAMPBELTOWN

Masonic Recreational
Lodge, St John Street
Tuesdays 1pm,
5.30pm & 7.30pm
Tel: Rhona 07880 878 906





The Gift Of Giving

This new year support your local charities in helping them to help others . . .

Befrienders

Because children's lives are never just black and white



Do you have a few hours to spare to support a vulnerable local child or young person?

We offer 1:1 befriending to vulnerable children and young people across Argyll and Bute and we are currently looking to recruit volunteers across the area.

Befriending is about offering a supportive, consistent friendship to a young person in your own area.

Please contact Cathi Bertin

01546 603144

www.befriendersforchildren.co.uk
PO BOX 9576, Lochgilphead, PA31 9BB
cathibertin@btconnect.com



The Dove Centre in Oban provides advice and therapies to people with life limiting illnesses such as cancer. It is a drop-in centre similar to Maggie's Centres. Group sessions, one to one support and home visits are available.

Oban Hospice have also refurbished two rooms for patients with terminal illnesses as well as a relatives room in Lorn & Islands Hospital.

The Dove Centre

24 Stevenson Street, Oban, PA34 5NA
Tel: 01631 561315

www.obanhospice.org.uk
enquiries@obanhospice.org.uk
Facebook/Twitter @ObanHospice

Enhancing the quality of life

Charity No : SC198133



Charity No : SC0 23995



Couple Counselling Argyll

"It helps to talk"

We offer face-to-face appointments in Oban & Lochgilphead, and also provide counselling by telephone or Skype.

www.argyllcouplecounselling.org

0300 111 0031



Support and friendship for families



Supporting families in Oban and Lorn

HOME-START believes that children need a happy and secure childhood and that parents play the key role in giving their children a good start in life and helping them to achieve their full potential. We deliver one-to-one support, friendship and practical help to young families.

Home-Start Lorn 15 Lochside Street, Oban PA34 4HP

Tel: 01631 566749 Email: admin@homestartlorn.org.uk
Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/homestartlorn
www.homestartlorn.org.uk

Charity No : SC000783



Oban Youth Café employs qualified and trainee youth workers to provide regular youth clubs, including a club for young people with additional support needs. They also provide holiday activities, camping trips, day trips, small group work and one to one mentoring. Check website for weekly activities. Charity No : SC032354

OBAN YOUTH CAFÉ

4 Albany Terrace George St Oban
Argyll PA34 5NY Scotland

Tel 01631 567399

Lochaber Geopark: Born of fire, shaped by ice and steeped in history



Ben Nevis



Each year we need to raise 40,000 pounds in order to continue our work.

We are a charity devoted to education, spreading the word about the formation of Lochaber's unique landscapes and providing science outreach.

You can visit us in Fort William High Street and Roy Bridge.

You can support the Geopark by becoming a "Friend Of Lochaber Geopark", a volunteer or giving a donation. Find out more online at <http://lochabergeopark.org.uk>

Lochaber Geopark Association is a Scottish charity (SC038372)



Care Lochaber run your local community car scheme. If you are older, disabled, suffering from ill health or injury and unable access public transport, then we can help you get to where you need to go.

For a small fee, our volunteer drivers will collect you at your door, take you to your destination and then take you home again. Using the scheme to attend health appointments, go shopping, visit relatives or go to clubs and social events allows you to take control of your life and stay independently at home.

The community car scheme is available across Lochaber.

Please call us on 01397 701222 to register and book your journeys.

www.carelochaber.org

SCIO 019863

LEISURE & ENTERTAINMENT

YOUR GUIDE TO WHAT'S ON IN ARGYLL AND LOCHABER

Mànran gig gives folks final boost of festive energy

The Corran Halls, built in the 1960s and of its time, over the years has attracted all the major artists, writes Campbell Cameron.

Many came as a warm-up for the bigger tour events to follow. But they all had the place bouncing on the night.

The arrival of January 2 means the New Year celebrations have peaked and festive energy may be sagging but the other night I was fortunate to have a ticket to attend the



Mànran had the Corran Halls jumping on January 2.

Mànran gig which raised the spirits once more. The band made the Corran Halls their

tour finale and made my celebrations perfectly complete. I can report that they are on

top form, with a great solid wall of sound and a couple of front men in the form of Gary Innes and Ewen Henderson who create the chemistry with the audience and infuse the energy.

Eight and a half years into the journey, they are ready for a new album, so they told us. Presently they are road-testing some new tunes.

The big village hall atmosphere of the Corran Halls makes it the ideal place to

see reaction to new songs and tunes. Thus Thugainn, Port na Calliche and Ghost made their debuts on the Oban scene.

Four tracks in, Oran na Cloiche – the big band favourite – brought the audience to peak of appreciation and the dancing cobwebs disappeared as the catchy singalong had everyone joining in. And so it was for the remainder of their half, it was full participation and dancing, warmed up by

the amazing Trail West who played the first half – the Corran Halls are now officially live for 2019 and the Celtic Rock Scene is all the better for having Mànran growing.

It is the country music fans who get the treatment this weekend with Friday night's Legends of American Country concert to look forward to. All the hits and all the favourites will have you singing along – I look forward to it.

Happy New Year!

Courses starting this January

- Certificate in Maritime Skills *Mallaig*
- Certificate in Further Education *Fort William*
- Professional Cookery *Portree*
- NPA Practical Science *all centres*
- A range of HNCs and Degrees *all centres*

**Make us your #PlanA
#ChooseCollege**

Explore your options:
www.whc.uhi.ac.uk
01397 874000

 University of the Highlands and Islands
West Highland College

 Oilthigh na Gàidhealtachd agus nan Eilean
Colaiste na Gàidhealtachd an Iar

West Highland College UHI is a company limited by guarantee (SC153921) with charitable status (SC024193).

Ceòlas' dance officer set to keep islanders on their toes

A new dance development officer will soon be running dance activities in Uist.

Lowenna Hosken, who started in post at the beginning of November, will be based part-time in Ceòlas' office in Dalabrog, South Uist.

Originally from Cornwall, Lowenna grew up dancing the traditional Cornish social and step dances. She was dancer and choreographer with several Cornish groups such as Keskowethyans, Kekezza and Hevva across Europe, America and the Caribbean.

She also trained in ballet, tap, jazz, modern and Spanish, among others, at the Bev-Lyn School of Dance in Cornwall and as a professional musical theatre performer at the Centre for Performing Arts College in Kent.

Most recently, Lowenna gained undergraduate and postgraduate degrees in Scottish Ethnology from the University of Edinburgh,



Lowenna Hosken.

where she was based at the School of Scottish Studies.

As Ceòlas' new dance development officer, she will work to augment existing dance activity in schools, community groups and care homes across Uist. Please contact the Ceòlas office if you would like to arrange a meeting with Lowenna.

The position is funded through a grant by the Robertson Trust and NHS Eileanan Siar, and will build on the achievements of previous officer Sorcha Monk.

MG ALBA kickstarts new year with new chairman at helm

The new chairman of MG ALBA, Allan MacDonald, has started his role with the body responsible for Gaelic programming in Scotland.

Appointed for a four-year term from January 1 by Ofcom, Mr MacDonald succeeds Maggie Cunningham, who served as chairman of MG ALBA from July 2012.

A native Gaelic speaker, Mr MacDonald has played a major part in Gaelic radio and television production and broadcasting spanning 40 years.

His career includes 12 years with the BBC, during which time he was instrumental in establishing a radio station in Stornoway, two years as head of Gaelic with Grampian TV and 25 years in the independent television sec-



Allan MacDonald started his new post on January 1.

tor as chief executive of sport and entertainment company mneTV, and a director of digital and television producer, purpleTV.

Mr MacDonald has experience in news and current

affairs in radio, television and the press, as well as being an executive producer and director of a wide variety of general programmes, including religion, comedy, music and award-winning documentaries, most recently RTS award winners about Jock Stein and Jim Baxter.

He was most recently the chairman of Bòrd na Gàidhlig (the principal public body in Scotland responsible for promoting Gaelic development), and is a former member of the board of Lewis Castle College of Education in Stornoway and of the Board of Skillset in Scotland.

For six years he was elected chairman of the independent television sector in Scotland (PACT) and served as a

director of PACT (UK) in London.

Mr MacDonald said: 'I am very proud to be joining MG ALBA as the organisation's new chair.'

'Our shared aim is to build on the success delivered by BBC ALBA over the past 10 years and I look forward to working closely with my fellow board members and staff, our creative partners who make our content, and with the BBC, who are our broadcast partners in BBC ALBA.'

'I also look forward to engaging closely with the community and other partners and to developing our relationship with government, which funds MG ALBA to enable it to fulfil its mission.'

competitions

WIN

A COOKING EXPERIENCE WITH NICK NAIRN



Scottish Field have teamed up with the Nick Nairn Cook School to offer two lucky readers the chance to win a 'Just You & Nick' one day cooking experience at the school at Port of Menteith. Winners will receive a telephone consultation with Nick to help design a bespoke menu. They will have the school and Nick to themselves for the entire day. Nick will teach them how to cook their menu and join them to eat and drink.

FOR YOUR CHANCE TO WIN, just answer the following question: **Where is the Nick Nairn Cook School?**

Prize must be taken in 2019. Transport is not included. Any additional costs are not covered by the prize.

To enter, send separate entries (in the same envelope) with your name, address, telephone number and email address to **Scottish Field Competitions, Fettes Park, 496 Ferry Road, Edinburgh EH5 2DL** or enter at www.scottishfield.co.uk. Closing date, unless otherwise stated, is 31 January 2019.

Winners drawn from all competitions also enter a prize to win a bottle of Berry Bros. & Rudd Islay Reserve Whisky.

Entrants must be 18 or over. Employees of Scottish Field, the competition promoters, and their direct families are ineligible to enter. No purchase necessary. The winner will be first correct entry drawn after closing date. No cash alternative is available. The winner will be informed by telephone. Usual Scottish Field rules apply. We will protect your personal data. We only gather what we need for the requirements of this competition - your name, address, telephone number and email address. If you wish to receive news and offers from the third party running the competition, then please mark the words 'OPT IN' on your postcard entry. If you enter various competitions on one card you will be opting in for every competition running. Unless you opt in to receive further marketing information we will only contact you if you win a prize in the competition. Scottish Field (Wyvex Media) will retain your information for a maximum of 3 months after the competition closes and then it will be deleted. If you have opted in to receive third party information, the data you have supplied will be passed to the third party company running the competition. This may be used for the purposes of the third party contacting you regarding new products and services for a period of 3 months, unless you agree to an extension with the third party company at a later date.

WIN

AN EPICUREAN INDULGENCE AT THE PEAT INN FOR TWO PEOPLE (WORTH £355)



Relax in one of eight luxury suites before heading to the restaurant for a beautifully crafted six course tasting menu. Let us serve you breakfast the next morning before you enjoy a day in the Kingdom. The Peat Inn, by St Andrews, is a 5-star restaurant with rooms and Michelin Star Chef Proprietor, Geoffrey Smeddle, uses the finest Scottish ingredients to create delicious and contemporary cuisine.

FOR YOUR CHANCE TO WIN, just answer the following question: **How many suites does The Peat Inn have?**

Valid Tues - Thurs, subject to availability, based on 2 people sharing a room. Drinks not included. Must be taken by 31 May 2019.

WIN AN OVERNIGHT STAY IN A ONE BEDROOM APARTMENT AND A THREE COURSE MEAL IN KYLOE FOR TWO, WORTH £450



Win a luxurious stay in The Rutland Hotel's 5-star apartments with dinner for two in the award-winning Kylee Restaurant & Grill. Located in the heart of Edinburgh, just a step from Princes Street, The Rutland Hotel oozes luxury and style making it the perfect stayover in Scotland's capital. Also included is a three course meal from Kylee, offering some of the world's most ethical beef from Hardiesmill Farm in the Scottish Borders and delicious in-house dry aged steaks.



FOR YOUR CHANCE TO WIN, just answer the following question: **Where do Kylee source their ethical beef from?**

Must be booked in advance. Subject to availability. Prize cannot be part redeemed and must be used during one stay. Prize includes a 1 night stay in a luxury 5 star, self-catering apartment and a 3 course meal in Kylee for 2 people. Drinks are not included.

To enter, send separate entries (in the same envelope) with your name, address, telephone number and email address to **Scottish Field Competitions, Fettes Park, 496 Ferry Road, Edinburgh EH5 2DL** or enter at www.scottishfield.co.uk. Closing date, unless otherwise stated, is 28 February 2019. **Winners drawn from all competitions also enter a prize to win a bottle of Berry Bros. & Rudd Islay Reserve Whisky.**

Entrants must be 18 or over. Employees of Scottish Field, the competition promoters, and their direct families are ineligible to enter. No purchase necessary. The winner will be first correct entry drawn after closing date. No cash alternative is available. The winner will be informed by telephone. Usual Scottish Field rules apply. We will protect your personal data. We only gather what we need for the requirements of this competition - your name, address, telephone number and email address. If you wish to receive news and offers from the third party running the competition, then please mark the words 'OPT IN' on your postcard entry. If you enter various competitions on one card you will be opting in for every competition running. Unless you opt in to receive further marketing information we will only contact you if you win a prize in the competition. Scottish Field (Wyvex Media) will retain your information for a maximum of 3 months after the competition closes and then it will be deleted. If you have opted in to receive third party information, the data you have supplied will be passed to the third party company running the competition. This may be used for the purposes of the third party contacting you regarding new products and services for a period of 3 months, unless you agree to an extension with the third party company at a later date.

Glasgow Letter

ROBERT ROBERTSON

robert.d.robertson@hotmail.co.uk



Well, the festivities are over (the Christmas decorations came down on Sunday) and everyone is back to 'auld claes and porridge' this week, as they say. Except, of course, for Glasgow, which will still be partying all through January and February with a whole host of exciting events.

Celtic Connections

Glasgow's premier folk festival returns very soon with a cracking line-up of gigs this year.

I previously wrote a brief preview of the opening evening and, over the coming weeks, I would like to preview a couple of different concerts which I think will be of interest to Oban Times readers.

This week my focus is on a concert called Tìree: A Toast to Ten Years of Tìree Music Festival, which will take place on Friday January 18 at 9.30pm in the Old Fruitmarket.

I think I have managed to make it to seven out of the nine Tìree Festivals over the past 10 years, so I cer-



tainly won't be missing this celebration of the festival's anniversary.

From the first festival in July 2010, attended by a 600-strong crowd, the event has since flourished to become one of the most anticipated events in the Highland

(or even the Scottish) music calendar – nowadays routinely selling out its current capacity of 2,000.

There are a number of surprises being kept for the line-up of this gig but rest assured there will be a whole host of acts who have performed at

the festival over the years joining Skerryvore onstage for a party.

MIA announce gathering line-up

The Mull and Iona

Tìree Festival will be celebrating its 10th anniversary this year, starting with a concert at Celtic Connections.

Association got 2019 off to a great start by announcing the line-up for their annual gathering concert and dance which will take place on Saturday February 16 in the Glasgow University Union.

This year, the event has moved to a Saturday to help make it easier for folk from Mull and Iona to travel down to the event.

The concert is full of great acts: Arthur Cormack, Mary Catherine MacLean, Janet Campbell, Niall Kirkpatrick, and Fiona Ross – as well as the Mull and Iona pipers who are assembled especially for the occasion.

This year, Beinn Lee will play for the dance. Having released their wonderful debut album last year, which

I reviewed in this letter, Beinn Lee have already made a huge name for themselves on the West Coast. They have performed at festivals up and down the country and 2019 is set to be an even bigger year for them.

Doors for the concert open at 7pm and the dance begins at 10.30pm. Tickets for the concert cost £8, tickets for the dance are £10, and a concert and dance deal ticket is available for £12.

More details on the event are available on the event Facebook page and tickets can be obtained from the Park Bar or by emailing themullandiona@gmail.com

First Clydebank cèilidh of the year

Clydebank and District Highland Association are having a cèilidh in the Napier Hall, Old Kilpatrick, tomorrow (Friday January 11) at 7.30pm. Admission at the door is £8 and this includes tea or coffee and some homebaking.



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MY ALBA

DIARDAOIN 10 AM FAOILLEACH THURSDAY 10 JANUARY

17.00 Prògraman Chloinne – Children's programming
19.00 O Mo Dhùthaich (rpt)
19.30 Speaking our Language (rpt)
19.55 Earrann Eachdraidh (rpt)
20.00 An Là - News
20.30 Bus Ghlaschu (rpt)
21.00 Talamh gu Truinnsair (rpt)
22.00 Nochd (rpt)
22.30 **UR | NEW:** Slighean Sgoile an t-Saoghail
23.20 **UR | NEW:** Belladrum Highlights
23.25 Dhan Uisge (Loch Comond) (rpt)
23.30 Mach a Seo (rpt)

DIHAOINE 11 AM FAOILLEACH FRIDAY 11 JANUARY

17.00 Prògraman Chloinne – Children's programming
18.35 Machair (rpt)
19.00 An Là - News
19.25 Fraochy Bay (rpt)
19.30 Fianais (rpt)
20.00 Ceòlraidh (rpt)
20.30 Puirt-adhair (rpt)
21.00 Tannadice '87 (rpt)
22.00 An Klondike (rpt)
22.50 Dhan Uisge (Loch Coruisk) (rpt)
23.00 Doolin (rpt)

DISATHAIRNE 12 AM FAOILLEACH SATURDAY 12 JANUARY

16.00 Prògraman Chloinne – Children's programming
17.45 An Là - News
18.00 Am B.F.G (rpt)
19.30 Fianais (rpt)
20.00 Machair (rpt)
20.25 Fraochy Bay (rpt)
20.30 Vets: Gach Creutair Beò (rpt)
21.00 **UR | NEW:** Doolin

21.50 Piobairean Bhòrnais (rpt)
22.00 Slighean Sgoile an t-Saoghail (rpt)
22.50 Binneas - Na Trads (rpt)
23.00 Tannadice '87 (rpt)
24.00 **UR | NEW:** Belladrum Highlights 2018
24.50 Dhan Uisge (Loch Coruisk) (rpt)

DIDÒMHNAICH 13 AM FAOILLEACH SUNDAY 13 JANUARY

16.00 Prògraman Chloinne – Children's programming
18.15 An Là - News
18.30 Seachd Là - News Review
19.30 Alleluia (rpt)
20.00 Bus Ghlaschu (rpt)
20.30 Leugh Mi (rpt)
21.00 Scotstar: Teasairginn Eiginneach (rpt)
21.45 Sgeul Slàinte (rpt)
22.00 Doolin (rpt)
22.50 Dhan Uisge (Loch Coruisk) (rpt)
23.00 An Klondike (rpt)
23.55 **UR | NEW:** Belladrum Highlights 2018 (rpt)

DILUAIN 14 AM FAOILLEACH MONDAY 14 JANUARY

17.00 Prògraman Chloinne – Children's programming
19.00 Eileanan Fraoich - Colonsay (rpt)
19.30 Earrann Eachdraidh (rpt)
20.00 An Là - News
20.30 Puirt-adhair (rpt)
21.00 Trusadh - Clann-nighean nan Taighean-òsta (rpt)
22.00 **UR | NEW:** TradFest
22.30 Farpaisean Chon-Chaorach (rpt)
23.30 Nochd (rpt)

DIMÀIRT 15 AM FAOILLEACH TUESDAY 15 JANUARY

17.00 Prògraman Chloinne – Children's programming

19.00 O Mo Dhùthaich (rpt)
19.30 Speaking our Language (rpt)
19.55 Earrann Eachdraidh (rpt)
20.00 An Là - News
20.30 Vets: Gach Creutair Beò (rpt)
21.00 Scotstar: Teasairginn Eiginneach (rpt)
21.45 Sgeul Slàinte (rpt)
22.00 Trusadh - Clann-nighean nan Taighean-òsta (rpt)
23.00 Ceòlraidh (rpt)
23.30 Alleluia (rpt)

DICIADAIN 16 AM FAOILLEACH WEDNESDAY 16 JANUARY

17.00 Prògraman Chloinne – Children's programming
19.00 Eileanan Fraoich - Colonsay (rpt)
19.30 Speaking our Language (rpt)
19.55 Earrann Eachdraidh (rpt)
20.00 An Là - News
20.30 **UR | NEW:** Leugh Mi
21.00 **UR | NEW:** Farpaisean Chon-Chaorach
22.00 **UR | NEW:** Mach a Seo
22.30 TradFest (rpt)
23.00 Talamh gu Truinnsair (rpt)

DIARDAOIN 17 AM FAOILLEACH THURSDAY 17 JANUARY

17.00 Prògraman Chloinne – Children's programming
19.00 O Mo Dhùthaich (rpt)
19.30 Speaking our Language (rpt)
19.55 Earrann Eachdraidh (rpt)
20.00 An Là - News
20.30 Bus Ghlaschu (rpt)
21.00 Air a' Chanal (rpt)
21.55 Na Trads - Shooglenifty (rpt)
22.30 **UR | NEW:** Slighean Sgoile an t-Saoghail
23.15 **UR | NEW:** Belladrum Highlights 2018
23.20 Dhan Uisge (Loch Coruisk) (rpt)
23.30 Mach a Seo (rpt)



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Dogstar Theatre ann

Dogstar continues to carry the tradition of Scottish touring theatre in 2019, travelling to remote village halls and town theatres with two outstanding works from the Highlands, reflecting the company's determination to celebrate the universal in the particular, the international in the local with art which connects us all.

The two new productions follow 2018's Scottish-Swedish success, Morna Pearson's Let's Inherit The Earth, which has been invited to the prestigious 2019 Almedalen Festival of Politics in Sweden this July, and the second revival of the company's 2016 Scottish-Danish success, Mungo Park - Travels in the Interior of Africa, which played at the 2018 Leeuwarden European Capital of Culture in the Netherlands in September.

The Tailor of Inverness
Marking the 80th anniversary of the outbreak of the Second World War and the 100th anniversary of the birth of Mateusz Zajac, The Tailor of Inverness, the universally acclaimed international hit play, will tour Scotland for the sixth time during April and May. This great cry for refugees, for Europe and for those affected by war everywhere, will



Matthew Zajac in The Tailor of Inverness.

open its tour just days after Britain's expected exit from the European Union.

The Tailor of Inverness is one of the most widely travelled and highly praised Scottish theatre productions of the past decade. It premiered at Edinburgh's

Assembly Rooms in 2008 and was an instant success. Since then it has been performed worldwide from Australia to New York. Awards for the production include The Stage Award for Best Solo Performer 2008, Scotsman Fringe First, Holden Street

Assembly Rooms in 2008 and was an instant success. Since then it has been performed worldwide from Australia to New York. Awards for the production include The Stage Award for Best Solo Performer 2008, Scotsman Fringe First, Holden Street

Ghillie the bear kicks off 125th Cowal Highland Gathering celebrations with world trip

Cowal Highland Gathering (CHG) organisers kicked off their 125th anniversary celebrations in style as Ghillie the CHG bear left Dunoon onboard Western Ferries with multiple World Highland dancing champion Morgan Bamford on a world trip which will cover three continents and take eight months to complete.

Named Ghillie by the gathering's social media followers, in recognition of a Ghillie as a male attendant for a Scottish Highland chief as well as the shoes Highland dancers wear in competition, he will start his adventure with Morgan in New Zealand before heading to Australia for a couple of months.

While there, Ghillie will visit seven Highland danc-

ing schools, along with the ACT Regional Committee of Highland Dance. From Australia, he heads to the US where he'll visit all four corners of the country, as well as being taken for sushi by the organisers of California's Vista Highland Games. Then it will be on to Canada where, among other adventures, he will be in the half-time show of a Harlem Globetrotters game, before heading over to Europe. He will have a brief stop in Scotland, where he'll attend the 50th Thurso Festival and be guest of honour during the week of Beltane, before heading back across the Atlantic to visit the Canadian Highland Dancing Championships. Then he'll dash back to Scotland, arriving home in Dunoon in time

for the 125th Cowal Highland Gathering.

CHG chairman Ronnie Cairns was there to wave off Ghillie and Morgan. He said: 'Cowal Highland Gathering has touched the lives of hundreds of thousands of people across its 125-year history.

'From competitors to spectators, we wanted to involve as many people in our anniversary celebrations as possible. The idea to send a bear around the world started as a post on social media. We thought we would perhaps get a few people interested but we were inundated with offers from the four corners of the world. We're absolutely delighted to have this opportunity to send our good wishes to so many people through our very special envoy.

What's on at *The Nevis Centre*

Spectrum soft play area
Suitable for children of 12 and under. Baby area 0-2 years, toddler area 2-5 years and older children can be let loose in all the other areas.

Superbowl
open everyday from
12 noon until 10pm

The Nevis Centre
Tel: 01397 700707 www.neviscentre.co.uk

An Aird, Fort William

announces spring tour

Theatres Award and Critics' Awards for Theatre in Scotland Best Actor 2009 (Matthew Zajac).

