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Oban is a big hit on social media



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Community council objects to Lonan Drive development

by David McPhee
dmcphree@obantimes.co.uk

The campaign to stop 46 houses being built in Lonan Drive received a boost on Monday when Oban Community Council (OCC) voted to object to the plans. The community council joins 60 objectors in opposing TSL Contractors Limited's amended plans to develop the area.

The company withdrew plans last year after the council's roads department recommended an application be refused owing to the proposed road being too narrow.

Dozens of residents attended the meeting on Monday seeking the community council's backing.

While there was general support for social housing, people objected to it being built in Lonan Drive for a number of reasons.

They include: ruining green space, traffic congestion, impacting wildlife and protected plants, and flooding.

The area is due to be discussed within Argyll and Bute Council's Local Development

Plan 2, which will set out development proposals for the next 10 years, starting in 2020.

'LDP2 was postponed from November until March,' a resident said. 'That conversation should be had before a decision is taken on this planning application.'

Another resident said: 'It is the right type of housing in an inappropriate area.'

'It is a balance between green and concrete'

And another added: 'There is always going to be a need for housing. If you do this correctly now, it will create a template to do it right in the future. It is not just about concrete, it is a balance between green and concrete.'

Oban councillor Roddy McCuish, who sits on the planning committee, recommended that the community and the developers get together for a special meeting.

While some were happy for this to go ahead, one resident said: 'People don't want to

compromise. People want the development to stop. I don't know how helpful that would be.'

Councillor Jim Lynch said he has personally objected to the plans. He was 'all for' building more housing, but was concerned there wasn't any material change to the road, which caused the last application to be withdrawn.

He added: 'I think the infrastructure in Oban is different to what it was in the past. It is clogging up that end of the town.'

A member of the public said: 'There are 300 houses being built out at Dunbeg. It looks as if that is likely to satisfy some of the demand.'

However, Councillor Kieron Green said: 'The number of people on the housing list is more than 300. The last I heard it was getting on for 1,000 in the Oban area.'

OCC chairwoman and local resident Marri Malloy declared a conflict of interest, so Duncan Martin chaired the vote and will lodge the official objection.

Continued on page nine



Performance goes down a dream

The Corran Halls in Oban were packed last week for Spotlight Musical Theatre's production of Fiddler on the Roof. Fran Melville as Golde and Ian Henry as Tevye delighted the audiences with their performances, as did all the cast. For a full review and photo special, see pages 32 and 33.

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OT

Oban is a big hit on social media

by Kathie Griffiths
kgriffiths@obantimes.co.uk



Oban is attracting thousands of followers as a must-visit holiday destination.

In the past year, social media campaigns boasting about the town have seen numbers of hits and likes soar.

At Monday's annual general meeting, members of Oban and Lorn Tourism Alliance (OLTA) heard how Twitter, Facebook and Instagram are taking off, spreading the word far and wide about the west coast gem.

BID4Oban chief executive Andrew Spence was at the meeting hosted by Oban Distillery to present a cheque for £10,000 to boost OLTA's marketing pot and 'get the Oban name out there' even more.

OLTA marketing director Linda Battison said its market-



BID4Oban chief executive Andrew Spence hands over the cheque to OLTA's marketing director Linda Battison and chairman Neil MacKay.

ing campaigns were working well, especially on social media and with outdoor advertising on motorways and city centre signs, including wraps on Glasgow taxis.

Last year OLTA had 3,900 followers on Twitter but it has risen to 4,200 now. Its Facebook page has 5,500 followers and Instagram has gone up from just six followers 12 months ago to 2,500.

Ms Battison told the meeting that the millennials age group, under-54s, are its main target and she said short breaks were becoming increasingly popular with people often spending more than they would in one week.

Oban Live head of communications Pauline Clifford was at the meeting to give a presentation on Oban Live, now going into its fourth year.

She said: 'It's a big deal in the town, bringing in a big cash injection.'

Dates for this year are June 7 and June 8 and event organisers are building on numbers. It has about 8,000 attendees.

'More and more local people are coming to it and more local businesses are backing it,' added Ms Clifford.

Oban Live Fringe is also getting bigger and better with each year, she said, and organisers want to hear from venues across the town interested in getting involved in it from the Thursday to the Sunday.

Mr Spence said there was a lot of good co-working happening among groups and organisations to shout out about Oban and bring in more people to the town.

Guided walking tours are popular and there are other projects, said Mr Spence, including lighting up the Black Lynn.

Woman admits assault in Oban and struggling

A 39-year-old woman has admitted throwing a bar stool in an Oban licensed premises, punching staff members and scratching a police officer.

Lisa Marie McCuish, of Flat 0-1, 97 George Street, Paisley, pleaded guilty when she appeared at Oban Sheriff Court on Monday February 25.

The incident occurred on January 19, 2018.

Procurator fiscal Eoin McGinty said that at 11.30pm, McCuish arrived at the pub and almost immediately entered into a heated argument. She was approached by staff who tried to calm her down but she became volatile and an off-duty staff member tried to usher her out of the premises.

'She punched him on his chest,' the procurator fiscal said. 'She then picked up a bar stool and threw it at another

member of staff, a female.'

McCuish then grabbed hold of the woman's hair and punched her on the face.

'The police arrived and the accused struggled,' Mr McGinty added. 'She was informed she was being detained and began to shout.'

'She then threw her arms and legs out and shouted, "I will take you on".'

During the struggle, she ran her hand across the constable's face, cutting his right eye.

Sheriff Patrick Hughes said: 'This is a serious matter and one for which the court will consider a custodial sentence. Before that can be imposed, the court will require social work and criminal justice reports and a restriction of liberty order assessment.'

Sentencing was deferred for four weeks.

Call for new firefighters to join up

The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service has issued a call to people from all walks of life to apply to become a wholetime firefighter. Applications will go live on Thursday, March 21. Visit <https://www.firescotland.gov.uk/work-with-us.aspx>

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Representatives from the three groups and Dawnfresh with Taynuilt Rainbows.

Three groups share fish farm donation

Dawnfresh, the UK's largest producer of farmed trout, has donated £2,000 to three Oban and Taynuilt groups.

Taynuilt Community Hall, Taynuilt Rainbows and the RNLI in Oban have all benefited.

Dawnfresh farming director Alison Hutchins said the chosen groups reflected the firm's priorities.

Taynuilt Community Hall is a vital resource, while the Rainbows provide excellent

education and skills, and supporting the RNLI shows Dawnfresh's understanding of the dangers of working on the water and the importance of the service that the charity provides to boats near Oban.

Last year Dawnfresh produced more than 4,500 tonnes of trout from its sites at Loch Etive, Loch Awe and Loch Earn. The company has also recently announced plans for a further four farm sites on the west coast, in-

cluding at the south of Bute.

Ms Hutchins said: 'In addition to donations such as this, our teams provide practical support and assistance on the lochs such as clearing rubbish, helping with moorings or helping boats which may run in to trouble. It is vitally important that we form an integral part of the community where we farm our fish and will always be seeking to do more to help where we can.'

POLICE FILES

Bicycle stolen

Between 6.10pm on Sunday February 17 and 7.30am on Monday February 18, a black and red mountain bike was stolen from the common close at 21 Combie Street, Oban.

Theft of digger

Between 6pm on Friday February 15 and 2pm on Saturday February 16, a quantity of red diesel and a yellow Volvo EC15BXR digger were stolen from Benderloch Quarry.

Drugs found

At about 2.50pm on Monday February 18, on Albany Street, Oban, a man aged 20 was stopped and searched. He was found in possession of a small amount of cannabis, was charged and issued with a recordable police warning.

Banner damaged

Between 10am and 9.30pm on Saturday February 16, on Railway Pier, Oban, an advertising banner was ripped from a trailer and damaged.

Motorist speeding

About 4.25pm on Tuesday February 19, on the A85 near Dalmally, a motorist was stopped for exceeding the speed limit. The van was also found to have three tyres with tread depth below the legal limit. The driver, a man aged 59, was charged and a report will be submitted to the procurator fiscal.

Abusive behaviour

At about 5.40pm on Saturday February 23, following a report of a person behaving in an abusive manner in Shore Street, Oban, a man aged 38 was traced, arrested and charged with abusive behaviour. The man was later issued with a recorded police warning.

Drink driving

At about 11.30am on Sunday February 24, on the A85 in Connel, a car was driven dangerously. It was stopped by police and the driver, a man aged 67, was arrested for driving while under the influence of alcohol. The man was charged and a report has been submitted to the procurator fiscal.

■ If anyone has information in relation to any incident, they can contact police on 101, or anonymously through Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.

Removing flights would hurt Coll

by Kathie Griffiths
kgriffiths@obantimes.co.uk



Grounding scheduled flights between a tiny island and Oban would put 'another nail in Coll's coffin'.

The death knell warning comes from the convener of Coll Community Council Paula Smalley, who has accused Argyll and Bute Council of having 'no desire' to keep the lifeline service link running once a contract with Hebridean Air Services Ltd (HASL) runs out.

Earlier this month, Argyll and Bute Council announced the service linking Coll and Colonsay with Oban Airport would be suspended for at least six weeks from mid-May following a failure to agree a new tender.

The only tender it received was from HASL but the bid was classed as 'non-compliant' for being out of budget.



Councillor Roddy McCuish.

On February 14, the council's policy and resources committee discussed the issue behind closed doors.

Mrs Smalley said: 'We previously asked as a community council to have sight of the new tender before it goes out but that was refused. We've been told we can only see it when it goes live but that will be too late. We are concerned it will be the same tender they put out the first time. If that's the

case, then it will have the same result. We feel Argyll and Bute Council does not want this to work. We feel it has no desire to support this service. We appreciate it's not as politically palatable as a swimming pool on the mainland or flowerbeds in Oban but this air service is a lifeline to our island.'

Frustrated islanders are now taking their plight to national level by lobbying the Scottish Government and calling on the health and education ministers to step in and help.

An Argyll and Bute Council spokesman told The Oban Times the second procurement process would start early next month. He said community councils had been sent letters about what was happening and an update had been posted on the council's website. He also said the number of future flights could be reduced.

Mrs Smalley said: 'Connectivity is paramount to our

island's survival. Our fear is the council will turn round and say if we can manage without it for six weeks, then we can do without it completely.'

'Argyll and Bute Council is failing us when it has a duty of care.'

Among those using the scheduled flights are eight young people aged 11 to 18, who travel to Oban High School from Coll and home at weekends.

Tiree's flights to Oban will also be affected by the situation but the island will still have flights to Glasgow. More than £1.5 million in council funding was made available for the three-year contract.

Oban South and Isles councillor Roddy McCuish said he would pursue 'every avenue' to keep the isles' air service going. 'We have to see this air service not only continue but also to grow. It's not a luxury service, it's a lifeline. It's vital.'

Fundraiser for couple who lost everything

The community of Lismore hosted a fundraising night for a couple who lost everything in a fire.

Teenie Wilson and her husband David, who run the Lismore post office and shop, were left with just 'the clothes they stood up in' after the fire gutted their home of 25 years in January. The fundraiser took place on February 16.

'The evening was very successful with a lot of money raised for David and Teenie,' organiser Paul Speakman said.

Funds were raised through donations of both money and things to be raffled. Mr Speakman added: 'People and local companies donated things like a free holiday in Devon, an overnight stay at the Pier House in Appin and original artwork by Ted Odlin.'

David and Teenie said: 'We really cannot find the words to express our gratitude.'

Oban Rotary backs charity

Oban Rotary president Iain MacIntyre hands a cheque to Homestart secretary Karen Scott.



The Rotary Club of Oban, in line with its support for a variety of good causes, recently donated part of the funds raised at its very successful annual Christmas carol concert to Homestart, a charity which supports young families encountering problems raising children under five.

Homestart offers support, through volunteers, to young parents throughout North

Lorn and Mull who find it difficult to cope for a number of reasons - including illness or disability, post-natal problems, relationship breakdowns, bereavement or financial issues.

Oban Rotary, along with its financial support to Oban Young Carers Initiative - £12,000 over three years - regards Homestart as hugely beneficial to the welfare of the community.

Mull Rally hopes to return for 2019

Mull Rally could be back on the road this year if Holyrood gives new legislation the green light.

The guardians of Mull Rally are working behind the scenes for the possible return of the Mull Rally over the weekend of October 11-13, which would follow the much-loved format that proved so popular over the years.

However, the event's return

depends on the implementation of a new act being passed through Holyrood.

Transport Scotland recently closed a public consultation period asking for comments which could determine whether motorsport can take place on the public roads. Organisers of the Mull Rally now hope legislation will be passed in time for the rally to return in October.

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OT

Council agrees to cut youth and adult learning services

by David McPhee
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Argyll and Bute Council agreed its spending plans for the next year and it is not good news for youth and adult learning services.

Despite protests from high school pupils in Argyll, the council agreed to cut 17.1 full-time equivalent positions – more than half of its current staffing level.

On behalf of the hundreds of Oban pupils who downed tools and protested at the high school, Dante Lopez said that young people's voices were not being heard.

He added: 'The youth of Argyll will not take this sitting down as this is something that affects all of our lives.'

Lollipop crossing patrollers were spared the axe, but the council's road safety unit will

be scrapped and five jobs will be cut from the authority's environment warden service.

As previously reported, the council approved a 4.79 per cent rise in council tax for the next 12 months.

Other policy options not approved were a 10 per cent reduction in grounds and environmental maintenance, closures of customer service points, and fee increases for car parking.

Leader of Argyll and Bute Council Aileen Morton said the local authority had to deal with a funding gap of almost £8 million – equating to £50 million in savings over the past nine years.

'Cuts mean we have had to make tough decisions about even the most valued council services,' Mrs Morton said.

'Our approach is to protect essential services and to



Oban High pupils walked out of school to protest against Argyll and Bute Council cuts.

protect jobs as far as we can. When it is said like that, it sounds simple, but in reality it is near impossible.

'The continued existence of local authorities is under threat as they struggle to meet costs.

'People may find it difficult to understand that we have to

face tough choices regarding services they depend on as they hear announcements that councils are getting more money.

'We didn't receive more funding overall. Our overall budget gap is nearly £8 million.'

The budget put forward

by the ruling administration of Liberal Democrat, Conservative and independent councillors was countered by three amendments, including one from the opposition SNP group. All three amendments proposed saving the road safety unit and maintaining the environmental warden and youth and adult learning services at current levels.

Amendments were put forward by Councillor Douglas Philand, seconded by Councillor Donald Kelly, and by Councillor George Freeman, seconded by Councillor Jean Moffat, as well as one from the opposition SNP group. The administration's motion received 21 votes, while leader of the SNP group, Councillor Sandy Taylor's amendment was backed by the 10 members of the group.

Key decisions made include:

Agreed: £500,000 reduction in council management costs over the next three years;

Agreed: an additional £500,000 for winter maintenance;

Agreed: an additional £2 million for the Health and Social Care Partnership;

Agreed: £120,000 to bring the Royal National Mòd to Oban in 2023;

Agreed: £23,330 for Kintyre Recycling Limited;

The increase in council tax will see Band D increase from £1,249 to £1,308.83.

Rejected: proposals to remove school crossing patrollers;

Rejected: proposal to close customer service points;

Rejected: proposal to reduce grounds and environment services;

Rejected: proposal to increase parking charges.

Oban pupils protest youth service cuts

by Jack MacGregor
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Oban High School was abuzz on Wednesday February 20 with young protesters carrying signs and banners, demanding a stop to the cuts Argyll and Bute Council was going to make to the youth services in the area.

A 20-minute protest took place in the pitch outside the high school after break with a large turnout from the school.

The budget change means that 57 per cent of staff working in youth services will be made redundant, resulting in a loss of many quality events and services that benefit young people in the town.

Two pupils from the high school were the main organisers of the protest.

Rachel Lawler, who has been a member of the North Argyll Youth Forum for four years, said: 'The protest got a lot of media coverage and attention and a few hundred people turned up. And there have been thousands of young people protesting in schools all over Argyll and Bute.'

Rachel also said Argyll and Bute would 'lose young people being involved in their community' as a result of the cuts.



Abbie Wood, left, and Christiana Cameron were among the protesters at Oban High School. Photograph: Jack MacGregor

The other organiser, Dante Lopez, S4, said that the council 'needs to think about what young people need, as these services are essential for them and for our community'.

Christiana Cameron, S6, was a pupil attending the strike. She said youth services 'provide irreplaceable support to many members of our school and opportunities that any young people may otherwise be deprived of. These cuts will be detrimental to our community'.

Christiana also said they helped by 'expanding our CVs, job applications and personal statements and are vital to our educational ex-

perience'. The cuts have affected other towns in Argyll and Bute. According to Lochgilphead High School pupil Cameron Garrett, who is a member of the Scottish Youth Parliament, these cuts could affect 'mental health services, youth exchanges, gaining qualifications in PDA or getting involved in the Scottish Youth Parliament'.

Cameron added: 'The council think that cutting youth services is part of the solution, which it isn't. We will lose youth support workers who do a seriously valuable job in supporting and working with young people across the area.'





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YOURVIEW

Is the council tax increase justified?



Henry Woodman, 79, from Connel said: 'I'm very upset about the increase. It affects people of all ages and I myself am affected by some of these cuts.'



Sheelagh Still, 67, from Mull said: 'If the council can improve amenities and public services, then that's fine but if not, I'll be furious.'



Josh Latimer, 21-year-old student from Oban said: 'As a student, I don't pay council tax but I will when I graduate. I think it depends on where the money is going and whether they can justify it or not.'

Oban Community Councillor Cynthia McKeown said: 'I know it's difficult, but you can't spend what you don't have.'

Martin Campbell, 29, from Dunbeg said: 'It seems like a very big increase. We need to know exactly where the money is going.'

Oban's inaugural Pride Day revealed

by Fiona Scott
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Oban Pride 2019 will take place on Saturday May 18 with equality for all a main theme for a packed day of activities.

The much-anticipated date for the inaugural event was revealed at the Oban Pride launch party at the Lorne Bar on Friday night, which had enjoyed its own Pride makeover especially for the event.

Local drag performer Crystal, whose alter ego Phill Dexter was part of the launch team, hosted Dragoake on the night with Lorne Bar resident DJ Neil keeping everyone dancing.

Talking about the historic event taking place in May, Crystal said: 'I can't tell you how good it feels to finally be able to release the date for Oban Pride 2019.'

'We are currently working on



Crystal was one of the VIPs at the Oban Pride launch.

a programme full of entertainment that the whole family can enjoy for that day and are hoping to have a parade through the town as well as other events throughout the evening and the weekend.

'If Friday night is anything to go by, the day itself will be a truly magnificent one. The Lorne had a fantastic atmosphere and all who attended

seemed to have an amazing evening.'

Having started after the Stonewall riots in 1969, Pride was originally a protest for the LGBTQ+ community in order to get equal rights.

'We may have come a long way with equal rights in this country but there are other countries that don't and we are showing the world that our

beautiful town of Oban stands with them in their fight for equality,' added Crystal.

'Pride is also a celebration of how far our rights have come in this country and fighting the stigma that LGBTQ+ people still face in their everyday lives, as well as making everybody feel welcome in all areas of our community.'

Gary Hamilton is also a member of the launch team and explained what events had been planned so far by Oban Pride. 'February is LGBT History month so to mark the end of this we have a double feature at Oban Phoenix Cinema on Friday March 1 with a documentary called LGBT Britain followed by the fabulous musical Everybody's talking about Jamie.'

'We have lots of events in the lead up to Oban Pride and all can be found on our Facebook page Oban Pride.'

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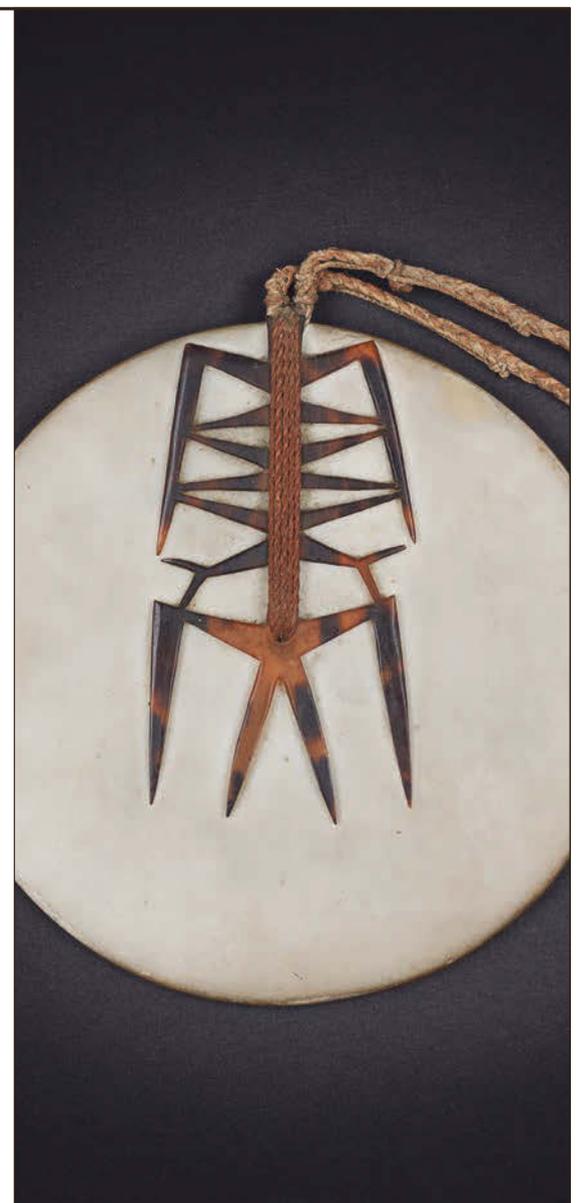
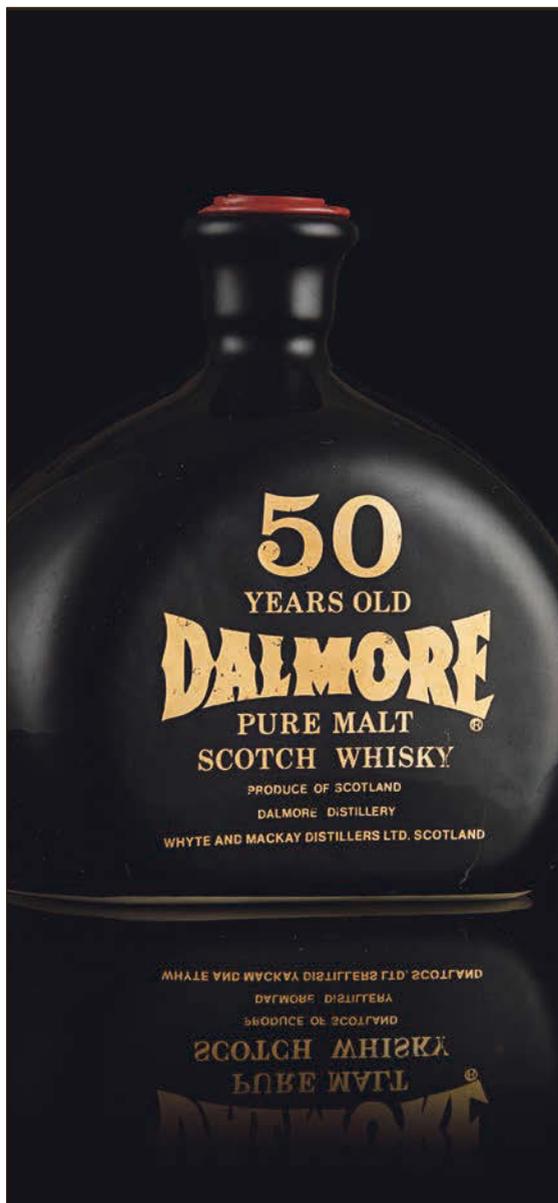
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OT

Shop in Oban to keep town vibrant

Around Oban

KAY MCDONALD

editor@obantimes.co.uk



The new Premier Inn opens today (Thursday February 28) and has been the subject of much conversation since the announcement it was going to be built.

I'm delighted to say that most of the conversation I've heard has been positive, and it certainly makes that area of the town look much better and can only add to what Oban has to offer our visitors.

Things are happening on George Street too with building work going on in what was Kitchen Garden and Oban Bay Fish Bar and Restaurant. While it's sad not to have the old businesses there any more, it's exciting to be welcoming new ones to the town.

I hear from many of our visitors how lucky we are to have such a vibrant town centre, and I agree, but it's not something we can become complacent about. It would be so easy for

WHERE IS THIS?



businesses to slip away with the lure of internet shopping tempting everyone.

However, as a town we have to make conscious decisions about supporting the businesses we have large and small or it would be very easy to lose them. It's so easy to sit in the evening browsing the internet but nothing beats going into a shop and getting to see and touch things. The colours are truer and it's much easier to judge the quality.

You also have the benefit of a shopkeeper for advice and some human interaction, which always makes the experience better, and you

don't have to wait for it to be delivered and have the stress of wondering if it'll arrive on time or in one piece.

I encourage everyone to think about it when they go to order something. Is there somewhere locally you could buy it? It means someone locally is making a living and perhaps employing others and putting money back into the economy which can only be a good thing.

The photo last week was of the building above New Look. It's amazing what you spot when you look up. This week's photo isn't too far away and is part of a beautiful building.

Oban Rotary funds Uganda volunteer Poppy

Poppy Honeyman, who is from Taynuilt and a former pupil of Oban High School, recently completed a three-month project in Uganda.

Poppy was leading a group of 20 volunteers, 10 British and 10 Ugandans, with the aim of improving the livelihood of communities surrounding the city of Lira in the north of the country.