Wherever it has been seen the play has evoked extraordinarily enthusiastic reactions, touring Scotland five times, Ukraine, Sweden and Ireland twice, Denmark, Wales, Poland, Germany, Australia and the USA, including selling out for three weeks at Manhattan's 59E59 Theatre's Brits Off Broadway Festival.

Inspired by the life of Matthew Zajac's father, it is the story of a boy who grew up on a farm in Galicia (Eastern Poland, now Western Ukraine) and became a tailor in Inverness, of how a life and an identity can be reconstructed. The tailor's life spanned most of the 20th century and the journey he took was made by thousands of Poles during the Second World War. His was a forced migration across many borders, subject to the brutal vagaries of war.

The book of *The Tailor of Inverness* by Matthew Zajac is printed by Sandstone Press and Circling A Fox - the Story of The Tailor of Inverness, Brian Ross's documentary produced by Hopscotch Films, is completed and awaits release.

The Stornoway Way

Kevin MacNeil's 2005 debut novel was hailed by *The Scotsman* as 'the best Scottish book since *Trainspotting* ... full of wisdom, jokes, poetic language and mind-burning imagery', and a *Herald* book of the year 'whose honest bleakness is outdone by its sheer good humour and energy' (Ali Smith). *The Independent* described it as 'a novel of consistently hilarious verbal invention'.

MacNeil is currently writing his stage version, which he sees as a development from the novel, and a more mature and inclusive take on his earlier work.

The Stornoway Way is a romantic tragicomedy about alcoholic young drifters on the Isle of Lewis. These are characters who are outcast from, yet inescapably part of their Hebridean culture, whether they are physically there or not, on the margins of the margin. They leave and return, struggling with their identity and their alienation from both society and each other, searching for love as a path to salvation.

Written in English with some Gaelic, the production will have a cast of three young actors, directed by Matthew Zajac. Live and

recorded music and sound, composed and designed by Pippa Murphy, will play an important role. At times, the actors will include the audience in the storytelling, inviting us to be part of this poetic, provocative and funny ceilidh play.

Kevin MacNeil was born and raised on the Isle of Lewis. As poet, novelist, aphorist, lyricist, screenwriter and playwright, his books include *The Brilliant & Forever* (Birlinn), *A Method Actor's Guide to Jekyll and Hyde* (Polygon), *The Stornoway Way* (Penguin), *Love and Zen in the Outer Hebrides* (Canongate), *Be Wise Be Otherwise* (Canongate).

His short stories have been published extensively. His first book won the Tivoli Europa Giovani International Poetry Prize for best poetry collection published in Europe by a writer under 35.

MacNeil was the inaugural Iain Crichton Smith Bilingual Writing Fellow and has held further prestigious writing residencies in Sweden (Uppsala University), Bavaria (Villa Concordia) and a number of other places. He currently teaches Creative Writing at Stirling University.



Morgan Bamford and Ghillie set off on their adventures.

'Some of the adventures Ghillie is about to embark on are nothing short of astounding. I'm just sorry I didn't suggest accompanying him on his journey!'

As she waved goodbye, Morgan Bamford said: 'I've got many wonderful mem-

ories of Cowal Highland Gathering, so I was thrilled to be asked to accompany Ghillie on the first leg of his journey.'

'Ghillie is on an incredible adventure and I hope each of his visits inspires a new generation of Highland danc-

ers, pipers, drummers and athletes.'

For more information about Ghillie's journey, follow Cowal Highland Gathering on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. The 2019 Cowal Highland Gathering runs from August 29-31.

WHAT'S ON

In partnership with Oban Town Diary bid4oban.co.uk



THURSDAY 10TH JANUARY

Oban Health Walk

Oban Congregational Church Hall
10am - 11.30am

Live Music & Entertainment @ Markie Dans

FREE JUKEBOX EVERY THURSDAY

FRIDAY 11TH JANUARY

Oban Dance Academy - Cheerleading

Glencruitten Church Hall
All Day

The Annual Quiz Night in aid of Oban Pipe Band

Masonic Lodge, Albany Street, Oban
7.30pm

Live Music & Entertainment @ Markie Dans

The Fold
Open till 2am

Live Music & Entertainment @

The Lorne Bar Oban

From 9pm, Free Entry

SATURDAY 12TH JANUARY

Oban Dance Academy - Cheerleading

Glencruitten Church Hall, All Day
parkrun

Comunn Gàidhealach an Óbain - Old New Year Céilidh

Masonic Hall, Albany Street, Oban
7.30pm

Live Music & Entertainment @ Markie Dans

Sandra MacBeth & Lorna Thomas
Open till 2am

Live Music & Entertainment @

The Lorne Bar Oban

From 9pm, Free Entry

SUNDAY 13TH JANUARY

Oban Music Society Concert

St John's Cathedral, Oban
3.00pm

Live Music & Entertainment @ Markie Dans

QUIZ NIGHT at 9.30pm

£1 per person, max of 6 per team
Win £20 bar voucher

MONDAY 14TH JANUARY

Slimming World

Union Street/Argyll Street,
Lochgilthead
5.30pm & 7.30pm

Tel: Rhona 07880 878906

WEDNESDAY 16TH JANUARY

Slimming World

Glencruitten Church Hall, Oban
9.30am, 11.30am, 5.30pm & 7.30pm
Tel: Gillian 07796 040803

Events may charge. Please visit www.obanwhatson.co.uk
for more details. To list your event, please call 01631 568000

WHAT'S ON AT YOUR LOCAL CINEMA THIS WEEK

Tel: 01631 562905 or see

www.obanphoenix.com for more details

FRIDAY 11

15:00/20:45 FREE SOLO 12A
17:30 MARY POPPINS RETURNS U
18:15 BUMBLEBEE 12A
20:15 AQUAMAN 12A

SATURDAY 12

11:30 THE GRINCH U
11:45/16:15 MARY POPPINS RETURNS U
14:30 AQUAMAN 12A
17:30 BEST OF SHAFF!
19:00 TULIP FEVER 15
19:30 FREE SOLO 12A

SUNDAY 13

11:45 BUMBLEBEE 12A
14:15/16:45 MARY POPPINS RETURNS U
14:30 TULIP FEVER 15
17:00 AQUAMAN 12A
19:30 TIME TRIAL 18
20:00 FREE SOLO 12A

MONDAY 14

14:00 AQUAMAN 12A
17:00 MARY POPPINS RETURNS U
17:15 BUMBLEBEE 12A
19:45 THE DAWN WALL 15
20:00 FREE SOLO 12A

TUESDAY 15

14:00/19:15 FREE SOLO 12A
16:15 AQUAMAN 12A
16:15 MARY POPPINS RETURNS U
19:00 NT LIVE: THE TRAGEDY OF KING RICHARD THE SECOND 12A

WEDNESDAY 16

14:00 AQUAMAN 12A
17:00 MARY POPPINS RETURNS U
17:30 BUMBLEBEE 12A
20:00 FREE SOLO 12A
20:00 THE ATHLETE PG

THURSDAY 17

14:30 BUMBLEBEE 12A
17:00 AQUAMAN 12A
17:00 MARY POPPINS RETURNS U
20:00 FREE SOLO 12A
20:00 THE YUKON ASSIGNMENT PG

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Scott Dickinson.

Society starts new year on right note

Oban Music Society's first concert of 2019 will be the Echo Chamber Ensemble with Ruth Morley on the flute, Scott Dickinson on the viola and harpist Sharron Griffiths at St John's Cathedral on Sunday January 13.

The programme, which starts at 3pm, will include works by Bach, Bax, Britten, Thomas, Ibert, Takemitsu and Debussy.

Tickets are available at the door and cost £10 or £5 for Oban Music Society members.

Guest duo step into breach at music night

It was an almost full house in November at the Inveraray Inn. Unfortunately, chairman Niall Iain MacLean was unwell that day, so committee member Roddy MacDiarmid kindly stepped in as compere.

Supporting players were – Fyne Folk, with Jake MacKay on 'moothie', Sally Hall and Alex John MacLeod on fiddles and Agnes Liddell on keyboard, and they were joined by Ishbel Fraser on 'moothie' for a third set. Also playing were Janet Graham on accordion, Alex MacKinnon on button box, the Dalriada Ceilidh Band, Jake and Agnes on 'moothie' and keyboard, and Jimmy MacDonald on keyboard. They all played nice, varied selections and were much enjoyed.

The guest artistes were to have been the Donald MacLeod Trio but unfor-



tunately Donald suffered a back injury the day before so was unable to lift the accordion, never mind play!

As Ian Anderson was

to play keyboard, he very kindly stepped into the front row on accordion and, accompanied by Gus Millar on drums, gave an absol-

utely superb programme with many of the great favourite pipe marches, Gaelic waltzes, jigs, reels, Irish medleys etc, which had

Gus Millar and Ian Anderson had the near capacity audience shouting for an encore at the end of their set.

the audience shouting for an encore at the end.

Roddy thanked all the artistes, and in particular Ian and Gus, for a great night and wished everyone the compliments of the season.

To see in the New Year, the club welcomed Craig McFadyen, son of well-known bandleader Hector, and his trio.

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Astronomer Royal
John Brown.

Hebridean Dark Skies Festival's free events

Dark Skies Exploration Day, at An Lanntair on Saturday February 9, will feature six hours of free talks, workshops and more.

From 11am to 5pm, An Lanntair will become a laboratory of cosmic activity for all ages, with workshops and talks led by Stornoway Astronomical Society, Lews Castle College UHI, arts and science project Creativity and Curiosity, Astronomer Royal for Scotland John Brown, and An Lanntair's education team. All events are free but advance booking is recommended.

Festival co-ordinator Andrew Eaton-Lewis said: 'We're very keen that everyone gets a chance to experience this exciting new festival, so on our opening Saturday An Lanntair will be filled with free events for all ages - from science talks for teenagers and adults to arts and crafts activities for smaller children, and a special Ask the Astronomer session with Astronomer Royal for Scotland John Brown, where you can ask John any question you want about the universe.'

The full programme for the day is as follows. Free tickets can be booked online via www.lanntair.com/darkskies or by phone on 01851 708480

11am-5pm (foyer and forecourt): arts and crafts drop-in, Stornoway Astronomical Society information stall with advice on telescopes and binoculars, and (weather permitting) solar scope demonstrations on the forecourt.

11.30am: An Introduction to the Planets and Moons of the Solar System (auditorium, 1hr approx, suitable for ages nine and above).

An insight into our nearest

cosmological neighbours, with Donny Mackay of Stornoway Astronomical Society.

Noon: workshop - make a solar system mobile (education room, 1hr approx, suitable for families, children of all ages, with activities aimed at ages five and over. Families welcome).

1pm: A Hebridean history of space travel (auditorium, 45 mins approx, suitable for teenagers and adults).

Ahead of the festival's special screening of The Rocket Post, Christopher Macleod of Lews Castle College UHI explores some of the fascinating Hebridean connections to the development of rocket technology and space travel.

1pm: workshop - build a plastic bottle rocket (education room, 1hr approx, suitable for families, children of all ages, with activities aimed at ages five and over. Families welcome).

2pm: Creativity and Curiosity: A Collaboration Between Artists And Astronomers (auditorium, 2hrs, suitable for teenagers and adults).

What happens when artists collaborate with astronomers, cosmologists and planetary geologists? For the past two years, artists Gillian McFarland, Ione Parkin and Alison Lochhead have been exploring the rich imagery of space, engaging in creative dialogue with space researchers and artists, gaining new insights into the dynamic forces of the universe. Launched at Cambridge Science Festival in March 2017, Creativity and Curiosity now makes its first visit to Lewis with Dr Amuary Triaud, discoverer of more than 100 exoplanets.

2pm: workshop - make your own kaleidoscope telescope (education room, 1hr approx, suitable for families, children of all ages, with activities aimed at ages five and over. Families welcome).

3pm: workshop - paint your own galaxy (education room, 1hr approx, suitable for families, children of all ages, with activities aimed at ages five and over. Families welcome).

4pm: Ask the Astronomer, with John Brown (auditorium, 1hr approx, suitable for all ages).

What are your most burning questions about

astronomy, space and the universe? Throughout the day we will be collecting questions and, for our final session, Astronomer Royal for Scotland John Brown will do his best to answer them (as well as any questions you think of during the session itself).

The Hebridean Dark Skies Festival will run from Friday February 8 to Thursday February 21, 2019. For full programme details, and to book tickets, visit www.lanntair.com/darkskies. Tickets can also be booked via the An Lanntair box office on 01851 708480.

COMMUNITY NOTICEBOARD

If you would like to advertise in the Oban Times Community Noticeboard please call 01631 568000

OBAN MUSIC SOCIETY CONCERT

SUNDAY 13TH JANUARY AT 3.00PM
IN ST JOHN'S CATHEDRAL, OBAN

The Echo Chamber Ensemble (Harp, Flute, Viola)
with be playing music by Bach, Britten, Ibert,
Thomas and Debussy.

Tickets £10 for non members (no charge for students.)
All music lovers welcome

Comunn Gàidhealach an Óbain Old New Year Céilidh

Saturday 12th January 2019
Masonic Hall, Albany Street, Oban
7.30pm
Admission: £6

Featuring: CÓISIR GHÁIDHLIG AN ÓBAIN and solo performances from choir members

Bean an Taighe: Sileas Sinclair
Raffle and light supper
SC001282

An Comunn Gàidhealach - Meur Chruachain

TAYNUILT WINTER CEILIDH

Laura Robertson
Sileas Sinclair & Donald MacLean
Kieran MacInnes (2018 Mod Trad
Gold Medallist)

Plus Full Supporting Programme
Taynuilt Village Hall
Saturday 19th January
7.30pm
Supper and Raffle
Adults - £4 - Children £2

The Annual Quiz Night in aid of Oban Pipe Band

will be held on Friday 11th January 2019 at 7.30pm in the
Masonic Lodge, Albany Street
Admission: £3.00 per person
(teams can vary from 2 to 6 in number)

Your local radio listings Community Radio - your local radio station Tune in to 103.3 or listen live at www.obanfm.com



For requests, competitions or questions please
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MONDAY: 08.00 AM on FM, 08.10 Breakfast Show, 9.00 Monday Morning with Stephen, 11.00 Ian Simmonds on Monday, 17.00 Drivetime, 19.00 Rosie's Highland Fling with Rosie Macoll, 20.00 John McLuckie's Show, 21.00 David Cullen show, 23.00 Station close down

TUESDAY: 08.00 AM on FM, 08.10 Breakfast Show, 10.00 Ken Hunter's Tuesday Morning, 13.00 Macky on FM, 17.00 Drivetime Jim Lynch, 19.00 Highest Praise - Stuart Chalmers, 20.00 Archie Darlings's Mix, 22.00 Clyde 2

WEDNESDAY: 08.00 AM on FM, 08.10 Breakfast Show, 09.00 Sound Scottish Repeat, 10.00 Comfort Zone, Doug Carmichael, 11.00 Comfort Zone, 12.00 Comfort Zone, 17.00 Drivetime with Campbell, 19.00 Country Meets Rock & Roll - Len + Ken, 20.00 Country Meets Rock & Roll, 21.00 Gordon's Grooves with Gordon Macintyre

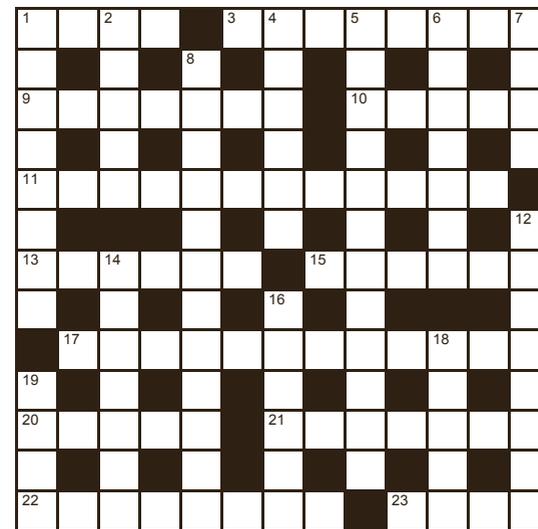
THURSDAY: 08.00 - 11.00 Breakfast with Andy and Sarah, 11.00 Molly's Mix with Molly Black, 13.00 Molly's Mix, 15.00 Drivetime with Stephen, 17.00 Drivetime with Stephen McPhee, 18.00 Drivetime with Stephen

McPhee, 19.00 Christies Collection, 20.00 Christine's CD Collection, 21.00 Ann's Ceilidh, 22.00 Margo Till Midnight, 11.00 Margo Till Midnight

FRIDAY: 08.00 Breakfast Show with Laura, 10.00 Teeny and Tiny, 17.00 Drive Show with Jim Lynch, 17.30 Drive Show, 18.45 Sports View, 19.00 Country Meets Country with Jackie Craig, 20.00 Lewis Bingham, 21.00 Peter Rainnie

SATURDAY: 08.00 Breakfast Show with Stephen
10.00 Sat Morning Live, 11.00 Saturday Morning, 12.00 Saturday Morning Live with Linda Crowsher, 12.03 Sat Morning Live, 12.05 Saturday Morning Live, 13.30 Clyde, 18.00 Sports View - Dream Team, 19.00 Sounds Scottish with Archie Darling, 20.00 Dave Lewis, 22.00 Margo Till Midnight
SUNDAY: 09.00 Sunday Morning With Breege, 10.00 Sunday Morning, 11.00 Sunday Brunch With Archie, 12.00 Sunday Brunch, 16.30 Archie Darling, 18.00 Ken's Friends - Ken Hunter, 19.00 New Country Show - David Entwistle, 21.00 Drum & Bass - Graham Scott, 23.00 Station Close Down

Crossword



Across

- 1 Scrawny (4)
- 3 Eyebrow pluckers (8)
- 9 Inundated (7)
- 10 Teach (5)
- 11 Fall apart (12)
- 13 Walking on air (6)
- 15 Group meeting (6)
- 17 Become too old (12)
- 20 Surface (5)
- 21 Suspended (7)
- 22 Initial dishes (8)
- 23 Decline (4)

Down

- 1 Crimson (5-3)
- 2 Requires (5)
- 4 Having equipment enabling flight (6)
- 5 Amusing (12)
- 6 Adaptable fabric (7)
- 7 Transmit (4)
- 8 One who rules but not as a monarch (6,6)
- 12 Banned insulation (8)
- 14 Corundum (7)
- 16 With tent (6)
- 18 Central stage (5)
- 19 Young woman (4)

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Around the markets

Stirling – Caledonian Marts Ltd had forward 201 store cattle on Monday January 7. Bulls averaged 193ppkg selling to 231p for a Limousin from D and L Graham, Mains of Burnbank, Blairdrummond and to £1160 for a British Blue from Glenside Farms, Stirling. Heifers averaged 185ppkg selling to 206p for a pen of Limousins from W and S McCord, Treetops, Methven and to £1050 for a Charolais from A L and J Blair, East Kerse, Lochwinnoch. Other leading prices Bulls per head:- £1120 (x3) Mains of Burnbank £1110 Glenside and Mains of Burnbank £1100 Mains of Burnbank £1090 Dalquhurn £1070 Inchgall Heifers per head:- £1000, £980 and £930 Wester Braco £920 Humbie (Aberdour) £890 Dalquhurn and Wester Braco £840 Wester Braco £800 Gartclush Bulls per kg:- 220p Drumelzier 217p Mains of Burnbank 211p Treetops 207p Mains of Burnbank 205p Walton (Cardross) Heifers per kg:- 192p Drumelzier 190p and 189p Wester Braco 185p Easterton (Caldercruix) 184p Treetops 183p Dalquhurn Also forward were 675 store hoggets, ewes and tups. All classes of hoggets were keenly bid for, and averaged £60.38 (+£7.52 on the year).

Top price went to H J and I Duncan, Lands of Drumhead at £76 for Texel X Lambs. Other leading lamb prices; Texel X £74 Wester Culbowie Cross £69 Auchenlochan Texel £68 Lawhead of Stobwood Cheviot £68 Victoria Charollais £67.50 Pendreich Mule £60 Standingfauld BF £60 Grant Farm Feeding sheep: Tups: £70 Innergellie Ewes: £40 Bower Park

Stirling – United Auctions on Thursday January 3 sold 4518 prime sheep comprising of 3184 prime lambs selling to an average of 194.72ppk & 1334 ewes and rams. Lambs (3184) – West Park (BTex) £108.00; Gibsley (Tex) £101.00; Ormiston Mains (Suf) £98.00; Harelawsie (Cha) £95.50; Blegbie (Chev) £94.00; Fridayhill (Cross) £91.00; Blegbie (Chev/Mule) £88.00; Easter Buckleyvie (Mule) £85.00; West Bracklin (BF) £80.00. Lambs (3184) – West Park (BTex) 251.00ppk; Easter Ochtermuthill (Tex) 235.00ppk; Pittenkerrie (Suff) 207.00ppk; Drumrack (Chev) 204.00ppk; Fallhills (Cross) 202.00ppk; Croftintygan (BF) 189.00ppk; Harelawsie (Cha) 188.00ppk; Lilyburn (Mule) 188.00ppk. Ewes (1334) – Braevalloch (Tex) £138.00; West Lundie (BTex) £118.00; West Carse

(Suf) £100.00; Ardtornish (Chev) £86.00; Lilyburn (BFL) £76.00; Lathrones (Mule) £70.00; East Miss-Side (BF) £52.00. Tups – Kinclaven (Tex) £86.00; Quixwood (Suf) £76.00.

Dingwall – Dingwall and Highland Marts Ltd on December 31 sold 25 prime cattle. Prime bullocks (3) averaged 199.9p (-6.0p) and sold to 211.0p per kg and £1,329.30 gross for a 630kg Limousin cross from Ashley, North Kessock. Prime heifers (22) averaged 202.8p (-3.6p) and sold to 215.0p per kg for a 570kg Limousin cross and £1,374.75 gross for a 705kg Limousin cross selling to Messrs John M Munro Ltd, Dingwall, both from Bridgend Farm, Dingwall. Other leading prices per kg: Bullocks: Easter Hardmuir, Nairn, (BRB), 206.0p. Heifers: Bridgend Farm, (LimX), 213.0p; Easter Hardmuir, (SHO), 213.0p; Ashley, (LimX), 208.0p; Bridgend Farm, (CharX), 207.0p. Other leading prices per head: Bullocks: Ashley, (LimX), £1,295.00; Easter Hardmuir, (BRB), £1,174.20. Heifers: Bridgend Farm, (LimX), £1,320.00, £1,312.00; Ashley, (LimX), £1,300.00, £1,293.60; Bridgend Farm, (CharX), £1,293.75. Dingwall and Highland

Marts Ltd also sold 483 prime sheep. New season lambs (430) averaged 192.4p (+9.5p) and sold to 200.0p per kg twice for 41kg Texel crosses from Englishtonmuir, Bunchrew and 40kg Texel crosses from 4 Glaick, Ardrross and £89.00 gross three times for 47kg Texel crosses from Kinchyle Farm, Scaniport, 49.5kg Texel crosses from Pithogarty, Tain and 45.5kg Texel crosses from Lochdhu, Nairn all selling to Messrs John M Munro Ltd, Dingwall. SQQ 36.5kg to 45.5kg (326) averaged 194.9p (+9.8p) per kg. Feeding sheep (53) sold to £77 gross for a Suffolk ewe from Lochgorm, Grantown on Spey. Other leading prices per head and per kg: New season lambs: TexX – Kinchyle Farm, £88.50, Lochdhu, 198.9p; Cross – Inshes Farm, Inverness, £87.50, Drynie Farm, Dingwall, 196.5p; SuffX – Dunain Mains, Inverness, £87, Bayhead, Munloch, 197.7p; Chev – Wester Muckernich, Tore, £87, 1 Newmore, Muir of Ord, 192.8p; BF – Tulloch Farm, Dingwall, £84, Drynie Farm, 197.3p; CharX – Fairview, Nethybridge, £79, 190.4p. Feeding sheep: SuffX ewe – Lochgorm, £69.50, £69; TexX ewe – Wester Cairnglass, Inverness, £68, £67.

New attitudes needed for new year, says HSE

Farmers in Scotland are being told they must pay closer attention to how they manage workplace risk or face serious penalties.

The Health and Safety Executive's (HSE) programme of inspections will review health and safety standards on farms across the country, and the industry is being reminded that the inspections will soon begin.

The inspections will ensure those responsible for protecting themselves and workers are doing the right things to comply with the law and prevent death, injury and ill-health.

If they are not, HSE says it will not hesitate to use enforcement to bring about improvements.

Throughout the inspection initiative, inspectors will be checking that risks are being controlled in specific areas including: machinery, falls from height, children and livestock.

The announcement follows a series of compliance events that were developed as a result of research into farmers' attitudes to risk and are aimed at changing behaviour in the industry.

Farmers were given the opportunity to attend one of these events, paid for by HSE, to help them comply with the

law and prepare for its inspections. HSE is now following up to make sure all farms are doing the right thing.

Agriculture has the poorest record of any industry in Britain and latest figures show that 33 people were killed in agriculture across Britain in 2017/18 – around 18 times higher than the all industry fatal injury rate.