The programme, which operates under the auspices of Voluntary Services Overseas and is government-funded, is very much youth orientated in terms of vocational training towards gainful employment along with developing awareness among the young of how they can benefit their communities.

Poppy, who has studied International Disaster Management at the University



Poppy Honeyman from Taynuilt receives a cheque from Oban Rotary president Iain MacIntyre.

of Manchester and looks forward to continuing her enthusiasm for a career in humanitarian work, met Oban Rotary president Iain MacIntyre to receive a cheque for £300 towards the costs of the programme as

each volunteer has to contribute a percentage of the overall cost.

Poppy, who visits her family in Taynuilt on a regular basis, intends to give Oban Rotary a talk on her experiences when available to do so.

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Breakdown cancellations prompt call for review

Almost 800 CalMac sailings were cancelled last year because of mechanical breakdowns, figures have revealed.

Scottish Greens transport spokesperson and Highlands and Islands MSP John Finnie has now called on the Scottish Government to urgently review its ferries plan in light of the new figures.

According to the figures obtained from CalMac by Mr Finnie, 780 services were cancelled for technical reasons in 2018, 150 more than in 2017.

Mr Finnie said: 'The Scottish Government has a duty to provide good quality ferry services to support rural and island communities.

'CalMac runs lifeline services and contributes significantly to local economies, particularly with regard to the important tourist trade. However, my constituents need to have confidence that, outwith extreme weather events, services will run as planned.'

He added: 'The transport secretary must urgently review the ferries plan to

ensure CalMac has a fleet that is fit for purpose and can be relied upon.

'As vessels get older, they require to spend more time in dry dock for repair. Steps must be taken to ensure the long-term sustainability of Scotland's ferry services.'

A CalMac spokesman said: 'Over the past months we have introduced new in-service maintenance teams, preventative maintenance regimes, and targeted investment to help keep vessels in good running order.

'This, along with other improvements in planned maintenance and procurement, made possible partly through the Scottish Government's £3.5 million Resilience Fund, will improve the technical resilience of the fleet.

'We acknowledge that losing 780 sailings due to technical breakdown is too many and causes inconvenience to passengers but in the context of nearly 145,000 timetabled departures this represents around one cancelled in every 200 sailings.'

Man made sexual gesture in court

A 70-year-old Oban man has pleaded guilty to making a sexual gesture to a councillor while she was in court as a witness.

Kenneth McLennan, 70, of Cadderlie, Crannaig-a-Mhinister, Pulpit Hill, admitted turning round and putting his finger in and out of his mouth towards Councillor Julie McKenzie when she was in Oban Sheriff Court as a witness.

Procurator fiscal Eoin McGinty told the court on Monday February 25 that there was a background of unwanted attention between the accused and the complainer.

Mr McGinty said: 'The complainer is a local SNP councillor and, as such, is in the public eye. She does receive unwanted attention, but particularly from the accused. 'On May 21, 2018, the complainer was in this court. The



Oban Sheriff Court.

court was closed for the giving of her evidence.

'The accused had attended. He had no reason to be within the court on that day.'

After giving evidence, Councillor McKenzie took a seat at the back of the court with some friends to watch the rest of proceedings.

While a witness made a reference to the councillor, Mr McGinty explained: 'At that point, the complainer,

who was sitting at the back, watched as the accused turned round and put his fingers in and out of his mouth in what might be recognised as a sexualised gesture.'

A friend of Ms McKenzie described being shocked 'by the fact that he had the audacity to do that in a court'.

A complaint was made immediately to the officer in the court.

Mr McGinty said:

'[McLennan] accepted contacting the complainer on many occasions and his position is that she is someone in the public eye and his comments to her on social media were fair comment.

'To his actions in court, his position was that his brace was loose and he perhaps fixed it, but did not recall doing so.

'When the question was put to him did he remember making a gesture with his finger, his response was "Goodness gracious no, I'm silly, but I'm not totally stupid".'

In his defence, Edward Thornton said: 'He is 70 years old and of previously excellent character.'

Sheriff Patrick Hughes said it was 'a serious matter,' and deferred sentencing for four weeks in order for the court to obtain reports.

McLennan will reappear on March 27.

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OT

Biggest Parents' Evening focuses on apprentices

by Fiona Scott
fscott@obantimes.co.uk



Developing the Young Workforce (DYW) Argyll is hosting a Scotland's Biggest Parents' Evening event along with Scottish Sea Farms (SSF) to mark the end of Scottish Apprenticeship Week 2019.

The event, aimed at SSF employees and partners who are parents or carers, will take place at the Scottish Sea Farms conference room at South Shian, Benderloch, from 12.30pm to 2pm on Friday March 8.

Around 71,800 job openings are expected in the Highlands, Islands and Argyll and Bute between 2018 and 2028, driven entirely by replacement demand.

Developed with Skills Development Scotland (SDS),

Scotland's Biggest Parents' Evening will see all 21 DYW regional groups partner with employers to showcase apprenticeship and other career opportunities through events across the country.

Friday's event will consist of an informal talk with guest speakers including Graham Campbell from SQA, Margaret Bennett from SDS plus modern apprentices from Scottish Sea Farms talking about their roles within the company.

A spokesperson from DYW Argyll said: 'We are delighted to be partnering with Scottish Sea Farms for this BPE event to explore routes into aquaculture careers in Argyll and Bute.'

As well as trying to encourage more young people to choose an apprenticeship,

the BPE project will be tapping into the power of the Developing the Young Workforce network to raise awareness of apprenticeships through this campaign during Scottish Apprenticeship Week.

Other aims of the project are to increase the understanding of apprenticeships and to debunk myths and misconceptions.

Alison MacPhee, learning and development coordinator with Scottish Sea Farms, added: 'Come along and see what fantastic opportunities SSF has available for you.'

DYW Argyll is hosting a series of free events in Dunoon, Campbeltown and Oban to raise awareness and understanding among parents about the career opportunities available in their area.

A Cry For The Wild

HOLLY GILLIBRAND

editor@obantimes.co.uk



Over the past few months, children around the world have been missing class to demand that our governments do something about the climate and ecological emergency.

Last Friday was the first UK-wide school strike for climate and it was truly a massive and momentous day with an estimated 15,000 students striking around the UK.

Young people like me who have been making a stand for our only planet and sacrificing an hour a week of education to do so have been receiving support and encouragement, but also considerable amounts of hate.

This movement all started with Swedish 16-year-old Greta Thunberg, who does not understand why people are calling climate change an existential threat and the most important issue of all, yet is not being treated as the crisis it is.

So a few months ago, she sat herself down outside the Swedish parliament and stayed there for three weeks. She school-striking for the climate. Greta now strikes every Friday instead of every day and tens of thousands of young people around the world are following in her footsteps.

I started striking from school on January 11 this year, every Friday morning for an hour. A few years ago, I'd heard of climate change but not really thought much of it. I was looking forward to growing up in a beautiful, healthy world and becoming a veterinary surgeon so that I can heal and protect the wildlife that I love.

But if our leaders continue down the path that we are on today, that future will be no more. There will be no more wildlife, no more nature, just a planet decimated by humanity's greed.

The diverse and complex mosaic of species on Earth

is being threatened by man-made climate change and other human activities. Not only is our biosphere being destroyed even as we speak, we are on our way to causing humanity's own extinction.

The Arctic and Greenland ice sheets are melting, Australia is burning and parts of America are experiencing temperatures colder than the Arctic. The ocean is warming, rising and acidifying.

And yet, after all this evidence, after all this destruction, we still ignore climate change and ecological breakdown. People do not realise what is going on. Even when people know about this crisis, many still do nothing, perhaps because they feel powerless in the face of this catastrophe.

So, please join us on Friday March 15 for the global strike for the climate, to demand that our governments take the action needed.

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Pier repairs make trips from Mull to Ulva safer

Community Council objects to house plans

Continued from page one
There was a request for him to ask for a year-long biodiversity assessment for the area.

Iain Lumsden, managing director of TSL Contractors, said: 'We continue to work to satisfy the requirements of the local authority planning and their stakeholders in respect of our proposed development at Lonan Drive.'

'We also continue to discuss the benefits of our proposals with a highly reputable housing association which provides affordable housing solutions supported by the Scottish Government.'

'Such opportunities to provide low cost affordable homes to sustain and support the Oban community, and in particular young families, in such a central location within the town are unfortunately rare.'

'We would, as you would expect of a reputable and community-focused company, be happy to meet with the local community to present our proposals at an appropriate time.'

by Sam Ormiston
editor@obantimes.co.uk

Travel between Mull and the Isle of Ulva is now much safer after improvement works were completed on both sides of the Sound.

The Isle of Ulva has been under community ownership since June 2018, after the North West Mull Community Woodland Company purchased the island on behalf of its inhabitants.

Since then, safeguarding the pier has been high up on the priority list for the community. In recent years, the condition of the piers on both sides had significantly deteriorated, so much so that there was a risk of pieces falling off.

This was endangering those travelling between Mull and Ulva, as well as the local fishing boats which operate out of the Sound of Ulva.



Concrete is delivered to the Ulva pier, left, and workers resurface the lower part of the slipway.



The residents of Ulva are grateful to Marine Scotland, which funded the repairs that included cutting back loose material and resurfacing in certain areas.

Mull-based company TSL Contractors worked tirelessly through difficult weather con-

ditions to ensure everything was in place, ready to receive concrete on schedule and take advantage of this month's low spring tides.

John Nicolson of TSL said: 'We were delighted to be selected to carry out this work in support of the community

of Ulva and North West Mull including the fishermen working out of Ulva Ferry, for whom these piers are so important.'

Rhuri Munro, an Ulva man and fisherman, said: 'This is a hugely significant milestone for the community, and the

first of many projects we hope to deliver in the future.'

The pier on the Mull side, as well as the slipway on Ulva, have now been restored and are in good shape. Most importantly, it is safe for those travelling and working on the Sound of Ulva.

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MacPhail

ANGUS MACPHAIL

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Last Friday, February 22, I was lucky to be involved in the joint SJ Noble and Kilfinan Trust Annual Gathering.

The event, which took place at Portavadie Marina, involved an evening followed by a day of talks and discussion panels on a range of subjects, mainly focusing on entrepreneurship, rural economies, community development and social enterprise. What a great pleasure it was to take part in such a gathering of enthusiasm.

The SJ Noble Trust was set up in memory of Johnny Noble of Ardkinglass, who died in 2002. Johnny, along with business partner Andy Lane, set up Lochfyne Oysters in 1978 and through years of hard work and navigating many setbacks, they took the company from nothing to being a multi-million-pound enterprise employing more than 100 people in Cairndow, and many more across the UK with sister company Lochfyne Restaurants.

The main work of the trust is to assist in the set-up of new businesses in Argyll by providing loans and grants as

well as guidance and support in other ways.

I first had an involvement with the SJ Noble Trust back in 2004 when, not long after its formation, my uncle and I received a grant of £5,000 to help towards the costs of setting up Skipinnish Sea Tours on Tiree. The main start-up cost was buying a suitable boat and their grant was a vital part of knitting our funding package together. As well as further assistance with expansion and other new projects over the following four years, along with added investment organised by them from the Kilfinan Trust, the trustees have been a great source of encouragement, the benefits of which go well beyond the financial support at set-up stages.

As I wrote last summer, during our nearly seven years of trials and tribulations with the Ceilidh House roof quagmire, we had some very difficult obstacles to overcome. At all stages, the SJ Noble Trust were hugely supportive and inspirational in their outlook whenever we met to discuss

progress, as were Jane and Nick Ferguson of the Kilfinan Trust and many others. This tied very closely to one of the discussion points of the day.

The title of the panel in which I took part was 'Dos and Don'ts in business'. All of us on the panel had a fair experience in the 'don'ts' through the various mistakes and setbacks we had all had in our respective experiences. One of the main 'dos' discussed was that in business and indeed any other aspect of life, it is very important to have a resource of trusted and experienced allies at hand for advice and guidance when it is needed.

I have been very lucky to have benefited from the wisdom and experience of many people in this regard over the years – some I have referred to in these articles.

The chair and trustees of the SJ Noble Trust are certainly among those who have helped me greatly.

I would highly recommend their involvement to anyone in Argyll considering starting a new business or community enterprise.

Mull student turns teacher

by Sam Ormiston
editor@obantimes.co.uk

A Mull student has impressed his teachers and peers after gaining the status of Level 1 Google Certified Educator.

Jakub Marzec, a third-year pupil at Tobermory High School, is the first Argyll and Bute student to gain the industry recognised qualification, which is actually aimed at teaching staff.

The qualification, which can be worked towards and gained on Google's Teacher Centre, is used to certify educators who know how to use Google tools in the classroom.

Jakub is one of many pupils at his school who had been using Google's G Suite to develop their digital skills.

The Google Educator programme, which he has been using, was originally designed to help teachers use Google for Education to im-



Julien McKenzie, principal teacher at Tobermory High, congratulates Jakub Marzec.

prove standards of teaching and learning.

In gaining the Educator status, Jakub has demonstrated that he has the knowledge and ability to do this.

Councillor Yvonne McNeilly, Argyll and Bute Council's policy lead for education, praised Jakub on his success, remarking that his achievement was 'fantastic for Jakub and for Tobermory'.

The council has seen a huge increase in young people taking up an active interest in technology. Councillor McNeilly added: 'Our schools are working extremely

hard to give young people the opportunity to take the lead in this.'

In the 21st century, it is becoming increasingly important to be aware of how technology can affect businesses.

And Councillor McNeilly believes that young people should be doing more than just consuming technology – they should be creating online digital content as well.

The more opportunities students receive in the classroom at a young age to enhance their technological skills, the more likely their chances of success in later life.

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Duo to walk Hadrian's Wall in full Roman gear for Oban's Guy

Two men will walk the length of Hadrian's Wall in full Roman armour after one of the men's Oban nephew was diagnosed with MS.

Steve Bertuzzi and his friend Stef Douglas will follow the 84-mile route from Cumbria to Segedunum Fort, starting on May 6, to help raise money for Guy Forteith.

Steve said: 'My nephew, Guy, was diagnosed with MS when he

was only 16. Guy is inspirational – despite how debilitating and challenging MS has been to him, he still keeps fighting on.

'Thousands of people live with MS and we want to raise at least £2,000 to go towards further research and therapy centres like the one that helps look after Guy in Oban.'

The wall was commissioned by Emperor Hadrian in 122 AD

to protect Roman Britain from invasion from the north. Steve and Stef have an interest in Roman history and have already sourced authentic Roman gear.

Speaking to The Oban Times, Guy said: 'It feels really good that he is going to be doing it for MS. It took me by surprise.' Stef said: 'We will be marching the whole route wearing full authentic Roman gear just as a Roman Centurion

from a legion would have done around 2,000 years ago.

The equipment is heavy – 20 to 30 kilograms – and designed for fighting and not hiking.

The duo have raised £804 so far. To donate, visit www.facebook.com/donate/2129149550438646

Steve and Steff will do the charity walk in full Roman armour.



Councillors leap to defence of censured deputy

Argyll and Bute Council's deputy leader will face no further action – and has survived calls to consider his post – after being censured for breaking the code of conduct for Scotland's councillors.

Councillor Gary Mulvaney was reprimanded by the Standards Commission for Scotland last month after failing to declare a non-financial interest in plans to introduce parking limits near a housing development in Cardross.

The breach arose after the authority's Helensburgh and Lomond area committee, including Councillor Mulvaney, discussed parking restrictions at the Scott Gardens sheltered housing unit – run by Dunbritton Housing Association, of which Councillor Mulvaney is a board member – in December 2017.

The censure was discussed at the council's meeting on Thursday February 21 – Councillor Mulvaney left the chamber for the discussion.

Members agreed to take no further action in respect of the commission's findings beyond noting its report.

Councillors George Freeman and Donald Kelly suggested Councillor Mulvaney, a Conservative, should apologise or consider his position – but other members leapt to his defence.

Councillor Freeman said: 'Looking at the statements...I don't see how he can believe he acted in a proper manner.'

'Going back to a previous council leader who had a similar incident about 18 years ago, I believe he apologised to the council that time.'

Councillor Kelly added: 'I feel it does bring the council into disrepute. I think Councillor Mulvaney should consider his position.'

But Councillor Ellen



Councillor Mulvaney

Morton (Liberal Democrat), who is chairwoman of the area committee, responded: 'I am astonished at these remarks. They [the Standards Commission] have imposed the minimum sanction that they could under legislation. They have made it clear it was a finely balanced judgement.'

'This particular item did not come from Dunbritton; it came from council officers on road safety grounds arising from complaints.'

'It never crossed my mind at that meeting that Councillor Mulvaney had any interest to declare. It was entirely a road safety matter on the A814.'

'He has nothing to be ashamed of, nothing to apologise for, and I am bitterly disappointed in the remarks made.'

SNP councillor Richard Trail added: 'The Standards Commission, in censuring, have gone over the top. I believe this was a trivial issue and I was sorry to see Councillor Mulvaney censured.'

Other members also spoke warmly in Councillor Mulvaney's favour, with leader Councillor Aileen Morton saying: 'I have been aware for six and a half years that he was a Dunbritton board member and I didn't think he had to declare an interest. I think calls for him to apologise are ridiculous.'



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OT

Mary's Meals lands £30,000 cash windfall

by Martin Laing
mlaing@obantimes.co.uk



A kind-hearted landlord has given a major donation to Dalmally-based charity Mary's Meals, which will help transform the lives of hungry children.

Ian Paver, who manages the building of the Argyll-based charity's Oban shop, donated £30,000 to Mary's Meals following the passing of his mother Catherine Kinloch Paver, founder of the Pavers shoe company.

Ian, 55, who made the donation on behalf of the Paver Foundation, will see his incredible gift go even further during the charity's Double The Love campaign.

Until March 1, 2019, public donations to Mary's Meals' Double The Love campaign will be matched by the UK government, up to £2 million, helping to provide life-changing daily school meals to impoverished children in Zambia.

Ian, from York, said: 'After my mum's passing, I was given some money to donate to charity and Mary's Meals is a charity I really believe



Ian Paver, left, met Christina Lynas and Peter Russell from Mary's Meals.

in. My mum built the Pavers business from nothing into what it is now, so it's great that her work will also help impoverished children.

'It's a great way to help celebrate my mum's life too, as she was from Scotland, where Mary's Meals started.

'The Double The Love campaign is great because you know that your donation will go even further, helping even more children through Mary's Meals.'

Mary's Meals currently provides life-changing daily school meals to more than 1.4 million children in 18 countries around the world.

It costs just £13.90 to feed a child for an entire school year through Mary's Meals.

Christina Lynas, community fundraising manager at Mary's Meals, said: 'Our wonderful supporters never cease to amaze us with their kindness and determination to help us reach the next hungry child with Mary's Meals.'

'We are incredibly grateful to Ian for thinking about Mary's Meals and the children at this time. We are delighted that, during our Double The Love campaign, we have a wonderful opportunity to create an even bigger impact by transforming lives.'



David Isaac, centre, has notched up 500 call-outs on Oban lifeboat.

Maritime milestone for lifeboat's David

A double dose of call-outs last Wednesday resulted in Oban RNLI lifeboat crew member David Isaac reaching his 500th 'shout'.

It was a busy day for Oban lifeboat's volunteer crew, first launching at 8am to assist a barge in difficulty before answering a 'mayday' call for an overdue diver in the Sound of Mull.

The lifeboat left the berth once again, making best speed to the Salen area where it was joined by Tobermory RNLI lifeboat and the Coastguard rescue helicopter.

CalMac ferries diverted course to assist but thankfully there was good news

and the diver was located safe and well shortly after the lifeboat arrived on scene.

David, a fisherman by trade, first joined Oban lifeboat 20 years ago. By 2006, he passed out as a deputy coxswain on station.

Last year alone he clocked up 55 hours and 526 miles on board the lifeboat.

When asked about his service, David said: 'It's hard to pick a most memorable shout, but I have been picked up off my fishing boat several times when the pager has gone off. I've also cut short an anniversary dinner!'

Reflecting on his time at

the station, he continued: 'As a boy growing up and watching the lifeboat launch, it was something I always admired, so it was a big milestone for me when I joined the crew and a huge honour passing out as a coxswain.'

'To be the one at the helm with such a good crew backing each other up is a real privilege.'

David is one of thousands of volunteer crew members around the coast who drop everything at any time to respond to their pagers. Without such commitment and dedication the RNLI wouldn't be able to continue saving lives at sea.

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Cruachan wants to inspire youth

by Fiona Scott
fscott@obantimes.co.uk



Energy enthused youngsters are being offered free tours of one of the region's top visitor attractions.

Owner Drax Group Ltd has announced that all schools and higher education institutions will be welcome at Cruachan: The Hollow Mountain during term time and UK government minister, Lord Duncan of Springbank, pledged his support for the initiative when visiting the award-winning tourist attraction last week.

The announcement follows Drax Group's acquisition of the VisitScotland five-star-rated power station at the end of 2018 as part of a £702 million deal and is part of the company's efforts to promote education and skills, particularly STEM (science, technology, engineering and maths) subjects.

Lord Duncan toured the site, which welcomes around 50,000 visitors every year, learning about Cruachan and how the site can power the equivalent of more than 90,000 homes at times of peak electricity demand.



Lord Duncan with Cruachan visitor centre staff.

being in awe of the engineering achievement,' he said.

'I therefore welcome the fact that pupils and students are being given the opportunity to see this great example of first-class engineering free of charge.

'Renewable energy is vital for all our futures and Cruachan's commitment to educating young people about its important role in power generation and as a home to nature is to be applauded.'

Constructed between 1959

and 1965, Cruachan was the first power station of its kind and size anywhere in the world. Just a short distance from Oban, the site is also a haven for wildlife, with swallows, ospreys, pine martens and golden eagles all calling the mountain home.

Andy Koss, Drax Power CEO, said: 'The tour really is an inspiring experience - we take visitors right inside the mountain to see the power station, including the turbine hall.

'We're keen to share this feat of engineering with the next generation to inspire them, and so offering free educational visits, as we do at Drax Power Station in North Yorkshire, is the obvious next step.'

The visitor centre is open from 9.15am to 3.45pm in winter and 9.15pm to 4.45pm in summer, Monday to Friday.

To find out more about visiting Cruachan, go to <https://www.visitcruachan.co.uk/>.



Headway Highland manager Lee Gordon and board member Jan May at a recent fundraising/awareness event in Inverness.

Charity is hoping to make Headway in Oban

A charity that supports adults with acquired brain injury (ABI) and their families and carers is looking to start up a support group in Oban.

Headway Highland (SC023551) already has support groups in Inverness, Fort William, Nairn, Thurso and Wick, where members can go along to relaxing and friendly meetings where they socialise with other people in a similar situation.

The charity, which provides support groups, home visits - following referral - access to a free accredited counselling service, signposting to other services and organisations and a quarterly newsletter, is holding a consultation event at the

Dove Centre from midday to 3pm on Wednesday March 13.

Anyone in the area interested in attending a brain injury support group in Oban is invited to go along and find out more. Free refreshments will be provided.

Anyone who cannot make it along but is interested in attending a brain injury support group in Oban should contact Headway Highland charity manager Lee Gordon on 07767 416006 or email leeheadway@yahoo.com.

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New appointment looks to raise awareness of benefits of screening

A screening engagement practitioner has been appointed following a decline in numbers on NHS screening programmes.

Heather McAdam has joined the team at Argyll and Bute Health and Social Care Partnerships (HSCP) and is looking to deliver knowledge and awareness of available programmes around the region.

'There has been a decreased level to uptake screening programmes within Argyll and Bute,' she told us.

'My role is to encourage people who are most likely to benefit from screening to uptake screening test invitations. This is to help diagnose diseases earlier and help patients to access earlier treatment.'

'Screening is a vital method of preventing and identifying health problems in people with no symptoms at an early stage when it can be easier to treat.'



Argyll and Bute HSCP's new screening engagement practitioner Heather McAdam.

'The services are offered to people who meet particular criteria and who are most likely to benefit.'

Ms McAdam's professional experience includes nursing,

midwifery, sexual health, genitourinary (reproductive organs and urinary system) medicine, contraception and sexual health clinics, including outreach and

public health promotion and awareness services.

She is also responsible for community engagement activities and scoping new opportunities to increase awareness through delivery of training workshops and presentations throughout Argyll and Bute.

Working closely with community groups, HSCP colleagues and partners Ms McAdam is keen to build stronger community screening awareness networks.

'Social connections in Argyll and Bute, for example HSCP staff, community groups and service providers, can make a significant impact and help to deliver effective strategies to promote available screening tests,' she added.

'At the end of the day, the main goal is to increase participation in screening, which will result in an outcome of developing stronger resilient communities.'

Argyll seek for type 2

Argyll and Bute Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP) was awarded £22,500 in October last year to investigate how to support people living with type 2 diabetes and to prevent more people from getting this condition.

This funding is part of a national healthy weight strategy launched by the Scottish Government in 2018. It is being used to investigate what people living in Argyll and Bute think needs to happen to reduce their risks of getting type 2 diabetes and, if they already have a diagnosis, what could be done to help them manage their symptoms better. Gestational diabetes which occurs in pregnant women is also included in this work.

Type 2 diabetes is a very se-



rious long-term health condition associated with many debilitating complications such as visual impairment, circulatory problems and amputations, heart disease, stroke and kidney failure.

This causes a huge amount of pain and suffering to people and costs the NHS more than £1 billion each year in Scotland, yet the risk of having type 2 diabetes can be reduced.

Alison McGrory, health improvement principal from Argyll and Bute HSCP, said: 'My job is to enable the people of Argyll and Bute to

 International Women's Day

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Balance for better

Advertorial



'Balance for Better' is this year's theme for International Women's Day. A day celebrated across the world on 8 March to acknowledge the many achievements of women and to take action to forge a more gender balanced world.

Gloria Steinem, journalist, feminist and activist stated

that "the story of women's struggle for equality belongs to no single feminist nor to any one organisation but to the collective efforts of all who care about human rights."

For our communities to thrive, we need a more gender balanced society. Wherever we live and work our actions matter. We can

make the balance better for the next generation of young women. Maybe you could make your organisation and your board of directors more gender balanced?

Lochaber Women's Aid are staging a display in Caol Library from 1st to 11th March which celebrates the women who took action to make a balance for better.

So, if you would like to know more about pioneering women you can visit our display in Caol Library.

You can also come along to our coffee morning between 10am-1pm on 8th March at Lochaber Women's Aid premises and find out what you can do to help our cause and make a balance for better.

ks better outcomes diabetes patients



Alison McGrory, left, and Debbie Kirby.

more support to enable them to manage their condition so it's very important we learn from people about what type of support is needed and use this information in our planning.'

A survey has been developed to enable people to give their views and a number of focus groups are taking place with community groups

throughout Argyll and Bute during February and March. The survey can be viewed at www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/VJQDKYM

If anyone is interested in hearing more about the project, contact Deborah Kirby, Argyll and Bute Professional Lead for Dietetics, Argyll and Bute HSCP - NHS Highland, Cowal Community Hospital, 360 Argyll Street, Dunoon, or email deborah.kirby@nhs.net

lead healthy and well lives. Type 2 diabetes is on the rise in Scotland and although we all know a friend or family member with diabetes, it is a very serious condition. I am delighted that we have been awarded this funding to work with people to develop appropriate services and support.'

Debbie Kirby, lead dietitian for Argyll and Bute HSCP, added: 'Recent research has shown even stronger

evidence that weight loss and weight maintenance can reduce the risk of type 2 diabetes.

'For those already with type 2 diabetes, it means that working on their weight and being less inactive can delay and avoid complications.

'Excitingly, we now know in some cases, lifestyle changes can bring people into remission. In future, people with type 2 and gestational diabetes will receive much

NHS Highland annual review is delayed

NHS Highland has rescheduled its annual review for April 9, 2019.

The review was initially to take place on Monday February 18 but, owing to a 'change in leadership', it has been rescheduled.

Newly-appointed chief executive of NHS Highland Iain Stewart took up the role in January, and now has just over a month to prepare for the annual review.

Politicians have hit out at the board for the postponement, which has happened amid claims of a 'bullying culture' on the rise in NHS Highland.

Highlands and Islands MSP Edward Mountain said: 'If everything was going well, the public would be the first to know.

'Now that it isn't, it is wholly inappropriate to cancel the meeting.'

It is hoped that things are looking up, however.

One Facebook user commented: 'I'd like to praise the new chief executive of NHS Highland for meeting me in the first two weeks of being in the post to start making small steps to



David Alston.

sort this mess out.' Cabinet Secretary for Health and Sport Jeane Freeman will attend the review in April, which will take place at the Centre for Health Science in Inverness.

NHS Highland chairman David Alston has encouraged members of the public to attend from 2pm to 3pm, when there will be a question and answer session for people to voice their concerns.

Mr Alston said: 'The annual review is a good opportunity for us to celebrate our successes and highlight the challenges we have faced.'

Argyll and Bute carers awarded cash boost

More than 1,000 carers in Argyll and Bute receiving the Carer's Allowance Supplement will get two further payments this year, writes Sam Ormiston.

The scheme started in 2018, with carers receiving £221 in September and December last year.

The extra payment is part of a new Scottish Government initiative. It is given to people who also receive Carer's Allowance from the Department for Work and Pensions.

The scheme has helped 1,030 people in Argyll and Bute, and more than 77,000 across Scotland.

Carers will receive a further

£226.20 in June this year, and again in December.

Holyrood has always been keen to recognise the contribution that carers make to society. The Carer's Allowance Supplement is just the start of a bigger plan.

Cabinet Secretary for Social Security Shirley-Anne Somerville said: 'Once fully operational, Social Security Scotland will administer 14 benefits.'

This will include extra payments to disabled people, as well as people in low-income households.

The scheme has been marked as 'the most significant new public service since devolution became real'.



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BUSINESS NEWS

Community board to boost island business

CalMac's independent community board has teamed up with the company to help raise the profile of Scotland's west coast islands as business destinations.

The board has organised a business conference aboard the MV Clansman, on a non-landing cruise from Oban to Colonsay on March 27.

The event, Strengthening Communities: Diverse Approaches to Business Success, is targeting people thinking of locating to an island to set up a business or expanding an existing operation. They will hear from a range of speakers who have made a success of an island enterprise.

The initiative is the creation of community board member Ian Macfarlane, who has a career-long track record of successful business development.

He said: 'Our islands and remote communities are not only wonderful places to live and visit, they are also great places to do business. We have a real can-do attitude to enterprise and business opportunities across a range of sectors which are there to be developed.'

The networking event will also give existing business owners a chance to share their experiences and expertise.

The range of speakers includes sessions from Isle of Colonsay Oysters, the Loch Melfort Hotel, Gael Force Group Holdings, Gigha Halibut Limited, the Tیره Music Festival and the Kilchoman Distillery Company Limited.

'Every business presenting has a success story to tell and is sharing their expertise and experience with anyone interested in following their lead and expanding their business on the west coast,' said Ian.

Anyone interested in attending can find more details and book at calmac.co.uk/CCB-initiatives

SSC sustainably restocks Benmore

The Scottish Salmon Company (SSC) has helped launch a new restocking project on Mull as part of its ongoing commitment to working collaboratively with wild fisheries and sustainably supporting the natural environments in which it operates.

Some 300,000 ova have been supplied to the Benmore Estate at Gruline to assist in the restocking of salmon on its river.

The ova have been provided to the estate's Glen Forsa hatchery as part of a long-term partnership with SSC. The hatchery marks a significant investment for Benmore Estate and will see salmon raised and returned to its fishing river.

The Mull partnership is the latest in a number of sustainable restocking projects supported by SSC to regenerate wild salmon numbers in Scottish rivers.

In the spring of 2018, more than 4,000 smolt were released into a river system on North Uist as part of an ongoing project with the North Uist Estate.

It was this river system that the company's own native Hebridean broodstock originated from – and it was fish from these bloodlines that restocked the estate.

One of the company's most successful programmes is on the River Carron, where its relationship with the wild fishery began 10 years ago through the supply of feed and equipment to support wild salmon stocks.

This was formalised in 2012 when the University of the Highlands and Islands set up a research project to investigate the impact of restocking on the river. The three-year River Carron Restoration Project was jointly funded by SSC, Scottish Sea Farms, Skretting, Ewos and Biomar.

SSC's involvement continues. The company's Langass hatchery has received 30,000 wild ova from the River Carron and has returned more than 685,000 ova and 228,000 fry back to the river over the past eight years.

Craig Anderson, chief executive of SSC, said: 'The unique natural environment on the west coast of Scotland and the Hebrides is the fabric



At the restocking are, left to right, Robin Harrowsmith, Benmore Estate; Donald Bisset, Benmore Estate; Henry Dalgety, SSC; Renata Schmidtova, Benmore Estate, and Andrew Gorthy, also Benmore Estate.

weaved into the provenance of our Scottish salmon. Restocking projects, such as those on the Benmore Estate, play an important role in our ongoing commitment to support the marine environment in these beautiful areas.'

Bob Kindness, manager of the River Carron Restoration Project, added: 'The restocking project has proven to be effective on the River

Carron with elevated catches for the past 15 years, reflecting exactly the timeline of our restocking efforts.

'Our longstanding relationship with The Scottish Salmon Company has delivered practical support and knowledge sharing between both parties and has delivered a measurable impact on wild stocks.'

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Argyll and isles gins are among the best

Three Argyll and the isles gins have made the top 10 nationally in a consumer survey of Scotland's favourite gins.

An online survey of Scotland's gin lovers has revealed that Isle of Harris Gin from Tarbert, Isle of Harris, was the nation's favourite, with Kintyre Botanical Gin from Campbeltown ranking second. Lussa Gin, from Ardlussa on Jura, finished ninth.

The online consumer survey was launched by The Scottish Gin Society, a not-for-profit organisation that promotes and celebrates the Scottish gin industry.

In total, 6,435 unique votes were cast, almost double that of the responses received in 2018.

Smaller gins enjoyed success throughout the survey, reflecting the loyal following of many smaller brands and the diverse landscape of the Scottish gin industry in general.

While brands such as Edinburgh Gin, Caorunn Gin and Hendrick's appeared in the top 10 in 2018, the most recent survey shows a departure from the big names in favour of the rise of smaller distilleries.

The full top 10 list of gins as voted for by the public are: Isle of Harris, Kintyre Botanical Gin, Redcastle Gin (Angus), Kirkjuvagr Gin (Orkney), The Teasmith Gin (Udny, Aberdeenshire), Crag



Simon Erlanger of
Isle of Harris Gin.

& Tail Gin (Angus), Kinrara Highland Gin (Aviemore), The Old Curiosity Gin (Edinburgh), Lussa Gin and McLean's Gin (Strathaven, South Lanarkshire).

Stephen White, founder of The Scottish Gin Society, said: 'We believe the Scottish Gin Society survey to be the largest of its kind and are delighted to have received twice as many responses in 2019.'

'The results show that the popularity of Scottish gin is still growing, especially with all the new entrants appearing in this year's survey. We would like to congratulate the brands involved as they are all producing

exceptional products and look forward to the bright future of the gin industry in Scotland.'

The Scottish Gin Society produces an interactive online distillery map and an A-Z of Scottish gins to educate consumers about where their favourite gins are produced. The society engages with followers from across the globe with a combined social media following in excess of 120,000.

The Scottish Gin Society's A-Z of Scottish gins now lists 139 separate gins from nearly 70 separate distilleries. It is estimated that up to 80 per cent of UK produced gin comes from Scotland.

HIE set to hold export workshop

Highlands and Islands Enterprise is to hold a one-day Preparing to Export workshop to help businesses to develop overseas markets.

The introductory programme is loaded with practical advice, including current Brexit considerations, and HIE experts will work with attendees to develop a



tailor-made export plan to help launch a business internationally.

Key areas covered include market analysis and entry, international finance, contracts and logistics, to ensure the right foundations are laid for exporting.

This free workshop is for Highlands and Islands businesses of all sizes from all sectors, but places are limited and in high demand.

It will be on Thursday March 14 at Highlands and Islands Enterprise in Inverness, from 9am-5pm.

To register, go to <http://www.hie.co.uk>



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New film captures the spirit of whisky

Scotch: The Golden Dram, a revealing feature documentary on how whisky became the premiere spirit of choice around the globe, will be released in UK and Irish cinemas on March 8 by Parkland Entertainment and Munro Films.

This follows the film's European premiere at the Glasgow Film Festival on March 1 and Irish premiere at the Dublin International Film Festival on March 2.

The film journeys to the stunning Scottish countryside to uncover the history of the craft and to meet some of the biggest names in the industry.

Shot on location in Scotland, Scotch: The Golden Dram tells the story of uisge-beatha, Gaelic for 'water of life', which is enjoyed in more than 200 countries, generating over \$6 billion in exports each year.

The film charts the Cinderella tale of legendary master distiller Jim McEwan, a veteran with more than 50 years standing in the industry, who takes on a dilapidated distillery on his home island of Islay and turns it into an award-winning blend.

Some of the other ardent enthusiasts featured include Richard Paterson, a master blender whose nose was insured for \$2.5 million, as well as biochemist whisky-maker Dr Bill Lumsden, and master distiller Ian MacMillan.

The film marks director-producer Andrew Peat's feature-length documentary debut, a passion project for the American film-maker who studied at St Andrew's University.

For further information, visit the film's Facebook page at [scotchthegoldendram](#) and Twitter @TheGoldenDram.



Whisky expert Charles Maclean features in the film.

Highland hospitality

Morvern lines

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I have been privileged to have had some wonderful hospitality around the world but none better than in the Highlands and Islands.

Here, despite a quickening pace of life, the tradition is still very much alive. It is not new. The ancient Greeks demonstrated their piety by giving hospitality to humble travellers who turned out to be disguised deities and in the Bible we find: 'Be not forgetful to show hospitality to strangers for thereby some have entertained angels unawares' - (Hebrews 13.2).

Even in civil wars, such as the Jacobite risings, visitors were never asked who they were or their business. And, for as long as they remained under his roof, their host considered it was his sacred duty to protect them regardless of the circumstances. Visitors stayed for months often proving ruinous to the provider.

At the burial of one of the Lord of the Isles, in Iona, nine hundred cows, valued at three merks each, were consumed. One of the most outstanding examples of hospitality in the West Highlands in modern times, that I know of, used to be found at the annual Glenfinnan Gathering.

Here, every year from 1945 to 1993, its convener, Mrs Cameron-Head of Inverailort, who was not rich as the world now understands riches, provided free lunches and afternoon tea, to around 300 friends, piping stewards and judges, dancers, policemen, helpers, overseas visitors and many others whom she had never met.

Glenfinnan is not a huge gathering, like Braemar. There are no royal visitors. The great names from the sporting world don't appear here. It is a domestic day out. But it worked.

Mrs Cameron-Head, who lived across the hill at Inverailort Castle on the shores of Loch Ailort, would summon a cohort of willing helpers from all parts of the country weeks before the day of the gathering which, incidentally, is always held on the Saturday nearest August 19 when the Jacobite standard was raised in 1745; these unpaid auxiliaries would peel potatoes, make venison stew and prepare buckets of jellies and trifles. Some would be detailed to make scones, others shortbread. In the early morning of the great day a convoy of cars carried the food and drink 10 miles to Glenfinnan - their drivers hoping that they wouldn't get bogged down on the field before they reached the convener's marquee

which legend had it came from Mons, or was it Sandhurst? 'Do come in, come in,' she would say to anyone peering through the open door of the old canvas marquee. 'The dog will only bite if he doesn't like you.'

A good deal of Gaelic could be heard and there was none of the bitter class differentiation that sours so much in the Highlands. Everyone was there, and they all spoke to each other like family - helped along no doubt by Hangman's Blood, a dangerous cocktail of whisky, brandy, gin, cider and other ingredients.

Mrs Cameron-Head of Inverailort, otherwise known as 'Mrs CH', was much loved throughout the Highlands for her essential Christian kindness and an ability to lead and persuade by example. Born in Glasgow in 1917 the kinswoman of Viscount Gormanston of County Meath, she was tall and striking with her tartan suits, black neck-choker and a sense of fun. As a child aged two, she with her sister was rescued by the gardener when their house in Ireland was set on fire by the Black and Tans.

Over the next 17 years, the family had 21 different homes in France, England, Scotland and Ireland - 'Mummy liked moving' - before deciding to go to Alderney in the Channel Islands for three weeks. They stayed for three years. She was educated at Stover School, near Newton Abbot, in Devon, where she became the school's first head girl. After school she taught until the Second World War, when she became an organiser of the Land Girls and then a Red Cross ambulance driver with The Princess Royal's Volunteer Corps. In 1941, she was posted to Lochailort with the commandos. There she met Francis Cameron-Head and in 1942 they married. He was Laird of Inverailort whose home had been requisitioned by the Royal Navy for the training of commandos under Colonel David Stirling of SAS fame. The writer Seton Gordon was best man. They went to live at Dunain Park outside Inverness until 1945, when they were able to return to Inverailort.

There they found their castle badly damaged by the hundreds of troops that had been stationed in it and on the surrounding fields. Chandeliers and deer had been shot at, parquet floors swabbed down like decks, antique furniture used to make a temporary bridge and the place was alive with rats.

'We could hardly complain,' Mrs Cameron-Head said later. 'Hundreds of those who passed through Inverailort were now dead or wounded. Our sacrifice was pretty small by comparison. We saw the damage as honourable battle scars.'



Francis Cameron-Head died in 1957, leaving his young widow to run the large estate - a task she undertook with characteristic style. 'There are three things a Highland laird must be,' she would say, 'and they all begin with R. Responsive, reliable and resident. You don't own a Highland estate; it owns you.'

When Royal Mail withdrew the post office from the local railway station, she converted her morning-room into a sub-office, and for over a year she herself delivered the mail to Glenuig by small launch until, after vigorous lobbying, the link to the Mallaig road was built. Guests came



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at Glenfinnan



Mrs Cameron-Head of Inverailort and Col Donald Hamish Cameron of Lochiel at the 1953 Glenfinnan Gathering. Left, Inverailort Castle, home of the Cameron-Head family.

Photograph: Iain Thornber

thick and fast from all walks of life. There would often be as many as 25 round the dining room table and the Secretary of State for Scotland was quite likely to find himself sitting next to a crofter, a professor of history, or an expert on fish-farming to a priest who had come to say Mass en route to Eigg and had stayed on.

Mrs Cameron-Head's hospitality, which she gave so freely and without publicity, was not confined to a day at Glenfinnan, but flowed through the many projects and charities she supported. They included bringing fish-farming to the Highlands and starting the present Belford Hospital, where she died in 1994.

The castle was also in constant use by the Territorial Army and, each Sunday, Mass was celebrated for worshippers from around the area

in the upstairs chapel. An enthusiastic Gaelic supporter, she provided a venue for Gaelic youth camps organised by Comunn na h-oigridh and to catechistical and Scout camps run for rural children. The presidency for 17 years of the Lochaber Handicapped Association gave her the opportunity to charter carriages from British Rail to bring its members and helpers to Lochailort station from where friends with cars transported them down to the castle for lunch and games. 'What's the point of living in a large house if you can't share it with others less fortunate?' she would ask.

For these and innumerable other services, she was appointed OBE in 1971. She typically remarked that it was no doubt because she was the only Irishwoman to run a Highland Gathering.

DOWN MEMORY LANE

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



Can you help? This photograph was taken in 1995 but has no information other than the names of those pictured. What was the event? Left to right are Catriona Maitland, Fiona McKechnie, Morven Summers, Hugh MacLean, John MacGregor, Ian Wallace, Rae Michie, Roy Clunie, Margaret MacDonald, Robert McCulloch, Audrey Campbell and Les Stewart.



This photograph dates back to 1995 and features some of those who attended the Lochaber Show centenary dance in the West End Hotel in Fort William.

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LETTERS

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Tourism sector keeps up the good work

We report this week on the increasingly positive profile of Oban and its surrounding areas on social media.

The annual general meeting of Oban and Lorn Tourism Alliance (OLTA) heard how Twitter, Facebook and Instagram are becoming ever more important in the marketing drives to keep visitors returning to the town.

This excellent work is being driven by a number of groups, people and events, including, but not limited to, BID4Oban, OLTA and Oban Live, the last of which brings an estimated £1.4 million into the economy over the second weekend in June. Make no mistake, tourism is crucial to the economy of the Oban and Lorn area, as well as to the islands.

Very many jobs rely on the tourism sector, so it is essential that those charged with promoting it are given the maximum support available from us all.

As we have reported previously, one thread of the tapestry is the growing importance of cruise ship visits, with a record number scheduled to call at the town during this year.

All in all, the picture is highly positive but there is no suggestion of complacency and we commend those behind this success story.

Important to keep lifeline air service

We understand the budgetary constraints facing Argyll and Bute Council but its position with regard to the Coll air service is to be regretted.

As has been said, this is a lifeline service for the tiny island and it is vital that it is maintained.

The local authority and Hebridean Air Services Ltd must find a solution.

Rise in Corran Ferry fares is unfair for residents

Highland Council approved its budget on February 14, including an increase in council tax of three per cent, with the probability that it will go up by the same amount next year and the year after.

This comes alongside various planned cost savings, and an increase (also three per cent per year for three years) in the cost of cremations, burials, bulky uplift, Corran Ferry fares, fish export certificates and a few others. So that's okay then, it's only in line with inflation and at least we are all being treated fairly and equitably.

But hang on a minute. It isn't fair or equitable because the small communities of Sunart, Ardgour, Morvern and Ardnamurchan are required to pay higher charges to make use of a ferry to get to their only nearby town, Fort William.

Approximately 1,500 people who have no reasonable option but to make use of the Corran Ferry to get to work, healthcare, shops and meetings are going to have to pay more to do so.

This specific group of people have been targeted for an increase in their day-to-day costs, whereas all other cost increases are either applicable to all, or may be required by us all at some time.

As far as I can see, this is the only example of an increase in costs being applied specifically to one group of people, according to where they live. Imagine if the council tax increase was only applied to those people living on Skye. Or if the cost of burials only went up for people living in Nairn.

We are appalled when we read about the so-called 'postcode lottery' whereby people get differing healthcare according to where they live, and yet most of our councillors, including four out of the seven Lochaber ones, were prepared to support this particular penalty.

This is unfair, and Highland Council should be ashamed.

Joanne Matheson, Acharacle.

Urgent need to address the problem of potholes

There is a real need to address the large quantity of potholes on Islay between Port Charlotte and Portnahaven and the long overdue resurfacing of the Claddach road is still

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. This week's

needing to be done. The constant flooding of roads across Islay is rapidly accelerating their deterioration.

Even in the areas that don't flood, the amount of heavy traffic on our roads means that pothole repairs only last a few weeks at best. We can see evidence of this on Mansfield Road in Port Ellen and at the bottom of Main Street in Bowmore.

As part of the current council administration, I will continue to lobby relentlessly for better infrastructure for my council ward.

Councillor Alastair Redman, Kintyre and Islands.

Proper management of MPAs is needed urgently

I read with interest and anger that a further incursion of illegal dredging has been tracked in a Marine Protected Area (MPA) in the Sound of Mull (The Oban Times, February 14).

It would seem to me that seabed damage by such activity is unacceptable, not just in MPAs but in much of our inshore waters, since these seabeds in fairly shallow waters are the nursery ecosystems for many of our valued marine creatures, be they immature fish, and sustainable shellfish

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TLC Spas



photograph was sent in by Gordon Caldwell from Ballachulish who said his image was taken on Friday February 1 and shows 'ice on the beach at Oban' during the cold snap.

stock, caught by divers and creel fishermen. The case for better spatial management and a modernised return of the three-mile limit is clearly being made by such destruction.

The goal of wealth and jobs was why the three-mile limit was set in place originally. The three-mile limit was created to protect spawning grounds and maintain the fishery.

The trawl closure within three nautical miles of the coast was repealed in 1984 under pressure from the industry. Thereafter, bottom fish landings went into terminal decline, with all species collapsing to zero or near zero landings by the early 21st century. Very soon, over-fishing result-

ed in the loss of many of the fisheries, followed by increasing bottom trawling and bottom dredging doing untold damage to seabeds and ecosystems.

Inshore waters require better spatial management and good compliance with Marine Scotland enforcing this. Until then, we shall continue to lose precious habitats and see diminishing returns in the truly sustainable fisheries.

Sally Campbell,
Blairbeg House, Lamplash, Isle of Arran.

Tree-felling in Knapdale is restoration project

With reference to Nick MacInneskar's letter (The Oban Times, February 7) regarding the felling at Barnluasgan, Knapdale Forest, please may I reassure your readers that this work is part of the ambitious plan to restore the native oakwoods in Knapdale.

The trees above the car park were non-native beech and noble fir, which have been removed to prevent them seeding into the surrounding forest.

Similar fellings were carried out on the hillsides to the north around 20 years ago; these areas are now covered in dense regeneration of birch, ash and oak.

We hope to reopen the car park shortly to allow access to view the beavers. With time, we fully expect to see the Atlantic rainforest re-establish in this special part of Mid Argyll.

David Jardine,
Regional manager,
Forest Enterprise Scotland.

Canna is the wrong place to house valuable collection

Your correspondent Alan Rankin, writing on behalf of the National Trust for Scotland, states that the Canna collection is in good hands (Letters, February 14).

If this world-class collection is sitting in Canna House subject to the possibility of water ingress, fluctuation in humidity, infestation, pilfering and fire, it is at risk and being kept there purely for sentimental reasons.

How are students to get to and from Canna, where are they to stay when they arrive and who is going to provide the technology and reading rooms necessary for modern research? Not Mr Campbell's estate, his executors, who stand charged with their protection, or the National Trust for Scotland.

Iain Thornber, Knock House, Morvern.

Beachd Ailein

ALLAN CAMPBELL

editor@obantimes.co.uk



Bhiodh co-dhiù cuid agai-bhse a cheart cho tàmail-teach 's a bha mise feasgar Disathairne seo chaidh a' faicinn sgioba rugbaidh Alba a' call an aghaidh na Frainge.

Cha ghabh àicheadh nach d' fhuair sinn droinneadh ach faodaidh sinn beagan leisgeul a dhèanamh leis gum bheil Alba mar dhùthaich, le nas lugha na ceathrad mìle cluicheadair rugbaidh clàraichte, ann am farpais le còig dùthchannan aig am bheil taghadh à mòran nas motha slòigh.

Gun teagamh tha an leisgeul agam gu math nas laige nuair a thig sinn chun na Cuimrigh aig nach eil ach beagan is trian chluicheadair clàraichte a bharrachd oirnn, ach a tha gan dearbhadh fhèin fada air toiseach oirne! Leisgeul eile, 's e gum bheil rugbaidh na gheama nas bitheanta sa Chuimrigh seach an seo far am bheil ball-coise air a bhith nas cunbhalache fad ghinealaichean.

Ach bu choma mu leisgeulan Alba nuair a thòisich an fharpais eadar Sasainn agus a' Chuimrigh. Dà sgioba sònraichte làidir agus

ealanta, agus shaoil mi gun robh seo cho brosnachail ri geama rugbaidh a chunnaic mi riamh, is an dà thaobh cho faisg ann an comas.