HSE's head of agriculture, Rick Brunt, said: 'We are seeing signs of a change in attitude across the farming industry and, while this is encouraging, these inspections act as a reminder to farmers of the importance of managing risks so that everyone can go home from their work healthy.'

'Everyone involved in farming has a role to play. Those working in the industry need to understand the risks they face and the simple ways they can be managed. Those that work with the industry can be part of the change that is so badly needed.'

HSE has a range of resources and guides available to help employers and employees improve health and safety on farms.

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Union blasts cut in aid

by Martin Laing
mlaing@obantimes.co.uk



Farming leaders have blasted an announcement from the Scottish Government that assistance under the Less Favoured Area Support Scheme is to reduce.

The Scottish Government announced this week that hill farmers and crofters in Scotland's most remote areas will continue to receive funding under the Less Favoured Area Support Scheme (LFASS) into 2020.

It said: 'Following compulsory changes to regulations governing LFASS made by the European Commission, LFASS support will be retained at 80 per cent in 2019 and 40 per cent in 2020 – the only part of the UK to continue such a payment.'

Rural Economy Secretary Fergus Ewing said: 'LFASS is crucial for our hill farmers and crofters operating in some of our most remote and marginalised areas. That is why I am pleased to confirm they will continue to receive payments



Jonnie Hall from the NFUS says LFASS is vital for remote and rural farmers and crofters.

at 80 per cent and 40 per cent into 2020.

'I fully accept that this is not ideal, but under changes to EU regulations there is no option but to revise payment rates down. Importantly, we are clear this change will not impact on those who receive the minimum payment of £385, which is not being reduced.

'Our hill farmers and crofters continue to face significant

challenges from both adverse weather and Brexit uncertainties, and we are already seeing reduced livestock numbers and land abandonment.

'Therefore, I will continue to strongly push for further revisions and have submitted proposed amendments to give more flexibility in setting the rates for 2020 – a move I fully expect the UK Government to support.'

For 2020, the EU regulations currently require a further reduction to 20 per cent, which Scottish Government has said is unacceptable. The European Commission recently announced a proposed change to regulation which could see that payment rise to 40 per cent of current rates.

Mr Ewing discussed the possibility of any further flexibilities in the proposed regulation

when he met Commissioner Phil Hogan when he was in Brussels in December.

However, Jonnie Hall, NFUS Scotland's director of policy said: 'While the comments from Scottish Government come as no surprise, any shortfall in LFA support remains completely unacceptable to NFUS Scotland. This is currently a top priority for the union and we continue to meet with Scottish Government to press for workable solutions to make good any shortfall

'We believe there are both practical and legal ways forward to resolve the LFASS shortfalls for 2019 and 2020. The issue now is whether Scottish Government is willing to run with such approaches and to fully restore the £65 million LFASS budget which is more critical than ever.

'The net result of cuts to LFASS, unless reversed, will be a significant reduction in cashflow to our most rural communities, challenging our more extensive livestock sectors and the Scotch brand it underpins and the risk of yet

more agricultural land abandonment in some quarters.

'LFASS payments provide a vital financial lifeline to those who are trying to eke out a living from some of the hardest land in the country. For them to lose out on any of this support would not only be devastating for their businesses but also for the natural environments which they sustain.

'Given a primary objective of LFASS or ANC support is the prevention of land abandonment, it is undeniable that continuity of LFASS payments at current levels is needed in order to ensure continued agricultural activity in remote and more disadvantaged areas.

'Critical LFASS payments are a significant injection of cash flow in to rural economies – and this money is spent locally by active farming businesses to support local employment and provide new opportunities. The union's position is that the LFASS payments are absolutely vital and any cut in them must be avoided at all costs. This is a message we continue to take to our political representatives.'

Clarity published over CAP payment dates

Clarity and certainty over when farmers and crofters can expect to receive their 2018 Common Agricultural Policy payments has been published.

Under the plans, Pillar 1 payments will begin in March and will largely be completed by the end of June. Pillar 2 payments will start in April with the majority paid by the end of October.

Publishing the payment schedule, Rural Economy Secretary Fergus Ewing said: 'As we approach the commencement of the New Year, I want to provide farmers, crofters and other rural businesses with as much clarity and certainty as possible.

'I am therefore confirming



Fergus Ewing MSP.

that we intend to keep to the proposed CAP payment timetable published in our stabilisation plan, which outlines when farmers and crofters can expect to receive their CAP entitlements.

'By doing this, we are offering clarity and certainty over when payments will be made, demonstrating stability in our payment system, while enabling farmers and crofters the opportunity to plan ahead accordingly.'

BPS/Greening/Young Farmer: payment start March 2019; 95 per cent of payment made end of June 2019.

VCS: April 2019; end of June. LFASS: April 2019; end of June.

Rural Priorities: May 2019; end of September.

AECS: May 2019; end of September.

FGS: May 2019; end of September.

BES: July 2019; end of October.

New campaign targets livestock attacks

A five-month multi-agency campaign to highlight the reality of livestock attacks and trauma by dogs was launched this week by the Scottish Partnership Against Rural Crime (SPARC).

The aim of the campaign – Your Dog – Your Responsibility – is to ensure dog owners understand the distressing nature as well as emotional and financial impacts such incidents can have, not just on farmers but

everyone having to deal with the aftermath.

Experience has shown that more often than not, livestock attacks and trauma occur when dog owners are not present. Owners are reminded that they must take responsibility for the actions of their dogs.

The campaign draws attention to other animals such as camelids, including alpacas and llamas, plus horses due to reports being received of

these animals being attacked with increasing frequency.

Over the next few months, local events will be held around Scotland concluding in May at Conic Hill, Balmaha, within the Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park.

SPARC is made up of partners from across the rural community, including Police Scotland, NFUS Scotland, Scottish Land and Estates and NFU Mutual.

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66	Dacia Sandero LAU DCi	Silver	6,000	£8,950	14	Skoda Rapid TDi	White	27,000	£6,950
66	Renault Clio S NAV DCi-90	Red	11,000	£12,200	63	Nissan Qashqai 1.5 DCi Visa	Black	48,000	£7,550
66	Renault Clio 1.2 DYN NAV	White	14,000	£9,750	13	Renault Megan DYN DCi EST	Black	75,000	£5,750
66	Renault Captur TCe DYN NAV	Cream	18,500	£10,250	13	Kia Rio Petrol	Black	44,000	£4,750
65	Dacia Logan EST LAU TCe	Silver	19,000	£6,950	62	BMW Series SPH 1.6	Black	48,000	£8,950
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For further details and application forms please contact Andrew Ashton, Director
ARDFERN YACHT CENTRE

Ardfern, Lochgilphead, Argyll, PA31 8QN
andrew@ardfernyacht.co.uk 01852 500247

Head Herd Person Required

We have a vacancy for Head Herd Person at Ormsary Estate, near Lochgilphead, Argyll. Ormsary has a long tradition of producing quality livestock, with a home bred beef herd of 200 suckler cows, and 20 Highland cattle. The successful candidate will report to the Farm Manager. You will be responsible for all cattle at Ormsary. You will have a positive and enthusiastic manner, and be able to work in a small multi-skilled team with a flexible hands-on approach to stock farming and estate work. You will preferably have a recognised qualification and experience in all aspects of cattle husbandry, as well as general farm and machinery work. The successful candidate will also possess a full driving licence, and be prepared to make their home at Ormsary. Ormsary Farmers offers an excellent employment package, including pension and family housing in a vibrant and scenic rural community, with a modern local primary school.

Please apply in writing by sending your CV to James Peterson – Farm Manager, Estate Office, Ormsary, Lochgilphead, PA31 8PE.

Email: enquiries@ormsary.co.uk .
Telephone: 01880 770700.

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Morag A Telfer. 01631 562168
Email info@northargyllhouse.org

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PUBLIC NOTICES

First Registration of a Croft

Stuart MacCormick Ross has registered their croft 9 Craiginish, Craiginish, Lismore and Appin on the Crofting Register held by the Registers of Scotland.

Any person who wishes to challenge the registration may apply to the Scottish Land Court by September 18th, 2019

Details of the registration can be found at www.crofts.ros.gov.uk/register/home. The croft registration number is C5553.

FIRST REGISTRATION OF A CROFT

Mr David R Cameron has registered his croft known as 161 Kentra (Burnside), Kentra, Ardnamurchan & Sunart on the Crofting Register held by the Registers of Scotland.

Any person who wishes to challenge the registration may apply to the Scottish Land Court by the 21st September 2019.

Details of the registration can be found at www.crofts.ros.gov.uk/register/home. The croft registration number is C5583.

GALMORE COMMON GRAZINGS COMMITTEE

A meeting will be held on Tuesday, January 29, 2019 at 7.30pm at Tigh na Sgoile, Roy Bridge for the re-election of the above committee

CROFTING COMMISSION COIMISEAN NA COITTEARACHD DECROFTING APPLICATION

D M Clark
Cuiluaire, Ardchattan & Muckairn
0.245 ha – Existing house site
94300

Written comments from any member of the crofting community within the locality of the croft and any expressions of demand for the croft (which may be made public), may be sent to the Crofting Commission by 08/02/19. Crofting Commission, Great Glen House, Leachkin Road, Inverness IV3 8NW, info@crofting.gov.scot

The Crofting Commission takes the protection of your privacy seriously. To safeguard your personal data and make sure that it is accurate, we only collect and/or store the data necessary to carry out our functions as a regulatory body. You can find a copy of our Privacy Notice at www.crofting.scotland.gov.uk/openness-and-customer-care.

DECROFTING DIRECTION ISSUED

A M Barrie
79 Lochyside, Kilmallie
93657
0.099 ha
Reason – croft house site & garden ground
Condition – No conditions.

Full details at www.crofting.scotland.gov.uk

Argyll and Bute Council

PLANNING

These applications listed below may be inspected between 09:00-12:30 -13:30-16:00 hrs Monday to Friday at Municipal Buildings Albany Street Oban PA34 4AW, 1A Manse Brae Lochgilphead PA31 8RD, your Local Customer Service Point and by logging on to the Council's website at www.argyll-bute.gov.uk.

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT PROCEDURE (SCOTLAND) REGULATIONS 2013 REGULATION 20(1) ADVERT STATEMENT TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (SCOTLAND) ACT 1997 (AS AMENDED), RELATED PLANNING (LISTED BUILDINGS AND CONSERVATION AREAS) (SCOTLAND) ACT 1997

Ref. No.	Proposal	Site Address
18/02643/PP	Erection of dwellinghouse	Garden Ground Of Ben Glass Glencruitten Oban Argyll And Bute PA34 4QB
18/02693/PP	Alterations and partial change of use of office/store to form beauty salon	16 Airds Crescent Oban Argyll And Bute PA34 5SJ
18/02688/PPP	Renewal of planning permission in principle reference 15/03210/PPP (Site for the erection of dwellinghouse)	Plot 3 Lagganmore Kilninver Oban Argyll And Bute
18/02628/PP	Use of land for the siting of portable office building with associated parking for a period of 2 years	Container Yard Glengallan Road Oban Argyll And Bute PA34 4HG
18/02652/PPP	Site for the erection of dwellinghouse	Garden Ground Of Witchwood Corran Esplanade Oban Argyll And Bute PA34 5AQ
18/02682/PP	Installation of replacement roof covering and reconstruction of derelict byre to form extension to dwellinghouse	Burnside 1 Keills Craighouse Isle Of Jura Argyll And Bute PA60 7XG
18/02520/PP	Erection of extension to dwellinghouse and retrospective change of use of vacant land to form extension to garden ground and erection of shed and decking	16 Elder Crescent Bowmore Isle Of Islay Argyll And Bute PA43 7HU

Written comments can be made to the above address or submitted online <http://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/planning-and-environment/find-and-comment-planning-applications> within 21 days of this advert. Please quote the reference number in any correspondence. Any letter of representation the Council receives is considered a public document and will be published on our website. Anonymous or marked confidential correspondence will not be considered. A weekly list of all applications can be viewed at all Area Offices, Council Libraries and on the Council's website.

To find out more about living and working in Argyll & Bute visit us at:

www.argyll-bute.gov.uk
Comhairle Earra – Ghàidheal agus Bhòid



MARINE (SCOTLAND) ACT 2010

Extension of Pontoon – Tobermory Harbour, Mull

Notice is hereby given that Tobermory Harbour has applied to the Scottish Ministers of the Scottish Government, under Part 4 of the Marine (Scotland) Act 2010, in respect of extending their existing pontoon at:

Cost	£400,000	
Location	Latitude	Longitude
Tobermory Harbour, Mull	56° 37.241' N	006° 04.041' W
	56° 37.209' N	006° 04.032' W
	56° 37.244' N	006° 03.936' W
	56° 37.210' N	006° 03.931' W

(WGS84)

Plans showing the position of the works may be inspected at Tobermory Post Office, Hus Gate, Ledaig Carpark, Tobermory. Alternatively, copies are also available from the Tobermory Harbour office.

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 to: MS.MarineLicensing@gov.scot, quoting reference: 06272V and Tobermory Harbour.

Fair Processing Notice

The Scottish Government's Marine Scotland Licensing Operations Team (MS-LOT) determine applications for marine licences under the Marine (Scotland) Act 2010 and the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009. During the consultation process any person having an interest in the outcome of the application may make representation to MS-LOT. The representation may contain personal information, for example a name or address. This representation will only be used for the purpose of determining an application and will be stored securely in the Scottish Government's official corporate record. Representations will be shared with the applicant and/or agent acting on behalf of the applicant, any people or organisations that we consult in relation to the application and, where necessary, be published online, however personal information will be removed before sharing or publishing.

A full privacy notice can be found at: <http://www.gov.scot/Topics/marine/Licensing/marine/PrivacyNotice>. If you are unable to access this, or you have any queries or concerns about how your personal information will be handled, contact MS-LOT at: ms.marinelicensing@gov.scot or Marine Scotland - Licensing Operations Team, Marine Laboratory, 375 Victoria Road, Aberdeen, AB11 9DB.

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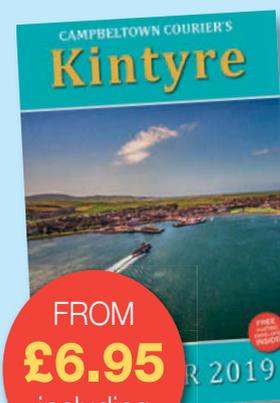
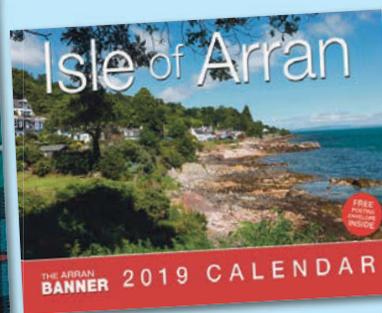
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BOSCH FRIDGE FREEZER White 50/50 Bosch fridge freezer. Good condition, £50 Telephone 07741 1100779.

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KOFS 28B O-U (new) - £500

BERETTA 12B 686 silver pigeon 1 (new) - £1500 Telephone 07990 886646.

Furniture



2 SEATER LEATHER SOFA

Nearly new real leather, button back sofa, from Saxons. Colour antique chestnut. Excellent condition (now have 3 seater, so not needed), £99.99 Telephone 01586 554537.

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Garden

GARDEN GATE gate size, 6ft by 2ft by nine, color green, £45 Telephone 01546 510341.

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VINTAGE CART WHEELS and smaller implement wheels. Colourful garden display items. Prices from £30, Telephone 01631 564578².

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Oban Times
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Home Entertainment

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Home Furnishings

SINGLE DULA PILLO MATTRESS clean, suitable dog bed or for cutting up. Free must collect Telephone 01631 720344.

Kitchen

BUILT IN OVEN Hotpoint built in double oven/grill. Black, good condition, £90 Telephone 01631 562645.

FRIDGE FREEZER Upright freestanding Bosch fridge/freezer. 50/50 split. White. Good condition, £75 Telephone 01631 562645.

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LIVE CEILIDH BAND to play at a 60th birthday party on 29th June 2019 at Cuan Mor, Oban. Please call Catriona Campbell on Telephone 01631 570720.

PERSONAL

Monika, 46 years and counting!

Monika and I met in 1971 and were married in St Columba's Argyll Square Church on 27th December 1972. Since then we have converted three houses into homes and we have three fine sons, Matthew, Lorne and Gordon, who have brought wonderful ladies into the family, Rebecca, Fiona and Maria, and who between them have added three adorable grandsons, Louis, Oliver and Benjamin. Throughout the last 46 years, Monika has been the beating heart of our family. She is loving, kind and caring. She makes things happen and is always there to lend a hand or offer sound advice and support.

Monika has a degree in Maths and Economics. She knits and sews, paints and makes jewellery. She is a wonder in the kitchen and can design bathrooms and staircases when required. She takes pure delight painting with her grandsons and she makes superb Lego models. She has been my wife and best friend for 46 years and I love her dearly. Every day spent with Monika is special. When the family is involved, they are very special and have been for the last 46 years. Roll on 2019, at a slightly slower pace.



CATHERINE FERGUSON, CONNELL

Would like to thank her family and friends for gifts, flowers, cards and a lovely lunch at Creagan Inn on her birthday.

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DEATHS

CAMPBELL - (Isle of Skye). (Formerly of Wades Road, Inverloch). Peacefully at Broadford Hospital on Saturday, January 5, 2019 Margaret (Rita) aged 81 years. Loving wife of the late David Walter, dear mother of Finlay, Susan and Janet, mother-in-law of Murdo, much loved granny of Murdo, Shona, Kirstie and Lorna, grandmother-in-law of Gordie and great-granny of Jessie. Funeral service at the Church of Scotland, Kensaleyre at 11 a.m. on Friday, January 11, thereafter to Skeabost cemetery. Family flowers only. All welcome.

FORBES - Peacefully at home on December 30, 2018 Michael Robert (Mike), loving husband of grace, dear father of Robert, Alan, Jamie and Michael, proud grandfather of Andrew, Matthew and Christian. Funeral will take place at St Modan's Church, Benderloch on Tuesday, January 15, 2019 at 1pm. Thereafter Pennyfuir cemetery. Family flowers only. Retiring collection for Macmillan Cancer Support and The Dove Centre.

GALBRAITH - Peacefully, at Edinburgh Royal Infirmary, on December 25, 2018 in her 94th year, Lorne Galbraith (née MacIntyre), of 6 Achagoil, Minard. Much loved mother of Douglas, Alastair and Colin, and dearly loved mother-in-law and nana. Funeral service was held at Cumlodden Parish Church, on Tuesday, January 8, 2019 followed by interment at Kilevin Cemetery. Sadly missed.

HARRISON - Catriona (Catherine Christina), (née McDougall), aged 85 years, of Allanmyo, Minard, Argyll, passed away peacefully with family, on Friday, December 28, 2018. Wife of the late Thomas Harrison, much loved mother of Ann and Kathleen, grandmother of Alasdair and sister to Ian. The family would like to thank all the Care Service who supported Catriona's wish to remain in her own home. Funeral service will be held from 'Allanmyo', Minard, Argyll on Friday, January 11, 2019, at 11.00 am, thereafter to Kilevin Cemetery. Family Flowers only. Donations, if desired, to The Red Cross.

HILL - Peacefully at her home surrounded by family, on January 8, 2019, in her 97th year, May, beloved wife (for 70 years) of the late Jimmy Hill, a devoted mum, granny and gran gran. Funeral will take place at Oban Parish Church, Glencruitten Road, Oban on Wednesday, January 16 at 11.00 am thereafter to Pennyfuir Cemetery. Family flowers only please.

HENDY - Peacefully, on Monday, January 7, 2019, Margaret MacInnes Hendy, aged 85 years. Beloved wife of the late Brian and a much loved mum, granny and great-granny. Funeral Service will be held in private, later next week.

MACINNES - Peacefully at the Beatson, after a brave battle on December 26, 2018, Craig, beloved husband of Jacklyn, cherished son of Jessie and Alastair and much loved brother of Iain. Loving grandson of the late Rachel and John (Iain) Gillies, formerly of Airds Bay, Tainuill. Sadly missed.

MACPHEE - Donald Angus (age 87). Formerly of Bonawe. Peacefully at The New Victoria Hospital, Glasgow on Thursday, January 3, 2019. Much loved dad of Catriona, Donna and Janice, father-in-law to John, Paul, and Charlie, granda to Paul, Kirsty, Gillian, Sarah, Calum, Scott and Lori. Funeral service at Craigton Crematorium on Friday, January 11, at 3.30pm. Donations to Alzheimer's Scotland are welcomed in lieu of flowers.

MCDONALD - (née McCulloch). Janet (Jen). Oban / Musselburgh. Peacefully in the loving care of Crookston Care Home after a long battle with Parkinson's, on Saturday, January 5, 2019. Jen, beloved wife of the late Bert, much loved mum of Ellen and Gordon. Loving mother-in-law, proud gran and great grandma. A service will be held at Seafeld crematorium on Thursday January 17 at 10am to which all are welcome. Family flowers only, please.

MCKECHNIE - Peacefully in Gortanvogie on January 6, 2018, Mary (née Baker) aged 96 years, beloved wife of the late Angus and loving mother of John Angus and Mairi and much loved grandmother and great-grandmother. Funeral service in Portnahaven Church, Islay at 11.30 a.m. on Saturday, January 12, 2019. Dearly missed by all family and friends.

MITCHELL - Peacefully at his home in Oban on December 22, 2018 and in his 88th year, Robert (Bob) Mitchell, beloved husband of the late Margaret (Moira) Mitchell, much loved dad of the late Robert (Bobby), Malcolm, Marie, Colin and Debbie and much loved grandad and pop to James, Lisa, late Margaret Louise, Ryan, Aleesha, Graeme, the late Robert, Craig, Amanda, late Laura, Kyle and Rhona. A very special pop pop and great grandad to Rowan, Isla, Aspen and Gene. Will be sadly missed by all.

ROBERTSON - Sadly, on Thursday, January 3, 2019 at home, after a short illness, aged 80, Anne (née MacLennan), beloved wife of Phil and much loved mum of John, Karen and Lesley and proud grandmother and great-grandmother. Funeral will take place on Friday, January 18, 2019 at Kilchattan Church, Isle of Luing at 1 p.m., thereafter to Kilchattan Cemetery. Retiral collection/donations will be taken for the Tearfund.

STEVEN - Douglas. (Edinburgh/Kilchoan). Peacefully on January 3, 2019, after a short illness, Douglas,

beloved husband of the late Irene, loving father to Martin and the late Timothy. Proud papa to Jamie, Matthew, Gregor, Sandy and Iain and great-grandfather to Josh and Elle. Formerly QS with Miller Construction. A service is to be held at Mortonhall Crematorium Pentland Chapel on Thursday, January 17 at 12.30pm.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

MUNRO - Danny, Margaret, Gerald and Evelyn would like to sincerely thank all family and friends for joining them in the Memorial Service for their loving son and brother who sadly died suddenly in Denmark. Grateful thanks for the very many kind expressions of sympathy received personally and by card. Heartfelt thanks to Fr Danny Convery for a very comforting service, organist Margaret, Frank for his assistance, John who delivered a tribute in Allan's memory and James who recorded the service for Allan's family in Denmark. Thanks to McLellan's Funeral Directors for their guidance and to the Bridge Café for the excellent catering following the service. Finally, thanks to all who generously donated £474 to Mary's Meals.

PATERSON - Archie and family, Hazelann and Paul, would like to thank most sincerely all who sympathised with the loss of my wife Hazel who died on December 17, 2018. We offer our heartfelt thanks to the many friends, neighbours and well wishers who visited our home, attended the wake, services and burial and who provided emotional and practical support for us at this difficult time, for those who travelled distances, sent floral tributes, cards and messages of condolence as well as charitable donations we are very grateful. A special word of thanks to Moss Park Nursing Home, all Hazel's private carers while she was at home, Tweeddale Surgery Doctors, Belford Hospital for her many stays there, Father Roddy, Father Donald, Monsignor Wynne, Deacon Wynne, Ann Marie Steele, Catriona Steele, Kate Steele, Catherine Maxwell, Craig Gardiner, St Mary's Choir, Jamie and all his staff at McFall Undertakers. A sum of £654.06 was collected at St Mary's for Moss Park Resident's Fund.

MEMORIAMs

CAMPBELL - With love we remember Chrissie Campbell, who died January 12, 2004, aged 65 years. A dearly loved wife, mum and gran. Forever in our hearts. - Duncan and family.

CRUICKSHANK - In everlasting memory of Jimmy, a loving husband, father and grandfather who passed away January 15, 1999.

Is it really 20 years since that cold winters day
When you left us all in tears at your sudden passing that day
Now all we have are fond memories
But they will live in our hearts forever.
- With love from Kate, sons Iain, Dougie and all the family members.

HAY - Treasured memories of Jimmy, a much loved son, brother and uncle who died January 10, 1998.

Precious memories keep you near
As time unfolds another year.
Forever loved.
- Mum, Donald, Anthea and Iain and families.

HEAP - In loving memory of a beloved husband, dad, father-in-law and grandad Robert (Bob), who died January 12, 2018.

Every time we think of you
Our hearts just fill with pride
Though we'll always miss you
We know you're by our side
In laughter and in sorrow
In sunshine and in rain
We know you're watching over us
Until we meet again.

- Your loving wife Isabel and sons Robert and Joe xxx
Our lives go on without you
Though nothing is the same
We have to hide the heartache
When someone speaks your name
You did so many things for us
Your heart was kind and true
As long as we were happy
You were happy too
Always loved and sadly missed.
- Lorraine, Louis, Sophie and Morgan xxxx

Also remembering a dear son and brother Edward (Eddie), who died April 4, 1979, aged 18 years and our lovely dog Buster who left a paw print on our hearts.

JOHNSTON - Precious memories of Bridget, who died on January 11, 2018.
An empty spot no one can fill.
- Your loving family. x

MACASKILL - In loving memory of our darling daughter and sister Helen Jean, who died January 14, 1994, aged 20 weeks. Love always.
- Mummy and Karen xx

MACDONALD - Treasured memories of Eileen, dearly loved mum of Phillip, precious daughter of Margaret and sister of Colin and Karen, taken from us on January 6, 2008. Also remembering loved ones gone before.

To us you were so special
What more is there to say
We only wish with all our hearts
That you were here today.
Sorely missed.
- The family, 14 Corran Brae, Oban.

MACIVER - Treasured memories of dear Duncan who died January 12, 2007.
Remembered with love.
- Chrissie and Rob, Colin and Jocelyn, Lindsay and Kevin and families.

MACLELLAN - With love we remember baby Christopher, taken from us on January 1, 1991. Forever in our hearts x
- MacLellan family.

MACLEOD - In loving memory of our dearly loved son Douglas who was accidentally drowned at Largs Marina on January 13, 2007.

The call was sudden
The shock severe
To lose a son we loved so dear
As thoughts drift back
As they often do

We cherish the memories we have of you.

- Mum, Dad and brother Gordon.

MACMILLAN - Mark. Miss you always.
Love you.
- Jane.xxx

MACMILLAN - In fond and loving memory of our dear son, Mark, who died January 14, 1991 aged 15 years.
Deep in our hearts you will always stay
Loved and remembered every day
Love you always.
- Dad, Mum and family, Ballachulish.xx

MORRISON - In loving memory of Johnny who passed away on January 3, 2008.
Sadly missed by us all.
- Catherine, John, Karen, Alan and families.
Forever in my thoughts.
- Mum.

PALMER - Roberta (Gaga), January 14, 2018.
You brought me into this world
My hand was on your heart as you left it
Nothing will ever fill the gap you left in mine.
- Mary x.

SCOTT - In loving memory of my dear father and grandfather William Scott, who passed away January 9, 2017.
Miss you dearly
Always in our thoughts.
- Fiona, Roddy and family.

GRADUATIONS



REBECCA MARY ROBERTSON

Recently graduated from Glasgow Caledonian University with a Bachelor of Science in Nursing Studies with Distinction. Rebecca is the daughter of John and Alison Robertson from the Island of Luing and granddaughter of May and the late John Laird and Phil and the late Anne Robertson, both Island of Luing. She is a past pupil of Luing Primary School and Oban High School.

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Obituary: Janet Anderson, Church of Scotland Deacon

Born: September 1, 1948
Died: November 20, 2018

On November 27, Janet's family and friends from near and far gathered at Ashaig cemetery in south Skye to pay tribute to a unique person who has left behind her so many changed people and places throughout Scotland.

Already feeling deep stirrings to help others, which was to become the theme of her life, Janet set out from home and went to Rostrevor in County Down, Northern Ireland, to the then newly established centre for Christian renewal and reconciliation to be part of the community there. These were formative times for her.

In 1979, having been challenged to consider serving God in that way, she was commissioned as a deaconess in the Church of Scotland, serving at first in Hillhouse parish in Hamilton, before moving in 1982 to Ruchazie in north Glasgow where she would stay until 2004. In those 22 years, she spent herself tirelessly for the community and collected around her a wide circle of friends.

She was truly ecumenical in her outlook and practice, and could see through to the things that united. There, in that challenging part of the



Janet Anderson.

city, she put all her efforts into helping the less fortunate and bringing people together.

She was instrumental in establishing the Ruchazie,

Garthamlock and Craighend Credit Union, which she chaired for many years. She worked tirelessly for the credit union, giving people the confidence to keep it

‘In retirement, she carried on in the same vein of faithful service, actively involved in the Presbytery of Lochcarron and Skye and also serving as an NHS chaplain’

going themselves, making it a real force for upward social mobility. Under her guidance, it moved out of the church to have its own shop front.

Those who would never have gained access to financial services were now being helped to become financially independent and many were set free from the tyranny of poverty and loan sharks. Janet was also involved in beginning and developing the Ruchazie Housing Association, bringing health and comfort to those previously living in damp and draughty conditions.

Janet's life of service was marked by her complete lack of self glory. She declined the bestowal of an MBE for her services. And it was this very

humility, combined with her desire to serve others, that made her life speak so powerfully, including her complete independence of mind and fearlessness to say it as she saw it.

After Ruchazie, she had spells working at Arisaig, Mallaig and the Small Isles, and then in the Parish of Reay, Strathy and Halladale in Caithness, from where she retired back to the family home in Breakish, south Skye.

In retirement, she carried on in the same vein of faithful service, actively involved in the Presbytery of Lochcarron and Skye and also serving as an NHS chaplain in Broadford Hospital. There are many families on the island who could tell their own stories of how Janet helped them and their loved ones through difficult times.

When she received news of her own ill health, she carried on life as we knew she would, stepping in to trying days with her usual honesty and courage.

In Janet's passing many have lost a great companion and devoted friend. But to those same people her life still speaks and provides an example of practical, persistent love.

THOUGHT for the week

When most of the world has recovered from New Year, we in A' Ghàidhealtachd may have another go.

Old New Year is celebrated on January 12, and I'll be singing my heart out with Oban Gaelic Choir at the An Comunn Gàidhealach ceilidh on Saturday January 12.

I enjoy the vibrant cultural identity of the Highlands and Islands, of which I am so much part on both sides of my family. In a world where so many feel rootless and disconnected, a sense of belonging is valuable.

However, the other side of belonging can manifest itself in 'identity politics' which tends towards the exclusion of others on account of their ethnicity, nationality, religion or sexuality. It can be argued that the current Brexit debacle has its roots in uncertainty over identity in a 21st-century world.

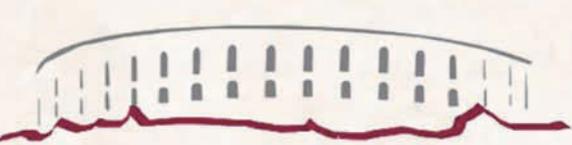
Christian faith asserts the value of each person, in their individuality and context. The birth of Christ was God's 'yes' to being human. So as we live in the light of this reality we must deal with issues of sovereignty, Scottish and/or British identity and citizenship, independence and/or EU membership without belittling others.

Indeed, we should cherish and welcome the fascinating cornucopia of human cultural expression when it is liberating and generous. And in Christ Jesus we have the Way, the Truth, and the Life wherever we make our home.

Rev Dugald Cameron,
Kilmore and Oban

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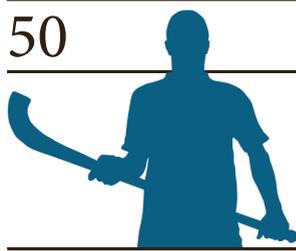
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Brian MacCallum is new Lochside Rovers manager

Brian MacCallum has been confirmed as the new Lochside Rovers manager.

He takes over at the Marine Harvest South Division 1 team from Gareth Evans who will be a tough act to follow having led the side to Marine Harvest South Division 1 success as well as lifting the Sutherland Cup and Bullough Cup during his four years in charge.

Brian will be assisted by George Easton who was previously part of a successful Oban Camanachd U14s coaching team.

Brian MacCallum has previously stood in to take charge of Lochside when Gareth Evans was unavailable and he will meet with new Oban Camanachd manager Stephen Sloss to select their respective squads for the new season.

Oban Camanachd and Lochside Rovers pre-season friendlies

Oban Camanachd and Lochside Rovers' pre-season plans are almost complete.

Oban Camanachd and Lochside Rovers will take on the Glasgow Mid Argyll first and second teams at Mossfield on Saturday February 9.

Lochside Rovers and the Kilmallie second team will meet a week later on Saturday February 16. The match is currently scheduled for Ganavan but the venue could change. Oban Camanachd have yet to secure a friendly match for that date and have put out an open invitation to potential opponents for a fixture, either home or away.

The Oban Camanachd squad travel to the Eilan on Saturday February 23 to face treble winners Newtonmore. Lochside Rovers play neighbours Taynuilt at Mossfield the same day for the J C Trophy as the sides remember John Cameron.

The new competitive shinty season starts on Saturday March 2.

Oban Camanachd training schedule

Oban Camanachd and Lochside Rovers started their pre-season training at Oban High School on Monday January 7.

With new boss Stephen Sloss putting his side through their paces, training on Mondays will be in the

games hall between 8pm and 9pm, whilst Wednesday training will be on the astro pitch between 7pm and 8.30pm.

Celtic youngsters win Boxing Day bragging rights

The Oban Celtic young boys (under 30s) side were 4-3 winners against an Oban Celtic old boys (over 30s) side in their annual Boxing Day clash at Mossfield.

The veterans were penalty shoot-out winners a year earlier but the young boys came out on top this year with Ross MacMillan, Daniel MacMillan, Andy MacDonald and Dylan Cooke getting the goals.

The match was keenly contested as ever. Kenny Wotherspoon scored twice for the seniors and also saw a penalty saved by young boys' keeper Iain MacFarlane. Scott Burnett got the other veterans' goal.

Young boys skipper Andy MacDonald was presented with the trophy at the club's annual player of the year awards evening which took place at Oban Masonic Lodge afterwards.

Ross MacMillan is Oban Celtic Player of the Year

Ross MacMillan has been named 2018 Oban Celtic senior player of the year.

Scotland U21 cap Ross was the choice of outgoing Oban Celtic manager Kenny Wotherspoon who said: "Ross is a great guy to work with. The boy will do a job no matter what position you play him in. I think most people thought of Ross as a defender rather than a forward when he joined us. When I first played him up front, he finished that season joint top scorer in the National Division along with Fraser Watt and Calum McLay. Ross is a good player and he can play in both positions and did well for the Scotland U21s in defence in their win over Ireland U21."

Scott Mossman won the Oban Celtic second team player of the year accolade as a reward for his fine performances during the season.

The Carnie and Pearson families presented the prizes on the night.

The Oban Celtic players took



Brian MacCallum, right, takes over from Gareth Evans as manager of Lochside Rovers.

the chance to bid a final farewell and offer their thanks to Kenny Wotherspoon for his three successful years as first team manager.

Lovat retain Lovat Cup

Lovat lifted the Lovat Cup for the fourth consecutive year after beating Beaully 3-1 at Braeview Park on Wednesday January 2.

Beaully, who last won the trophy in 2015, were without Liam Girvan, Robbie Brindle and Ryan Tillman for this 1pm throw-up.

Lovat were missing Drew Howie, who has gone travelling for a year, and Greg Matheson, so influential in this match in recent years, who damaged his knee a few days before the match.

The usual good crowd from throughout the shinty world gathered for the game.

Favourites Lovat got off to a great start with Graeme MacMillan giving them the lead within 30 seconds of the throw-up. Marc MacLachlan, back in the side after suffering a serious knee injury in the Camanachd Cup Final, won possession on the Lovat right and his low ball into the middle found Graeme MacMillan unmarked in acres of space. Graeme had time to take a touch before steadying himself and rifling a shot into the back of the net.

Beaully equalised on 29 minutes. Daniel Lamont won possession on

the left of midfield and surged forward before finding Sean Stewart. Stewart held off a couple of challenges before playing the ball into the danger area. Lovat defender Martin Mainland looked sure to clear but missed his hit and Jack MacDonald nipped in to win the ball and thump a superb shoulder-high shot past goalie Stuart MacDonald to make it 1-1. The sides remained on level terms until the break.

Lovat regained the lead seven minutes into the second half. Callum Cruden sent forward a free-hit from just inside his own half. Marc MacLachlan battled for possession and Graeme MacMillan swept the ball forward to the edge of the 'D' where Duncan Davidson ran in from the right and took a touch to take the ball away from the keeper before slipping a shot into the net from the left of the 'D'.

Former Glenurquhart and Inverness player Fraser Heath came off the bench to make his Lovat debut, replacing Bailey MacKay with 25 minutes remaining.

Chris Johnston and Thomas Fraser took over from Duncan Davidson and Graeme MacMillan shortly after.

Marc MacLachlan sealed the win with eight minutes remaining. Thomas Fraser chipped a corner from the right into the 'D' and former Beaully player MacLachlan stretched to take a touch before

flicking the ball past helpless keeper MacKay Murray to make it 3-1.

Lovat captain Lewis Tawse was presented with the Lovat Cup by Kim Fraser from the Lovat family and the celebrations carried forward into the club's annual dance that evening. Deek Cameron was referee.

Ballachulish bring in the New Year

Ballachulish brought in the New Year with their annual club match on Wednesday January 2.

2018 captain Duncan MacDonald and 2019 skipper Cian MacPhee led the teams with MacDonald's side eventually winning 5-1.

The teams finished with a penalty shoot-out which MacDonald's side also won, 3-2.

Ballachulish started their training ahead of the new season on Monday January 7.

2018 John MacKinnon Sixes

Crossal & Co retained the John MacKinnon Memorial Sixes at the Portree High School astro pitch on Saturday December 29.

The tournament takes place each year in memory of Skye Camanachd vice president John MacKinnon who died in December 2011 as the result of a tragic accident at work.

Five teams took part in a round-robin set of fixtures before Crossal & Co and Morrison & Co finished in the top two positions to win through to the final.

A turn and shot into the top corner of the net from Christina MacDonald gave Morrison & Co an early lead. However, Jordan Murchison, who looked back to his best after an injury-hit 2018 shinty season, thumped the ball through a crowded goal area to make it 1-1.

Murchison got his second to seal the win, striking a low, hard shot into the corner of the net.

The teams then made their way to the Skye Camanachd clubhouse for the trophy presentations.

Tournament winners Crossal & Co were again to the fore when the individual awards were handed out as William MacKinnon (overall player), John MacLean (over 40s) and Caitlin MacLean (ladies) took the honours whilst Connor Gilpin (The Magnificent 7) and James Morrison (Morrison & Co) shared the U17 prize.

Camanachd Leòdhais and Kinlochshiel remember Iolaire disaster

Camanachd Leòdhais and Kinlochshiel met at Bayhead, Stornoway, on Tuesday January 1 to commemorate the Iolaire disaster 100 years earlier.

Representatives from both clubs attended a remembrance service at the Iolaire Memorial before the match with thoughts turning back to the early hours of Wednesday January 1 1919 when 201 men, returning home following the end of World War 1, perished after the HMV Iolaire sank just yards from the Stornoway coastline.

Shinty historian Dr Hugh Dan MacLennan explained how appropriate the match was. 'The significance of Kyle of Lochalsh as a key part of the chain which has historically linked the Western Isles and the mainland will forever be overshadowed by the tragic events which began to unfold when the Iolaire set sail for Stornoway. There was, no doubt, an overwhelming sense of relief that the war and its traumas were being set aside; the impending celebration of a New Year and all that this entailed, with local shinty matches still fresh in the memory.'

The Iolaire changed the Western Isles forever. It is singularly appropriate, however, that the sportsmen of the west coast and Lewis, and in particular the shinty players, come together to play their own distinctive part in marking the events 100 years ago. Shinty withered on the Western Isles with the passage of time and the cataclysmic events of World War 1. The home-coming of men with their football and changed habits, along with other changes in community life saw to that. But now, with the fullness of time, the caman is again at the heart of the community, a symbol of the strength of its people, their resilience and a pride in its past.'

The all-weather pitch on Smith Avenue was on stand-by in case the Bayhead field failed an inspection but the weather was kind and the match was able to go ahead as scheduled although the surface was difficult for both sides.

Camanachd Leòdhais included a number of their youth players as well as the more experienced Donald Lamont, Stuart Campbell and Daniel Gallagher

Kinlochshiel bosses Johnstone Gill and Duncan MacLeod included skipper Paul MacRae, David Falconer, Jordan Fraser, Oliver MacRae, Ali Nixon and Duncan 'DA' MacRae from the squad which won the 2018 Artemis Macaulay Cup. They also introduced a number of their youths including Duncan MacMillan, who had a good game, Martin MacRae, Archie MacRae, Shaun MacLean and Cam Jones. Former Lewis player Eoghan Stewart also guested for the Balmacara side, whilst veteran Neilie 'Ach' MacRae played in goal.

Referee Henry MacInnes signalled the start of a two-minute silence ahead of this 1.30pm throw-up. A special strike from Kinlochshiel's Oliver MacRae was the only goal of the first half. MacRae gathered the ball from far out before sending a rocket into the top corner of the net past helpless Lewis keeper Kieran Murray. Ali Nixon made it 2-0 when he touched the ball home with one hand on his caman on the angle.

Youngster Archie MacRae made the most of his opportunity when he added a third shortly after. MacRae hammered the ball home on the half volley from close range. Oliver MacRae got his second late in the match, again from close in, to round off the 4-0 victory.

Schools Camanachd changes

After an extensive consultation process surrounding all primary and secondary school-based shinty competitions, the Camanachd Association has decided to rename the current Camanachd Association Youth Working Group the Camanachd Association Youth and Schools Development Group.

The new group will oversee shinty played at primary and secondary schools as well as club youth, U14 and U17 and will include representation from all four shinty regions.

The changes, which will be reviewed annually, will take effect from the start of the 2019 shinty season and have been introduced with the intention of extending playing opportunities for youngsters participating in school and club-based shinty.

There will be the introduction of a new 10-a-side club competition, mirroring the MacKay Cup, for club primary teams with the Camanachd Association Trophy at stake. The format will involve individual regional matches followed by district matches, culminating in a national final.

The first shinty indoor winter festivals for individual schools will continue with amalgamated schools within the 150 rule able to compete with the specific permission of the Camanachd Association Development Team.

The current format for secondary schools competitions will remain the same for 2019 with additional regional festivals being run.

The Tulloch Cup format will be extended with the introduction of area groups of six teams each who will host/organise a nine-a-side tournament. The winners from each area will move forward to a regional tournament and then to a national finals tournament. The 150 amalgamation rule will still apply.

The MacKay Cup competition will begin with regional ties followed by district matches leading to a national final. However, the tournament will be 10-a-side to help enable players to have more time on the ball and to allow teams to take part without being too reliant on introducing younger players to make up the numbers. The 150 amalgamation rule will again still apply. Entry forms will be circulated this month.

SPOT THE SHINTY BALL

THIS WEEK'S JACKPOT £850

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

Put 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 noon Tuesday. No refunds will be given for entries received after the deadline.

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.

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RUGBY



Lochaber's William Stewart fends off the this Cowal defender. Photo: Iain Ferguson, alba.photos.

Lochaber pipped at the post

A last-minute Cowal try denied Lochaber a dramatic result on Saturday as their heroic second-half comeback fell just short as they went down 26-33.

Having been 26-0 down at half-time, Lochaber scored four tries without reply in the second half to level the match. However, with just minutes remaining, a last-gasp Cowal try dashed any hopes of what would have been a remarkable Lochaber victory.

After Lochaber had initially kept Cowal out, a maul formed right under the posts from which Cowal's hooker then peeled off the back to score. To add to the poor start, Lochaber were then reduced to 14 men for 10 minutes when Daniel Thomas received a yellow card for a high tackle.

The visitors were gifted their second try when two Lochaber players failed to deal with a high ball and the opposition wingers were able to capitalise to score. Cowal kept the pressure up and some poor tackling allowed for another break through the defensive line for a run in from 20 metres.

Lochaber finally started to get some possession and worked their way into Cowal's 22. Just as Lochaber were starting to gain some momentum, it quickly turned around and Cowal were able to make their way down the pitch to score their fourth try in the last play of the half to make it 0-26 at half-time.

After a frank half-time discussion, the match would turn on its head as Lochaber came out firing in the second half. Picking up the tempo and running direct lines, Cowal couldn't cope with the intensity of Lochaber's attacking play and, just a few minutes into the second half, Christopher Simpson crossed the line with Andrew Bell converting.

Lochaber's and Simpson's second try came after Lochaber were awarded a penalty. Simpson took a quick tap penalty five metres from the try-line. A dummy pass fooled the onrushing Cowal defence, leaving a big hole for Simpson to score.

Cowal were then reduced to 14 men when one of their players was yellow carded for a high tackle which spurred on the home side to go chasing scores. And it didn't take long until they got one after a well worked passage of play saw the ball passed to John MacKerlich who broke through the tackle to run in from 30 meters to score, with Bell converting again to make it 19-26.

The momentum remained with Lochaber and with around three minutes remaining they were awarded a penalty five metres out and once again it was Simpson who took a quick tap and got across the line. Bell converted to level the scores and secure a remarkable comeback.

Lochaber received the ball from the restart and were starting to make their way up the pitch but, in another twist, lost the ball forward. Cowal were able to capitalise on the mistake and got the ball wide where they had a numbers advantage and their winger had the pace to beat Lochaber's defence to make it 26-33 and secured the victory for the Cowal men.

League leaders Lenzie prove too strong for the Green Machine

Oban Lorne	8
Lenzie	40
Tennent's West Division 2	

Last weekend saw the return of league rugby to Glencruitten after the festive break. With Oban's game against Millbrae on December 15 being called off due to the weather conditions, this was the first outing in a month for the Green Machine.

With only one session in the bank on the Thursday before, it was always going to be a tough game against the league leaders Lenzie. Oban had run them close down the road in September, being narrowly beaten by three points after staging a spirited fightback in the second half.

Oban fielded a fairly strong team but were light in numbers in the pack with back rowers Lorne Sinclair, Owen McDonald and vice-captain Stephen Povey all missing. There was, however, a start at No8 for 17-year-old Kieron Morrison, who has been a stand-out for the U18s this season.

Lenzie started the game strongly and were very direct with good strong runs from their centres getting them on the front foot. Oban were struggling to contain them and with only five minutes of the match gone, the Lenzie



Oban Lorne captain Iwan Roberts barges his way through the Lenzie defence.

winger cut off his wing beating a number of Oban tackles to make the line and give Lenzie an early lead. The try was converted.

Struggled

Oban tried to respond straight from the kick off with some good linking play between forwards and backs but struggled to get any real penetration through the well organised and aggressive Lenzie defence.

After a period of Oban possession, they were awarded a penalty kick and up stepped Finlay Carmichael to convert the three points.

Lenzie were quick to get on the attack again and a missed



Craig Wright escapes this attempted tackle to score in the corner.

tackle in midfield allowed the powerful inside centre to cruise over the line to extend the lead to 14-3.

Oban responded again and managed to string some good phases together and eventually generated some quick ball for the backs to exploit. The ball was worked wide for Craig Wright to cross in the corner for another fantastic score for the fullback. Finlay Carmichael narrowly missed the conversion to make the score 14-8.

Oban were back in the game and looking to keep things tight until the half-time whistle. From a scrum inside their own 22, Carmichael attempted a chip over the top of the onrushing defence and the bounce of the ball took it just out of the reach of both Wright and captain Roberts.

Strolled over

If either of them had managed to secure that ball they were in for a score. Unfortunately, the ball fell into the hands of the Lenzie fullback who hacked the ball forward again. The covering Oban players allowed the ball to bounce and once again the bounce took the ball in the Lenzie player's hands and he strolled over for another try under the posts to give the visitors a 21-8 half-time lead.

RUGBY

Oban were determined to close the gap in the second half but just could not breach the Lenzie defence again. There were a number of close calls for Oban with a number of visits to the Lenzie 22 being repelled by the visiting defence. Time and time again Oban tried to breach the line and got close on three or four occasions but either dropped the last pass or were wrestled into touch just short of the line.

Cover defence

The league leaders were showing why they have only conceded 84 points all season with some fantastic cover defence whenever Oban did have an opportunity. There are definitely lessons for Oban to take from this game as their own defence leaked a further three tries for a final score of 40-8.

Lenzie were made to work hard for their scores in the end but Oban were just off the pace and must now look ahead to trying to secure second spot in the league as Lenzie are too far ahead now to be caught.

Some tough games ahead for Oban starting with next weekend's trip to Loch Lomond who are always a tough proposition. Then in two weeks Oban welcome Uddingston who are currently second in the league.

There were some notable performances on Saturday with young Kieron Morrison making his debut at No8 being outstanding, Daniel Broderick also showed up well being a willing ball carrier time and again. In the backs, Vasil Borisow had another outstanding game at scrum-half before moving into the back row to cover an injury. This allowed Ferg McCoss to come on and make his debut for Oban having recently moved to the area and he looks like being a really useful addition to the squad.