Chan eil mi cinnteach an e dàimh Ceilteach neo fiaradh nàdarra ris an taobh a bu lugha a dh'fhàg mi a' cur taic ris a' Chuimrigh, ach bha mi a' fàs draghail mar a bha an dàrna leth a' ruith 's gun na Cuimrich a' faotainn thar na loidhne.

Bheil cuimhne agaibh air an fhèistear Chuimreach Max Boyce a bhiodh daonnan ag aithris ann am prògraman telebhisean mu gheamannan rugbaidh a bhuannaich iad leis na briathran 'bha mi an làthair!' 'S neònach mura bithear ag aithris mu na deich mionaidean mu dheireadh den gheama seo ann an eachdraidh na Cuimrigh fad iomadh bliadhna, is mar a chuir an sgioba aca dà thadhail agus a bhuinnig iad an aghaidh nan seann nàmhaid a-rithist!

Bidh coimhearsnachdan mhion-chànain Cheiltich an Alba, Èirinn, agus sa Chuimrigh, tric ag argamaid chòraichean le mothachadh air mar a tha cumhachd a'

dol le rùn a' mhòr-shluaigh, agus tha e doirbh aig amannan gabhail ris an fhiorachd seo den t-saorsa phrìseil dheamocratach a th' againn mar dhùthaich.

Ach chan eil còir aig taobh seach taobh air geama rugbaidh na eile a bhuan-nachadh. 'S coma àireamh taghaidh chluicheadairean nan dùthchannan, tha buaidh an urra gu tur ri ealantas agus dìonmhaltas, agus tha sin a' fàgail mar a thachair an Cardiff nas mìlse buileach!

England being substantially larger than Wales and with a considerably larger pool from which to select an international rugby team, the historic Six Nations result at Cardiff last Saturday is that much sweeter!

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

CONTACTUS
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telephone 01631 568000



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DISTRICT NEWS

TAYNUILT

Taynuilt Highland Games will celebrate its 150th anniversary this year and the committee is on the hunt for memorabilia.

There are plans to have a tent displaying photographs of past games. 'We are planning to have a tent displaying memorabilia throughout the years. The committee is hoping someone might have some pictures/memories from the early years of the games, which we could use for the day. If you do have anything please get in touch with Douglas MacCallum: douglasmacallum@btinternet.com.'

A fundraising quiz night is being held in Taynuilt Village Hall on Saturday March 2.

Proceeds from the event, from 7pm until 11pm, will go to Roanne's Expedition to Peru.

Entry £5 per person, with a maximum of five per team.

A light supper will be provided. Bring your own bottle.

APPIN

A family ceilidh night will be taking place in Appin Village Hall on Saturday March 30, raising money for Feis na h-Apainne and Appin Skiff.

The night of music, singing and dancing will run from 6pm until 9pm, with doors opening at 5.45pm.

Roonashee and the Appin Feis children will be performing at the event, which will be BYOB - bring your own bottle.

Tea and cakes will be available on the night and there will be a raffle.

Musicians, poets and story-tellers can also sign up to perform.

There will be a donation bucket on the door.

The Port Appin healthy village group will meet on Tuesday March 5.

The monthly group, for residents, carers and cared for people, will run from 2pm until 3.30pm in the Port Appin Village Hall.

Once a month people get together

Inveraray hosts tenants' conference



Argyll Community Housing Association (ACHA) has held its annual Tenants' and Members' Conference in Inveraray.

The conference focused on three

key themes: getting involved, planning services for the future, and rents and value for money.

There were also breakout sessions.

Alastair MacGregor, ACHA's

chief executive, said: 'This year's conference gives our tenants and members an opportunity to input into the association's priorities going forward.'

for some fun and laughter, with something different happening each time - whether it be films, quizzes, discussions, gentle exercise, music, and arts and crafts.

Tea and cake will be provided.

OBAN

Oban High School pupils are hosting a quiz night to raise money for the Oban and Laurinburg exchange programme.

The event will take place in the Soroba House Hotel on Friday March 1, starting at 7pm.

Entry is £10 per team, with a maximum of five players per team, and

there will be a raffle with 'excellent prizes'.

Join Mairi from North Argyll Carers Centre for a reminiscence session at Oban Library.

The next event will run from noon until 1.30pm on both March 1 and March 2.

The group chats about something different every month. Bring your lunch, and share stories over a cuppa.

Oban Community Fire Station will be hosting a recruitment information day on Saturday March 9.

The event, which is part of Scottish

McMaster and Richard Reid, had the edge and won with their creation of lettuce, peppers, cucumber, chicken and sweet chilli sauce on warm hearty Italian bread. The sandwich will be available to purchase in Subway stores this spring.

HELENSBURGH

A Helensburgh cinema and entertainment complex has announced plans to expand its facilities by adding a fourth screen - along with a function suite and bar.

The Tower, based in the former St Columba's Parish Church on Sinclair Street, has been open since 2016, operated by charity The Tower Digital Arts Centre.

A decision on whether or not the extension, which would also host new toilet facilities, can go ahead is expected from Argyll and Bute Council by mid-April.

CARDROSS

The only crematorium in Argyll and Bute is closed for five weeks from this weekend.

The Cardross facility shut from Saturday February 23 for work to improve access for disabled users and to install a disabled toilet.

Cremations can still be carried out during the week, but the chapel will not be available for use during that time.

HARRIS

The Western Isles Lottery has given Harris Football Club its first result of 2019 by announcing it will receive all funding currently being raised by supporters of the lottery across Harris.

All proceeds raised will go to the football club to ensure it receives the best start to its resurgence into the Lewis and Harris Football League.

Andy Morrison said: 'This will be the first time since 2014 that we have entered a Harris senior team in the league, as we have struggled in the past finding a big enough playing squad.'

Fire and Rescue Service's recruitment drive, starts at 10am.

DUNOON

A team of budding young entrepreneurs from Dunoon Grammar School will see a tasty sandwich they created being sold in more than 100 fast food stores across the west of Scotland, after winning a national competition organised by Subway.

Two teams from Dunoon Grammar made it through to the Dragons' Den-style final.

Both teams excelled but Brain Booster, made up of Olivia Robertson, Findlay Moback, Millie



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At random

MARTIN LAING

mlaing@obantimes.co.uk



Positive development

There has been a fair bit of controversy over a walk-out by secondary students at a number of Argyll and Bute schools last week, including Oban High.

The pupils were protesting about Argyll and Bute Council's budget cuts, which were threatening to target youth and adult services, among a range of other cost saving ideas. Youth and adults services were earmarked to lose some 17 full-time equivalent positions in a bid to save £330,000.

I heard some people condemning the youngsters for skiving and using the 'strike' to dodge classes. And that is a valid point in some cases, no doubt.

However, looking at the bigger picture, I think it is brilliant to see our youth engaging in politics.

Teenagers regularly are given a bad press and are often treated as if they pose some kind of threat to society. And they are frequently pilloried for a lack of involvement in current affairs.

So I tip my tile to those youngsters for their awareness of the issues and willingness to become involved. Seeing the pupils with banners and placards in the school grounds is, for me at least, a very positive development.

At a time of great uncertainty, it is great news that our young people are trying to engage with the political process. More power to them.

Shiver me timbers!

I am in awe of Stacey McGowan Holloway and like-minded people.

Stacey is, as readers of last week's Oban Times will know, the young lady who has set up an open-water swimming group in Oban along with her husband Max.

To make sure none of you good people misunderstands, Stacey swims in the icy outdoors without the benefit of a wetsuit or other protective gear.

I know a number of people who are keen champions of the benefits – and I'm sure there must be some – of swimming in freezing water but let me assure you I am not about to find out first-hand any time soon what they might be.

What do you think?

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



E.ON Energising Communities Fund paid for £1,774 worth of insulation to be fitted at Arrochar Mountain Rescue base.

Arrochar Mountain Rescue lands windfall

Vehicles used by the Arrochar Mountain Rescue Team will benefit from being garaged at a more constant temperature this winter.

The E.ON Energising Communities Fund paid for £1,774 worth of insulation to be fitted at the rescue post.

Working across all mountainous terrain and in any weather conditions, the team uses three vehicles which are kept in the garage attached to the mountain rescue post in Arrochar.

Mechanics identified condensation and corrosion as the principal causes of the vehicles'

increasingly frequent and expensive mechanical and electrical problems.

Douglas Philp, team secretary for Arrochar Mountain Rescue, said: 'As a charity, we're totally dependent on donations, grants and volunteers.'

'Fundraising can be a real chal-

lenge for the team, particularly as it comes on top of our primary function of providing a mountain rescue service.

'We expect the insulation to reduce our heating costs, which will allow more money to be spent on essential equipment and training for our volunteers.'

Oban pub boss is gifted football memorabilia

An Oban pub owner and keen Dundee United fan will be able to display club memorabilia after a special visit last weekend.

Douglas Fisher, who used to work for the football club, gifted Kenny Evans of the Lochavullin Bar a pennant commemorating the 1984 European Cup semi-final game against Roma, as well as a Dundee

United history book. Douglas said: 'I was in Oban last week visiting another friend, Sach McMillan, and went into Lochavullin Bar and presented Kenny with a book and pennant.'

'Kenny was very pleased with the mementos and tells me he will hang up the pennant in the pub and I enjoyed a lovely afternoon in his bar.'

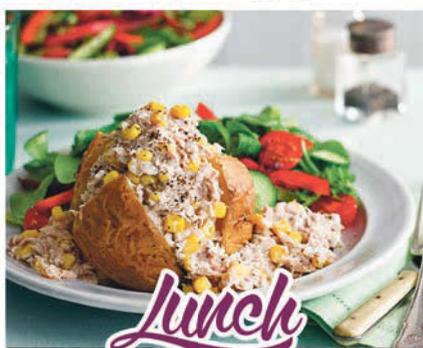


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OUTDOORS

Volunteers wanted to help control mink

A major new project working in Highland and eastern Perthshire, the Scottish Invasive Species Initiative, is looking for people to get involved in work to help remove American mink from the countryside.

The invasive American mink was brought to Scotland for fur-farming in 1938 and, as a consequence of escapes and deliberate releases, became established in the wild in the 1960s.

Mink are opportunistic and ferocious hunters, taking whatever prey is available and often killing more than they require for food. Their presence in the countryside has a devastating effect on native Scottish wildlife, particularly ground-nesting birds and water vole populations.

Scottish Invasive Species Initiative project officer Mark Purrmann-Charles said: 'This time of year is critical for our mink work. We really need to control mink before they breed.'

'One female mink hunting a 4km stretch of river can take 100 water voles over the three to four months of feeding her young. That is 10 water vole colonies, often an entire local population, wiped out.'

'We really want to remove them in spring before they breed and their young spread widely and cause devastation to native wildlife.'

'We've already got some fantastic volunteers helping the project and have a good coverage between Dunkeld and Ballinluig – though we are always keen to improve that network further.'

Anyone interested in getting involved or who would like more information should contact Mark Purrmann-Charles on markeskrivers@gmail.com or 07741 639556. To find out more about the Scottish Invasive Species Initiative or volunteering with the wider project visit www.invasivespecies.scot.

Survey shows threat facing red squirrels

Saving Scotland's Red Squirrels has published its 2018 survey, which indicates that while most of Scotland's red squirrel populations remain stable, their welfare in southern areas remains under threat.

Since 2011, Saving Scotland's Red Squirrels has been monitoring squirrel populations in the parts of the country where red squirrels are most threatened by the spread of non-native grey squirrels.

Grey squirrels, which were introduced to Britain from North America in the 19th century, out-compete red squirrels for resources and can also carry squirrelpox, a virus that does not harm them but is deadly to reds.

Previous survey results have indicated that red squirrel populations in the project's focal areas had stabilised, a sign that with continued effort from conservationists and volunteers, the decline of Scotland's core red squirrel populations can be halted. The 2018 survey results again make optimistic reading regarding the future of red squirrels in the north-east and the central lowlands.

In southern Scotland, however, while the proportion of survey sites detecting red squirrels has remained constant, the number of sites with a grey squirrel presence has significantly increased, suggesting that grey squirrels are continuing to move into what was previously 'red only' territory.

Although red and grey squirrels can live side by side for short periods, in most wooded landscapes, greys will typically replace reds within a few years unless efforts are made to reduce their numbers. When squirrelpox is present this process can be far more sudden and rapid as an infected red squirrel population can be wiped out within weeks.

Protecting reds in south Scotland is challenging because greys are spreading from the central belt and north from across the border. Greys also favour broadleaved trees such as oak and beech, which are more common in south Scotland.

The most positive survey results were found



Native red squirrels are under threat from the non-native greys.

in north-east Scotland, where reds continue to expand their range, particularly around Aberdeen. Project staff are optimistic that with continued effort greys can eventually be completely removed from the region, which would enable reds to fully recolonise the city and at the same time remove a major threat from the important red squirrel populations in Grampian and the Highlands.

The north-east results are complemented by those from the central lowlands, where reds' range has been maintained, indicating that the National Lottery-funded project is successfully protecting Scotland's largest red squirrel population north of the Highland Line.

Mel Tonkin, Saving Scotland's Red Squirrels project manager, said: 'Grey squirrels have continued to spread in some parts of southern Scotland, particularly in the eastern Borders and in the Nithsdale area of Dumfriesshire. It is vital that the work we do in priority areas is stepped up to make sure that the red squirrel populations in these areas remain healthy.'

Squirrel populations are surveyed using feeder boxes placed in the same areas of woodland each spring. When a squirrel visits a feeder box, a sticky tab collects some of its hair, which can then be identified under a microscope.

The 2018 squirrel survey report can be viewed at scottishsquirrels.org.uk/publications

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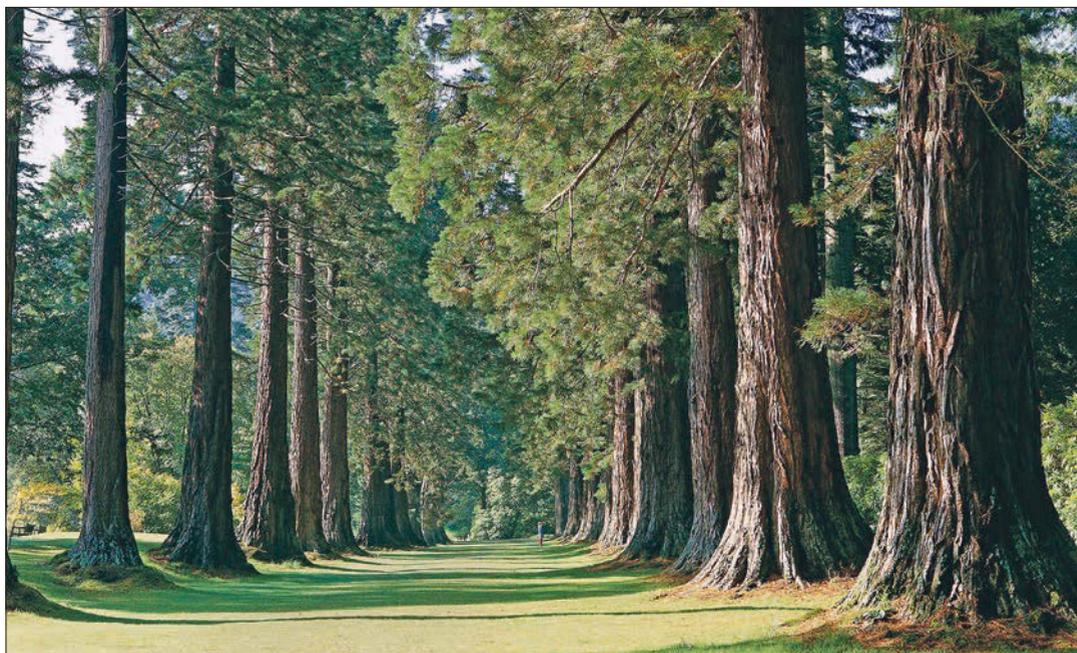
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This week's walks



Benmore's Redwoods Avenue, described as the best entrance to any botanic garden in the world.

Argyll's botanic garden is ready to open again

Benmore Botanic Garden near Dunoon will reopen to the public tomorrow (Friday March 1).

With many different events running throughout the season, this year promises to be just as noteworthy as 2018.

Curator Peter Baxter said: 'There has been much activity by the garden team over the winter months in connection with various project work and in preparation for the 2019 season.'

Already home to a large quantity of the Chilean species *Araucaria araucana* (monkey puzzle) trees, Benmore is now gearing up for more to arrive over the next few months. As part of the International Conifer Conservation Project (ICCP), Benmore will be home to a further 150 new monkey puzzle trees that have been grown in the Roayl Botanic Garden Edinburgh (RBGE) nursery.

It is not just the monkey puzzles

that will be new. Benmore garden has crammed its upcoming season with events and activities.

One of these new ventures is a Lichen Exhibition and Trail. The event aims to open up the mysterious world of lichens – an organism that can be used to monitor air pollution levels. This exhibition will run from March 1 until June 23.

On Wednesday March 20 at 2pm in the Courtyard Gallery, RBGE's Dr Alan Elliott is hosting a talk titled *Wild about Meconopsis*. Alan will discuss the species in detail, talking about growth in the wild to the cultivation of them, then on to taxonomy and the history of the species.

This year's AGM will include a talk by Dr Peter Wilkie on Taxonomy, Teeth and the Titanic which will look at his taxonomic and conservation research on the tropical tree family Sapotaceae and the impact the family has had on

world history and everyday life of ordinary individuals. The AGM is on Thursday April 18 at 2pm in the Courtyard Gallery.

Following last year's success, children from the region are again being offered an opportunity to explore what plants mean to the world through the annual schools' weeks delivered by the RBGE education team and made possible through the support of players of People's Postcode Lottery.

As well as these specific events, Benmore offers regular chances for visitors to get involved. The motorised explorer tours every Wednesday and Thursday at 2pm and the walking tours every Sunday and Tuesday, also at 2pm, allow visitors the chance to gain a greater understanding of the garden.

In keeping with tradition at Benmore, the annual open day when the garden has free entry, is on Sunday May 19.

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

Saturday March 2: Old Fort to Caledonian Canal, Fort William

An urban walk that follows the Great Glen Way from the town to the Caledonian Canal. Many points of interest and some wide-open views.

Start from the Old Fort opposite Morrison's Supermarket at NN104743. There are long-stay CPs available in the vicinity. Head NE to the roundabout, then past Lochaber College. Continue NE alongside the River Lochy estuary and cross the bridge over the River Nevis at NN108746.

Turn immediately left on to a footpath and follow it NE between the river estuary and the housing estate to the footbridge adjacent to the railway bridge over the River Lochy. Pass under these bridges and visit the Old Inverloch Castle just beyond. Return to the bridges and cross the river, turn left on to the B8006 and follow it to Caol.

The first left turn leads to the shore. Follow the shore NW to the sea-locks at the entrance of the Caledonian Canal. Head E along canal tow-path on its N side to the locks of Neptune's Staircase. Continue NE along the canal tow-path on its N side to reach a junction with a path at NN121776. Follow the path down to the entrance to the Mount Alexander Aqueduct. The left tunnel carries the Allt Mor under the canal, the right tunnel is a footway for pedestrians. On emerging from the tunnel, locate a track a few metres downstream and follow it W up to the towpath on the S side of the canal. Continue W back to Neptune's Staircase.

Cross this on a lock gate to reach the CP beside The Moorings Hotel. Transport required 10mins from start.

Distance: 9km; height to climb: 50m; map(s): LR41, EX392. Meet at Old Fort opposite Morrisons at 10.30am. Leader: Helen Critchley 01397 712346 or 07789 253701.

Thursday March 7: Tomdoun to Kingie by Druim na h-Achlaise, Glen Garry

An old road, built by Thomas Telford in 1821 connected Glen Garry with the Cluanie Inn. It was the old road to Skye. The section crossing the River Loyne on a stone arched bridge was flooded in 1957 when the Loyne Dam was completed. The bridge has been seen at

low water levels.

Start at the telephone kiosk on the public minor road just W of the Tomdoun Hotel at NH154010.

Limited parking is available in the vicinity. Head NE along the Telford road for 3.5 Km to the shore of Loch Loyne. Head back for 150m then W up through a conifer plantation on a track to its boundary fence. Cross the fence and climb the E ridge of Druim na h-Achlaise to its summit, 540m. Head W across the plateau past some lochans, taking care to avoid marshy ground, and descend a little to locate a footpath at Mam na Seilg. Descend S to the public minor road and follow it SW for 1Km to Kingie. Take the track SE, past the power station and cross the River Garry on the Salmon Catch. Follow the footpath E in the conifer plantation and alongside the S bank of Loch Pouлары for 2Km. Fork left onto a track and follow it across a bridge over the River Garry, turning N to reach the public minor road at Pouлары, NH132014. Transport required 2Km from start.

Distance: 15km; height to climb: 400m; map(s): LR34, EX414. Meet at Fort William WM for start of walk at 10am. Leader: Andrew Gilbert 07808 924722.

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.

Sunday March 3: Ben More, Stob Binnein, Crianlarich

These two classic hills dominate the area. This route is slightly longer, but less steep than the more popular one from Benmore Farm, and makes a splendid winter expedition.

Start at a small CP on the A85 just W of the bridge over the Allt Coire Chaorach at NN454275. Take the path behind the CP and then the forest track heading SW. Turn left at the T-junction and follow the track SE to a large turning area. At WP NN456260, take the path on the right, waymarked, which leads up to emerge from the trees at WP NN457254. A faint path continues to a stile in the deer fence at WP NN458251. Follow the fence back NW to gain the NE ridge of Ben More. Continue up this ridge (rocky in places) to the summit, 1,174m. Descend S to Bealacheadar-dha Bheinn, 862m, and continue S up the long ridge to the summit of Stob Binnein, 1,165m. Return to the Bealach, then W down into Benmore Glen and pick up the track to Benmore Farm.

Transport required, five mins from start. 14km, 1297m ascent. Suggested by Gerry Gilbert; co-ordinated by Ken Stevenson

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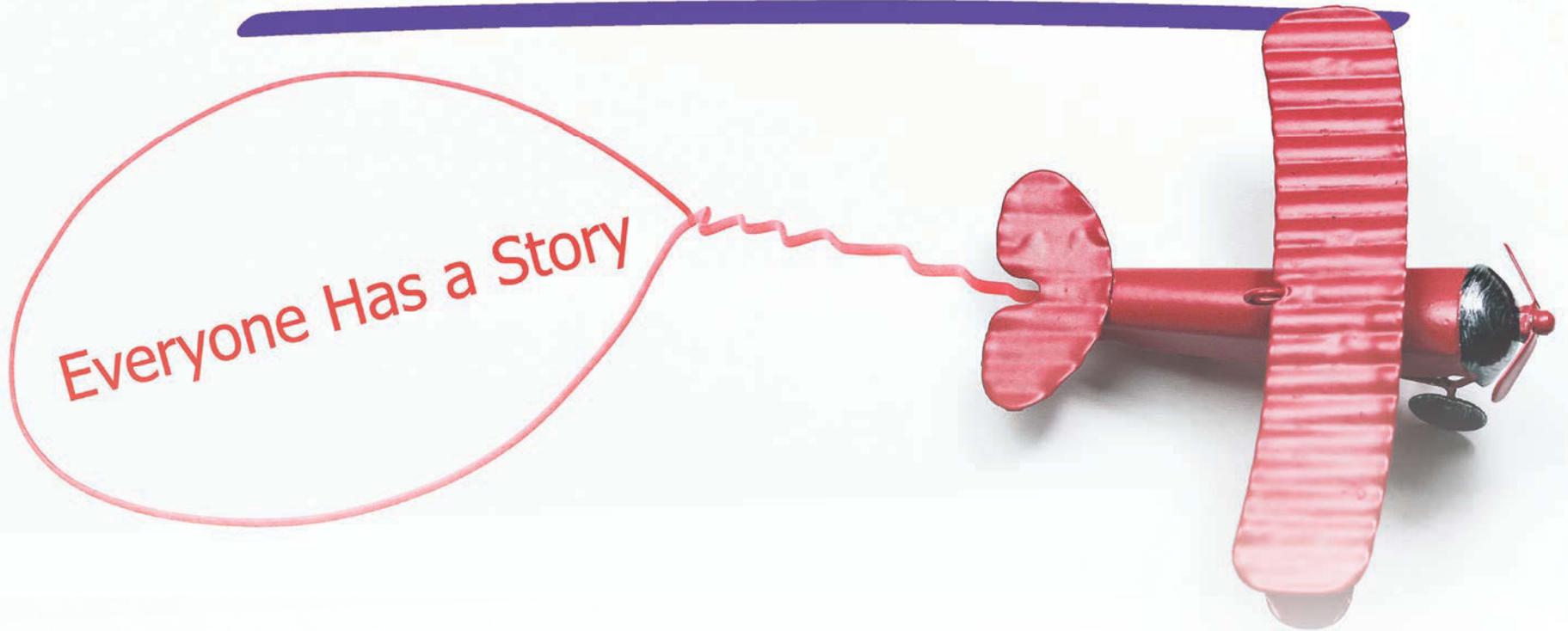
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Recently the team have been focused on making sure clients are ready for Making Tax Digital on 1 April through meetings and several free seminars across the region. As well as advice and



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support on software packages, or how to outsource bookkeeping needs entirely, we offer a bespoke package for each client we see.

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Kenneth Ferguson Electrical Contractors is reaping the rewards of its training programme, with three apprentices making great strides at the award-winning Connel company.