Eric Roberts is dragged back by a Lenzie defender during last Saturday's league encounter at Glencruitten.
Photos: Stephen Lawson

Mull's good home record remains intact

Mull	20
Waysiders/Drum	10
West Regional Division 3	

Mull welcomed Waysiders Drumpellier to Garmony to start 2019 on the first Saturday of the year. The two sides met earlier in the season in Coatbridge with Waysiders beating a depleted Mull side convincingly, despite a strong performance from the Muileachs. Although Mull had played no competitive fixture since November, they were undefeated at Garmony and were facing a Waysiders team who were undefeated

and top of the league, so the scene was set for a fantastic game in front of a big home crowd.

Mull started well and were rewarded with a converted try from the returning Scott MacColl inside the first 10 minutes. They continued their strong start with some big carries, a solid set-piece and excellent work at the breakdown and soon added another try to make the score 12-0. Waysiders began to apply some significant pressure to the home tryline but some resolute defending kept them at bay, leaving Mull ahead 12-0 at the break.

Both teams came flying out in the second half and, after a missed penalty, Mull captain Sean Black stepped up to knock over a kick from in front of the posts to put Mull up 15-0. Waysiders came back strongly and, after a number of phases, were able to cross the tryline to bring the score back to 15-5. Straight from the kick-off, Mull went through the phases and Black took the ball from the base of a ruck and broke through the middle to add a third try for Mull.

Waysiders suffered a number of injuries throughout the match but continued to put

RUGBY

pressure on Mull and despite some heroic defending, eventually bundled over to make the score 20-10. The last 10 minutes passed with some disjointed rugby and a number of further injuries and no further scoring. As the clock went over 80 minutes, Mull thought they had added a bonus point try but the final pass to Cameron Anson was deemed to be forward.

The result means that Mull continue their undefeated home record this season and sets them up well for the rest of the season.

Tarbert Gun Club's annual turkey match

The last competition of the year on Sunday December 16 was the annual article and turkey match with 36 shooters.

As in previous years, all names were put in a hat and shooters were paired up, so shooters could only rely on luck since any points would average out.

One target

Like previous competitions, there were no runaway winners with five pairs of shooters separated by one target only.

Kilmichael's Shaun Doy is shooting well these days and Malcolm MacDonald of Minard tied with Andrew



Andrew MacDonald, Archie MacGilp junior, Shaun Doy and Malcolm MacDonald.

MacDonald and Archie MacGilp junior for top spot.

Only one target behind were Bob McColl and Donald Nicholson of Bellochantuy,

John Weir partnered with Billy Bergant and Ian Winnard and John Winnard. Tarbert Gun Club thanks everyone involved for their

SHOOTING

support and wishes everyone season's greetings.



The winning Rangers team.

Mid Argyll girls secure a Scottish Cup win for Rangers

By Bruce West

Here's a novelty question. When did two players from Mid Argyll help Rangers win the Scottish Cup?

The answer is this year. Jasmine McPhie and Carla Todd were both key players in Rangers Girls triumphant run in the girls under-15 Scottish Cup.

In their run to the final, Rangers played the top four under-15 girls teams in Scotland beating, Aberdeen 5-0 in the first round, then Hamilton 8-0 and Central Girls 4-0 in rounds two and three. A quarter-final tie against Glasgow City saw the Rangers Girls win 2-1 to set up an Old Firm semi-final against Celtic Girls in which the Rangers Girls emerged 3-2 winners in a close game.

The final was played recently at the Oriam Performance Centre in Edinburgh. In a competitive match, Rangers started strongly but Hibernian began to come into the game and, while both sides had chances, the score remained 0-0 at half-time.

In the second half, Rangers took the lead in 45 minutes but three minutes later Hibernian drew level.

There were few chances in the remainder of the second half and at full-time both teams were level at 1-1. Rangers took the lead again in extra time with a deserved winner to secure the cup.

Jasmine and Carla came through the Lochgilhead Soccer Centre from primary one age to primary seven, playing in Argyll festivals.

In 2016/17, the girls were important members of the successful Lochgilhead Red Star 2004 team which won the DFDL league cup and finished second in their league.

At the end of that season, they joined Rangers Girls where they are in their second season playing mostly in the Paisley League against boys' teams but also in national girls' competitions.

Both girls have also been involved in Scotland national squads for their age group and the soccer centre is delighted to see them thriving with a big club.

With more than 25 girls now playing football through the soccer centre, the success of Jasmine and Carla should be a real inspiration for Argyll girls.

SCOTTISH AMATEUR LEAGUE

Results and fixtures

Last Saturday's result: Scottish Amateur Cup, fifth round – Rothie Rovers 1, Oban Saints 1.

This Saturday's fixtures: Scottish Cup fifth round replay – Oban Saints v Rothie Rovers, Glencruitten, kick-off 1.30pm; Jimmy Marshall Cup, first round – Dunoon v Villa Park, Glenburn Athletic v Campbeltown Pupils; Tarbert v Cardross. Lochgilhead Red Star, no game.

OBAN SAINTS YOUTHS

Results and fixtures

Last Sunday's results: Under-13s 2, Glasgow Boys 4. Scoring for Saints were Gabriel Tidser and Zander Craik.

Next Sunday's fixtures: Finnart v Under 13s; Cam-buslang Colts v Under 14s; Under 15s v Drumchapel; Ardencaple v Under 16s.

OT

GOLF



Robert MacIntyre.

MacIntyre on his first year as a pro golfer

Continued from page 56

middle, but it was seriously nerve-racking. To get the ball actually going forward was an achievement.'

But once he got going, MacIntyre held his own, which instilled confidence in the Glencruitten golfer.

'That's what made me feel comfortable,' he said. 'Now I believe I can actually compete out there. Not just make up the numbers, actually compete for the tournaments.'

Regardless of where the 22-year-old is in the world, he is never far away from the thoughts of friends, family, and the Oban community, especially those involved with Glencruitten Golf Club, where MacIntyre learned his trade.

When asked about the support at home, he said: 'They have been brilliant. Every week I have been getting messages, even if I am struggling. It's not just if you are doing well. So that's encouraging – knowing that they are not just there for the highs, they are actually trying to push you back up when you are down.'

However, despite his success, he still has to chip in and help out at home.

'The family, they are delighted with it, but still realise I have not made it,' he said. 'They are going to be proud, but they realise how much effort has been put in, not just from me, but from them as well – the sacrifices.'

'I'm still doing the housework,' he jokingly added. 'They are keeping me on my toes.'

In order to maintain his European Tour card for next season, MacIntyre will need to finish in the top 110 in the Race to Dubai series.

There are a total of 41 tournaments in the race and the former Scottish amateur champion is hoping to play in around 30.

After a handful of events, Robert is sitting 29th on the back of his two top 15 finishes.

He will need plenty more top results in 2019 to be in with a shout, but it is an exciting time for 'Bob' and everyone who is supporting him.



Bob and the legendary Ernie Els have a chat during the South African Open. Photograph: Bounce Sports.

Saints are still in – but only just

Tale of two penalties keep Saints in the Scottish Cup

Rothie Rovers	1
Oban Saints	1
Scottish Cup – fifth round	

A penalty with two minutes to go on the clock saved Saints' Scottish Amateur Cup hopes.

The game looked like slipping away from the D&K Lafferty-sponsored Oban outfit until James Ford was unceremoniously scythed down in the box.

Lewis Cameron stepped up to take the pressure spot kick and calmly drilled the ball home past Rothie keeper Lewis Milne to level the scores at 1-1.

Saints keeper Graham 'Sugar' Douglas was the hero at the other end when he saved a 71st-minute penalty to save his team from going 2-0 down.

It meant an early start for the Oban outfit last Saturday as they made the 350-mile round trip – an eight-hour drive – to and from Rothienorman in rural Aberdeenshire.

Saints arrived to find an excellent playing surface at the Rothienorman park.

Rothie are in good form this season, not having lost a game, so the Oban side knew they were in for a tough match and this is exactly what they got.

Journey

To reach the fifth round Rothie had defeated Aberdeen Division One (North) side BS Amateurs 5-3 in the first round followed by a narrow 3-2 win against Stirling and District outfit Syngenta. Round three saw them defeat Midlands AFA team Newport and then an impressive 1-0 win over top Caledonian side Dalziel HSFP. All these games were played away from home.

Saints' journey to the fifth round started with a good 3-2 away win in round one over Gartcosh United, followed by and even better 9-1 home victory over Perth outfit St Johns in the second round. A trip to Forfar in round three was on the cards for Saints and they returned with an impressive

3-1 win under their belts. Round four saw them drawn away to East Kilbride Thistle but the East Kilbride side had to forfeit home advantage as their park failed two Saturday pitch inspections with Saints winning the re-arranged game at Glencruitten 5-1.

Surprisingly, Saints co-manager Donald Campbell left himself out of the starting 11 for Saturday's match to take a place on the bench alongside Matty Kelly, Ruairidh Horne, Dougal Graham and Fraser MacFarlane.

The Saints line-up was Graham Douglas between the sticks, behind a back four of Jamie Graham, Dene Cassells, Steven MacLeod and Scott Maitland. Willie Gemmell and Daniel Croarkin took on the midfield holding positions with Lewis Cameron playing just behind James Ford, Craig MacEwan and David Beaton.

Dangerous

The visitors started reasonably well, knocking the ball about confidently, but the home side looked dangerous on the break, hitting long balls forward for the energetic Sean Bremner, who was getting backed up by the eager Keith Walker and Jake Stewart from midfield.

Saints created the first chance of the match when James Ford raced clear up the right flank and cut the ball back for Craig MacEwan but referee Graeme Bowman from Dundee ruled MacEwan offside in a very tight decision.

An uncharacteristic mistake from the reliable Steven MacLeod allowed Ryan Walker a clean run through on goal but the Rothie striker failed to hit the target.

Both teams were going at it hammer and tongs with no quarter being asked or given.

The Oban side were awarded a free kick just outside the 18-yard box in the 21st minute with Willie Gemmell drawing a superb save from the Rothie keeper.

At the other end, another slack piece of play from the

Saints defence allowed Sean Bremner a clear run in on goal but a superb last-ditch tackle from Jamie Graham denied the Rovers front man.

The game was flowing from end to end and was turning into an excellent cup tie for the large crowd of spectators.

However, the 100-mile-an-hour football doesn't suit Saints and they were getting hustled off the ball in the last third of the pitch by a well-drilled Rothie outfit.

James Ford and Lewis Cameron then combined to set up Craig MacEwan, but Craig was crowded out by the Rothie defence before he could get his shot away.

The home side created a couple of half chances before the interval but these were skied over the bar.

The dressing room talk at half-time didn't make for easy listening for the Saints players as Donald Campbell and Willie Gemmell were not happy with the performance and they were told in no uncertain manner to up their game or they would be out the cup.

The home side started the second half on the front foot and had Saints pinned back with only some poor finishing and good defending denying the Aberdeenshire side from taking the lead.

Rovers broke the deadlock in the 55th minute when a long punt up the park caught the Saints defence appealing for offside but Jake Stewart was allowed to play on by the referee and although Graham Douglas saved Stewart's original effort, the ball spun back to the Rothie striker who bundled it home.

Despite the Rothie striker looking at least two yards offside, referee Graeme Bowman allowed the goal to stand.

At this point Saints made a double substitution with Donald Campbell and Matty Kelly replacing Daniel Croarkin and David Beaton. This move seemed to give Saints a better balance as they battled back into the game.



Saints keeper Graham Douglas made a brilliant penalty save to keep his team in the cup tie.

the Scottish Cup



Lewis Cameron held his nerve to slot home a penalty with two minutes remaining to earn Saints a replay. Photos: Derek Black

The Oban side had a great chance to equalise in the 59th minute when Craig MacEwan had a free header in the box from a Lewis Cameron corner but his effort flew past the post.

Worse was to come for the Oban side in the 71st minute when Steven MacLeod handled a cross from Jack Brown in the box, leaving referee Bowman an easy decision to point to the spot.

Rothie's top scorer Jake Stewart was entrusted with the penalty kick but Graham Douglas made a brilliant diving save to keep his team in the match.

Had this spot kick gone in, Saints' Scottish Cup adventure would surely have been over.

This let-off seemed to galvanise the Oban side as they took the game to Rovers and created two good chances through Craig MacEwan and Donald Campbell but these were both missed.

The visitors took off Jamie Graham, replacing him with Ruairidh Horne for the last 15 minutes with the youngster getting forward at every opportunity.

Command

Saints were in command as the clock ran down, but the home side always looked a threat on the break.

Dene Cassells was pushed up front with five minutes remaining in an effort to get that all-important equaliser and he had a great chance but shot wide of the target.

With only two minutes left

on the clock, Saints were awarded a penalty when James Ford was scythed down in the box. Lewis Cameron stepped up and slotted the ball home to make the score 1-1.

Referee Bowman played six minutes of added time before blowing the final whistle.

Saints were obviously the happier of the two sides at the final whistle as they could quite easily have gone out the cup. Credit should go to the players, though, for their battling display in the last 20 minutes which earned the replay.

However, co-managers Donald Campbell and Willie Gemmell were not happy with the overall performance and changes could be on the cards for this Saturday's replay.

They said: 'We are lucky to still be in the cup. We never worked hard enough and gave the ball away far too often. Rothie aren't the greatest of teams but they are a hard-working outfit and unless we match their work rate then we will be in trouble.'

'We had a number of good chances but these were missed. We need to be more clinical in front of goal.'

'In saying that, it was a long journey and it must have had an effect on the players, so this weekend Rothie will have to endure that, so we can have no excuses.'

'We are the better footballing team but we need to go out and prove that on Saturday. If we play the way we can

we're sure we can reach the last 16 of the national cup competition.'

The Oban side would like to thank Allan Hill and John Horne for making the long trip to support the team as well as Obanite John Boyd who has been in Aberdeen for the past 42 years but hasn't forgotten where his loyalty lies.

Saints will be looking for a

FOOTBALL

big turnout of supporters for the replay match which will be played at Glencruitten on Saturday with a 1.30pm kick-off. The official in charge is top Caledonian League referee Ross Holms.

The winners have been drawn away to Alba Thistle in the last 16. This tie is scheduled for Saturday February 2.



James Ford was scythed down for the penalty.



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WEATHER

Thursday
Light cloud and a gentle breeze
Temperatures 7°C to 9°C.

Friday
Light cloud and a moderate breeze
Temperatures 7°C to 10°C.

Weekend Outlook

Saturday
Light rain showers and a moderate breeze

Sunday
Drizzle and a moderate breeze
Temperatures 7°C to 10°C.



FRIDAY

TIDAL INFORMATION

Tide tables for Oban during the week from **Thursday January 10, 2019** are listed below with differences for major ports listed on the right. All times are GMT (add one hour BST)

Thur	02.14	1.3	08.07	3.8
	14.37	1.6	20.13	3.6
Fri	02.47	1.5	08.42	3.7
	15.13	1.7	20.46	3.5
Sat	03.19	1.6	09.18	3.5
	15.52	1.8	21.22	3.3
Sun	03.55	1.7	09.59	3.4
	16.38	1.9	22.05	3.2
Mon	04.41	1.8	10.50	3.3
	17.36	2.0	22.59	3.0
Tues	05.41	1.9	12.02	3.2
	18.41	1.9	***	**
Wed	00.13	3.0	06.51	1.9
	13.47	3.2	19.47	1.8

Tidal Constants: (Add or deduct from High Water at Oban)

Ardrishaig	-5.35	Mallaig	+0.25
Campbeltown	-5.30	Portree	+0.55
Crinan	-0.47	Tobermory	+0.16
Islay Port Ellen	2.00	Dover	+5.30
Lochboisdale	+0.30		

Ferry Crossings/Sea States

Oban to Barra/South Uist	Moderate
Oban to Coll/Tiree	Moderate
Kennacraig to Islay	Moderate

Stop Press: New pontoons at Ulva Ferry and visitor moorings installed at Lochaline by North West Marine Ltd



INSIDE THIS WEEK:
League leaders Lenzie
prove too strong for
the Green Machine

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AND TIDES - SEE PAGE 55



Robert MacIntyre pictured beside the new banner proudly displayed outside Glencruitten Golf Club.

MacIntyre talks about his first year as a pro golfer

by David McPhee
dmcph@obantimes.co.uk



What a year it has been for Oban golfing sensation Robert MacIntyre.

In his rookie season as a professional golfer, the 22-year-old finished second in the Foshan Open, secured a European Tour card, and played with some of the game's greats.

And following a second

top-15 finish in the European Tour, the left-handed player went into the festive break sitting in the top 30 in the Race to Dubai rankings, with a \$1.25 million bonus going to the player who finishes first at the end of the season.

'I always wanted to get to the European Tour,' MacIntyre told The Oban Times. 'But I honestly didn't expect it to happen in the first year.'

'It's been good,' MacIntyre said about his first year on the

professional circuit. 'It was a shock, and it wasn't a shock at the same time. After my start I was a wee bit behind, but once I got going I started feeling comfortable.'

'I knew I had a chance [to get a European Tour card]. As long as I stayed in the top 45, I knew if I had one big result in the last four events then I would be close, but for it to be on that event, that's why the emotion came out over that putt.'

'Once that went in, it wasn't just the emotion of taking the lead or getting into a play-off, it was the emotion of what I have almost achieved.'

December was a massive month for MacIntyre, who secured two top 15 finishes, winning more than £31,000 in the process.

'The money is a reward at the end of it, that's the way I try and see it,' he said. 'There's going to be a time where I am in with a chance to win,

a real chance coming down the last six to seven holes and for the first time it is going to be seriously nerve-racking because all you are going to be thinking about is what is on the line - not just the tournament, the finances that come with it. Just now I am just trying to enjoy it and play golf and if I play good golf I will make money and make points.'

On his travels, MacIntyre has been paired twice with

South African legend Ernie Els, and on both occasions, the Oban man matched the four-time major winner.

'The first tee shot with Ernie, I could hardly tee the ball up,' he said. 'I put it down the

Continued on page 54



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No 8441

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A COOKING EXPERIENCE WITH NICK NAIRN



Lochaber pupil set to strike for climate change action

EXCLUSIVE

by Mark Entwistle
mentwistle@obantimes.co.uk

Thirteen-year-old Lochaber High School pupil Holly Gillibrand will tomorrow (Friday) walk out of school to stage a one-hour strike in support of calls for more government action to tackle climate change.

Holly, from Kinlocheil, is in second year at the Fort William secondary, and says she has been inspired by the astonishing speech given at the recent UN summit on climate change in Poland by teenage climate campaigner Greta Thunberg.

The address by the 15-year-old from Sweden, in which she shamed climate change negotiators at the summit over their lack of action so far, went viral online.

'You are not mature enough to tell it like it is,' Ms Thunberg said at the COP24 summit. 'Even that burden you leave to us children. But I don't care about being

popular. I care about climate justice and the living planet.'

The Swedish teenager has now inspired thousands of young people in 40 countries around the globe to walk out of their schools on Fridays in a demand that adults take more radical action on climate change.

Now Holly, already fast becoming a seasoned environmentalist with a recent campaign around Fort William on single-use plastic, is set to follow in Ms Thunberg's footsteps.

Solidarity

She told the Lochaber Times: 'I am planning to climate strike in solidarity with Greta Thunberg every Friday from 8.45am to 9.45am and I hope more students and people will join me.'

'On February 15 there is also going to be a UK-wide school strike, so hopefully I will have a group of people striking with me by then.'

'I am striking because the UK government is not doing enough to prevent rapid



climate breakdown and to have net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2025.'

Holly's mum Kate Willis is one of the founding members of the new Fort William

branch of the Extinction Rebellion protest movement on climate change, which will stage its first meeting on January 22 in the town's Duncansburgh Hall.

She says her daughter, who eventually wants to be a vet, has her full support for the series of Friday climate strikes and intends being with her tomorrow outside

Holly Gillibrand says she has been inspired by young Swedish climate activist Greta Thunberg's speech at the UN's recent climate summit in Poland.

Photograph: Iain Ferguson, The Write Image

the school. 'We have notified the school that Holly will be absent for an hour – she will be missing a drama class – and hopefully many others will lend their support,' she said. 'Hopefully, any others will be doing it for the right reasons and not just because they fancy an hour out of school.'

'It would be best if any young people wanting to join Holly make sure their parents give their consent and notify the school.'

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Esme Leitch, centre, with Highland council convener Bill Lobban and council leader Margaret Davidson at her induction last year.



Being Heard authors John Ross Scott, right, and Kristopher Leask with Highland Council leader Margaret Davidson.

Lochaber's Esme at forefront of new youth study

by Mark Entwistle
mentwistle@obantimes.co.uk

Lochaber's Esme Leitch is at the forefront of a major new study into engagement by young people within Scottish local authorities.

Esme, 20, from Duror, who was inducted last year as Highland Council Youth Convener, features in the recently published Being Heard study.

The report gives, for the first time, details of what is happening within Scotland's 32 councils when it comes to young people's participation and engagement with decision makers.

The report's authors, Orkney councillor John Ross Scott and Kristopher Leask, say the aim of the report is to fill the void of unawareness

that has led to young people in certain areas being left behind in local policy making.

Mr Scott said he had been very impressed with Ms Leitch. 'Esme is really special and a great asset to the Highlands,' he told the Lochaber Times.

'Being a spokesperson for young people for such a vast area cannot be easy but she has a great personality, honed probably by her radio experience and, with assistance from others, she is doing her job well and giving us an insight into what could be achievable across Scotland.

'We could not believe the youth convener's post – which allows a young person into the heart of decision making – has not in the 13 years it has been operated in the Highlands, been trialled elsewhere.

'One concern might be that councils find coping with the administration of the role too time consuming but thanks to Hi-Life Highland it is achievable. But other areas could duplicate this.

'We thank Esme for helping us understand the role of the youth convener. We are sure she has a bright future.'

Esme said: 'I don't like it when people say they are keen to give young people a voice. Young people already have a voice.'

'I don't see this as being about adults giving young

people a voice. It is more about adults listening more actively to the voices that are already there.'

A former community presenter with Nevis Radio in Fort William and a member in 2017-18 of the Young Women's Lead Committee at the Scottish Parliament, Esme told the report's authors that space needed to be found to allow young people the time to engage in important discussions.

'Young people run in different circles from adults. We communicate differently and while we are at school they are at work, so it is important space is found – possibly in the evening – to link up, so evening meetings may be a way forward to attract young people to come to the table and engage in important discussions,' she said.

'There also really needs to be a change when it comes to who sits around the table. We cannot, for instance, continue to have entire community councils made up exclusively of older people.

'In some countries, they have legislated youth quotas which reserve seats for young people in parliament.

'Obviously, we cannot take away the public's democratic right to choose candidates, but legislation of some type may help address what appears to me to be an imbalance across age ranges.'

Search on for two board members

NHS Highland is looking for two new members to join its board.

The non-executive members will play a central role in representing the public, guiding strategy and holding the board to account for delivery of health services.

The role takes up, on average, eight hours a week, in exchange for £8,416 a year plus reasonable travel and subsistence costs. The closing date for applications is tomorrow, Friday January 11. For more information contact Seonaidh Laing, on 01463 704811 or email Seonaidh.laing@nhs.net

Lochaber features on new song map

Lochaber has featured on a map of the most sung about places in the world.

The classic anthem Letter from America by The Proclaimers pushed Lochaber onto the list, with its famous lyric 'Lochaber no more'. The interactive music map – the first of its kind – analysed more than 200,000 songs to discover places around the world mentioned the most in songs since the 1960s.

Grange Stores steps closed

The communal steps between Grange Road at the Spar Shop up to Lundavra Road will be closed until Tuesday January 29.

This is to allow Highland Council to build replacement steps and carry out repairs in the area. There will be no access to the site, but various alternative routes are available.

An Aird one of the best places to watch sport

The home of Fort William Shinty Club, An Aird, has been listed as one of the best places to watch sport in the UK and Ireland by a national newspaper.

The premier shinty venue was recently named by The Times as one of The 50 Best Places to Watch Sport in the UK and Ireland.

Sports journalist Alasdair Reid, explaining why An Aird deserves to be listed alongside such illustrious venues as St Andrews Old Course and Liverpool's Anfield Stadium, said that watching a shinty match on the Fort William pitch is 'a marvellous experience', owing to its dramatic setting.

He said: 'Laid out on a



Spectators at An Aird, the home of Fort William Shinty Club, enjoy dramatic views of Ben Nevis from the main stand.

reclaimed rubbish tip and surrounded by a retail estate, An Aird, the home of Fort William Shinty Club, might not look too promising on paper. However, the views from its main – well, only – stand are remarkable, as it looks towards the dramatic,

mist-shrouded flanks of Ben Nevis, Britain's highest mountain.'

An Aird regularly hosts shinty's blue riband event, the Camanachd Cup final, and has previously hosted Scotland v Ireland shinty/hurling international fixtures.

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Owners Stephen and Fiona Leckie outside the new Kingshouse Hotel.