Matthew Kelly, Oban, is in his third year and about to apply for his final test. He came through the Right to Work scheme before starting his apprenticeship and plays football for Oban Saints in his spare time.



David Cameron, 17, from Mull, attended Oban High School, staying away from home in the hostel and he carried out work experience with the firm before his apprenticeship. He

plays rugby for Oban Lorne 1st XV.

Daniel MacVicar, Oban, gained great academic results but instead of a degree was determined to follow up his apprenticeship. He plays shinty for Oban Camanachd.

All three spent 20 weeks of their first year on block-release at West of Scotland University, Paisley, travelling down on Sunday and staying in digs till Friday.

Kenneth Ferguson said: 'They have proved a great asset to the team and have been busy learning the latest developments in the industry which is an ever-changing place

and we're constantly looking at new ideas and technologies. It means our areas of expertise now cover everything from fire alarms, CCTV and solar PV to electric car charging, LED lighting upgrades and air source heat pumps.'

Established in 2006, Kenneth's company has carved out a substantial business in the West Highlands and islands, from Campbeltown to Fort William and the islands. Its domestic, commercial and industrial services were recognised when it scooped Best Medium-Sized Contractor at the SELECT Awards 2018.



Daniel MacVicar enjoying his work

ENGINEERS PMG SERVICES

New premises, new equipment and expansion to cover a new area means that 2019 is set to be an exciting year for Connel-based engineers PMG services.

The plant service company provides maintenance and servicing to construction plant, quarries, static plant and forestry, marine and agricultural equipment.

Based out of a new yard in North Connel, PMG offers a 24/7 service and employs a team of qualified plant engineers, as well as making significant investment in training apprentices.

"We want people in the local area to know that we are open for business and we are growing," says owner Peter MacGregor. "We have a good team of engineers providing an all hours field service for the whole of Argyll and the west coast of Scotland.



"Our service vans and three hydraulic hose vans are on call day and night to do hydraulic hoses, breakdowns and diagnostic testing."

An important recent development has been the company's expansion to Campbeltown, where an engineer and hydraulic hose van are now based – meaning it can respond quickly and effectively to call outs from Kintyre and Mid Argyll as well.

Wherever you are in Argyll, and whether you are looking for a one-time recovery or an ongoing package for your plant

maintenance - marine, civil, or agricultural - PMG services can help. Get in touch at any time and look out for the distinctive white vans featuring a blue MacGregor clan crest and hydraulic hoses on the side.

"We want to thank our great loyal customer base who have supported us through some challenging times," said Mr MacGregor. "Now we have turned a corner and we're bigger and better than ever. We're ready to welcome any new customers who need our services."

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LEISURE & ENTERTAINMENT

YOUR GUIDE TO WHAT'S ON IN ARGYLL AND LOCHABER

Top mountaineer visits Oban and Mull

Internationally renowned mountaineer Simon Yates will visit Oban and Mull this March as part of his British tour.

Yates became a household name in the mid 1980s after making a life or death decision while descending the infamous Siula Grande mountains in Peru.

In an act which saved both climbers' lives, Yates cut the rope which attached him to his climbing partner, Joe Simpson, whom he believed to be dead. In a survival story regarded as one of the most miraculous of all time, both men made it back

to base camp after days of exhaustion.

The story, which was first told in Simpson's bestseller *Into the Void*, has recently been brought back to life in the form of a stage play directed by Tom Morris, which is touring Scotland.

It could be expected that after this terrifying ordeal Yates would have hung up his crampons. Instead, from Asia to the Antarctic, he has conquered some of the most remote and dangerous mountain ranges in the world.

Yates will be in Tobermory on Saturday March 9 at the

Mull Theatre, before heading over to Oban at the Corran Halls on Monday March 11. Both lectures will start at 7.30pm.

He will share his stories of 30 years of mountaineering, from Peru in 1985 to some of his more recent expeditions.

Yates is no stranger to the Highlands and Islands. In 2017, he made it his mission to visit every Scottish island that could be reached by public transport.

He said: 'I'm really looking forward to returning and sharing my international mountain adventures with audiences in Oban and Mull.'

Since his Peruvian expedition in 1985, Yates has also published three books, recording three decades of fascinating mountaineering experience.

The most recent of his books, entitled *The Wild Within*, included a chapter reflecting on his visits to the Scottish islands. Despite being from Cumbria, he titled the chapter *More Like Being Abroad*.

One reviewer has stated that: 'Simon is a totally engaging speaker, who both entertains and inspires.'

This lecture is sure to bring mountaineering to life in a unique and witty way.



Simon Yates has conquered some of the most remote and dangerous mountain ranges in the world.



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Local produce to the fore at benderloch food festival

Foodies will be flocking to Benderloch next weekend, Saturday March 9, as the Victory Hall hosts its first ever Food Festival.

Members of the public will have the opportunity to connect directly with producers while local chef Alex Needham will be cooking up a treat in a Ready, Steady, Cook using locally sourced food.

Environmental action group, Awakening in Argyll, are hosting the event, which runs from 2-5pm, and spokesperson Joy Cameron hopes that it will engage people through 'actual' food rather than just the talk of it.

'This is really shaping up to be a very interactive and exciting event,' she told us.

'We are huge supporters of local producers and want to put particular emphasis on letting people know what wonderful fresh food is on their doorstep as well as offering help to know what to do with it.'

On the day there will be local produce stands, a short



'food' film running on a loop throughout the afternoon, a small play area with toy cooker, pots and pans etc for children to roll play preparing their own food and an interactive soup making demonstration with sampling station.

In response to the Scottish Government's consultation on Good Food Nation proposals, which ends on March 29, Awakening in Argyll plan to survey hundreds of

folk in Lorn about what their priorities are in relation to good food.

Many of the surveys will be carried out online but the Food Festival will also give people the chance to complete paper copies to enable as many people as possible to have their say.

Awakening in Argyll are a local environmental action group who regularly screen films to educate themselves and others about climate change and food choices among other topics.

They work positively to reduce single use plastics and held a very successful 'ditch the plastic' day around Oban supermarkets.

Members have already created a film about industrial pollution in Lorn and the group hope to do some filming around the Food Festival too.

A screening of That Sugar Film will be shown prior to the Festival, on Thursday, March 7 at 7pm. Age and content appropriate for children and adults.

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DIARDAOIN 28 AN GEARRAN THURSDAY 28 FEBRUARY

17.00 Prògraman Chloinne – Children's programming
19.00 Turas a' Bhradain (rpt)
19.30 Speaking our Language (rpt)
19.55 Earrann Eachdraidh (rpt)
20.00 An Là – News
20.30 **UR | NEW:** Eòrpa
21.00 Sùlaisgeir: an t-Sealg (rpt)
22.00 Ceathrar air Chuairt (rpt)
22.30 **UR | NEW:** Side nan Seachd Sian
23.20 Dhan Uisge (Firth of Forth) (rpt)
23.30 Iùl a' Chiùil – An Ceòl (rpt)

DIHAOINE 01 AM MÀRT FRIDAY 01 MARCH

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 An Lot S3 (rpt)
21.00 Pròis Tartan (rpt)
22.00 Corp agus Anam (rpt)
22.50 Dhan Uisge (Firth of Forth) (rpt)
23.00 ALT (rpt)

DISATHAIRNE 02 AM MÀRT SATURDAY 02 MARCH

16.00 Prògraman Chloinne – Children's programming
17.45 An Là – News
18.00 Seachd – Inaccessible Pinnacle (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:** ALT

22.00 Side nan Seachd Sian (rpt)
22.50 Dhan Uisge (Firth of Forth) (rpt)
23.00 Pròis Tartan (rpt)
24.00 Belladrum highlights (rpt)

DIDÒMHNAICH 03 AM MÀRT SUNDAY 03 MARCH

16.00 Prògraman Chloinne – Children's programming
18.15 An Là – News
18.30 Seachd Là – News Review
19.30 Alleluia (rpt)
20.00 Eòrpa (rpt)
20.30 Leugh Mi (rpt)
21.00 DIY le Donnie S5 (rpt)
21.45 Sgeul Slàinte (rpt)
22.00 ALT (rpt)
22.00 Corp agus Anam (rpt)
23.50 Dhan Uisge (Firth of Forth) (rpt)

DILUAIN 04 AM MÀRT MONDAY 04 MARCH

17.00 Prògraman Chloinne – Children's programming
19.00 Puirt-adhair (rpt)
19.30 Speaking our Language (rpt)
19.55 Earrann Eachdraidh (rpt)
20.00 An Là – News
20.30 **UR | NEW:** An Lot S3
21.00 Trusadh – Traisg is Càisg (rpt)
21.50 Dhan Uisge (Firth of Forth) (rpt)
22.00 Iùl a' Chiùil – An Ceòl (rpt)
22.30 Guth Ag Aithris – Christine Primrose (rpt)
23.30 Ceathrar air Chuairt (rpt)

DIMÀIRT 05 AM MÀRT TUESDAY 05 MARCH

17.00 Prògraman Chloinne – Children's programming
19.00 Turas a' Bhradain (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 **UR | NEW:** DIY le Donnie S5
21.45 Talla Sheòrais (rpt)
22.30 Trusadh – Traisg is Càisg (rpt)
23.25 Froachy Bay (rpt)
23.30 Alleluia (rpt)

DICIADAIN 06 AM MÀRT WEDNESDAY 06 MARCH

17.00 Prògraman Chloinne – Children's programming
19.00 Puirt-adhair (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 Sàr-Sgeòil: The Lewis Trilogy (rpt)
22.00 **UR | NEW:** Seòid a' Chidsin S3
22.30 Iùl a' Chiùil – An Ceòl (rpt)
23.00 Sùlaisgeir: an t-Sealg (rpt)

DIARDAOIN 07 AM MÀRT THURSDAY 07 MARCH

17.00 Prògraman Chloinne – Children's programming
19.00 Turas a' Bhradain (rpt)
19.30 Speaking our Language (rpt)
19.55 Earrann Eachdraidh (rpt)
20.00 An Là – News
20.30 **UR | NEW:** Eòrpa
21.00 Sùlaisgeir: na Sealgairean (rpt)
22.00 **UR | NEW:** An Sgrùdaire
22.15 **UR | NEW:** Belladrum highlights
22.30 **UR | NEW:** Side nan Seachd Sian
23.20 Dhan Uisge (Isle of Arran) (rpt)
23.30 Seòid a' Chidsin S3 (rpt)



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Oban theatre co emotion in spad

Spotlight Musical Theatre Group delighted audiences once again in Oban's Corran Halls last week, this time with its adaptation of Fiddler on the Roof, which was first performed on Broadway in 1964, writes Sam Ormiston.

A household favourite, Spotlight did not disappoint. Despite having to perform four shows in four days, the cast remained energised throughout and did not let their standards slip. More than 850 people came to see the show over the course of the week.

The show included some great vocal performances – from stunning solos to upbeat numbers from the ensemble. Some of the best vocals of the night came from Fran Melville, who was able to show off her impressive range in a number of her songs.

And my personal favourite track of the night, as clichéd as it sounds, was Ian Henry's performance of If I Were A Rich Man. Henry really brought the

character of Tevye to life, and he did so in a manner that was unique and entertaining.

There was also some impressive young talent on show. Lachie D'Arcy, who played the Rabbi's son, had the audience in fits of laughter with some of his one-liners.

As the final curtain closed, the audience were left buzzing. Hundreds of happy faces exited the Corran Halls stage right, content after a night of family entertainment.

A special mention also has to be given to all the fantastic people behind the scenes, whose faces might not be known to the audience, but whose work is just as important to make sure everything runs smoothly on the night.

The sets were authentically designed, while the costumes really made the audience feel as if they had been transported back in time to Imperial Russia.

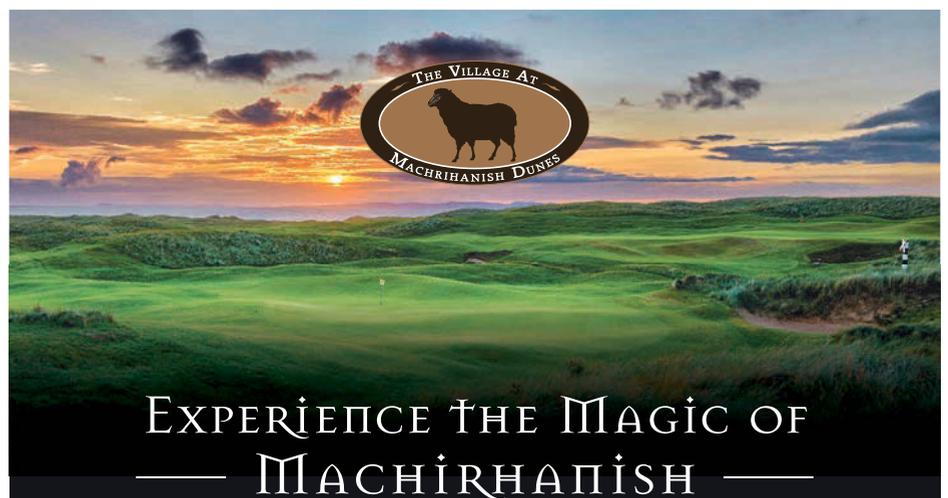
Henry was delighted with the show's success. He said: 'I feel

so lucky to have had the chance to perform in such a great show, with such a wonderful cast. The audiences each night seemed to warm to the characters; it made all the work in putting it on worthwhile.'

Stephen Day, who directed the show as well as playing a minor role, praised the cast and the crew. He said: 'So many people are involved in a show like this on and off stage, all volunteers, while doing their day jobs. It's a real testimony to their enthusiasm that we can do shows like this.'

Day added: 'Our audiences were enthusiastic, vocal, but equally, through some of the dramatic moments, you could hear a pin drop, and we can't thank them enough for what they gave to us.'

After another successful show for Spotlight, it is clear to see why the people of Oban keep on returning to their performances. Now, we wait in anticipation for the announcement of their next show.



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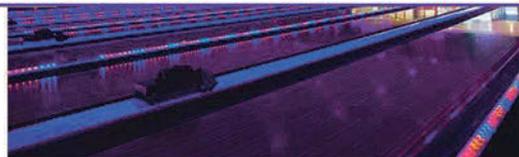


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THURSDAY 28TH FEBRUARY

Slimming World
Salvation Army Hall, Fort William
3.00pm, 5.00pm & 7.00pm
Tel: Gillian 07796 040803

Oban Health Walk
Oban Congregational Church Hall
10am - 11.30am

Live Music & Entertainment @ Markie Dans
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FRIDAY 1ST MARCH

Lorn Vintage Ploughing Match - Slide Show
North Connel Village Hall. 7.30pm

Live Music & Entertainment @ Markie Dans
Tweed. Open till 2am

Live Music & Entertainment @ The Lorne Bar Oban

From 9pm. Free Entry

SATURDAY 2ND MARCH

parkrun
Ganavan Sands, Oban. 9.30am

Live Music & Entertainment @ Markie Dans
Crooked Reel. Open till 2am

Live Music & Entertainment @ The Lorne Bar Oban
From 9pm. Free Entry

Comunn Gàidhealach an Òbain - Children's Cèilidh
Glencruitten Church Centre, Oban
7pm

Murder Mystery at Wizard School
Columba Hotel, Oban
2.00pm - 6.00pm

Strictly Come Killing Murder Mystery Night
Columba Hotel, Oban

7.00pm - 11.00pm

SUNDAY 3RD MARCH

Live Music & Entertainment @ Markie Dans
QUIZ NIGHT at 9.30pm
£1 per person, max of 6 per team
Win £20 bar voucher

MONDAY 4TH MARCH

Slimming World
Union Street/Argyll Street, Lochgilphead
5.30pm & 7.30pm
Tel: Rhona 07880 878906

WEDNESDAY 6TH MARCH

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 1

12:00/15:30 ALITA: BATTLE ANGEL 12A
15:30 HOW TO TRAIN YOUR DRAGON: THE HIDDEN WORLD PG
17:45 GREEN BOOK 12A
18:15 BRITAIN ON FILM LGBT BRITAIN PG
20:15 EVERYBODY'S TALKING ABOUT JAMIE 12A
20:30 THE FAVOURITE 15

16:00 HOW TO TRAIN YOUR DRAGON: THE HIDDEN WORLD PG
18:15 GREEN BOOK 12A
21:00 BRITAIN ON FILM LGBT BRITAIN PG
21:15 THE FAVOURITE 15

TUESDAY 5

12:00/18:15 THE FAVOURITE 15
16:00/18:45 ALITA: BATTLE ANGEL 12A
16:00 HOW TO TRAIN YOUR DRAGON: THE HIDDEN WORLD PG
21:00 BRITAIN ON FILM LGBT BRITAIN PG
21:15 GREEN BOOK 12A

SATURDAY 2

11:30 THE LEGO MOVIE 2: THE SECOND PART U
12:30/16:15 HOW TO TRAIN YOUR DRAGON: THE HIDDEN WORLD PG
15:00/17:45 ALITA: BATTLE ANGEL 12A
18:30 GREEN BOOK 12A
20:30 THE FAVOURITE 15
21:15 BRITAIN ON FILM LGBT BRITAIN PG

WEDNESDAY 6

12:00/21:15 GREEN BOOK 12A
16:00/18:45 ALITA: BATTLE ANGEL 12A
16:00 HOW TO TRAIN YOUR DRAGON: THE HIDDEN WORLD PG
18:15 THE FAVOURITE 15
21:00 BRITAIN ON FILM LGBT BRITAIN PG

SUNDAY 3

12:15/17:00 HOW TO TRAIN YOUR DRAGON: THE HIDDEN WORLD PG
14:30/17:15 ALITA: BATTLE ANGEL 12A
14:30 THE MULE 15
19:15 THE FAVOURITE 15
20:00 GREEN BOOK 12A

THURSDAY 7

12:00/21:00 BRITAIN ON FILM LGBT BRITAIN PG
16:00/18:45 ALITA: BATTLE ANGEL 12A
16:00 HOW TO TRAIN YOUR DRAGON: THE HIDDEN WORLD PG
18:15 THE FAVOURITE 15
21:15 GREEN BOOK 12A
MIDNIGHT CAPTAIN MARVEL 12A

MONDAY 4

12:00 STAN AND OLLIE PG
16:00/18:45 ALITA: BATTLE ANGEL 12A

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Scottish Sea Farms and Oban Live team up in nationwide talent hunt

Oban Live has teamed up with leading salmon grower Scottish Sea Farms to give talented musicians the opportunity to win a stage slot at the town's stadium gig this June.

The winners will join a whole stream of international Celtic, rock and folk acts confirmed for the 2019 event, attended by thousands on June 7 and 8, including Skerryvore, We Banjo 3, Red Hot Chilli Pipers, Lucy Spraggan and more.

The new Scottish Sea Farms Unsigned Oban Live campaign launched on social media on Tuesday night and is now open for entries. Two slots at Oban Live 2019 are up for grabs, with one winning act being from the Oban area and one from the rest of Scotland. A panel of judges will select a shortlist from each category and then it will be up to the public to vote for the winners.

The competition sees big changes this year with opportunities widened up to the whole of Scotland and

the introduction of a new title sponsor Scottish Sea Farms.

Georgie Mackenzie, co-ordinator for Scottish Sea Farms' Heart of the Community initiative said: 'Encouraging and supporting emerging talent is something we put a lot into at Scottish Sea Farms, both in terms of our own teams and the communities in which we live and work. So to be approached about partnering Unsigned Oban Live seemed like a really good fit; one that will give even more local and Scottish talent the chance to shine.'

Daniel Gillespie, managing director for Oban Live and co-founder of Skerryvore, which started the event in 2016, said: 'We are incredibly grateful for the support from Scottish Sea Farms. Their Heart of the Community initiative is well suited to our talent competition and the event itself as bringing people and musicians together for the good of the community is at the core of everything we do here at Oban Live.'

He added: 'Not only is Oban Live the perfect stage for musicians to showcase their talents in front of thousands, but it is also an excellent opportunity to get hands-on experience of performing in a stadium-sized arena.'

'Good luck to all who enter and we look forward to receiving entries and seeing who the public chooses in the coming months.'

The prize package also includes a performance slot at the Official Oban Live 2019 After Party at The View, Oban, a major part of the Oban Live Fringe Programme; £300 towards expenses and access to the concert both days so they can enjoy the party too.

Winners and shortlisted artistes will be able to enjoy some well-earned attention in campaign promotions on Oban Live and Scottish Sea Farms social platforms and beyond.

Those shortlisted in the local category will also battle it out at a special shortlist night in April at The View, Oban,

Drama on Luing generates fantastic feedback



Kathleen Robertson kicked off this year's Oban Live.

as part of their campaign for votes. Musicians interested in entering will be asked to submit examples of work including live performance footage and links to music.

To enter and for full terms and conditions visit www.obanlive.com/unsigned.

The show went on for Luing Amateur Dramatic Society last weekend after having to deal with a power cut prior to the final performance.

Never-the-less Don't get your Vicars in a Twist was well received by the sell-out audiences over Friday night and Saturday last week.

Having hosted a matinee in the afternoon, Cullipool Village Hall was plunged into darkness just before the Saturday night performance when many of the audience were already seated.

Not to be deterred the curtains were opened and the battery candle lights of the stage wall candelabras in the vicarage hallway were turned on.

Plans were hastily made to borrow a generator, enabling the show to go on until the power eventually came back on.

Director Hazel Cruickshanks said the actors and backstage

crew had smashed it. And that she had enjoyed every moment, apart from the power cut.

Comments from the capacity crowd included:

'Absolutely brilliant! Such a great night's entertainment. Huge thanks to everyone.'

'What absolutely brilliant fun.'

'Epic.'

'What a brilliant show. Well done everyone.'

Written by Ann Gawthorpe and Lesley Bown 'Vicars' was a fast-moving farce full of fun, frolics and lots of doors.

Cast: Gregor Shuff – Church Warden George; James Williams – Second Church Warden; Innes McQueen – Dickie; Pam Baker, Kay Benn and Helen Finnie – Guests; Fiona Cruickshanks – The Vicar; Paula Roberts, Kirsty MacLachlan, Mary Whitmore – Actors in the Theatrical Company Murder Mystery Weekend; Sarah Ferguson – The Real Vicar.

NEVIS RANGE WINTER EVENTS

BOOK ONLINE ON EVENTBRITE OR THROUGH OUR FACEBOOK EVENT PAGES

PINEMARTEN CAFE & BAR	AHOOLIGAN CEILIDH BAND	FEB 16	NEVIS RANGE SKI SLOPES	FREESTYLE SERIES RND 2	MAR 09
PINEMARTEN CAFE & BAR	ALPINE EATS	FEB 23	PINEMARTEN CAFE & BAR	FROZEN SING ALONG	MAR 16
PINEMARTEN CAFE & BAR	MUSIC QUIZ	MAR 02	PINEMARTEN CAFE & BAR	DJ SET: PUT YOUR WEIGHT ON IT	MAR 23
NEVIS RANGE SKI SLOPES	THIGHS ON FIRE TELEMAR COMPETITION	MAR 03	NEVIS RANGE SKI SLOPES	SKI-AN-DURO	MAR 30
NEVIS RANGE SKI SLOPES	GLASGOW SKI CLUB CHAMPIONSHIP	MAR 03	NEVIS RANGE SKI SLOPES	FREESTYLE SERIES RND 3	MAR 30
NEVIS RANGE SKI SLOPES	MOUNTAIN INDUCTION TRAINING	MAR 09	NEVIS RANGE SKI SLOPES	GIRLS OFF-PISTE DAY	MAR 30
PINEMARTEN CAFE & BAR	TRAD-AN-DURO FEATURING MEMBERS OF HORO	MAR 30			

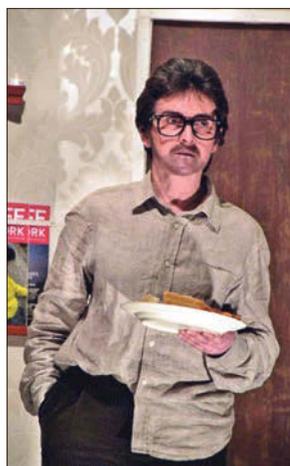
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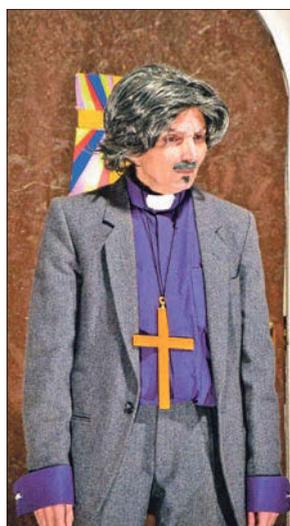
The full cast of Luig Amateur Dramatic Society's latest production, *Don't get Your Vicars in a Twist*.



Innes MacQueen, who played Dickie, the proprietor of the Murder Mystery Company, and who had to take on the role of Lydia, Lady Alicia's maid when some of his actors didn't show up. In the background are the two church wardens, on the left George played by Gregor Shuff and Alan played by James Williams.



Kirsty MacLaclan who played actor Charles.



Paula Roberts playing Bishop Ronald.