New era for hotel after major revamp

Developers have confirmed the Kingshouse Hotel in Glencoe will reopen next month after a £12 million refurbishment.

Formerly a 17th-century droving inn, Kingshouse Hotel on Rannoch Moor has welcomed its fair share of guests over the centuries and was well-loved by climbers and walkers on the West Highland Way.

With the refurbishment nearing completion, the new hotel is almost unrecognisable.

Project management team Bidwells says great care has been taken to retain the informality of the inn while upgrading the building for today's guests.

Kingshouse will be managed by the Crieff Hydro Family of Hotels and owner Stephen Leckie said: 'Our motivation from the outset was to provide continuity for all the things which make Kingshouse unique, while ensuring its longevity for another century and more.'

The refurbishment project was not free from controversy, however, as conservation organisations The John Muir Trust and the National Trust for Scotland objected to the new hotel plans on the grounds the designs are not in keeping with the surrounding area.

New general manager Craig Haddow added: 'I feel really fortunate to be part of the next chapter of this historic inn. The response locally to the 54 new jobs being created has been superb and we intend to bring wider facilities to this area, including weddings and events.'

The Kingshouse Hotel is due to reopen on Friday February 8.

Climber killed on Ben Nevis was from Germany

Lochaber Police have confirmed that the climber who died on Ben Nevis on New Year's Day was a 21-year-old woman from Germany.

The incident was reported to police at 10.40am after the woman, a student from Bristol University who was part of a four-strong party on a planned expedition along the

popular Càrn Dearg route, fell 500 feet while climbing.

On New Year's Day, Lochaber Mountain Rescue Team received an emergency call at around 10.30am and a Coastguard helicopter airlifted members of the team to retrieve the woman's body and pick up her climbing companions.

A statement posted on the Lochaber Mountain Rescue Team Facebook page said: 'The team had to recover a young climber who, unfortunately, lost her life following an accident on Càrn Dearg on Ben Nevis. We pass on our sincere condolences to her family and friends. A very sad start to 2019.'

The team also thanked the Coastguard helicopter crew for what it called 'another example of exceptional flying', enabling the team to evacuate the casualty from a very difficult location.

Sergeant Michael Bell said: 'Our thoughts are with the woman's friends and family at this tragic time. There are no

suspicious circumstances and a report will be submitted to the procurator fiscal.'

The woman's family have requested no further details are issued.

This is the second death on Britain's highest mountain in a matter of weeks and follows that of Cardiff University student Patrick Boothroyd, 21.

Lochaber clinical waste to be shipped to Shetland

by Mark Entwistle
mentwistle@obantimes.co.uk

Residents of Lerwick in Shetland could find themselves being kept warm this winter thanks to their local incinerator being used to burn bags of clinical waste produced by hospitals, GP practices and dental surgeries in Lochaber.

Healthcare Environmental Services (HES), based in Shotts with 10 regional plants across the UK, confirmed last week that it served its entire 400-strong UK workforce with redundancy notices.

The company lost its contracts with NHS Scotland and 17 NHS trusts in England after it was found to have been storing waste, including human body parts, more than five times the permitted limit.

The NHS Scotland contracts covered every hospital and GP surgery in Scotland, including the Belford

Hospital, Fort William. Asked what the consequences were for clinical waste collection from the Belford Hospital and other Lochaber medical centres, an NHS Highland spokesman told the Lochaber Times that part of the health authority's contingency plan was using a 'local contractor' to collect waste from all community hospitals, GP practices, dental surgeries and pharmacists.

Asked how the waste from Lochaber was actually being disposed of, the spokesman said: 'Pharma and anatomical waste is taken to facilities in the Central Belt and in England, while the clinical waste is taken to Shetland for incineration.'

The Gremista-based Energy Recovery Plant incinerator in Shetland fuels Lerwick's heating scheme.

He added the Shetland incinerator is an alternative

solution which is part of the contingency plans put in place by the Scottish Government until a new national contract comes into force in April.

Previously, during HES operations, all waste from NHS Highland, including Lochaber, went to Shotts for appropriate treatment or disposal or incineration.

The Scottish Environment

Protection Agency (SEPA) has announced it is investigating whether HES was guilty of offences for failing to act on four enforcement notices at its plants in Dundee and Shotts. Environmental agency investigators in England have also launched their own probe into the company, although managing director of HES, Garry Pettigrew, has been

adamant the waste was being stored securely and blamed a UK-wide shortage of suitable incinerators combined with more waste being sent for incineration by the NHS.

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Skye hotel group joins UK Living Wage campaign

A group of multi-award-winning boutique hotels on Skye has become the first hospitality provider in the Hebridean islands to sign up to the UK's real Living Wage and says its move will help post-Brexit recruitment of staff in one of Europe's most popular tourist destinations.

Sonos Hospitality has agreed to pay employees at least £9 an hour – the figure set by the Living Wage Foundation based on actual living costs for workers outside London.

'Staff in the hospitality business work very hard and we believe each one should be valued and treated fairly,' said Anne Gracie Gunn, who heads the group which

owns Duisdale and Toravaig House on Sleat and Skeabost House near Portree. 'All are important links in the visitor experience chain.'

Around two-thirds of Sonas' staff on Sleat and 50 per cent at Skeabost are not local. The company employs just under 80 at peak season with 48 all year round.

Mrs Gracie Gunn added: 'Adoption of the real Living Wage shows we invest in our staff as well as our hotels' infrastructure and helps demonstrate to overseas and UK workers that, no matter what happens after Brexit, there is decent money to be made in the hotels industry which also offers excellent career prospects.'

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Drugs case arrest warrant issued

A warrant was granted by Sheriff Eilidh MacDonald at Fort William Sheriff Court last week for the arrest of a Lochwinnoch man for possessing cocaine and cannabis.

Nicholas Wiszniewski, 37, failed to appear at court to answer the charges, alleged to have occurred on September 29 last year in Fort William's Wallace Place.

Another man charged alongside Wiszniewski, Sean Parkes, 38, of Wallace Place, had his case continued until January 29.

Woman was of good behaviour

A woman ordered to be of good behaviour for six months after admitting slapping her partner on the face on May 6 was admonished at Fort William Sheriff Court last week.

Chloe Turner, 19, of the town's Fassifern Road, appeared in court last June. On hearing she had been of good behaviour, Sheriff Eilidh MacDonald ordered Turner be admonished.

German tourist drove on wrong side of road

A German tourist who became disorientated after reversing onto the A86 road, near Moy Lodge, colliding with another car while on the wrong side of the road, has been banned from driving in the UK for eight months.

Matthias Maximilian Hinkel, 30, from Kaiserslautern, appeared at Fort William Sheriff Court last week and pleaded guilty to an amended charge of careless driving on the A86 on August 10 last year.

Procurator Fiscal Ross Carvel told the court the collision occurred at 11.30am on the morning of the day in question.

'The complainant was travelling at 60mph and tried to avoid a head-on collision with the accused's vehicle and drove onto the verge. But this was unsuccessful and there was a head-on impact on the complainant's side of the road.'

Mr Carvel added Hinkel was taken to Raigmore Hospital, Inverness, with a suspected spinal fracture but it turned out he was less seriously injured.

Hinkel's girlfriend, however, needed hospital treatment in intensive care for a fractured spine and ribs and a liver injury, plus surgery to stop internal bleeding.

A man in the complainant's car was treated in hospital for a fractured hip.

The vehicle's driver and a two-year-old toddler who were also in the car were uninjured.

Defence agent Hamish Melrose said his client, a 30-year-old electrical engineer who qualified at Kaiserslautern University last year, had been on holiday and the couple were travelling in a hired car.

'They pulled off the road onto a forestry trail on the

opposite side of the road with a view to doing a u-turn and heading back the way they had come,' said Mr Melrose.

'But there was no area available to do a three-point-turn and he therefore reversed out onto the road, but became disorientated in his own view and ended up driving on the wrong side of the road.'

'He first realised he was on the wrong side when he spotted the oncoming vehicle and there was more or less a head-on collision.'

'He did try to swerve to avoid it but there was insufficient time. Mr Hinkel was in a state of shock after the accident and was found apologising to the driver of

the other vehicle.' As well as banning him from the road, Sheriff Eilidh MacDonald also fined Hinkel £640. 'This was a very serious matter with serious consequences,' she said.

'But I have to be mindful of the charge you have pleaded guilty to, which is one of careless driving.'

Fundraising calendar celebrates landscape

A new calendar is raising funds and supporting the work of the Nevis Landscape Partnership in protecting the unique landscape of Ben Nevis and Glen Nevis.

The calendar, called 'A Place of Contrast', contains photographs taken by partnership volunteers of areas they work in throughout Lochaber. Nevis Landscape Partnership digital marketing assistant Iona Skyring is pictured showing off the calendars. All proceeds raised go towards supporting projects run by the Nevis Landscape Partnership. Calendars are available from the partnership's office at An Drochaid, Claggan.



Court hears Claggan man held bar stool over head

A sheriff told a Claggan man that some of the hours of unpaid work he must do after admitting charges involving a breach of the peace and making abusive remarks to police officers, is for shouting offensive remarks about people with a disability.

Sean Thomas Laskey, 29, of Carn Dearg Road, appeared at Fort William Sheriff Court for sentencing after previously pleading guilty to two charges.

These were that on April 15 last year, at an establishment in Fort William's High Street, he had committed a breach of the peace in that he behaved in a disorderly manner by throwing a glass which smashed; shouted and swore and raised a bar stool over his head.

Laskey further admitted behaving in a threatening or abusive manner likely to cause fear and alarm by making abusive remarks to police officers.

Procurator Fiscal Ross Carvel told the court the incident had been sparked when drink had been spilled

by Laskey and others with him. 'The accused was asked to leave as a result. His friends accepted that and left but the accused began questioning this and became irate,' said Mr Carvel.

'He stepped to the side and threw a glass over the bar which hit a wall and smashed. He then began shouting and swearing as he walked towards the exit.'

'It was at this point he picked up a bar stool and held it above his head. A member of staff and one of the other patrons managed to remove the stool from him and pushed him out into the High Street. Police were contacted and the accused was traced 20 minutes later to [another bar], where he was arrested and handcuffed by police officers.'

Mr Carvel added Laskey had then been threatening and abusive towards the officers and continued that behaviour at the town's police station.

In mitigation, defence agent Gerry Sweeney told the court that on viewing CCTV footage from the first

establishment, the glass had not been thrown but simply moved and then dropped.

'But nonetheless the offence had taken place,' he conceded.

'There was extensive inebriation on Mr Laskey's part. He had been deeply involved with alcohol abuse at that stage of his life,' said Mr Sweeney.

'He is ashamed and disgusted by his behaviour on this occasion, as he surely should be, over the remarks made to the police officers.'

'He is now banned from every pub in the town. As these are quite antiquated cases, this is an aspect which has perhaps actually helped Mr Laskey in tackling his alcohol issues.'

Sentencing Laskey to carry out 104 hours of unpaid work, Sheriff Eilidh MacDonald added: 'A total of 20 of these hours are for shouting at people with a disability and this is a direct alternative to custody.'

Laskey will make another appearance at the town's court in March on separate charges.

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Patients wait too long at accident and emergency departments

More than 3,700 people waited too long at NHS Highland accident and emergency departments in 2018, new figures have revealed.

Data published by ISD Scotland reveals 3,600 people waited more than four hours in accident and emergency last year, with 194 waiting more than eight hours. The figures represent a significant increase from 2017.

The number of patients waiting for longer than 12 hours has, however, decreased by 33 per cent in the last year.

Scottish Labour said the figures evidenced the stress the health service is under, with overworked staff facing crowded departments because of mismanagement elsewhere in the health service – such as staffing vacancies in social care and primary care.

David Stewart, Highlands and Islands regional MSP and shadow minister for health, said: 'Patients and staff in NHS Highland deserve better. These figures expose the scale of the challenge NHS staff face in delivering patient care and how badly they have been let down by years of SNP mismanagement of our NHS.'

'We already know staff do not feel they are getting enough support and that the level of unfilled health posts is unsustainable.'

'Ministers set the health service targets for staff to hit then do not deliver the support and resources needed. It isn't good enough.'

Fort among first for 'top-up taps'

Thirsty walkers will soon be able to top up refillable water bottles as soon as they cross the finishing line of the West Highland Way in Fort William's Gordon Square.

New high-tech 'top-up-taps' are part of a scheme the Scottish Government hopes will encourage more people to use refillable bottles.

Fort William, along with Inverness, will be among the first to get the new taps installed in the spring with the rest introduced over the course of the next two years.

Each tap will be plumbed into the public water supply and fitted with technology which will enable them to digitally track water use, transmitting the data via cloud technology to specialists managing Scotland's water networks.

Data loggers inside provide information which can be translated into cost, plastic savings and the volume of water used.

Commenting at the launch of the initiative, Scottish Water chief executive Douglas Millican said the creation of a network of 'top-up taps' across the country is part of the organisation's 'Your Water, Your Life' campaign, which aims to encourage more people to drink tap water.

'Our research shows people feel very positively towards

'It's yet another sign we're all thinking more about our beautiful but fragile environment'

the quality of Scotland's tap water. Now these taps will allow water drinkers to enjoy it while on the go by using refillable bottles,' he said.

The scheme was welcomed by Lochaber Environmental Group which said it was delighted to see the installation of a new drinking tap in the High Street.

'This news is a positive development for the town and will mean far less use of plastic bottles which are a problem in production and disposal,' said a spokesperson.

'Reducing the transportation associated with bottled water as it is trucked huge distances will result in much-needed carbon savings as we try to tackle the challenges of climate change.'

'It's yet another sign we're all thinking more about our beautiful but fragile environment which is greatly encouraging.'

The national drive to encourage people to stay hydrated and healthy by drinking water from the tap in refillable bottles was set out in the Scottish Government's Programme for Government



Douglas Millican, chief executive of Scottish Water, and Roseanna Cunningham, Cabinet Secretary for the Environment, Climate Change and Land, try out one of the new top-up taps. Photograph: Gareth Easton Photography.

2018-2019. In summer 2018, Scottish Water launched Your Water, Your Life – a campaign to show how topping up from

the tap can benefit health and well-being, save money and help reduce waste and impact on the environment.

Extinction Rebellion to hold first Fort William meeting

Environmental activist group Extinction Rebellion is hosting its first public meeting in Fort William.

Taking place on Tuesday January 22 at Duncansburgh Church Hall, organisers hope to engage with Lochaber residents about the aims and objectives of the group.

Established in 2018, Extinction Rebellion is an international social movement that aims to drive radical change through non-violent protest to minimise species extinction and avert climate breakdown.

Campaigners want local and national government to enact legally binding policy measures to reduce carbon emissions to net zero by 2025 and reduce consumption levels. The movement gained global attention in November 2018 after thousands of people took part in co-ordinated action in London in what was described as 'one of the biggest acts of peaceful civil disobedience in the UK in decades'.

Channel swim veterans dive in for New Year dip in Loch Shiel

More than 30 hardy souls from across the UK, including three cross-Channel swim veterans, took the plunge at Glenfinnan on New Year's Day for the traditional dip in the cold waters of Loch Shiel.

The water temperature was 10 degrees but that did not deter the brave band of swimmers for the popular event, which has been organised for the last 14 years by local open water swimmer Morag Hughes who has completed the swim from England to France.

Also among the group were Lianne Hickling and Jean Wilkin-Oxley who, as well as conquering the Channel, have also completed many other swimming challenges.

Morag commented: 'It was great to swim with Jean and Liane in the loch. Maybe not quite as demanding as the Channel but, nonetheless, quite exciting.'



The three English Channel swim veterans who tackled the cold waters of Loch Shiel on New Year's Day, along with nearly 30 other hardy swimmers – from left Jean Wilkin-Oxley, Morag Hughes and Lianne Hickling. Photograph: Iain Ferguson, The Write Image.

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As a change from my planned extension of last week's article, I'm taking a tack off piste to extol the virtues of a culinary delight I enjoyed for the first time at the weekend. It was an experience I had to brace myself for as it was not in the usual range of items I would voluntarily swallow.

The humble sea urchin is an ocean creature that's been familiar to me all my life but not until last weekend did I ever consider eating any part of one!

We had to do some online research to make sure we were eating the right bits and it did not whet my appetite at all to read that the parts to be consumed were in fact the gonads of this poor creature!

However, unlike the immediate image conjured by my immature mind and the common slang use of the word 'gonads', in an anatomical sense this just means any reproductive organ and therefore like the roe, melt, or coral of many fish or shellfish which we eat regularly, such as scallop, cod or herring,

What was to be eaten were thankfully not akin to those of land living mammals and were much more palatable than what immediately came to mind when reading the description!

I am generally not keen on eating fish or shellfish raw except for oysters and occasionally scallops if they are just out the sea, but according to all the online sources we looked at this was how best to consume the sea urchin. This one had come out the sea only a few hours before and caught in the clear clean waters south of the Gunna Sound, so at least we knew it was fresh and from a good home!

After having chopped the spiky shelled beast in two, we carefully found and extracted all the right bits and placed them on a plate ready for eating. The light yellow, slightly slimy mush did not look attractive and at this stage I almost certainly would have chickened out had it not been for my much more gastronomically adventurous wife whose idea it had been to take

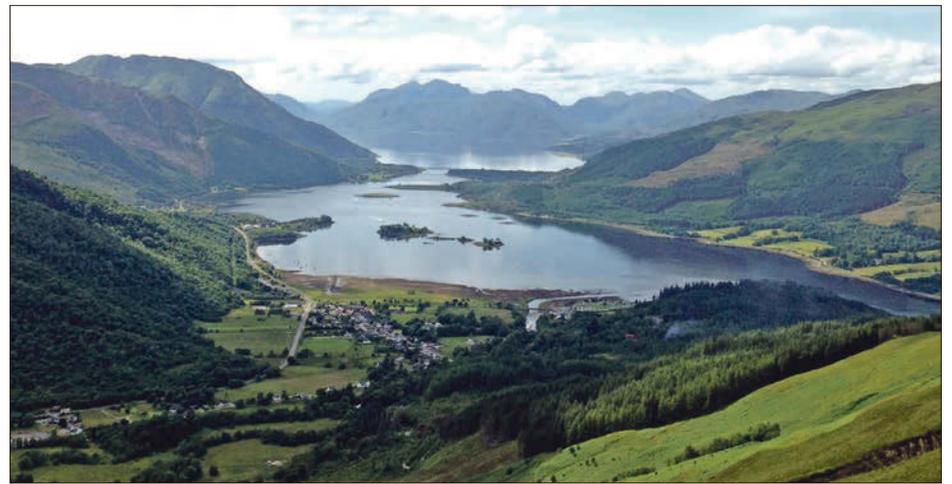
the sea urchin home to try it when my brother pulled it out one of his creels to show her.

Simultaneously we both took a spoon and the taste was a total surprise! As expected it was slightly salty but coupled with that sea-like effect was a deep sweetness that made it almost fruity. It was like eating a combination of sweet pear, cream and oyster together with a surprisingly satisfying and pleasant overall effect. The rest was soon eaten and very much savoured.

We were happy to move on to the much more familiar main course of crab claws and lobster after that, also taken home from the same very enjoyable short trip out.

While researching how to prepare the sea urchin, I read that it was a New Year tradition in Japan to exchange them as gifts as part of the festive celebrations and that made the eating of them at the start of the year all the more fitting.

Bliadhna Mhath Ur Iapanach dhuibh uile!



The proposed Allt Fhiodhan hydro development will be located just over one kilometre from Glencoe village, to the left of the photograph shown here.

Concern over proposed Glencoe hydro scheme

by Neill Bo Finlayson
nfinlayson@obantimes.co.uk

Glencoe residents have raised concerns over a proposed new hydro-electric scheme close to the village.

Glen Hydro has submitted plans to Highland Council to build a run of river hydro scheme on the Allt Fhiodhan river, a tributary to the River Coe and the application is now under consideration by councillors.

The development would be approximately one kilometre southwest of the Glencoe Camping and Caravan Site, just outside Glencoe village.

Construction of the scheme will include burying pipelines and building access tracks across the site. Access to the site will be via the A82 trunk road, using a new entrance from the A82 for the turbine house area and the existing entrance to Glencoe Visitor Centre and campsite for the

remainder of the site.

If planning is approved, the scheme will generate power equivalent to the average electricity use of 220 homes.

However, some villagers have expressed concerns over the impact of the scheme on surrounding rivers, streams and burns. Some residents also felt the consultation process was inadequate.

One worried local resident, who wished to remain anonymous, told the Lochaber Times: 'There are a lot of concerns about what this would mean for the Inverigan burn, which is an important tributary of the River Coe. There had been no public meetings as far as I am aware and some people say they have never received neighbour notifications about the planning application.'

Chairman of Glencoe and Glen Etive Community Council Alister Sutherland said Glen Hydro had attended

a meeting with community councillors to explain the proposed scheme. Mr Sutherland confirmed the community council has no objections to the application.

The proposed scheme lies within the Ben Nevis and Glencoe National Scenic Area, however a full landscape and visual impact assessment is not required.

In the company's design statement, Glen Hydro said: 'The proposal has been designed to minimise visual impact and with proposed mitigations all landscape and visual effects during construction would be temporary and no important effects would remain by year five. The site lies on land owned by Forestry Commission Scotland and it is intended that a lease will be agreed for the rights to develop and operate the scheme. The area is currently used for commercial forestry purposes.'

VIEW FROM THE CHAMBER

What makes the difference in business? Building strong business relationships.

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ing sessions on topics such as getting the best out of digital technology for your business, social media for tourism and host regular business showcase events that let newer members introduce what they do and site visits that allow us a peek behind-the-scenes at some of our area's biggest employers.

There are many great reasons for joining Lochaber Chamber of Commerce, so why not come along to an event to see what we're all about? Check out our events calendar on www.lochaber-chamber.co.uk or give us a call on 01397 705 765.

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Achnacarry man gets OBE for mountain rescue work

Achnacarry resident and HM Coastguard Area Commander Jonathan Hart says he is delighted to receive an OBE for his voluntary work with Lochaber Mountain Rescue Team.

He was one of four people in the Lochaber, Skye and Western Islands to feature in the New Year's Honours List.

The others were Sheriff Colin Scott Mackenzie DL, of Lewis, who gets an OBE for services to communities in the Western and Northern isles; Duncan MacInnes, creative director of Skye Events for All (SEALL) who gets an MBE for services to the arts and natural environment on Skye, and Mairi Levack of North Uist who gets the BEM.

Mr Hart has served with the mountain rescue team for more than 20 years. The role has seen him travel across the world, specialising in avalanche rescue and technical rope rescue techniques.

He says the voluntary work he does benefits his daytime

job as an area commander responsible for 18 HM Coastguard search and rescue teams, all made up of volunteers.

His reaction to receiving the award is one of delight but his response is typical of all those who volunteer, a reminder of the other support that really matters.

He said: 'I need to thank my partner Emma for supporting me. In addition, no individual award can be made without recognising that any major search and rescue is a team effort.

'For that reason, I need to recognise and thank my Lochaber Mountain Rescue Team colleagues for being always there for people in distress in the mountains on the west coast of Scotland and for whom I receive this award on behalf of.'

Sheriff Mackenzie said he too was surprised and delighted to be honoured with an OBE. 'It is always delightful to receive a pat on

the back however deserved (or otherwise) that might be – being all too aware that there are so many others far better entitled to the recognition than am I – but it is a pleasant situation to be in nonetheless,' he told the Lochaber Times.

The creative director of performing arts promotion charity SEALL Duncan MacInnes came to live in Sleat as a young adult.

This is the third time he has been recognised for his services to the community and performing arts.

'I am delighted to receive this honour and am grateful to those in the community that made it happen. It is wonderful to be rewarded for something I thoroughly enjoy doing,' he said.

'I am doubly pleased the citation covers the arts and the natural environment, referring to a previous existence. I am but one of many, so raise a glass to all rural arts promoters and all countryside rangers.'



Jonathan Hart receives the OBE for his services to Lochaber Mountain Rescue Team.

New depute 'privileged' to work at Kinlochleven

Kinlochleven High School has a new depute head following the retirement of long-serving teacher Gordon Milne.

After 13 years at Kinlochleven High School as principal teacher, depute and acting head teacher, Mr Milne retired in October having supported every aspect of school life.

His replacement, Joe Hannaway, who started at the school this week, is keen to pick up where his predecessor left off.

Formerly employed at Keswick School in the Lake District, he said he 'feels privileged' to have arrived at Kinlochleven, 'swapping one beautiful setting for another'.

Mr Hannaway, who teaches maths, said: 'One of the things that drew me to Kinlochleven was the fantastic sense of community at the school. I have received the warmest of welcomes from everyone, for which I am truly grateful.

'I have operated in a variety of roles previously, supporting



Joe Hannaway.

students through their induction into the school, guiding them through the options process and helping them upon leaving school, whether that be to higher education, training or employment.