Screen Machine Scotland's Mobile Cinema

Fort William Wed 6 - Fri 8 March

Mary Poppins Returns (U) 130 mins

06/03 at 5.30pm

The Favourite (15) 119 mins

"thrillingly made period picture" Empire 06/03 at 8.30pm

Stan & Ollie (12A) 97 mins

07/03 at 5.30pm (captioned) and 08/03 at 2pm

Mary Queen of Scots (15) 124 mins

07/03 at 8.30pm

Films We Love: Teenage Superstars

(£5 adults/£3 concs) (15) 97 mins

Documentary delving into the post punk Scottish music scene, a fertile time that produced bands such as Teenage Fanclub and The Jesus and Mary Chain. 08/03 at 5.30pm

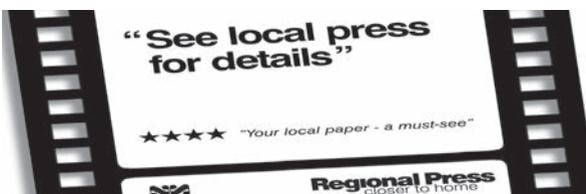
Glass (15) 129 mins

Stars James McAvoy, Samuel L Jackson and Bruce Willis

08/03 at 8.30pm

Before *The Favourite* we will screen a free photo presentation of work Steven Berkoff which has been produced in collaboration with Street Level Photoworks Glasgow. Please arrive promptly to be sure of catching it.

Book at: www.screenmachine.co.uk. Tickets also at the cinema 30 mins before screenings. Cash only, no cards. £7.50 Adults. £5.50 concs. Screen Machine will be in the An Aird car park, near the Shinty Club. Fully accessible to wheelchair users.



BONNIE babies competition 2019

How to enter

We are now open for entries! The Oban Times Bonnie Babies 2019 competition is open to babies and toddlers born on or after June 13th 2015. Look out the most adorable photo of your gorgeous little one and enter online by visiting www.obantimes.co.uk/bonniebabies. The closing date for entries is noon on 25th March 2019.

The Oban Times Bonnie Babies 2019 Supplement

After you enter your child, look out for our fabulous Bonnie Babies 2019 supplement in the 4th April edition of The Oban Times and Lochaber Times – a lovely little keepsake you can use to embarrass your children when they are older!

Vote for your favourite!

Readers will have the important job of voting for their favourite kiddy-winks in the supplement. We will then break it down to four further rounds of top 50, 30, 20 and finally top 10. From the top 10, the baby with the most votes will be crowned The Oban Times' Bonniest Baby 2019. **Good luck!**

The closing date for entries is midnight, March 25, 2019.

ENTER ONLINE

www.obantimes.co.uk/bonniebabies

The Oban Times and Lochaber Times Bonnie Babies 2019 competition is open to babies and toddlers born on or after June 13th, 2015. Only one entry per child. By entering the competition and by filling in the parental consent form that is provided with your entry, you – the parent or guardian – consent to the reproduction of your child's photograph in The Oban Times, Lochaber Times Bonnie Babies features in the paper and online and in any other related competition promotions. If you do not wish for your child's photo to appear in the newspaper or online then you should not enter the competition. Poor quality photographs will not be accepted as an entry. By sending us your photograph you agree that Wyvex Media Ltd has the right to publish the images and details of the entrant without payment for the purpose of promoting Wyvex Media Bonnie Babies campaign(s). The winner must take part in publicity. Employees of Wyvex Media Ltd and their immediate family are not eligible to enter. We care about your personal information The information gathered on the entry form will be used by us to contact you regarding the competition & the photo and name to enter you into the competition. We may also email you at the close of the competition. We will not pass on any of the information supplied by you in the entry form to any third party Wyvex Media would like to send you information on offers and promotions.

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MONDAY: 08.00 am on Fm, 08.10 breakfast show, 9.00 Monday morning with Stephen, 11.00 Ian Simmonds Monday Mix, 17.00 Drivetime, 19.00 Rosie's Highland fling with Rosie MacColl, 20.00 John McLuckie's show, 21.00 David Cullen show, 23.00 Through the night with Clyde 2
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 with Jim Lynch, 19.00 Highest praise with Stuart Chalmers, 20.00 Clyde 2 through the night with the Greatest Hits.
WEDNESDAY: 08.00 am on Fm, 08.10 breakfast show, 09.00 Sounds Scottish repeat, 10.00 The Comfort Zone with Lesley Blair Simmonds, 13.00 Doug Carmichael in the afternoon. 17.00 Drivetime with Campbell Cameron, 19.00 Country meets Rock & Roll with Len Ford & Kenny MacLachlan alternating, 21.00 Gordon's Grooves with Gordon Macintyre, 12.00 Midnight through the night with Clyde 2.
THURSDAY: 08.00 - 11.00 Breakfast with Andy and Sarah, 11.00 Molly's Mix with Molly Black, 15.00 Drivetime with Stephen McPhee, 19.00

Christine's collection, 21.00 Ann's Ceilidh, 22.00 Margo till midnight then Through the night with Clyde 2.
FRIDAY: 08.00 breakfast show with Laura, 10.00 Teeny and Tiny aka Harry, Janet, and Anna, 17.00 Drivetime with Jim Lynch, 18.45 Sports View, 19.00 Country meets Country with Jackie Craig, 21.00 Peter Rainnie 12.00 Midnight through the night with Clyde 2.
SATURDAY: 08.00 The Breakfast show with Stephen MacPhee. 10.00 Saturday Morning live with Linda Crosher, 13.00 Clyde2 Sports and the Greatest hits, 18.00 Sports view - Oban Fm Dream team, 19.00 Sounds Scottish with Archie Darling, 20.00 Dave Lewis, 22.00 Margo till Midnight then Through the night with Clyde 2 and the Greatest Hits.
SUNDAY: 09.00 Sunday Morning with Breege, 11.00 Sunday brunch with Allan MacKechnie, 13.00 Clyde 2 on a lazy Sunday afternoon with the Greatest Hits, 19.00 New Country show - David Entwistle, 21.00 Drum & Bass - Graham Scott, 23.00 Clyde 2 through the night with the Greatest Hits.

Glasgow Letter

ROBERT ROBERTSON

robert.d.robertson@hotmail.co.uk



Cèilidh dance

This year is, of course, a huge year for Gaelic in Glasgow as the Royal National Mòd comes to the city in the autumn.

After a very successful launch in the City Halls at Celtic Connections, the build-up to the event continues apace this weekend with a cèilidh dance this Thursday evening (February 28), with Glasgow's current most popular Hebridean cèilidh band, Beinn Lee.

The Uist band will be supported by an up-and-coming outfit called Dlù who I have yet to hear live but who I gather have a great future ahead of them.

The four-piece band, former students of the Glasgow Gaelic school, is made up of Moilidh NicGriogair (on fiddle and piano), Zach Ronan (on accordion), Andrew Grossart (on drums), and Aidan Spiers (on guitar and bass).

The cèilidh will take place in the basement of the Òran



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Baile Mòr nan Gàidheal ♦ The Heart of Gaelic Scotland



Mòr at the top of Byers Road and doors open at 7.30pm. Tickets are £13 and this is an over-14s event where under-16s must be accompanied by an adult. Tickets are available online from www.ticketweb.co.uk if you search for Mod Ghlaschu with Beinn Lee and Dlù.

Glasgow Islay Association

The 157th annual gathering of the Glasgow Islay Association will take place this Saturday March 2 in the Glasgow University Union and, as usual, the association has a fine line up in store.

The concert will be chaired by John Campbell, manager of Laphroaig Distillery,

and artistes include: Libby Morris, Pipe Major Andrew MacCowan, Fiona Hunter, Ruairidh Cormack, The Glasgow Islay Gaelic Choir, Kirsteen Grant and the Islay Pipe Band.

Doors for the concert open at 7.30pm for a prompt 7.45pm start.

The gathering dance will be played by none other than Beinn Lee who are kept extremely busy with all the big dances round Glasgow at the moment. If you missed them at the Mull and Iona the other weekend, or can't make it to the Glasgow Mòd dance, then be sure to head along to the Glasgow Islay dance which starts at 10.30pm.

Tickets are available on

the door on the night or can be purchased in advance through the Glasgow Islay Association's facebook page.

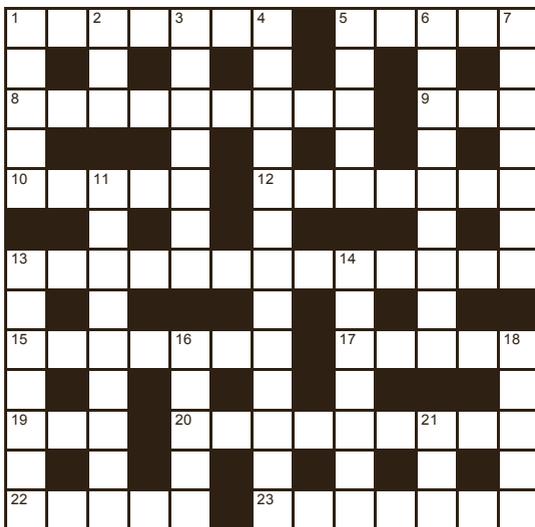
What's on

Thursday February 28: Mòd Ghlaschu Cèilidh at 7.30pm in the Òran Mòr.

Saturday March 02: The Glasgow Islay Association Annual Gathering Concert at 7.30pm in the GUU and dance thereafter at 10.30pm. Saturday March 09: Gaelictronica in the CCA, Sauchiehall Street, at 7.30pm

Friday March 15: Glasgow Skye Association Cothrom na h-Oigrìdh (Youth Concert) in the Crawford Hall, Beith Street, at 7pm.

Crossword



- Across**
- 1 Spouse (7)
 - 5 Move stealthily (5)
 - 8 Precocious young man (3,6)
 - 9 Neither (3)
 - 10 Honestly (5)
 - 12 Rude and aggressive (7)
 - 13 Consultant for women (13)
 - 15 Surroundings (7)
 - 17 Prize number selector (5)
 - 19 Ventilate (3)
 - 20 Whirlpool (9)
 - 22 Extremely hot ovens (5)
 - 23 Dexterity (7)

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION



- Down**
- 1 Pattern of behaviour (5)
 - 2 Tofu base (3)
 - 3 Pain reliever (7)
 - 4 Crane fly (5,8)
 - 5 Bush (5)
 - 6 Arrangement of teeth (9)
 - 7 Within hearing distance (7)
 - 11 Man-made (9)
 - 13 Airway protector (7)
 - 14 Supervise (7)
 - 16 Poetic feet (5)
 - 18 Ant (5)
 - 21 Fit a mast with stays (3)

COMMUNITY NOTICEBOARD

SC001282
Comunn Gàidhealach an Òbain Children's Cèilidh Saturday 2nd March 2019
Glencruitten Church Centre, Oban
7pm. Admission: £5.00
Artistes from local primary & secondary schools
Singing, Poetry, Piping and Dancing
Oban High School Trad Group
Fear an Taighe: Duncan MacNeil
Tea and home baking

Oban Accordion & Fiddle Club Thursday 7th March 2019
7.30pm. Royal Hotel
Guest Artist: Duncan Black & Marie Fielding
Admission £4
All Welcome!

Lorn Vintage Ploughing Match Presents
Slide Show by R. MacCulloch
Friday 1st March
North Connel Village Hall, 7.30pm
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Get your boat in the water

Fitting out for 2019

Winter is about to disappear and the time for getting boats ready to launch for the summer season is fast approaching.

Many owners want their craft launched before Easter. It may be that work that needs to be done has already been completed over the winter but, for many, fitting out is always last-minute, so it's time to prioritise jobs and get down to work.

The quality of de-winterisation can affect the life-cycle of a boat massively, so as a first step it's always useful to find out from the yard when they want to launch your boat, so you can work to a deadline.

If you need any work carried out by the boat professionals, get in touch as soon as possible to avoid disappointment, since this is their busiest time of year.

Set your workload list down alongside tools and materials required. Add an array of rags, silicone and grease, petroleum jelly, lubricating and penetrating oils, cleaning products, brushes, wet and dry sandpaper, rollers and tray, degreaser, rolls of tape, engine spares and treatments for your water and fuel tanks.

It's often the best idea to work from the outside in so that if you are pushed for time, any work required inside can be done after the launch.

It is also important to note that each make and model of boat is different, so the procedures for equipment testing will vary. Individual owner's manuals should be consulted in conjunction with the advice below, for in-depth instructions specific to each boat.

HULL AND TOPSIDES

Removing all the old anti-fouling is a time-consuming task.

This is an important job, especially if it has built up over the years, since it reduces efficiency of a boat's movement in the water.

Wood and gel-coat scrapers are available but care has to be taken, so that the hull does not become damaged. A smooth surface will pay dividends for re-application and help keep fouling at bay for the season.

This is a good time to inspect the keel and keelboats for signs of rusting or pitting and wear at the keel to hull joint that may be more evident after winter lay-up.

If anything looks suspect, ask the experts for the best course of action. Deep pitting on the keel may indicate anode problems and will need taken back to bare metal and an epoxy protective coating applied before anti-fouling.

Check the rudder, skeg fitments as well as the propeller and look for any play in bearings, stock or quadrant. Ensure that the bonding wires from the anode are sound and replace the anode as required. Grease the shaft, steering cables and the log's paddle wheel where fitted.

An extensive range of anti-fouling products is available on the market from powerboat finishes to racing and cruising coatings. Choice will depend on boat type, use and where it is kept. Your local chandler or boatyard will advise on what suits best. Follow instructions for application with a stronger build-up in high impact areas – the leading edge of the keel and skeg and the keel to hull joint.



A long-handled radiator roller can be a good option to give an even finish with a paint brush to reach more inaccessible points. Some antifouling requires only one application; others need a few depending on longevity required. If stored on a cradle or stocks, leave some antifouling for painting the underside of the keel and cradle support points before the boat is launched while in the hoist.

Topsides and deck will require a thorough clean up after lying for a winter. If a polish was applied before layup, this will make the process easier.

Repair any problem area such as chips or crazing in the gelcoat as required. Where gelcoat is older it may need hard work to get the original finish back. Then apply a protective wax and polish well to keep the boat looking pristine throughout the season.

Ask the chandlery for advice on the extensive range of products that are available for all requirements.

ENGINES, FUEL TANKS AND GAS SYSTEMS

Both inboards and outboards need serviced and this is most often done by a professional whether by your boatyard or an independent engineer.

If undertaking on your own oil, filters and anodes should be renewed and exhaust fitments checked. Impellers and engine belt tension and mounts should also be inspected as well as the underside of the shaft – re-bed if any leaks are apparent. Keep spares of everything you think you may need on the boat during the season. With sail-drives the oil level and gaiter seal need checked as well as the earthing wires from the starter motor. Replace if there is any wear on hose and electrical connections.

Before launching, all batteries need to be up to charge and holding. The typical battery life is between four and five years. The battery should be refilled with dis-

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tilled water and checked for charge. If they have not been on trickle charge over lay-up, recharge now and monitor electrolyte levels if unsealed. Ensure the battery tray is dry and tighten securing straps making sure all gas vents are clear. Clean terminals and coat with petroleum jelly.

Fuel tanks should be full from laying up. If not, drain water off and treat with a diesel biocide. Inspect the gas system regularly and thoroughly. A qualified gas engineer will ensure the system conforms to current gas regulations and any suspect hoses and fittings should be replaced to manufacturer's recommendations.

ELECTRONICS

It is essential that the switches, dials and any other electrical equipment on the boat be tested. All electrical systems are interconnected, so ensure that every switch in the cabin and the helm are tested as one faulty one could cause a lot of trouble.

BILGES

Inspect bilge pump impellers and gaskets, grease and replace if necessary. With automatic bilge pumps, see float switches work and the strum box is clear. Manual strum boxes should be pumped through to see hose is clear of blockages. Seacocks need serviced. When the battery is running, switch it off and see if the automatic bilge pump float switch is working.

DECK GEAR, RIGGING AND ANCHORS

Dirt will have built up over the winter on deck and will most likely need cleaned with an anti-mould treatment. Deck gear needs checking for wear and tear.

Check the stanchion bases for any cracks and any corrosion in lifelines, particularly under plastic sheathing. Replace if in any doubts. Inspect rigging for broken strands and any cracking at terminals and renew if necessary. If rigging has not been kept in good condition, this can invalidate boat insurance in the event of a claim. Your local sail rigging firm expert will carry out a rig inspection for you if you have any doubts.

Check all instrumentation and furling equipment at the masthead in case work is required before the mast is stepped.

Overhaul winches and strip down any that are seized – soak components in degreaser and re-grease. If warps and sheets were removed for winter then this is the time to check over, renew and replace them.

Similarly, look for corrosion on anchors and chain. Clean manual windlasses, check for wear and grease. Remove the gypsy in powered versions, grease the

drum, look at the foot switch for wear, clean and grease electrical connections.

All wood on deck, teak slats etc should be oiled or varnished and paintwork touched up and stainless polished. This is an ideal time for maintenance of spray hoods and other cockpit coverings.

INTERIOR

The cabin will need a good clean up if not already attended to over the winter. Most owners have a dehumidifier and heater installed to keep mould at bay so this will help greatly in the fitting out preparation.

Clean all the lockers before replacing everything and remember to display a list of where everything is in the boat. Clean the galley and check burners on gas cookers. Inspect any soft furnishings such as berth cushions, checking for any damp if they have not been taken off for the winter for storage. Reinstall for the season ahead and keep everything well aired to ensure a fresh start come summer.



WATER TANKS, GAS TANKS, FUEL LINES AND HEADS

Any water in the water tank should be pumped through and a purifier added before refilling for use. Flush through the heads adding washing up liquid/vinegar to lubricate the hoses and pumps. Check the boat's central heating system if there is one. All communication, navigation and other equipment that was removed for winter storage must be re-installed. Gas tanks and fuel lines are prone to rusting over the winter. Check to see if fuel lines have cracked during the cold temperatures as they often do during the winter, and replace. The cooling system should be filled up with water and antifreeze in equal measure. If the mixture has been lying there all winter, then the cooling system needs to be drained and refilled with a fresh mix. The hoses should be inspected in case of cracks and leakages.

SAFETY EQUIPMENT

Lives may depend on the safety of your equipment. Now is the best time to check that everything is in working order, so that there is enough time to store



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properly and replace items if there are any issues. However, if this hasn't been done, it's essential now to see all equipment is in good condition since lives may depend on it. Fire extinguishers, life-rafts, life-jackets and rubber dinghies should be inspected with items needing replaced or repaired if in any doubt as to condition. It is also vital that you check to make sure your vessel has the correct amount of flotation devices. Invert MOB lights to see they work and change bulb and batteries if not. Some WD40 on the copper contact strip inside should ensure good connection. Silicone grease rubber seals. The RNLI will carry out a free safety check on your boat equipment and lifeboat stations will check your life-jackets – this is really worthwhile. Make an inventory of where safety equipment is stored and display prominently in boat – items can then be found quickly and easily in an emergency. Horns, flares, whistles and other signalling equipment should all be checked. Finally, all paperwork should be organised because you never know when you might need it.



outdoor canvas should be checked for wear. If new sails are needed, order as soon as possible, since sail lofts are always extremely busy at this time of year.

EXPERT ADVICE

Professional advice is on hand from boatyards, engineers, marine service and repair firms as well as chandlers and sail-makers. Each has their own area of expertise and don't hesitate to contact them for advice and to carry out work as and when it is required. The maintenance of your boat is a full-time commitment. It is important to follow all the advice, and not cut any corners when it comes to getting your boat ready to go back out onto the water after winter. What could save money now could become a costly error in the future. Whatever your plans are for getting out on the water – whether it be cruising, racing, fishing or just pottering about for leisure, we wish you a safe and successful summer season in 2019.

SAILS AND SPRAYHOODS

Sailmakers are on hand for advice and since sails are the powerhouse of the sailing vessel, it's important they are kept in good condition. Get your sails checked over and repair or replace as required, if you haven't done so already. Sprayhoods and other



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Farms start year on high

Ewen Campbell, SRUC's Kirkton and Auchtertyre farms manager

It is good to be able to start this year's column with a few positive thoughts.

Calving has just got going and so far we have eight heifer calves and one bull calf. They are by the Shorthorn bull and we are looking for female calves.

The cows are looking well on the high quality haylage made last summer. When the analysis came back, some of it was as high as 80 per cent dry matter. In comparison, the hay we bought in and analysed from Stirling was 82 per cent. Therefore there is almost three times the feeding in each haylage bale that there would be in a wet bale of silage.

I should not tempt fate, but it looks like this winter will be less stressful than the last one. We have plenty of forage, there has been little snow and most of the ewes are in good condition.

We just finished pregnancy scanning the ewes in our Kirkton flock, and I am pleased with the results. The scanning percentage is 132 per cent, with seven per cent barren. This barren

percentage would be high for a commercial flock, but because of single sire mating groups and the high intervention our research requires, it is acceptable.

We have three lines of animals in our research flock. The control line of Scottish Blackface ewes with average genetic index value, scanned at 126 per cent; the selection line of Scottish Blackface ewes with higher genetic index, scanned at 138 per cent; and the Lleyn ewes scanned at 132 per cent.

Farmers have been a bit sceptical about the use of EBV index values, but there is no doubt they work. For example, if you used the above high index rams on a 1,000 ewe flock, this would potentially equate to 120 extra lambs. Next week, we are scanning our high hill flock at Auchtertyre, so it will be interesting to see how they do.

The male lambs from last year were finished in the sheds at Kirkton and Auchtertyre for slaughter. One group has been used at Kirkton to trial kit that keeps track of their feeding habits and individual feed intake. It is composed of feeding bins



Lambs feeding from the EID feedbin

that measure how much and how often the lamb eats, and is working with the EID tag of the animal to record this information.

We had a successful workshop on this on February 13, when 37 delegates from research, advisory, industry and farming came to Kirkton to discuss ways to measure feed efficiency in sheep.

Delegates spent the morning on the farm with demonstration of the kit. The afternoon was spent indoors where we had interesting discussions and brainstorming as to how such kit can help the Scottish sheep industry. It was interesting to hear ideas from different stakeholders. The feedback suggested that

use within national breeding programmes was one of the best ways to make use of the data collected. The workshop allowed us to develop a network of people interested in sheep feed efficiency, to take some of these ideas forward.

Finally, visitors to the farm recently were final year agricultural students from Harper Adams University, in Shropshire. They spent the morning learning about precision livestock farming and sheep systems and genetics research, as well as information about the environment and biodiversity in the hills. It is always nice to discuss the work that we do at Kirkton with the potential next generation of livestock farmers.

Market report

Dingwall and Highland Marts Ltd, February 20: sold 741 store cattle, 65 adult head of breeding cattle and 108 OTM cattle.

Bullocks (403) averaged 231.6p, and sold to 326.9p per kg for a 260kg Limousin cross from Croft Grant, Dalchalm, and £1,370 for a 750kg Limousin cross from Ashley, North Kessock.

Heifers (331) averaged 212.2p, and sold to 262.2p per kg for a pen of 286kg Charolais crosses from Pitmain Farm, Kingussie and £1,220 for a pen of 610kg Charolais crosses from Ardjachie, Tain.

Young Bulls (7) averaged 202.5p and sold to 232.0p per kg for a pair of Aberdeen Angus crosses from Spittal Shore, Strathpeffer, and £800 for a British Blue cross from 25 Camult Muir, Kiltarlity.

Heifer in calf (48) sold to £1,900 (four times) for Simmental crosses from Westfield Farm, Thurso.

Cow in calf (15) sold to £1,400 (thrice) for British Shorthorn and Simmental crosses from Bogburn Farm, Duncanston.

Cow with calves at foot (two) sold to £1,100 for a Shorthorn cross cow from 2 Cragganvally, Kiltarlity.

A spokesman said: 'Well bred cattle in all classes met a firm demand.'

Other leading prices per head and per kg:

Bullocks up to 400kg – Dunain Farms, Inverness, £1,020, 268.1p; 401-450kg – Druid Temple, Inverness, £1,160, 271.8p; 451-500kg – Torgorm, Conon Bridge, £1,150, 244.2p; 501-550kg – Kindecace, Alness, £1,180, 231.4p.

Heifers up to 300kg – Pitmain Farm, £750, Creagmhor, Glenelg, 248.3p (twice); 301-350kg – The Cloy, Fortrose, £810, 245.5p; 351-400kg – Dunain Farms, Inverness, £910, Clury Farm, Dulnain Bridge, 245.4p; 401-450kg – Leys Estate, Inverness, £1,030, 239.5p; 451-500kg – Kindecace, £1,115, Pitmain Farm, 234.0p; 501-550kg – Ardjachie, £980, 192.2p.

Heifer in calf – SalX – Westfield Farm, £1,850; SimX – Westfield Farm, £1,800; ShoX – Croft Martin, £1,100.

Cow in calf – SalX – Bogburn Farm, £950; BshoX – 2 Cragganvally, £900; LimX – Gorthleck Mains, Gorthleck, £900.

Dingwall and Highland Marts Ltd, February 20: sold 108 OTM cattle.

OTM cows (105) averaged 115.7p and sold to 162.9p per kg for a 485kg Piemontese from Lochquoy Farm, Castletown and £1,210 for a 760kg British Shorthorn cross from 91/92 Achviach, Dornoch.

OTM feeding Bulls (3) sold to 109.4p per kg and £1,110 for a 1015kg Saler from Cloverlea, Portmahomack.

Other leading prices per head:
OTM cows: Clury Farm, Dulnain Bridge, (LimX), £1,200; Kinnahaird Farm, Contin, (SimX), £1,180; Bayhead, Munloch, (CharX), £1,150; 15 Achnairn, Lairg, £950; Viewhill, Dornoch, (AAX), £930; Easter Sheep Park, Balblair, (HerfX), £900.

Other leading prices per kg:
OTM cows: 91/92 Achviach, (BshoX), 159.2p; Kinchyle Farm, Scaniport, (SimX), 156.9p; Alterwall, Lyth, (CharX), 156.1p; 2 Forss, Thurso, (LimX), 152.8p; 15 Achnairn, (ShoX), 143.9p.

Dingwall and Highland Marts Ltd, February 19: sold four prime cattle.