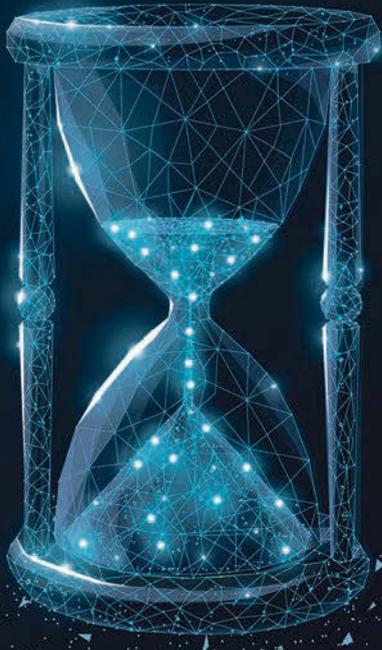
'I am passionate about supporting our young people, offering them advice, guidance and encouragement on a journey that will hopefully result in success. I am certain I can make a significant contribution to the wider life of the school, working closely

with a fantastic team of staff to ensure all of students produce the desirable outcomes that will provide a foundation on which they can build a successful career.

'Even though I fully recognise exam results are a vital component for many careers, I firmly believe it is equally important students receive a varied education, one where they learn how to be well-rounded citizens, contributing positively to society, recognising that success comes in many forms. It has been my experience that students positively thrive in an environment where their well-being is woven into the very fabric of the community, allowing them to feel safe, secure and supported, while affording them the opportunity to realise their full potential.

'Given that I am new to the area, I would encourage you to introduce yourself should you see me around school, or anywhere else. I look forward to meeting many of you in the weeks and months to come.'

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Well-known Lewis tour guide dies after collision

The pedestrian who died following a road traffic accident on the A857 at Swainbost on Lewis on Hogmanay has been named as tour guide Joan Morrison.

The collision occurred at 5.30pm and involved a Black Dacia Logan. The driver of the car was not injured.

It is believed the 67-year-old woman was on foot on her way to a church service to commemorate the centenary

of the HMY Iolaire maritime disaster. For the past 20 years she had worked as a tour guide and played an active role in the Western Isles Tour Guides' Association.

Sergeant Christopher Murray of the Road Policing Department, Highlands and Islands Division, said: 'Our thoughts at this time are with those involved and their families. Road policing officers have

travelled to Lewis and an investigation into the collision is under way. We have already spoken to a number of witnesses and we are grateful for the assistance the local community has provided. To help establish the cause of the collision, I would urge anyone who saw either the vehicle prior to the collision, a pedestrian walking in the area or the collision, who has not already come forward, to do so.'



Joan Murray Morrison who died following the accident on December 31.

WHAT'S ON in Lochaber

■ The first Lochaber Local History Society meeting of 2019 sees the 'world premiere' showing of a collection of old glass plate slides recently found at the other end of the country.

The scenes depicted follow in detail the construction of the West Highland Railway extension to Mallaig from 1897 to 1900.

They have been extensively researched by Hege Hernes of Glenfinnan Station Museum who will take his audience on a mystery tour from the Mallaig railway construction works and Polish hospital, Arisaig, to Portland, Maine, via County Donegal.

Everyone welcome at the Ben Nevis Hotel on Thursday January 10 at 8pm.

■ Police Scotland's recruitment team will be hosting an event at the Nevis Centre, Fort William, on Friday January 11 for anyone interested in the role of a constable or volunteering as a special constable.

Participants will be given details of the various stages of the recruitment process. Attendees will also be able to test themselves with a mock exam and given advice on interview preparation. To secure a place at the event or for more information, email policerecruitment@scotland.pnn.police.uk giving your name, address, date of birth and contact telephone number. Telephone 01224 306684.

■ There will be an open afternoon on Gaelic medium education in Lochaber on Saturday January 19 at Bun-Sgoil Ghàidhlig Loch Abar from 1pm to 3pm.

■ Lochaber Music for All presents The Ragtime Dolls on Sunday January 20 at Kilmallie Hall at 3pm. Tea, coffee and cakes will be available at the interval. Tickets are available at the door.

■ Entries for the 45th annual Lochaber Music Festival close on Friday January 25. For more information visit lochabermusicfestival.co.uk or go to the Lochaber Music Festival Facebook page.

■ The Fort William and district branch of Royal British Legion Scotland is holding a potted sports evening at Sunny's Bar on Thursday January 31 at 7pm.

Fight on plastic continues

A year after launching her campaign to ban plastic straws, Lochaber MSP Kate Forbes says she hopes 2019 will see further progress on the issue.

Last year scores of public bodies, supermarkets, cafes, bars and restaurants ditched plastic straws in favour of biodegradable alternatives.

The MSP for Skye, Lochaber and Badenoch took up the fight after hearing about the damage to coastal wildlife caused by plastic pollution.

Her campaigning efforts over the past year resulted in Ms Forbes being named as a finalist for an RSPB Nature

'Litter still plagues our coastlines and we're still consuming too much plastic.'

of Scotland Award. She told the Lochaber Times: 'Since launching the Final Straw campaign a year ago, lots of retailers have stopped providing or selling plastic straws and the Scottish Government

has committed to phasing in a ban on plastic straws.

'An advisor was appointed by the Scottish Government to consider how any proposed ban will affect disabled people and ensure there are no unintended consequences.'

The MSP continued: 'Ultimately, a plastic straw is just one symbol of single-use plastic and the problem is much wider than straws. Litter still plagues our coastlines and we're still consuming too much plastic. 2018 was a successful year for raising awareness of single use plastic and I hope 2019 builds on that.'



Lochaber MSP Kate Forbes hopes to see more progress on tackling plastic pollution in 2019.

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An architect's impression of the new £15m community hospital in Broadford.

Public to get look at new hospital design

Designs for Broadford's new hospital will be on display at two public information sessions for communities of Skye, Lochalsh and South West Ross early next year.

The first session will be held at the Lighthouse Christian Centre, Kyle of Lochalsh, from 1pm to 6.30pm on Wednesday February 6.

The second event will be held in the Portree Chamber, Tigh na Sgìre, Portree, on Thursday February 7, again from 1pm to 6.30pm.

Preliminary designs for the new building on land adjacent to the Dr MacKinnon Memorial Hospital in Broadford and Broadford Health Centre, were first shown just over a year ago.

Since then the design team

has incorporated ideas from drop-in sessions and worked with lead stakeholders to help fine tune the design.

Tracy Ligema, NHS Highland's head of community services, North and West Division, said: 'Technical representatives from the team will be on hand at the latest drop-in events to explain and listen to the views of local residents and answer any questions the public may have.'

'This is an excellent opportunity for the local community to speak to the design team about any aspect of the build and design. Members from the operational unit will also be present to discuss the proposed NHS Highland services.'

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West Highland Museum enjoys 40-year visitor high

by Mark Entwistle
mentwistle@obantimes.co.uk

The West Highland Museum in Fort William welcomed its 56,000th visitor of 2018 on Hogmanay, exceeding a footfall not seen for nearly 40 years.

The special visitor was Sarah Dungey, who was visiting the area from Cornwall with her husband Mark.

The couple have been visitors to Scotland over the festive period for the last decade, but this was the first time they had ventured north to Fort William.

They were impressed by the town's museum and its contents, with Mr Dungey especially interested in the exhibits on slate as he managed a quarry and since his retirement continues to cut slate part-time.

Mrs Dungey commented: 'I was amazed to be told I was the 56,000th visitor this year. It is quite an honour.'

'We both loved the museum as there are so many different

things to see and find out about. What a great asset to let people know about the history of the area. We will be back.'

Since the museum started offering free entry in 2011, visitor numbers have soared from that year's tally of 9,000 to the 2018 total of 56,111.

In the past year, the museum has hosted book launches and many visiting parties from home and abroad, including a group of Dutch commandos, fans of the Outlander television series, French schoolchildren, the Clan Society and an increasing number of visitors from the Far East.

The museum also organised a trip to the new V & A museum in Dundee to thank its volunteers, which was well supported.

Manager Colleen Barker said: 'We find ourselves the most popular indoor attraction about Fort William on Trip Advisor – but realise it's difficult to compete against Ben Nevis and Steall Waterfall, which occupy first and second slots. But we

West Highland Museum manager Colleen Barker, left, presents a gift of museum mementos to Sarah Dungey, who became the museum's 56,000th visitor in 2018. She was accompanied by her husband Mark, who became visitor 56,001.

Photograph: Iain Ferguson, alba.photos

think we can claim to be the second jewel in Lochaber's crown.'

She added that excellent reports about the museum and its volunteers abound on social media.

'The museum receives so much support from the community and personal recommendation, but no more so than from our team of 40 volunteers. We remain financially vulnerable, however, with income from the Highland Council reduced by two thirds and we may not receive anything from it this year. So we are now almost entirely dependent on local support and goodwill, visitor donations and purchases in the shop.'



Murdo and Helen Smith with their new son, and dad Stephen and big brother Leon Tanner, with mum Vicki and new baby Andrew.

Western Isles welcome first babies of 2019

Western Isles Hospital welcomed the first new arrivals of 2019 on Friday, January 4, as Baby Andrew and Baby Smith entered safely into the world.

The first new arrival was baby Andrew, born at 9.45am and weighing 5lbs

15oz, to proud parents Vicki MacDonald and Stephen Tanner.

Big brother Leon, Mum, Dad, and Andrew are now looking forward to returning to their home in the Uists following a Christmas and New Year in Stornoway.

Andrew was soon followed by the arrival of a baby boy at 2.47pm, weighing 6lbs 13oz.

The third child of Helen and Murdo Smith, the tot joins his family of two big sisters, Isla, five, and Eilidh, 8, in their home in Stornoway.

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Highland band to do battle for folk award

The new year has got off to a great start for Highland band Dougal's Jumper, pictured.



It has been chosen as one of the five bands from across Scotland to be part of the Hands Up For Trad 'Battle of the Folk Bands 2019' at The Drygate, Glasgow, on Saturday January 19 as part of Celtic Connections

Former Glenfinnan resident Catherine Stables, who plays bagpipes and Scottish small pipes in the band, said: 'We are very excited to have been

given this opportunity. Hand Up For Trad is such a driving force behind Scottish traditional music. It is an honour to have been picked.'

Dougal's Jumper has just released its CD called 'The Way I'm Wired' and has gained a reputation for their quirky online videos.

Lochaber Rugby Club in extraordinary AGM appeal

Lochaber Rugby Club members are invited to attend an extraordinary general meeting.

The event will take place in the clubhouse at Banavie on Monday January 14 at

7pm to discuss applying for charitable status for the club.

The club is urging as many people as possible to go along as it needs to hear views on the matter.

Sabhal Mòr Ostaig artist in residence

Australian artist Kim Anderson has been named Sabhal Mòr Ostaig's (SMO) new artist in residence, under the Jon Schueler Residency Programme.

The scholarship, which has been running for seven years at the National Centre for Gaelic Language and Culture on Skye, is a unique partnership between the centre and the Jon Schueler Charitable Trust, with support from the Royal Scottish Academy.

It was established to celebrate and remember the life, work and artistic influence of internationally renowned artist and abstract expressionist painter Jon Schueler (1916-1992) and in recognition of his special relationship with the landscape and environment of the Sound of Sleat.

Kim, from Ballarat, Victoria, completed a Bachelor of Fine Arts (Honours) at the University of Ballarat, Australia, and in 2007 was awarded a scholarship to study a Master of Fine Art at the University of Dundee. Since then, she has undertaken a number of residencies,



Kim Anderson has been named Sabhal Mòr Ostaig's new artist in residence.

including an Australia Council International Studio Residency at the British School at Rome, in Echigo-Tsumari, Japan, at Hospitalfield House in Arbroath, Scotland, and at DRAWinternational in Caylus, France, supported by the Ian Potter Cultural Trust.

In 2010 Kim received an Art Start Grant from the Australia Council and has created and curated projects supported by Arts Victoria,

the City of Melbourne and Regional Arts Victoria. Kim has also exhibited around Australia and abroad and been a finalist in numerous national awards including the Paul Guest Award, the Rick Amor Drawing Prize and the Hazelhurst Art Award. In 2018, Kim was a core artist of the Biennale of Australian Art.

On her SMO residency, Kim said: 'I feel so incredibly thrilled and honoured to be

awarded the Jon Schueler Scholarship for 2019.

'It is a real validation of the direction I have recently been pursuing in my work - focusing on themes of ecological grief and mourning in the face of climate change and irreversible damage to the environment.

'I am looking forward to engaging with Gaelic culture and developing a new body of work, a new series of large-scale drawings and soundscapes inspired by Gaelic traditional songs, poetry and the extraordinary landscape on the isle of Skye.'

Last year's residency artist, Rachel Schmidt, will be opening a solo show at the Hamiltonian Gallery in Washington DC on January 12, featuring new work that is the direct result of the residency at SMO. During her time at SMO, Rachel worked collaboratively with a young Gaelic artist and recent graduate of Glasgow School of Art along with sound artist/musician Hector MacInnes presenting a live installation/sound/performance event at SMO.

Nurse director retires after 37 years

NHS Western Isles Nurse Director Chris Anne Campbell has retired after 37 years of service to the NHS.

From Port of Ness, Isle of Lewis, Chris Anne trained as a student nurse at Edinburgh Royal Infirmary in 1976. Once qualified, she worked in various theatre wards at Edinburgh Royal Infirmary before returning to her home islands with husband Torquil at the beginning of 1982, working in theatre in the former Lewis Hospital in Stornoway.

Returning to nursing after a five-year break, Chris Anne was a theatre nurse when the new Western Isles Hospital opened in 1992 and, as she returned to full-time work, was promoted to theatre sister.

Chris Anne became senior nurse and soon afterwards agreed to cover the post of interim hospital manager. She was then made associate chief operating officer, before taking up another interim post as nurse director, being formally appointed to the position in 2016.

'I've enjoyed every job I had,' she said.

'I loved theatre and operational management. There have been very few days when I've thought 'I don't want to go to work today'.



NHS Western Isles chief executive Gordon Jamieson presents Chris Anne Campbell with flowers on her retirement after 37 years working with the National Health Service.

'The health service is not the health service I came into in 1976 when nurses were trained as apprentices. Now nurses are trained and educated to degree level.

'The way nurse training is provided has totally changed and in many ways has changed how nurses work, though the actual caring side

of nursing remains the same but that has always been a strong essence of health care within NHS Western Isles.'

Chris Anne thank everyone for all the support she has received over the years. William Findlay has taken over as nurse director and chief operating officer at NHS Western Isles.

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Prince Charles and First Minister join hundreds for Iolaire service

by Mark Entwistle
mentwistle@obantimes.co.uk

Prince Charles, in his role as Lord of the Isles, together with First Minister Nicola Sturgeon, joined hundreds of people, some from as far afield as Canada, in Stornoway on New Year's Day to remember those involved in the tragic sinking of HMY Iolaire exactly 100 years after the disaster.

The ship hit the Beasts of Holm rocks, around 20 yards from Stornoway's coastline as it brought men home from the First World War.

Of around 300 on board, more than 200 men from Lewis and Harris perished along with the crew.

Organised by WW100 Scotland in conjunction with Comhairle nan Eilean Siar (Western Isles Council), the national commemorative service, which was held at midday at the Iolaire memorial, was also attended by local people, Iolaire descendants, Scotland's most senior naval officer Rear Admiral John Weale and the Convener of Comhairle nan Eilean Siar Norman A Macdonald, each of whom laid a wreath.

Conducted by the Very Reverend Dr Angus Morrison, the service included a reading of Isaiah 43 1-7 by Prince Charles, The Iolaire Lament played by Stornoway piper Finlay Macleod and

The Iolaire Centenary Prayer, which was composed and led by the minister. The end of the two-minute silence was marked with reveille by Royal Marine bugler James Trowbridge.

A new sculpture to commemorate the Iolaire, adjacent to the memorial, was unveiled by Prince Charles.

Prince Charles and Ms Sturgeon met Iolaire victims' descendants and the 29-strong Royal Naval Guard. Descendants included Anne Frater, whose great-grandfather perished, and Malcolm Macdonald, whose grandfather also died in the disaster.

As the service took place on land, a similar event, led by



Prince Charles, Lord of the Isles, lays a wreath at the Iolaire memorial on New Year's Day.

Photographs: Warren Media.

the Reverend James Maciver of Stornoway Free Church, was held on board Caledonian MacBrayne's MV Loch Seaforth ferry near where the Iolaire hit the rocks.

More than 500 people were on board, including school-children from the Western Isles who threw 201 red carnations into the sea.

Ms Sturgeon said: 'As we welcome in the New Year, today in Stornoway we rightly look back 100 years and remember those lost on the Iolaire - a tragedy that involved so many, so close to shore and, for most of the men, so close to home.'

'We reflect on those who
Continued on page 12

Photograph special from the event on pages 12 and 13

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Prince Charles and Nicola Sturgeon with comhairle convener Norman A MacDonald.



Descendants of the Iolaire tragedy launch the centenary commemorations for the Iolaire at the memorial in Stornoway, which overlooks the site of the wreck. From left: Western Isles Convener Norman A Macdonald with descendants Anne Frater and Iain Maciver.



Sharon Smith, great-niece of Malcolm Thomson, with his photograph.



The Iolaire memorial.



Ruairidh Moir with a photograph of his great-great-uncle, Kenneth Campbell.



The wreath laid by Prince Charles.



Prince Charles gives a bible reading watched by the Very Reverend Dr Angus Morrison.



Prince Charles speaks with some of those attending the service.



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The Stornoway RNLI lifeboat Tom Sanderson passes the site of the tragedy.



First Minister Nicola Sturgeon lays a wreath.



Above: First Minister Nicola Sturgeon meets some of those attending the service.

Iolaire service



A torchlight procession, led by Lewis Pipe Band, left from Stornoway Town Hall to the Sports Centre ahead of A Community Remembers.

Continued from page 11
perished and how survivors, family, friends and the wider communities on Lewis, Harris and Berneray must have felt.

'It may have been a century ago, but the legacy of the Iolaire will never be forgotten. I was honoured to be part of the commemorations and meet descendants.'

Convener of Comhairle nan Eilean Siar and chairman of the Iolaire Working Group, Norman A Macdonald, commented: 'This was a very poignant service that chimes very much with the events that have already taken place and will continue to take place into the future, throughout the communities



Royal Marine bugler James Trowbridge sounds reveille.

from the Butt to Barra, in memory of the men who lost their lives so close to shore.'

In the early hours of the morning of January 1, the comhairle's convener also led a small vigil at the memorial to the minute the Iolaire hit the rocks.

And at 3pm on December 31, at Kyle Railway Station where the sailors disem-

barked before heading for the Iolaire 100 years ago, a special commemoration was held by Legion Scotland.

Lord Lieutenant of Ross and Cromarty and Skye and Lochalsh, Mrs Janet Bowen CVO, unveiled a plaque and both she and Sir Alistair Irwin, president of the Royal British Legion Scotland, laid wreaths.

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LETTERS

Write to us: send your letters to editor@obantimes.co.uk
or The Editor, PO Box 1, Oban, Argyll PA34 4HBA very positive start
to what should be a
good year ahead

As is often the case, the Lochaber Times this week is replete with upbeat stories about many things happening locally, including good news economically.

It may have surprised some people that Lochaber features prominently on a list of places across the world that are the most sung about. Additionally, An Aird has been rated as among the top 50 sporting venues in the UK and Ireland.

On the song front, Lochaber is perhaps slightly fortunate to make the list given that it is probably for the wrong reasons as the Proclaimers' lyrics in Letter from America lamented the dying of traditional industries. However, as the old saying goes, there is no such thing as bad publicity and anything that raises the profile of our wonderful part of the country is to be welcomed.

It seems that 2019 is off to a flying start. We can only hope the good news continues.

Such a moving
tribute to Iolaire

There was a prolonged build-up to the centenary commemorations to mark the appalling tragedy that was the sinking of the troop-carrying yacht Iolaire on New Year's Day in 1919.

As has been very well documented over recent months, more than 200 lives were lost when the vessel foundered on the rocks known as the Beasts of Holm, just yards from the Stornoway coastline.

Dignitaries, including His Royal Highness Princes Charles and Scotland's First Minister Nicola Sturgeon, joined hundreds of local people, many of them the descendants of victims, as well as visitors from further afield for the poignant and moving service held at the Iolaire memorial.

It was a fitting tribute to the men who died in that awful disaster.

Morvern hydro project poses
threat to native wildcats

The statements made to the Lochaber Times recently by spokespersons for Wildgenes Lab and the Woodland Trust about Scottish wildcats are as confusing as they are astonishing (Highland 'tiger' may now be extinct in wild, December 27).

Confusing because these groups suggest all cats in the wild are probably hybrids. Astonishing because Scottish Natural Heritage and Scottish Wildcat Action care to ignore their existence in an area which the Scottish Government says is one of the last few wildcat strongholds in the UK. Why? Because their presence may halt or delay a non-essential development.

The Highland Council Planning Committee has an application before it for a large hydro electric project on Forestry Commission land in west Morvern. This industrialisation of a peaceful haven will involve pipelines, intakes, powerhouse and switchhouse buildings, outfall, compounds, access tracks and a two-mile long overhead power-line linking it to the national grid. Wildcats are present in the glen and have been seen consistently for a number of years. But, as these shy animals have not been photographed by camera traps or caught live for DNA testing, their existence and pedigree is being pushed aside.

The isolated site, which was abandoned when the last resident crofter left more than a half a century ago, comprises ancient woods, dense scrub cover, old buildings and an abundance of small mammals and ground-nesting birds. It is perfect wildcat habitat which, of course, accounts for their presence today.

If there is one place where there are likely to be wildcats with the purest ancestry in Scotland, it is here. The Scottish wildcat is a priority species under the 2007 UK Biodiversity Action Plan. It is protected under UK and European law and the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species.

The need to reduce our dependency on fossil fuels and the benefits of green energy are clearly understood. However, they should not be allowed to jeopardise a native and critically endangered animal already on the edge of extinction. The small Morvern peninsula has the highest concentration of renewable schemes in Scotland. This particular development, if approved, risks pushing them over the brink.

Iain Thornber,
Knock House, Morvern.

YOUR PICTURES



We know our readers love to take photographs so we are happy to create this space to showcase people's images each week. If you have a photograph you would like to see published here, send

it to editor@obantimes.co.uk, post it to The Editor, PO Box 1, Oban, PA34 4HB or hand it in to our offices in Crannog Lane, Lochavullin Industrial Estate, Oban, or in High Street, Fort William.

Partnership is delivering
hundreds of new houses

I was rather surprised to see the letter from the ex-housing convener of Argyll and Bute Council, George Freeman, in The Oban Times of December 20 criticising the low level of investment in affordable housing provided by the Scottish Government.

The Scottish Government can obviously respond to Councillor Freeman's analysis if it

so wishes but I struggle to recognise the doom and gloom he portrays; 50,000 new homes are a commitment in the lifetime of the current parliament.

Grizzled old campaigners like me have welcomed that on the record because our message about the importance of affordable housing has now been recognised as a priority by the Scottish Government.

I am not aware of any housing associations in Argyll and Bute raising concerns through the Strategic Housing Forum about not being able



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DISTRICT NEWS

KILMALLIE

Kilmallie Community Council (KCC) met on Monday November 26 at Kilmallie Community Centre.

Police: There have been complaints regarding speeding and a request for an advisory 20mph sign. There had also been reports of parked cars blocking the pavement. It was noted the police had requested such parking to be reported while the vehicle was still there to allow officers to investigate. It was also agreed to ask Sergeant McCartney for an article for the newsletter describing the law about parking on the pavement.

Proposal for footpath linking Banavie school to canal: KCC had been contacted regarding proposals for pedestrian access between Banavie Primary School and the canal towpath. This would provide a safer and more pleasant walking route to the school than the current road. It could be accessed from both Corpach and Banavie. This would allow parents to park safely and to complete the last part of the journey on foot. The landowner, Scottish Canals, and Highland Council have been contacted and support the idea in principle. One concern raised is the lack of a safe crossing of the A830 at Banavie Swing Bridge. This is an issue KCC continues to try and persuade Transport Scotland to address.

Update from planning on Blar 'masterplan' PIP permission (18/03647/PIP): The report of the South Planning Applications Committee on the discussions on granting permission for 18/03647/PIP noted some of the concerns of Kilmallie Community Council but did not consider CO2 emissions associated with the disturbance of peat. Highland Council is obliged to address greenhouse gas emissions under the Climate Change (Scotland) Act. These requirements were all ignored by the committee. KCC will continue to urge a proper assessment of likely greenhouse gas emissions is conducted to allow for an informed debate on each detailed planning application. Concerns



Senior citizens enjoy Christmas lunch

Inverlochry and Torlundy Community Council Senior Citizens held their annual Christmas lunch in the Railway Club. Photograph: Iain Ferguson
alba.photos

were also raised that each development on the Blar would be subject to an individual planning application but there was no mechanism to ensure any developments were properly integrated with each other. BT noted housing in other areas, such as Glasgow, was required to meet a gold standard for sustainability but the proposals for housing on the Blar would not meet such standards.