Prime heifers (4) averaged 211.0p (-1.2p) and sold to 213.0p per kg and £1,354.50 gross.

Dingwall and Highland Marts Ltd, February 19 sold four prime cattle.

Prime heifers (4) averaged 211.0p (-1.2p) and sold to 213.0p per kg for a 630kg Limousin cross from Easter Strath of Auchterflow, Killen selling to Messrs John M. Munro Ltd, Dingwall, and £1,354.50 gross for a 645kg Limousin cross also from Easter Strath of Auchterflow, selling to Messrs John M. Munro Ltd, Dingwall.

Other leading prices per kg:
Heifers: Easter Strath of Auchterflow, (LimX), 211.0p.

Other leading prices per head:
Heifers: Easter Strath of Auchterflow, (LimX), £1,341.90.

Dingwall and Highland Marts Ltd, February 19: sold 1,295 prime sheep.

Old season lambs (1,236) averaged 183.9p (-5.7p) and sold to 230.8p per kg and £100.00 gross.

SOQ 36.5kg to 45.5kg (972) averaged 188.4p (-5.6p) per kg.
Feeding sheep (59) sold to £130 gross.

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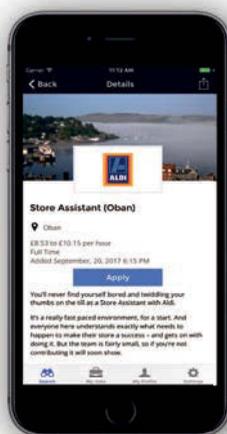
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PUBLIC NOTICES

PUBLIC MEETING

Oban Bay Management Group & Oban Bay Stakeholder Group

The Oban Bay Management Group (OBMG) and Oban Bay Stakeholder Group (OBBSG) will host a joint public meeting to update the community on plans to amend the statutory harbour authority arrangements at Oban Bay to improve navigational safety.

Thursday 28th March 2019 | 7.00pm

The Argyllshire Gathering Halls, Breadalbane St, Oban PA34 5NZ

The OBMG and OBBSG are exploring the opportunity for a trust port to be established as the single harbour authority to manage the Oban Bay area. The OBMG proposal that CMAL extends its harbour area is on hold while this evaluation is conducted.

The public meeting will report on the findings of a legal review on the jurisdictions and statutory status of Oban Bay, the next steps for forming a new statutory harbour to manage the navigational safety of the bay, and initiatives to improve current navigational safety in the interim period.

The Oban Harbour website hosts all information associated with consultations on this initiative.

www.obanharbour.scot

Oban Bay Management Group



CALMAC

HARBOURS

Working in Partnership to Improve Marine Safety in Oban



Due to continued success in securing several long term contracts we require the following full time personnel to join our Facilities management and Contracting departments.

FM - Help Desk Co-ordinator

Full training will be given for this role – Good admin skills are required with the ability to manage our bespoke Help desk system, familiarity with Microsoft office applications and attention to detail is key to the success of this position. Salary negotiable.

FM - Multi skilled Operative

Operatives with a strong trade background are required – Roofer's – joiner's- plasterer's etc, to work along side our existing team on long term housing/commercial FM contracts, both reactive and planned maintenance tasks.

The ability to work to a planned schedule and use initiative to complete tasks as required,. Training will be given to the right candidates to continue their development within the role.

Competitive hourly rate

FM - Trainee Building Services Engineer

Great opportunity to join our existing team to work on long term FM contracts throughout Argyll. Full on site training will be given and the opportunity

to join our Modern Apprenticeship Program at Forth Valley college

A wide variety of skills will be gained including electrical, mechanical, plumbing & air-conditioning. Hourly rate increasing through apprenticeship.

FM - Maintenance Electricians

Operatives with a strong electrical background are required to work along side our existing team on long term housing/commercial FM contracts, both reactive and planned maintenance tasks.

The ability to work to a planned schedule and use initiative to complete tasks as required. Training will be given to the right candidates to continue their development within the role.

Competitive hourly rate

Contracting – Approved Electricians/Electricians

Electricians & Approved Electricians are required for a variety of projects, commercial/industrial experience preferred.

We require experienced operatives due to a full order book for 2019

Full SJIB rates paid.

All applications including CV's and covering letter to be e-mailed for the attention of;
Angus MacPherson, Managing Director, OES Ltd
amacpherson@fes-group.co.uk



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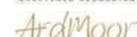


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Comhairle na Gàidhealtachd

**TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (SCOTLAND) ACT 1997
PLANNING (LISTED BUILDING AND CONSERVATION AREAS) (SCOTLAND) ACT 1997**

The applications listed below, along with plans and other documents submitted with them, may be examined online at <http://wam.highland.gov.uk>; electronically at the AREA PLANNING AND BUILDING STANDARDS OFFICE, CHARLES KENNEDY BUILDING, ACHINTORE ROAD, FORT WILLIAM, PH33 6RQ; or electronically at your nearest Council Service Point. You can find your nearest Service Point via the following link https://www.highland.gov.uk/directory/16/a_to_z

Written comments should be made to the EPC at the contact details below within the time period indicated from the date of this notice. Anyone making a representation about this proposal should note that their letter or email will be disclosed to any individual or body who requests sight of representations in respect of this proposal.

Reference Number	Development Address	Proposal Description
19/00613/FUL	Land 5015M SW Of River Cottage Roy Bridge	Installation of 20m telecoms mast and associated equipment to extend Emergency Services Network (ESN) and mobile coverage at Glen Roy.
18/05939/MS	Land 400M NE Of Blar Mhor Industrial Estate Lochside Fort William	Application for Matters Specified in Conditions 2/6/7/9/13/16/17/19/21 & 22 of Planning Permission 18/03647/PIP relating to the detailed design of Phase 1 residential development of 117 units
19/00352/FUL	3 Zetland Avenue Upper Achintore Fort William	Proposed alterations to garage to form additional owners accommodation
18/05558/FUL	Maoldon Bank Mallaig	Change of use of first floor of building from bank (Class 2) to flat
19/00402/FUL	Lower Falls Car Park Glen Nevis Fort William	New road layout including accessible parking bays and day parking for motorhomes; sheltered area with perch seating at bus drop off, with signage, donation point and bike racks; 2 waterless accessible toilet facilities; picnic area

Time period for comments is 14 days
ePlanning Centre, The Highland Council, Glenurquhart Road, INVERNESS IV3 5NX
Email: eplanning@highland.gov.uk

**THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL
(C1205 AONACH MOR ROAD, TORLUNDY)
(TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ORDER 2019**

On 21 February 2019 The Highland Council made the above Order in terms of Section 14(1) of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, in order to restrict traffic movements on the road during the UCI World Mountain Bike Cup taking place at Nevis Range, Torlundy on 30th May – 2nd June 2019 when large numbers of spectators, participants and event staff/organisers will be present.

The Order will temporarily prohibit the passage of vehicles over the length of road described in the Schedule hereto during the period that the Order is in force. There is no alternative route for traffic but shuttle buses will be provided to access the event and pedestrian access maintained at all times. Vehicles used by the emergency services/statutory undertakers, Highland Lime Ltd and their customers, Nevis Range, event organisers and participants (when displaying a permit), will be exempt from the prohibition.

The order will come into force at 8am on Thursday 30th May 2019 and will apply until 9.00 pm on Sunday 2nd June 2019. A copy of the order can be inspected at the Council Service Point, Charles Kennedy Building, Fort William (Mon – Fri 9.00 am - 5.00pm).

21/0219: Sharon Wares, Solicitor, The Highland Council
Glenurquhart Road,
Inverness IV3 5NX
Schedule

Length of Road
C1205

The extent of the road closure will be limited to a stretch of the road from a point 885m eastwards from the junction of the C1205 and the A82(T) (just beyond the Rural Complex junction) east to the Nevis Range Car park, a distance of 1197 metres or thereby

**CROFTING COMMISSION
COIMISEAN NA
CROITEARACHD
APPLICATION TO
CREATE A NEW CROFT**

J & K Farrell of Aegir Fell Croft, The Oa, Isle of Islay are applying to create a new croft. Case No. 95195.

**CROFTING COMMISSION
COIMISEAN NA
CROITEARACHD
DECROFTING
APPLICATIONS**

A M Carrigan
Mulduh, Colonsay
0.068 ha –Existing house site
92786

J Clark
3 Glenshellach, Kilmore & Kilbride
0.31 ha –Existing house site
91009

Comments can be made to the Crofting Commission by any member of the crofting community within the locality of the land, within 28 days of the date of this newspaper. Crofting Commission, Great Glen House, Leachkin Road, Inverness IV3 8NW info@crofting.gov.scot

Please specify your interest in the application and your reasons for commenting. A copy of any representations made will be forwarded to the applicant. You can find a copy of our Privacy Notice at www.crofting.scotland.gov.uk/openness-and-customer-care.

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 29/03/2019. 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. 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
19/00125/PP	Erection of dwellinghouse, detached garage, installation of sewage treatment plant and retrospective formation of vehicular access/access gates and boundary wall	Land West Of Kilmelford Fire Station Kilmelford Argyll And Bute
19/00256/PP	Erection of dwellinghouse, installation of septic tank and formation of vehicular access	Land South Of Blarchasaig Farm Appin Argyll And Bute
19/00120/PP	Revised outfall position relative to planning application 18/01257/PP for construction of run-of-river hydro scheme	Land West of Allt Eassach Loch Etive Argyll Et Bute
19/00189/PP	Erection of holiday unit (part retrospective)	Land South West Of Pottery Old Pier Shed Arinagour Isle Of Coll Argyll And Bute
19/00254/PP	Formation of vehicular access	Land South Of Ballachuan Farmhouse Cuan Ferry Isle Of Seil Oban Argyll And Bute PA34 4RB
19/00303/PP	Erection of dwellinghouse and garage	Plot 7 Land North East Of Tigh-An-Lochan Kilchrean Tainuill Argyll And Bute PA35 1HD
18/02753/PP	Erection of telecommunications equipment compound with 15 metre high lattice tower and associated works, including formation of access track	Land Approx. 1440 Metres North East Of Ulualv Cottage Glen More Isle Of Mull Argyll And Bute
19/00282/CONAC	Complete demolition of shop and residential unit	Iona Scottish Crafts Isle Of Iona Argyll And Bute PA76 6SJ
19/00200/PPP	Site for the erection of dwellinghouse	Land South East Of Blarchasaig Appin Argyll And Bute
19/00301/PPP	Renewal of planning permission in principle reference 16/00489/PPP – Site for erection of dwellinghouse and installation of sewage treatment system	Land North Of Campbell Hall Cottage Ledaig Oban Argyll And Bute
19/00061/PP	Erection of sub station to facilitate hydro scheme within Highland Council area	Land North Of Elleric House Fasnacloch Appin Argyll And Bute
19/00270/CONAC	Demolition of 2 sheds	Land West Of Block House Isle Of Iona Argyll And Bute PA76 6SJ

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 Councils 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

First Registration of a Croft

Jacqueline Boyd has registered her croft 1/2 5(2) Duisky (apportionment), Duisky 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 October 25, 2019.

Details of the registration can be found at www.crofts.ros.gov.uk/register/home. The croft registration number is C5594.

**BID4OBAN
BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT**

BID4Oban Ltd AGM

**Tuesday 19th March 2019
Perle Hotel Oban
6pm for Levy Payers
6.20pm for business presentation and discussion.**

**Oban Times
PUBLIC NOTICES**

First Registration of a Croft

Rosemary Bridge, Peter Bridge and Lilian MacDonald have registered their croft Murroch, Arisaig and Moidart 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 October 29, 2019. Details of the registration can be found at www.crofts.ros.gov.uk/register/home. The croft registration number is C5621.

**Argyll and Bute Council
COMMUNITY SERVICES: EDUCATION**

IS YOUR CHILD ELIGIBLE FOR FUNDED EARLY LEARNING & CHILDCARE PROVISION?

Early Learning and Childcare from August 2019 will be available for:-

- Four year old children whose birth date falls between 1st March 2015 and 28th February 2016
- Three year old children whose birth date falls between 1st March 2016 and 28th February 2017

A list of current Early Learning and Childcare Funded Providers, including those offering Gaelic Medium, is available from:

- All Early Learning & Childcare Providers
- All Primary Schools
- <https://www.families.scot/LocalChis.aspx?chisid=26>
- <http://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/early-years>
- Early Years Helpline noted below

Information leaflets will be available from Early Learning & Childcare Funded Providers at the time of registration and parents can obtain further guidance from the Early Years Helpline, Argyll and Bute Council, Argyll House, Alexandra Parade, Dunoon PA23 8AJ (Telephone 01369 708503).

Parents of eligible children should register at their preferred provider, taking along their child's birth certificate, during week commencing Monday 4th March 2019, during the normal operational hours of the setting.

Argyll & Bute COUNCIL

**Oban Times
PUBLIC NOTICES**

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of the business community
read the regional press

**Oban Times
PUBLIC NOTICES**

Argyll and Bute Council

Councillor Roddy McCuish (E.W. 4 Oban South and the Isles)
Councillor McCuish will be holding a surgery on **Friday 1st March 2019** in the **Municipal Buildings, Albany Street, Oban** from 1.30pm – 4.00pm. He can be contacted by email – Roderick.McCuish@argyll-bute.gov.uk and by telephone 01631 567854

Councillor Jim Lynch (E.W. 4 Oban South and the Isles)
Councillor Lynch will be holding a surgery on **Friday 8th March 2019** in the **Municipal Buildings, Albany Street, Oban** from 2.00pm – 4.00pm. He can be contacted by email – Jim.Lynch@argyll-bute.gov.uk and by telephone 01631 567893

Councillor Elaine Robertson (E.W. 5 Oban North and Lorn)
Councillor Robertson will be holding a surgery on **Friday 22nd March 2019** in the **Municipal Buildings, Albany Street, Oban** from 2.00pm – 4.00pm. Councillor Robertson can also be contacted by email – Elaine.Robertson@argyll-bute.gov.uk

Councillor Sir Jamie McGrigor (E.W. 4 Oban South and the Isles)
Councillor Sir McGrigor will be holding a surgery on **Friday 22nd March 2019** in the **Municipal Buildings, Albany Street, Oban** from 10.00am – 12 Noon. He can be contacted by email – Jamie.McGrigor@argyll-bute.gov.uk and by telephone 01631 567853

Councillor Kieron Green (E.W. 5 Oban North and Lorn)
Councillor Green will be holding a surgery on **Friday 15th March 2019** in the **Municipal Buildings, Albany Street, Oban** from 2.00pm – 4.00pm. He can be contacted by email – Kieron.Green@argyll-bute.gov.uk and by telephone 01631 562 444

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Oban Times
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OBAN TIMES WEST HIGHLAND CALENDAR, fabulous views of the West Highlands portrayed in this handy and conveniently sized calendar. Places include: Inveraray, Appin, Oban, Seil, Isle of Mull, Campbeltown, Tarbert, Machrihanish, Fort William. Ideal for home offices or as a gift. Order on-line at www.scottishcalendars.co.uk or tel 01371 851868.

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Oban Times
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Love David xxx

DEATHS

COOK - Peacefully, on February 23, 2019, at Glenaray Ward, Mid Argyll Hospital, with his family by his side, John McPhee Cook, aged 76 years, of 3 Allt Na Ceardaich, Furnace, beloved husband of the late Christina, loving father of Marion, John, Nancy, Gilbert and Gail, much loved grandfather and great grandfather to many and a dear brother and uncle to all the family. A good neighbour and dear friend to many. Funeral service will be held at Cumlodden Parish Church, Furnace, on Saturday, March 2, 2019 at 11.00am, thereafter to Kilevin Cemetery, Crarae. Flowers welcome. Donations to the Glenaray Ward (Dunadd Room). All friends are respectfully invited to attend.

HENDERSON - (Ardgay). Peacefully in The Meadows Nursing Home, Dornoch, on Friday February 22, 2019, Catherine "Eileen" Henderson, (née MacLennan), Brimmond, Ardgay Hill, Ardgay (formerly of Black Mount, Bridge of Orchy), beloved wife of the late Adam, cherished mother of Cath, Lorna and Ada, treasured granny of Lorna, dear great granny of Courtney, Rico and Indie, and a dear friend to many. Funeral service will be held in Ardgay Parish Church on Friday March 1 at 12 noon. Thereafter to Croick Cemetery. All friends respectfully invited. Family flowers only please but donations if so desired may be given at the service for Alzheimer Scotland and The Meadow's Nursing Home, Dornoch Comfort Fund or sent to Alasdair Rhind, Funeral Directors, Sutherland House, Bank Street, Tain.

PERLICH - Born asleep at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital on Friday, February 15, 2019, Teddy, beloved son of James and Lynsey, wee brother to Callum and dearly loved grandson to Fiona and Ellis, Terry and the late Catriona. A service for Teddy will be held in Kyles Parish Church on Friday, March 1 at 12 noon and thereafter to Cladh A Mhullin Cemetery, Millhouse, to which all are welcome. Please wear something blue. Family flowers only please.

POWER - Suddenly at home on February 8, 2019, aged 68 years, Janette, beloved daughter of the late Charles and Isobel Power, a dear sister to Michael and Nicky, aunt and great-aunt.

Oban Times ANNOUNCEMENTS
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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

McGHEE - Jane and family would like to offer thanks for the support and kind expressions of sympathy and all acts of kindness shown to us in loss of Eddie and to all involved in Eddie's care, you were all great. Thanks to Ian, D&A Munn and Donald MacKinnon for a lovely service. Eddie will be sorely missed.

MEMORIALS

BROWN - In loving memory of my dear husband Alaisdair, who died on February 25, 2005.

Also remembering my brother-in-law Hector who died on March 24, 2004.

Also remembering loved ones gone before and after.

Memories of you in some small way

Come my way every day

Sadly missed.

- Seonaid, 11 Balephuil, Tiree.

GRANT - In loving memory of my dear father and our grandpa Angus, who died March 3, 2016.

Never more than a thought away

Loved and remembered every day.

- Elizabeth, Julie and Steven, Keeper's Cottage, Dalmally.

MACCOLL - In loving memory of Dugie, a dear husband, father and grandfather who died March 2, 2002.

Loved and remembered every day.

- Margaret and family.

MACISAAC - In loving memory of Finlay, who passed away March 4, 2018.

It broke our hearts to lose you

You did not go alone

As part of us went with you

The day God called you home

You left us precious memories

And though we cannot see you

You are always by our side.

- Your loving wife Mary, sons, Donald, John and Finlay, daughter Sandra and grandchildren Donald, Alexander, Lachlan, Connor, Craig, Reece, Lauren, Caleb and Theo.

MACKINNON - In loving memory of our parents, grandparents and great grandparents, Hamish, died March 5, 1997 and Mary, September 20, 2004.

Words are few Thoughts are deep Memories of you we will always keep.

- Love from your girls, Johan, Annie, Marion and families, Killin, Lawers and Fersit.

MACLEAN - 27th Anniversary. Calum, those we love, live in our hearts forever. - All my love Chrissie xx.

MACLEOD - In memory of Captain Donald MacLeod, Kilchoan, who died March 1, 1996.

Always remembered.

- Inserted by nephew Hugh.

MACQUEEN - In loving memory of our dear mum Veronica, who died February 25, 2000.

Love and miss you always.

- Yvonne, Richard, Michael and Innes.

SHANKS - Treasured memories of my dear husband Jimmy Shanks, who died on February 23, 2016.

Your presence we miss Your memory we treasure

Loving you always Forgetting you never

- Lily, Eileen and Elayne.

SMITH - In loving memory of Joe, much loved brother and uncle who died February 23, 2017.

- Fondly remembered by Helen, Iain, Deirdre and Mhairi.

Oban Times ANNOUNCEMENTS

STEWART - In loving memory of our dear Mum, Mary (Tootise), who passed away on March 1, 2018. Also remembering our lovely Dad, Alister, who passed away on March 22, 1976.

- Iain, Sandra and family.

WANT - In loving memory of Margaret MacKinnon, a dear sister, aunt and great aunt, who passed away March 3, 2014. Remembering also her devoted husband David, who passed away on November 27, 2018.

Our grief does not go away We learn to live with the pain.

- Elizabeth, Roy, Shirley, Aiden, Emma and Sophie.

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GRADUATION



JOAN BEATON

Daughter of James and Jenny Beaton, Oban, recently graduated from Canterbury Christ Church University with a BA Hons in Youth Work and Community Learning and Development.



SCOTTISH FIELD'S MARCH ISSUE OUT NOW

Rugby legend Gregor Townsend... Fishing on the Tay... Borders under the spotlight... Horse hero Ian Stark... Stan Laurel's Caledonian roots... Pheasant recipes... Stuart MacRae...

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Obituary: Canon Angus MacQueen

Canon Angus MacQueen, who has died at the age of 95, was a giant of his faith, his culture and of the communities he served throughout the Diocese of Argyll and the Isles over seven decades.

Wherever he went as parish priest, he left a mark not just on the spiritual life of his flock but also on the social and economic interests of places that needed leadership. His Christianity took intensely practical forms, embracing a multitude of projects and innovations, all for the good of the people, always leading by example.

He was steeped in the language and lore of the unbroken Hebridean Catholic tradition and deeply aware of the harsh history that had shaped the places around him. Such knowledge was carried lightly and often invoked amidst much laughter to illustrate some thoroughly contemporary folly.

As a raconteur, he was brilliantly funny with an inexhaustible ability to find humour in the darkest of situations. Scepticism about all forms of authority or rank did not always endear him in high places, not least within the church, but contributed richly to his stock of hilarious stories.

At one point in the 1980s, the then Father MacQueen annoyed his Bishop in Oban with some outspoken comments about community issues in the Western Isles.

This – or so he believed – led to him being transferred out of Barra, first to Glencoe and then to the distinctly non-Gaelic parish of Rothesay.

Angus feared a long exile: 'Hess is still alive,' he despaired when I called to commiserate.

Of course, he was soon revelling in his new charge, having found the world's largest collection of Gaelic books in Mount Stuart, redoubt of the fabulously wealthy, and Catholic, Bute family.

His remit also included Arran, where the local estate had long frustrated the erection of a Catholic church. Angus rose to the challenge, found a crafty route round feudal superiority and built one in the middle of Brodick – an enduring monument to his ingenuity.



While a keen sense of the ridiculous was never far away, there was also a tough, serious side. More than most, he understood the value and fragility of his language and culture, as well as the society they had sustained. He was highly political, with a small 'p', in challenging forces which hastened the needless erosion of these inherited riches.

In this respect, his heyday was on Barra during the 1970s when he was parish priest at Castlebay and the equally formidable Father Calum Maclellan was in Northbay.

It was a time of local government reorganisation which brought the whole Western Isles within a single authority for the first time and highlighted the neglect of islands which had been under the remit of Inverness County Council.

Secondary pupils from Uist and Barra were scattered to a plethora of mainland schools from the age of 11.

The small island of Vatersay (for which MacQueen had a particular affection) had no vehicular access while other transport links were basic. There was no hospital

or facility for the elderly on Barra. All of these battles were fought and won with transformational effect.

When the concept of community co-operatives (co-chomuinn) was introduced from Ireland in the late 1970s, the priests were at the forefront of ensuring that their island parishes took advantage of the opportunities. Wherever he went, Angus MacQueen carried these same enthusiasms and inspired action through his own unstinting involvement.

Angus John MacQueen (Aonghas Iain mhic Chuithean) was born in the South Uist crofting township of Baile Garbha, the son of John MacQueen and Kate MacEachan. It was virtually a moneyless society and he recalled his upbringing as idyllic. Crofting families lived off their own produce and whatever land and sea bestowed. From this background, he acquired an intense love of nature in all its forms.

At the age of 13, he was sent off to Blair's College in Aberdeenshire to follow the route which would lead him to the priesthood. It was not a smooth journey. At that time, there were

too many trainee priests for the Scottish seminaries and Angus was among the overflow to Mill Hill in London.

An unauthorised outing to Madame Tussaud's led to his expulsion, all forms of 'theatricals' being out of bounds. He maintained that one of his companions, who avoided detection, later became Cardinal Thomas Winning. Angus lost his military exemption and spent two years in the army as the war drew to a close.

He then begged Bishop Grant in Oban to be allowed to resume his priestly studies and was sent to St Edmund's Ware in Hertfordshire with which he maintained lifelong connections. In July 1951, he was ordained and sent to his first parish, Morar, as curate to Father John MacNeil, a native of Mingulay. The new arrival's duties included relating the day's news to the aged, blind priest.

MacQueen loved Morar just as he quickly became committed to every parish in which he served – Dunoon, Eriskay, Castlebay, Glencoe, Rothesay, Bornish and finally Northbay in his beloved Barra. Well into his seventies when he returned to the island, he promptly turned over the land adjacent to the church for a market gardening project, staffed by people with learning difficulties.

An excellent cook using local ingredients, he became a regular broadcaster on matters culinary, cultural, historical and spiritual. Some of his vast knowledge will be retained as he recorded a great deal of material including a four-part account of his life for BBC Radio nan Gaidheal in 2015.

He travelled extensively, not least to Ecuador, where his Hebridean colleague Father Colin MacInnes had become a missionary priest working in a poor suburb of Quito.

Back in the islands, MacQueen raised prodigious sums of money to support this work, just as for many other humane causes.

Father Colin said: 'He was a man of great imagination and creativity who relished the unusual and extraordinary. He sometimes gave the impression that he didn't have a lot of time for religion but behind everything he did was a simple and deep faith.'

Brian Wilson

THOUGHT for the week

As I write this to you all we are experiencing a wonderful day of early spring sunshine. Oban Bay is like a mill pond, even the vessels which traverse it hardly seem to disturb the flat calm of the moment.