Update from Transport Forum on train services: West Highland Community Rail Partnership (WHCRP) has been asked to submit evidence of the demand for an improved overall train timetable to be introduced in 2020. It was agreed to make a submission from KCC highlighting the services which had been identified as most important for the Kilmallie community. Improved services could also help to reduce vehicle numbers and congestion on the A82 and A830. The need to co-ordinate the train timetable with any new ferry services from Mallaig was stressed. The WHCRP is also following up on future use of the

station buildings in Corpach which belong to Network Rail.

Corpach deepwater port feasibility study: An action from a previous meeting had been to follow up with HIE whether there had been any progress on the feasibility study for a deep water port in Corpach. RL was told verbally by Alastair Nicolson there was no progress to report.

Lorry traffic through Corpach: Further concerns were raised about the amount of lorry traffic through Corpach, in particular, that the Coire Glas development could increase this traffic. However, BT noted nothing was likely to happen with this development in the next five years. BT also commented he had experienced delays on the A830 due to the Banavie Swing bridge operating before 9am. He will follow up on this with Scottish Canals.

Banavie War Memorial: Chairwoman Christine Hutchison reported there had been 60 to 70 people at the Remembrance Service at Banavie War Memorial. The lettering had been done in time for

the service but the monument had not been cleaned. She has contacted Alf Leslie to follow up on this.

Christmas lights: KCC welcomed the display of Christmas lights and thanked the team responsible for putting them up.

The next meeting of KCC will be at 7.15pm on Monday January 28 in Kilmallie Community Centre.

CAOL

Permission is being sought to convert Caol bridal shop into bakery and cafe. A planning application has been lodged with Highland Council to convert the former Marina's Bridal Shopping Centre in Caol, pictured, into a homebaking shop, cafe and takeaway. The application is from Barbara Findlay, of Banavie Road, Caol.



The former bridal shop which could soon see a new lease of life as a bakery and cafe. Photograph: Iain Ferguson, alba.photos

KYLE

A large crowd gathered at Kyle Pier on December 31 exactly 100 years to the day to mark the commemoration of the HMY Iolaire disaster.

The doomed vessel had left from Kyle carrying more than 200 men back from the war to their homes in the Western Isles. Tragically, the boat hit rocks and 201 men were drowned.

Lord Lieutenant for Ross, Cromarty, Skye and Lochalsh Janet Bowen unveiled a plaque on the railway station during a short service of remembrance, conducted by Free Church minister Rev Roddie Rankin.

There were speeches by Royal Navy commander GA Mills, Chief of Staff/Naval Commander for Scotland and Northern Ireland and by the president of Royal British Legion Scotland, Lieutenant General Sir Alistair Irwin.

Piper Niall Stewart played the pìobaireachd, The Iolaire, and Lochalsh branch president Lieutenant Commander Andy Will organised and chaired the event.

Wreaths were laid and a reception followed in the Lochalsh Hotel.



Niall Stewart plays the pipes after the plaque was unveiled.

Lochaber Sensory Care laptop boost

Iain Rodger, Master of Fort William Masonic Lodge 43, presents a new laptop to Esther Briers, general manager of Lochaber Sensory Care. The donation was made from the Lodge Fund to help people and organisations in the community and will be used to help update the administration of Sensory Care Operations. Photograph: Iain Ferguson, alba.photos

Iain Ferguson, alba.photos



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Skye lambs Holly and Ivy arrive on Christmas Day

There were two unexpected arrivals at Earlish on Skye on Christmas day when a ewe, owned by Fay MacLeod and Philip MacAskill, gave birth to two camera-shy lambs, aptly named Holly and Ivy.



Retro Roamer

fort@obantimes.co.uk

More Roamerisms from the early 1990s

Our West Highland News Agency in Monzie Square came close to having a special delivery in time for the Old New Year on Wednesday, courtesy of a carrier from East Kilbride. 'This The Square, Fort William?' enquired the driver. 'Aye, one of them,' says I. 'Well, I've got a rake of paper carrier bags for Hornell, The Square, Fort William,' the driver continued. 'See's a look at your delivery note,' I pursued. It read: 'Hornell, The Square, Port William. Exit one crestfallen delivery van driver. South, by south west.'

The demolition of Fraser's Central Garage revealed what the Highland Region planners describe as a 'node'. And it's a particularly delightful 'node' when viewed from Monzie Square and the High Street. A new vista of Loch Linnhe and 'the other side of the loch' has been opened up. Aye that's one the planners have got right – even if it is ironic that it required the razing to the ground of a long-standing building for locals and visitors to be able to appreciate this new, aesthetic point of view.

Primaries one and two from St Mary's went on a coach trip to Arisaig last week. Sunshine all the way, of course, so the sky lights were wide open. Around about Lochailort wee Cara McGhee was most annoyed to see her new multi-coloured cagoule being wheeled 'through the roof'. It was spirited away by the combination of breeze and air currents. The coach driver was bade to stop while former pupils Emma and Fiona – who were acting as mentors – were dispatched to scour the Road to the Isles for the gadabout garment. The pair searched high and low, but no sign of it. Cara was very put out – just like her cagoule. But wait. The cavalry was at hand, in the shape of Willie, at the wheel of his Highland Region van. Willie caught up with the St Mary's party at Arisaig. 'Did a wee jacket come through the roof?' he asked. 'I think I know where it is likely to have landed. I'll look for it when I go back to Lochailort and hand it in to you when you come back from your run.' And that's exactly what happened. So Cara and the teaching staff would like to say: 'Thank you very much Willie for your local knowledge, watchfulness and thoughtfulness.'

Those of you following the European Championships probably thought Tuesday this week was to be a blank footballing day. Oh no, it wasn't, as Claggan Park was the venue

for a six-a-side challenge match between the cream of Lochaber House – a local authority derby between councillors and officials. The final result has not been ratified, of course, until a decision is made by the full council. But both camps did issue pre-match agenda papers. 'This will give us a chance to have a kick at the officers,' stated the elected members.

'We're looking forward to having the opportunity to have a go at the councillors for a change,' was the word from their 'opposition'.

'Let there be light' was the decree by one of the recently elected committee chairpersons on Lochaber District Council. And the result was that all the very expensive exhibition boards ranged round the chamber were removed to allow sunlight through the windows of Lochaber House. So what happens? Next day British Waterways Board brought along drawings and plans of their 'Canal Parks housing estate' but there was nowhere within the chamber to display them.

Until last Thursday's market day, Cathy hadn't been in town for ages. However, she ventured over from Caol for curtain material and bought 'a nice piece of net'. Cathy was holding it up above her head to study the pattern when an old acquaintance came along and exclaimed: 'Cathy, I haven't seen you for years. Is this you getting geared up to do your Matron of Honour at a wedding?' A red-faced Cathy quietly took her leave saying: 'I'll need to rush. I've got to get to MacLean the Dairy to pay the milk.'

Alan Kimber handed me a cutting from the Scottish Daily Express on the subject of the hotel and catering industry in the Highlands. Here is an excerpt: 'Highland hoteliers are in favour of a scheme to establish a hotel school in Inverness. It is felt imperative something be done to polish up the catering services in the north. Many towns are almost entirely dependent on the tourist industry, so surely a trade so important to our economy should be carried out by suitably trained people. The correct approach to the guests is essential because often the first impression is the lasting view. It is so important receptionists, waiters and housemaids be properly trained.' And the date of the article? January 1946.

The Scottish Office was on about another kind of 'rain' the other day. In a letter to Lochaber District Council about this year's housing capital allocation, our local authority was urged to 'reign back' on its expenditure. And that's from the same Scottish Office which publishes the league tables of school exam results.

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GOLF



Robert MacIntyre pictured beside the new banner proudly displayed outside Glencruitten Golf Club.

MacIntyre talks about his first year as a pro golfer

What a year it has been for Oban golfing sensation Robert MacIntyre.

In his rookie season as a professional golfer, the 22-year-old finished second in the Foshan Open, secured a European Tour card, and played with some of the game's greats.

And following a second top-15 finish in the European Tour, the left-handed player went into the festive break sitting in the top 30 in the Race to Dubai rankings, with a \$1.25 million bonus going to the player who finishes first at the end of the season.

'I always wanted to get to the European Tour,' MacIntyre told The Oban Times. 'But I didn't honestly expect it to happen in the first year.'

'I knew I had a chance [to get a European Tour card]. As long as I stayed in the top 45, I knew if I had one big result in the last four events then I would be close, but for it to be on that event, that's why the emotion came out over that long putt at the Foshan Open.'

'Once that went in, it wasn't just the emotion of taking the lead or getting into a play-off, it was the emotion of what I had almost achieved.'

December was a massive month for MacIntyre, who secured two top 15 finishes, winning more than £31,000 in the process.

'The money is a reward at the end of it, that's the way I try and see it,' he said. 'There's going to be a time where I am in with a chance to win, a real chance coming down the last six or seven holes and for the first time it is going to be seriously nerve-racking because all you are going to be thinking about is what is on the line.'

On his travels, MacIntyre has been paired twice with South African legend Ernie Els, and on both occasions, the Oban man matched the four-time major winner.

'The first tee shot with Ernie I could hardly tee the ball up,' he said. 'I put it down the middle, but it was seriously nerve-racking. To get the ball actually going forward was an achievement.'

But once he got going, MacIntyre held his own, which instilled confidence into the Glencruitten golfer.

Regardless of where the 22-year-old is in the world, he is never far away from the thoughts of friends, family, and the Oban community, especially those involved with Glencruitten Golf Club, where MacIntyre learned his trade.

In order to maintain his European Tour card for next season, MacIntyre will need to finish in the top 110 in the Race to Dubai series.

After a handful of events, the Oban golfer is sitting 29th on the back of his two top 15 finishes.



Bob and the legendary Ernie Els have a chat during the South African Open. Photograph: Bounce Sports.

First Masonic lodge match in 11 years



Masonic lodges Fort William 43 and Lochiel 1200 teams who took part in the inter-lodge shinty match which was played for the first time in 11 years. Lochiel 1200 won a close match 5-4. Photos: Iain Ferguson, alba.photos



George MacKay (left) Master of Lodge Fort William 43 presents the shinty winners' trophy to Les Gow, Master of Lodge Lochiel 1200.



Peds Kelly (yellow) FW Lodge 43 and Ross MacKenzie Lodge 1200.

Runners shake off New Year



Almost 130 runners took part in Lochaber Athletic Club's (LAC) annual New Year's Day Aonach Mor uphill race which provided a tricky test in changeable conditions.

Snowfall greeted runners at the finish line at the top gondola station at Nevis Range as the traditional race up the downhill track at Aonach Mor once again provided the perfect solution to clearing hazy heads from the

128 runners in total took part in the annual New Year's Day race.

Jags maintain unbeaten run against Belleaire

South Lochaber Thistle 3
Belleaire 1
GGPL Division 2

South Lochaber Thistle opened the new year by maintaining their unbeaten league form, wrapping up a convincing win at home to Belleaire AFC, until now the only other unbeaten team in the league this season.

Cheered on by a good crowd,

Thistle's opening goal came inside three minutes after a veteran midfielder general Dave Forbes stepped up and lazily stroked a free kick over the wall and around the visitors' keeper to secure the lead.

Thistle were moving the ball from the back confidently, Shane Gillies at right back linking well with Sean Noble on the right, allowing space and time for Forbes and Andrew Maclean to get the

ball down and play around the busy centre midfielders of the visitors.

However, clear-cut chances were hard to come by and, when they did, the Belleaire keeper was in excellent form, parrying one effort around the post and getting a tip over the bar to another Jags' drive which looked bound for the back of the net.

The Greenock outfit are tough competitors and soon got stuck into the task as Owen Cooke in the home side's goal made several outstanding saves, notably a scooped save over the bar which denied Belleaire parity.

From restarts, the visitors were looking to go long early and, as the first half drew to a close, this tactic meant that they had pushed almost of their men forward for a corner. A clearance to Lewis Morrison just outside the SLT box saw the winger dart away and isolate the Belleaire centre half two-on-one with skipper Martin Munro. A savvy pass saw the talisman scamper away, round the onrushing keeper and finish with a flourish to double the advantage.

The second half should have been plain sailing for Jags but from the restart a lofted ball into the box allowed the powerfully-built Belleaire midfielder to set himself and produce a competent finish past Cooke on the volley to reduce the deficit.

As the visitors continued



South Lochaber Thistle's Lewis Morrison looks to find a pass. Photos: Iain Ferguson, alba.photos.



SLT's Sean Noble takes the ball from the air.

to press for a draw, the game became niggly with fouls from both sides and some debate-generating officiating.

Chance after chance had been foiled by Belleaire's keeper whose sparkling form continued but in the

end it was Noble who had the decisive say. Pressure had been building before John Ferguson and Munro combined to put Noble away and, clean through, he put the game out of sight as the 90 minutes elapsed.

FOOTBALL

South Lochaber Thistle's next fixture is away in the fourth round of the Challenge Cup to high flying Division One side Calderglen on Saturday.

celebrations

previous night's Hogmanay celebrations.

Sam Alexander of Westerlands Cross Country Club was the first runner over the line in a time of 24:56 and was followed closely by PH Racing Club's Ewan Taylor who finished just nine seconds later. LAC's Esmond Tresidder came third and was the fastest local athlete home, recording a time of 25:28. LAC athletes Stuart Crustchfield and Callum Fraser also made it into the top 10.

Marie Meldrum was the fastest Lochaber female over the finish line in a time of 33:06, followed closely by Lisette Walter in 33:15.

ATHLETICS

The club also held the Creagan 10k race on Sunday January 6 which saw 45 runners take part. Esmond Tresidder of LAC took first place in a time of 34:08. Gavin Whiteside of HHR took second place while Alfie Bentley and Callum Fraser, both of LAC, finished third and fourth respectively.

Runners set off from the Nevis Range base station at the foot of Aonach Mor.



LT

SHINTY



Ruaridh MacDonald was presented with the Johnnie MacDonald Memorial Shield from chairman Scott Bremner.

Ruaridh named Glengarry players' player of the year

Glengarry Shinty Club held their annual Players' Player of the Year awards night recently for the 2018 season.

The winner of the prestigious award was Ruaridh MacDonald, who was presented with the Johnnie MacDonald Memorial Shield by chairman Scott Bremner. David Rodgers was named as the most improved player for season 2018.

The evening was thoroughly enjoyed by all at the club following a lovely meal at The Bothy, Fort Augustus. Earlier the same afternoon, the draw took place for the Christmas hamper, which was won by Kyle MacKinnon with Gary Paterson and Emma MacKinnon winning smaller hampers. This was an excellent fundraiser and the club wish to thank all members for donating towards the contents and those who spent so much time making sure most of the tickets were sold.

LOTTERY

Lottery numbers

Ballachulish Shinty Club's lottery numbers for this week were 9, 11 and 18. There were no winners this week. Next week's draw will be a jackpot of £1,200.

The Caol Community Centre bingo club lotto numbers this week were 5, 12, 17. There was one winner this week, T McCormack, and so next week's jackpot will be £100.



Numbers drawn in the Caol Regeneration lotto were 2, 3 and 17. There were no winners this week. The prize for next week will be £1,000.

Lochaber denied gasp Cowal try

Lochaber	26
Cowal	33
Tennent's West Division 3	

A last-minute Cowal try denied Lochaber a dramatic result on Saturday as their heroic second-half comeback fell just short.

Having been 26-0 down at half-time, Lochaber scored four tries without reply in the second half to level the match. However, with just minutes remaining, a last-gasp Cowal try dashed any hopes of what could have been a remarkable Lochaber victory.

Going into the match, Lochaber were missing several players in the backs for what was the team's first fixture of 2019 and were forced to field a makeshift back line. It was no surprise then that Cowal started strongly and it didn't take long until they got the first score of the game.

After Lochaber had initially kept Cowal out, a maul formed right under the posts from which Cowal's hooker then peeled off the back of

the maul to score. To add to the poor start, Lochaber were then reduced to 14 men for 10 minutes when Daniel Thomas received a yellow card for a high tackle.

The visitors were gifted their second try when two Lochaber players failed to deal with a high ball and the opposition wingers were able to capitalise to score. Cowal kept the pressure up and some poor tackling allowed for another break through the defensive line for a run in from 20 metres.

Lochaber finally started to get some possession and worked their way into Cowal's 22. Just as Lochaber were starting to gain some momentum, it quickly turned around and Cowal were able to make their way down the pitch to score their fourth try in the last play of the half to make it 0-26 at the break.

After a frank half-time discussion, the match would turn on its head as Lochaber came out firing in the second half. Picking up the tempo and running direct lines,

Cowal couldn't cope with the intensity of Lochaber's attacking play and just a few minutes into the second half Christopher Simpson crossed the line with Andrew Bell converting.

Lochaber and Simpson's second try came after Lochaber were awarded a penalty. Simpson took a quick tap five metres from the try-line. A dummy pass fooled the onrushing Cowal defence, leaving a big hole for Simpson to score.

Cowal were then reduced to 14 men when one of their players was yellow carded for a high tackle which spurred on the home side to go chasing scores. And it didn't take long until they got one after a well-worked passage of play saw the ball passed to William Stewart who fended off the first tackle and offloaded out of the next tackle to Alasdair Davidson who in turn offloaded to John MacKerlich who broke through the tackle to run in from 30 metres to score, with Bell converting again to make

RUGBY

it 19-26. The momentum remained with Lochaber and with around three minutes remaining they were awarded a penalty five metres out and once again it was Simpson who took a quick tap and got across the line. Bell converted to level the scores and secure a remarkable comeback. Cowal were again reduced to 14 men after a player swore at the ref after he awarded the try.

Lochaber received the ball from the restart and were starting to make their way up the pitch but in another twist lost the ball forward. Cowal were able to capitalise on the mistake and got the ball wide where they had a numbers advantage and their winger had the pace to beat Lochaber's defence to make it 26-33 and secure the victory for the Cowal men.

Lochaber travel away to Shawlands on Saturday for a 2pm kick-off at Cartha Queens Park Rugby Club, Glasgow.



Gary Macdonald (centre) with the Clare Mackintosh Memorial Trophy after beating off stiff competition from Joe Barnes (centre left) and James Shirley (centre right) and joined by race organisers Vincent Mackintosh (far right) and his son Campbell (far left).

victory by a last-



Daniel Thomas faces a wall of Cowal players as he nears their tryline. Photo: Abridge Photography

Wheelers success at inaugural Mackintosh Memorial Race

Lochaber trials hero Gary Macdonald claimed victory in the West Highland Wheelers' inaugural Clare Mackintosh Memorial Race on December 30, as part of the club's third race in the winter league.

Both juniors and seniors were in action for the race, which was run in memory of Clare Mackintosh, the late wife of Wheelers' race organiser Vince Mackintosh, who sadly passed away on December 16. Vince and his son Campbell decided to go ahead with running the race in memory of Clare and in true reflection of her 'just get on with it' attitude. Owing to the success of this year's event, next year's race is already in the diary.

With hard climbs, technical descents and lots of mud, Vince and Campbell had set out a challenging route for

the competitors, which made for a great day of racing.

Fourteen juniors competed in the 30-minute children's race and 39 seniors, and slightly older juniors, competed in the main race. The winner of the inaugural Clare Mackintosh Memorial Trophy was Gary Macdonald with a time of 49 minutes and 43 seconds. Liam Moynihan managed to beat him to the finish line by 33 seconds but confessed to taking a wrong turn and was disqualified. Second place went to James Shirley and third to Joe Barnes, with Daniel Parfitt taking first in the juniors followed by Cory Muir in second and Evan MacDonald in third. Ailsa Pooleman took the women's victory with Gill Barnes second and Marian Austin third.

The younger riders did as many laps of a short course

as possible in 30 minutes. The under-12 girls finished with Isla Cant in first with 12 laps and Ruby Clark and Charlie Stewart joint second on 10 laps. Under-12 boys saw Alexander Pervan take victory with 15 laps followed by Kody Cummings in second and Aidan Baltrunas in third. In the under-eight girls Lily Cant took first place with 12 laps, followed by Mia Jackson in second, Charley Kennedy in third and Jessica Bamber

CYCLING

in fourth. In the under-eight boys, Aaron Tresider took first with 15 laps beating his brother Kai who finished second, ahead of Archie Kennedy in third and Fergus Reid in fourth.

West Highland Wheelers would like to thank Vince and Campbell Mackintosh, who organised this fantastic cross country race.



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WEATHER

Thursday
Light cloud and a gentle breeze
Temperatures 7°C to 9°C.

Friday
Light cloud and a moderate breeze
Temperatures 7°C to 10°C.

Weekend Outlook

Saturday
Light rain showers and a moderate breeze

Sunday
Drizzle and a moderate breeze
Temperatures 7°C to 10°C.



FRIDAY

TIDAL INFORMATION

Tide tables for Oban during the week from Thursday January 10, 2019 are listed below with differences for major ports listed on the right. All times are GMT (add one hour BST)

Thur	02.14	1.3	08.07	3.8
	14.37	1.6	20.13	3.6
Fri	02.47	1.5	08.42	3.7
	15.13	1.7	20.46	3.5
Sat	03.19	1.6	09.18	3.5
	15.52	1.8	21.22	3.3
Sun	03.55	1.7	09.59	3.4
	16.38	1.9	22.05	3.2
Mon	04.41	1.8	10.50	3.3
	17.36	2.0	22.59	3.0
Tues	05.41	1.9	12.02	3.2
	18.41	1.9	***	**
Wed	00.13	3.0	06.51	1.9
	13.47	3.2	19.47	1.8

Tidal Constants: (Add or deduct from High Water at Oban)

Ardrishaig	-5.35	Mallaig	+0.25
Campbeltown	-5.30	Portree	+0.55
Crinan	-0.47	Tobermory	+0.16
Islay Port Ellen	2.00	Dover	+5.30
Lochboisdale	+0.30		

Ferry Crossings/Sea States

Oban to Barra/South Uist	Moderate
Oban to Coll/Tiree	Moderate
Kennacraig to Islay	Moderate

Stop Press: New pontoons at Ulva Ferry and visitor moorings installed at Lochaline by North West Marine Ltd



INSIDE THIS WEEK:
Lochaber denied victory by a last-gasp Cowal try

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Fort bring in the new year with a 14-goal thrashing

Formartine United	14
Fort William	1
Highland League	

FOOTBALL

Any hopes of a new year upset in the Highland League were emphatically dashed on Saturday as Formartine showed no mercy to a young Fort William side, scoring 14 goals and inflicting another painful defeat on the league's perennial bottom side.

Seven goals either side of the break meant for an uncomfortable afternoon for the Fort, who have now conceded 160 Highland League goals in their opening 22 matches, with Gary Carroll's late consolation the only glimmer of hope in an otherwise forgettable match for the Lochaber men.

The goal-fest saw Formartine record their biggest ever goal tally and largest winning margin, while midfielder Archie MacPhee enjoyed his day in front of goal, scoring six within a 45-minute spell.

United's squad of seasoned professionals had the visitors hemmed into the final third straight from kick-off. They eventually opened the scoring in the 11th minute through Scott Ferries. After an early injury, Formartine substitute Ryan Stott scored a quick-fire brace.

Despite the early warnings of a bruising defeat, as ever Fort William were not content to just sit back and soak up pressure and took the brave decision to try and take the game to Formartine. They managed one promising

break through the middle when Craig Rennie, with Sean Grant and Josh Knowles in support, forced prompt action by United keeper Ewen Macdonald, who was out in a flash to clear the ball.

Unsurprisingly, their intent on attack had left a gap, which was exploited by Ferries again who scored his second on the half-hour mark, with Archie MacPhee getting his first of the match, before Liam Burnett got the sixth.

Opting not to settle for damage limitation, Fort William continued to be brave on the ball and tried to put their hosts under pressure. However, Formartine were able to make it seven before the half-time break after a mix-up in the box allowed Graeme Rodger to score from a rebounded shot.

Toe-to-toe

The second half saw no change in the Fort's determination to go toe-to-toe with Formartine. However, this inevitably allowed United with a seemingly endless supply of goalscoring opportunities.

United made full use of their advantage with MacPhee, in particular, making his mark on the scoresheet, managing to score half a dozen goals in the space of around half an hour. Stott completed his own hat-trick in the 70th minute to take the score into double figures.

With United committed to attack, a clearance found its way to substitute Jordan Morrison, who exchanged passes with Iain MacIntyre

Lochaber pipped at the post



Lochaber's John McKerlich runs into this Cowal defender during last Saturday's match at Banavie. Full report and more photographs on page 55. Photo: Iain Ferguson, alba.photos

to progress up the field. He slipped the ball into Gary Carroll who, with some energy left in the tank, was able to collect and sprint clear in the middle of the park. Continuing to drive with the ball almost 40 yards he

coolly slipped the ball past the goalkeeper from the edge of the area.

The momentary celebrations for the Fort were quickly dampened, however, as MacPhee added another two goals, while fullback

Jonathan Crawford rounded off the day's scoring for Formartine.

Fort William remain winless in the Highland League this season and remain rooted to the bottom of the table.

The Fort are away to

Strathspey Thistle this Saturday, January 12.



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