The scene upon the water makes me think of the story in Luke's Gospel when Jesus, exhausted from preaching, healing and meeting the people of Galilee, set out in a boat under the care of his disciples. Exhausted as he was, he soon fell asleep putting his life and wellbeing into the hands of at least four experienced Galilean fishermen.

The story then tells us that the next thing that happened was that a storm erupted, throwing the crew into confusion and causing them to shout to Jesus: 'Master, Master, we're going to drown!'

But what happened before that? What happened in the bit that we are not told about, the bit between Jesus falling asleep and being awakened by the chorus of fearful voices?

On the one hand, we will never know, but on the other there is some room for conjecture. These fishermen had earned their livelihood on the lake. They would be able to read the signs of the weather patterns and of how they could change so rapidly on a surface of water that was 600 feet below sea level.

On the one hand, they would have been schooled at their father's knees as to how they should respond to the weather and its vagaries. On the other, their own accumulated experience would have proven a sound teacher.

So how did they miss the change in the weather? They must have seen the signs before and, when they did, they would have headed for the shore as soon as possible. So why not on this occasion? Did they misread the signs?

That is possible. Yet perhaps the answer is to be found in their humanity revealed by the words: 'Master, Master, we're going to drown!' Is this the human plea of men who had over extended their abilities? Is this the over-confidence of the disciples who had been on the lake on countless occasions? After all, it was their domain.

Jesus might preach and heal and give sight to the blind and feed numerous

people – he may even turn water into wine – but as they looked at him, they may just have thought: 'No matter what he can do, the Lake of Galilee is our domain where we are in control.'

One way in which we over-extend our abilities is to take our 'eye off the job' or to over-estimate our abilities. At that point, our skill takes second place to our confidence.

In Christian terms, this translates into setting aside prayer for and about whatever lies before us because we have done the job on countless occasions and so can do it again – 'Here, let me show you.'

Sometimes people use the phrase: 'I could do it in my sleep!' Such confidence usually comes before a fall and, for the disciples, their confidence in their ability to negotiate the waters of Lake Galilee were 'the fall' that resulted in the plea: 'Master, Master, we're going to drown!'

But Jesus does not use these events in our lives as though they were throw-away moments. He does not ignore the opportunity to further the understanding of those of us who are among his followers.

It says that 'in fear and amazement, they asked one another' – they entered into discussion among themselves for after this no other day would ever be similar, let alone the same.

The disciples were not left with only the fear that they might have drowned that day.

Rather, they were also left with 'amazement' and with it the positive question that would reveal more about the man who had been asleep in their boat and who from nowhere calmed the storm – 'Who is this? He commands even the winds and the water, and they obey him.' 'Who is this?'

If you have too much 'fear' in your life and not enough 'amazement', then the season of Lent which is about to begin is a great time to undertake your voyage to discovery and to find out more about the one 'who commands even the winds and the water, and they obey him' by asking the question: 'Who is this?'

But this is best done with Jesus resting in your boat!

Rev Dr Iain C Barclay,
Appin. Linked with
Lios Mor.

OT

Fixtures

Saturday March 2

All throw-ups 2.30pm, unless stated.

Mowi Premiership

Inveraray v Oban Camanachd, Robert Baxter.
Kyles Athletic v Kingussie, David Mitchell.
Lochaber v Caberfeidh, Graham Cameron.
Lovat v Kinlochshiel, Martin MacLean.
Newtonmore v Kilmallie, Calum Girvan.

Mowi National Division

Beauly v Fort William, John Angus Gillies.
Glenurquhart v Strathglass, Archie Ritchie.
Oban Celtic v Bute, Lachie Wood.
Skye v Glasgow Mid Argyll, Deek Cameron. Throw-up, 3pm.

Mowi North Division 1

Aberdeen University v Glengarry, Brian MacKay.
Caberfeidh v Skye, John Wood.
Fort William v Newtonmore, Des McNulty.
Kingussie v Glenurquhart, Iain Kennedy.
Kinlochshiel v Lovat, Andy MacLean.

Mowi South Division 1

Aberdour v Tayforth, Ross Brown.
Ballachulish v Glasgow Mid Argyll, Neil MacDonald.
Col Glen v Taynuilt, Graham Fisher.
Lochside Rovers v Inveraray, Ewan MacDonald.

Mowi North Division 2

Inverness v Boleskine TBC.
Kilmallie v Beauly, Lucy McNulty.
Lochcarron v Lewis, Ronnie Campbell, throw-up 1.30pm.
Strathglass v Strathspey, John Matheson.

Mowi South Division 2

Glenorchy v Ardnamurchan, Euan Pearson.
Kilmory v Oban Celtic, Jim Innes, throw-up, 2pm.

WCA North Division 2

Inverness v Lovat
Glengarry v Fort William
Strathglass v Lochaber
Skye v Kinlochshiel
South Division 2
Oban Lorn v Cowal and Bute
Tayforth v Ardnamurchan

Final pre-season friendlies and start of ladies' fixtures

Saturday February 23 saw the final pre-season friendlies played and the start of the Women's Camanachd Association's shinty season.

Newtonmore 1

Oban Camanachd 3

Oban Camanachd recorded a morale-boosting 3-1 win against Newtonmore at the Eilan, as part of the home side's annual open day.

Newtonmore were without some regulars who were at teammate David MacLean's wedding.

Oban Camanachd manager Stephen Sloss was also light, travelling without Scott MacMillan, Chrissie MacMillan, Keith MacMillan and Craig MacDougall. Youngsters Ross Campbell and Lennon Campbell started on the bench.

Newtonmore went in front after two minutes, Iain Robinson bulleting a knee-high shot past keeper Cameron Sutherland after Oban's Scott McKillop slipped.

Oban Camanachd drew level on 19 minutes after Malcolm Clark launched a hit-in towards the danger area. Andrew MacCuish took the ball down and held off his marker before finding Daniel Madej, who slipped the ball home to claim his first Oban Camanachd goal since signing from Oban Celtic.

The Oban side went in front around the half hour mark when Andrew MacCuish floated the ball in from wide on the wing. Connor Howe took a touch to his left before his shot was well saved by Newtonmore keeper Calum Grover. But Daniel MacVicar slotted the rebound home to give the visitors a 2-1 lead at the break.

Oban Camanachd switched Daniel Madej into defence with Scott McKillop coming off and introduced Daniel MacCuish up front.

Oban Camanachd continued to look threatening up front and good work from Aidan MacIntyre set up a chance for Daniel MacCuish but Calum Grover made a great save with his feet.

Daniel MacCuish got a goal just before the hour. MacIntyre was again the provider, sending in a ball from the right which MacCuish crashed high into the net to make it 3-1.

Gavin Stobbart took over from Cameron Sutherland in the Oban goal.



Keith Loades, Camanachd Association president, left, with eight-time Camanachd Cup winner and chief executive officer of title sponsor Tulloch Homes George Fraser.

Tulloch Homes boost for Camanachd Cup

Tulloch Homes is to sponsor the Camanachd Cup for the next four years beginning with the 2019 final in Fort William on Saturday September 14.

The game's blue riband competition has been sponsored by Tulloch Homes for the past two seasons and the new deal will guarantee continuity and financial security.

George Fraser, chief executive of Tulloch Homes, said: 'We have successfully concluded negotiations with the Camanachd Association to sponsor the Camanachd Cup until after the 2022 final. This builds on the excellent relationship we've established with the association over the past two years. Shinty clubs are often the keystone of the small rural communities in which they are based.'

Mr Fraser, who won

eight Camanachd Cup winners' medals as a player with Newtonmore, added: 'We're delighted, through this new agreement, to be able to support the game.'

The big game in September will return to An Aird, Fort William, for the first time since Newtonmore defeated Oban Camanachd 1-0 in the 2016 final.

Keith Loades, president of the Camanachd Association, said: 'Everyone involved in the sport will benefit from this deal. The Camanachd Association is fortunate to have formed partnerships with companies with such high standards for quality and excellence.'

Derek Keir, chief executive officer of the Camanachd Association, said: 'We are deeply grateful for the continued support of Tulloch Homes.'

Lennon Campbell took over from Andrew MacCuish, who felt a hamstring tweak, meaning Camanachd's regular penalty taker was on the sidelines when they were awarded a spot-hit. Daniel MacVicar took responsibility and struck the ball well, but keeper Grover capped a fine performance as he kept the ball out with a combination of foot and stick.

Oban Camanachd assistant manager Kenny Wotherspoon said: 'Not many teams would have

end, Daniel MacMillan ran through but passed to his brother Ross MacMillan when shooting might have been a better option.

Young Ruaraidh Graham gave Inveraray the lead with a shot from distance which took an awkward bounce on the way in. But Oban Celtic equalised when Ally McKerracher took on a defender and slipped the ball past the keeper.

McKerracher's goal came against the run of play as Inveraray pinned their opponents back for a 20-minute spell at the end of the half, with Lewis MacNicol scoring twice to give them a 3-1 interval lead.

MacNicol's second strike was the goal of the match as he turned a defender before smashing the ball into the top corner of the net.

Oban Celtic introduced Michael MacKinnon at the start of the second half which allowed them to push Andy MacDonald up front.

Lewis MacNicol completed his hat-trick before Ally McKerracher got another, this time taking a pass from Andy MacDonald before slotting the ball home.

Referee Des McNulty awarded Oban Celtic a penalty on 75 minutes when Inveraray keeper Scott MacLachlan up-ended Ross MacMillan as he ran in on goal. However, the keeper made amends, making a good save to keep out Ross MacMillan's spot-hit.

The Oban side dominated the final 15 minutes and had three set-piece opportunities but couldn't find the net.

Oban Celtic assistant manager Les Kinvig said: 'It was a really good game and it was a chance for our young boys to see what they need to do to step up to the next level.'

'We had Jamie Forgive, 16, on the wing today and he

didn't look out of place. Jamie Anderson, 16, and Scott Mossman, 17, also played well and Jamie Douglas, 14, came off the bench and did well against more experienced opponents so the club is in good shape.'

Fort William 2 Kilmallie 1

The Fort William second team beat the Kilmallie seconds 2-1 at An Aird.

Jamie Duncan and Duncan Stevenson scored for Fort William, whilst Cam Ross countered for Kilmallie.

Lochside Rovers 2 Ballachulish 2

Lochside drew 2-2 with Ballachulish at Mossfield, Oban.

Lochside included Gary McKerracher and goals were exchanged between Dan MacLean, Ballachulish, and Willie Neilson, Lochside, before Ballachulish's Scott Henderson hit a powerful drive from 30 yards which took a deflection off Craig Easton and ended up in the net.

Lochside's Lewis Buchanan equalised with a minute to go with a 25-yard shot into the top corner.

Overall, it was probably a fair result in a match well-refereed by Alec MacVicar.

Young Calum Kirsop, who is maturing game by game into a fine player, turned in a man-of-the-match performance for Lochside.

Lochside manager Brian MacCallum said: 'It was a good test against a strong, well-organised Ballachulish team. We could have finished better early on in the game and made it easier on ourselves, but I'm happy with the overall performance.'

'The young lads stepped in again this week as Ross Campbell and Lennon Campbell were drafted into the first team. We also



welcomed back our captain Jordan Kerr from a motocross injury?

**Lochaber 5
Glengarry 2**

Lochaber and Glengarry met at Spean Bridge, with Michael Delaney's side winning 5-2.

Max Campbell scored twice for Lochaber, with Ryan Johnstone, Shaun Nicolson and Findlay MacDonald getting the others.

Nick Dalgety and Raymond Robertson got the Glengarry goals.

**Kilmory 1
Taynuilt 2**

Taynuilt won 2-1 at Kilmory.

Scott Dempster scored both Taynuilt goals, with James MacArthur replying for Kilmory.

Both teams gave their younger players game time.

**Lovat 5
Beauly 0**

Lovat beat Beauly 5-0 at Balgate as they marked the official opening of their impressive new pavilion.

Lorne MacKay bagged a brace, with Greg Matheson, Lewis Tawse and Graeme MacMillan getting the others.

**Lovat 2
Caberfeidh 1**

Lovat and Caberfeidh's second teams also clashed at Balgate with the hosts winning 2-1 through goals from Raymond Rennie and Cameron MacMillan.

**Strathglass 0
Glenurquhart 1**

Connor Golabek's 83rd-minute goal gave Glenurquhart a 1-0 win over Strathglass in the MacDonald Cup at Cannich. The goal came when Oliver Black's quick free hit found Connor Golabek who sent a 22-yard shot high into the net. Ally MacKintosh was named man of the match.

**Strathglass 0
Glenurquhart 1**

The Strathglass and Glenurquhart second teams batted it out for the Ali Ban Cup with a late Duncan Fraser goal giving Glenurquhart the victory. Glenurquhart's Liam Robertson was named man of the match.

**Skye Camanachd 5
Kinlochshiel 4**

Skye Camanachd followed up their pre-season win over
Continued on page 52.



Ruaraidh Graham Junior of Inveraray and Robert Gillies of Oban Celtic in action on Saturday. Photograph: Stephen Lawson.



Alasdair Reid, Oban Celtic, and Fraser Watt, Inveraray, battle it out at Ganan. Photograph: Stephen Lawson.



Lovat's Lorne Mackay and Calum Morrison, Beauly, in front of the new Lovat clubhouse. Photograph: Neil Paterson.



The teams are piped on to the field after the official opening of the new Lovat clubhouse. Photograph: Neil Paterson.

**Kilmallie 1
Fort William 0**

Kilmallie lifted the BSW Cup with a 1-0 win over Fort William at Canal Parks.

The goal came when Michael Rodger had a shot from around the penalty spot which Fort William keeper Paul MacKay saved with his feet. However, the ball bounced out to the edge of the 'D' and Bryan Mackay bundled it into the net. The Kilmallie board agreed that the gate collection be donated to the Duncan Rodger Memorial Fund which benefits local charities.

Left: Kilmallie celebrate their BSW Cup success.



SPOT THE SHINTY BALL

THIS WEEK'S JACKPOT £1200

We have removed the shinty ball from the photograph opposite. Now look carefully at the position of the players and use your skill and judgement to place a cross at the exact point where you think the centre of the ball was. You may have a maximum of 20 attempts on this coupon at a cost of £1. If you wish to have more attempts, you must enter on separate coupons.

The game starts with a jackpot of £500 and will increase by £50 per week until it is won outright. To win the jackpot, the centre of your cross must be in the exact centre of the ball. If the crosses overlap the entry will be void. If no correct entry is received, two 'near miss' prizes of £25 will be awarded. When the jackpot is won, no other prizes will be awarded that week.

Easy to enter

Cut out your completed coupon and put your entry plus £1 per 20 attempts into a sealed envelope and post it to "Spot the Shinty Ball" Competition, The Oban Times, PO Box 1, Oban, Argyll PA34 4HB by 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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Winners' names and home towns will appear in the newspaper. Employees of Wyvex Media, their immediate relatives and any person otherwise connected with the competition are ineligible to enter. We will protect your personal data. We only gather what we need for the requirements of this competition. Entry data will be deleted/destroyed within 30 days of the competition entry deadline and in a manner appropriate to GDPR regulations. Entrant's details will not be used for any other activity.



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This week's nearest the ball winners, who each receive £25 are:
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E Carmichael Islay

OT

Mixed results for Oban Squash Club

Oban Squash Club experienced a mixed bag of results over a full weekend of fixtures.

On Saturday the men's team travelled south to Dumfries but lost their friendly fixture.

There were some close matches on the day, however, with members thoroughly enjoying their first visit to the Borders town.

The club thanked Callum from the Dumfries club and Jackie Kersley for organising the event. A return match in Oban will be arranged for later in the year.

On Sunday, the women's team fared better when hosting Dunblane Squash Club in an annual challenge event.

Oban won 18-3 with exciting matches keeping the crowd of

spectators at Atlantis Leisure entertained.

Women from both teams enjoyed the competitive matches followed by some friendly team matches with the Dunblane women.

Match organiser Jackie Kersley said: 'Many thanks to the Dunblane ladies for a great day. We are looking forward to the return match later this year.'

Oban Ladies v Dunblane: Kerry Delaney, Melissa Oatts, Charmaine Love, Claire Easton, Lesley Fraser, Fiona Campbell, Ethel Johnston and Nicola Morgan.

Oban Gents v Dumfries: Michael Kelly, Grant Addison, Mark Lockart, Andy Jamieson and Gavin MacLucas.

Right: Oban Ladies' Squash Team enjoyed a convincing win over Dunblane on Saturday.



Oban men lost at Dumfries.

'Green Machine' in action this weekend

RUGBY

Oban Lorne Rugby Football Club are back in action this Saturday with a West Division 2 fixture at home to Wigtownshire RFC.

Unusually for this stage of the season, Oban have played the most amount of fixtures out of any team in the league with 17 games played. This means the team only have three fixtures remaining as they look to secure second place in the division.

Fortunately for Oban, all of their three remaining games are at home, starting with this Saturday's fixture against a side that beat the 'Green Machine' in Stranraer in the first half of the league campaign.

Oban need 10 points out of their three games to secure second place. This

fight was aided on Saturday with Uddingston's 27-12 loss to bottom of the table Cumbernauld.

Second place could secure a second available promotion spot depending on the outcome of league reconstruction that is up for discussion at next week's West Regional League meeting.

Kick-off in Oban on Saturday is at 3pm. Everyone is welcome.

Oban Lorne congratulate everyone at Lenzie RFC after they secured the West Division 2 title with a 40-7 win at Strathaven on Saturday. Lenzie have been impressive this season, winning all of their games so far.

Shinty continued from p51
Lovat by beating Kinlochshiel 5-4 in their derby encounter at Pairc nan Laoch, Portree.

Kinlochshiel took the lead on 12 minutes when John MacRae brought down Duncan 'DA' MacRae's long ball from the left. MacRae got a shot in from the edge of the 'D' and although Skye keeper Ryan Morrison got a foot to the ball, he couldn't keep it out.

Kinlochshiel introduced Keith MacRae for youngster Martin MacRae on the half hour and he played for 30 minutes as he works his way back from injury.

Skye levelled when James Pringle's shot was saved by new Kinlochshiel keeper Stuart MacRae but the former Inverness and Boleskine player could do nothing to prevent Jordan Murchison turning home the re-bound.

Skye keeper Ryan Morrison saved a John MacRae penalty which meant the sides went into the break level.

Skye went in front when James Pringle ran onto a ball from Ally MacLeod before cutting inside and finishing low into the net.

Duncan Matheson latched onto a John MacRae flick to make it 2-2 with almost an hour gone.

Skye's William MacKinnon, who had a great game throughout, held off a challenge before taking the ball to his left and firing across the keeper and into the net to put Skye back in front. Jordan Murchison scored twice more to complete his hat-trick, giving Skye a 5-2 cushion.

And they needed it as John MacRae and Duncan 'WD'

MacRae pulled goals back but it finished 5-4 to Skye.

Beaulie 1 Lochcarron 2

The young Beaulie seconds lost 2-1 against Lochcarron in their noon throw-up at Braeview Park.

Finlay MacLennan scored for the hosts, but Gregor Cushnie and Angus Urquhart gave Lochcarron victory.

Kingussie 1 Glasgow Mid Argyll 1

Kingussie and Glasgow Mid Argyll played out a hard-fought friendly at Dunbarry.

Kingussie went in front in the second minute with a goal from Ryan MacWilliam. Calum McLay equalised for Glasgow Mid Argyll late in the first half to make it 1-1 at the break.

It was an entertaining second half, but neither side could find a winner.

Strathspey 3 Newtonmore 0

Strathspey Camanachd beat Newtonmore's second team 3-0 in their pre-season friendly at Grantown Grammar School.

With some of the Newtonmore seconds having to cover absences in the first team, Strathspey took advantage.

Connor Aubrey scored for the hosts, whilst John MacKenzie, who had a fine game, netted twice.

Aberdour 3 Glasgow Mid Argyll 1

The Aberdour seconds beat Glasgow Mid Argyll seconds 3-1 at Silversands.

Aberdour, with Roddy MacColl as player/manager this term, resisted the temptation to use any first team players and Mack McKean,

Chris Bowerman and Martin Cameron sealed the win.

Angus MacInnes scored for GMA.

WCA fixtures under way

Mowi National Division Skye Camanachd 1 Badenoch 2

Match of the day was the clash between Skye Camanachd and Badenoch at Pairc nan Laoch, Portree.

These sides took last year's title race to the final day of the season before Skye took the honours.

Badenoch's Rona Stewart came closest to breaking the deadlock when she hit the post before Skye took the lead through Lorna MacRae's low shot.

Kirsty Deans made it 1-1 when she took a touch before crashing home Rona Stewart's cross from the left.

With just 90 seconds remaining, Badenoch broke forward and Zoe Reid found Kirsty Deans, who squeezed the ball low into the corner of the net to clinch a 2-1 win.

Aberdour 1 Lochaber 4

Lochaber got off to a winning start defeating Aberdour 4-1 at Silversands.

Kirsty Delaney grabbed a hat-trick with Natalie MacDonald getting the other. Katie Booth netted for the home side.

Strathspey 4 Glasgow Mid Argyll 5

A last minute goal gave Glasgow Mid Argyll a 5-4 victory over Strathspey at Grantown Grammar School.

Arabella Kennedy, Beth Rodgers, Jade Callum and

an own goal counted for Strathspey.

But Christy Doherty's hat-trick and Shannon Birnie's double gave GMA the points.

Countdown to the new season

Clubs are making their final preparations ahead of this year's competitive action.

Mowi Premiership

Kilmallie's return to shinty's top flight could hardly be more difficult as they travel to the Eilan to play champions Newtonmore. Steven MacDonald is suspended for the home side.

Oban Camanachd's opening fixture is at the Winterton against newly-promoted Inveraray.

Manager Stephen Sloss said: 'We hope to have a full squad available. The pre-season has been good but it's always difficult to properly gauge when there are so many changes during these games. We want to get off to a winning start.'

Lochaber's meeting with Caberfeidh at Spean Bridge will mark Michael Delaney's latest term as manager. Caberfeidh will include Robbie Brindle who has signed from Beaulie.

New Kyles Athletic manager Dunky Kerr leads his side out against Kingussie at Tighnabruaich. James Falconer is banned for the visitors.

Lovat and Kinlochshiel clash at Balgate.

Mowi National Division

Oban Celtic open at home to Bute and whilst the islanders had the better of their meetings last season, Celtic will be looking to get their

competitive campaign off to a winning start.

Craig MacMillan is banned for the hosts, but new boss Dougie MacIntyre hopes to have Rory Bruce and George MacMillan back.

The Fort William squad travel to Braeview Park to play Beaulie. Fort William co-managers Victor Smith and Adam Robertson will be without influential defender James Tangney for the opening part of the season.

Regional leagues

Amongst the regional fixtures, Lochside Rovers have home advantage against the Inveraray second team in Brian MacCallum's first competitive match in charge.

Taynuilt travel to Col Glen and Ballachulish host the Glasgow Mid Argyll colts.

The Oban Celtic second team will be led by Iain MacFarlane and Johnny MacNeil against Kilmory.

Ardnamurchan's return to league action starts with a trip to Glenorchy.

Glengarry are at Aberdeen, whilst the Kilmallie seconds host their Beaulie counterparts.

Oban Celtic captains

Oban Celtic have confirmed their first and second team captains ahead of the new shinty season.

Scotland U21 player Ross MacMillan has been named as first team captain, supported by vice captain Andrew MacDonald.

Robert Gillies skips the Oban Celtic seconds, whilst youngster John Douglas is vice captain.

Strachur drop out of league and cup

Strachur have informed the Camanachd Association that they have no alternative but to withdraw from league and cup competitions this season.

Chairman Colin Cameron said in a club statement: 'Following a meeting on Tuesday February 19, the club took the extremely difficult decision to withdraw from league and cup competitions because we could not guarantee enough players every week to field a team. Work will begin shortly, in partnership with the Camanachd Association, to develop structures for the club's future.'

Strachur returned to league action in 2017 after a 12-month break. They came second in South Division 2 in 2017 and topped the league at the end of last season. Strachur had already indicated they were not in a position to accept promotion to South 1 and had been included in the draft 2019 fixture list. Their absence means the league will go ahead with six teams.

Kinlochshiel enforce helmets

Kinlochshiel agreed a new club policy at their recent annual general meeting which means any player born after January 1 2002 must wear a Camanachd Association approved helmet when playing for the club.

Kinlochshiel Ladies introduced the policy when they joined Mowi North Division 2 at the start of last season.

Cup ties and friendlies

Oban S1 24 v Helensburgh 31
Oban S2 17 v Helensburgh 43

Oban Lorne/Oban High Schools' first and second year sides welcomed Helensburgh and Lomond to Glencruitten for friendly fixtures on Saturday February 23.

All four teams had great numbers on the day showing the ever-increasing popularity and growth of the game throughout the area.

The first years played out a close-fought affair on Glen 3, with Helensburgh eventually running out 31-24 winners after scoring a late try.

Oban's four tries came from Murray McDonald, Mid Argyll, (2) and Thomas Jackson (2). This fixture could have gone either way with both sides playing fantastic, free flowing rugby.

On the main pitch, the second year game was a comfortable win for the visitors who ran out 43-17 winners. Oban did have their moments in the game and hit back with a hat-trick of tries from the impressive Gregor Warnock.

Both clubs enjoyed fantastic pre-match hospitality provided by a great team of Oban parents. It is hoped Oban can return the favour and travel to Helensburgh before the end of the season.

Oban's first and second year players were due back in action yesterday (Wednesday February 27) in their next

YOUTH RUGBY

Bulls v Sharks inter-school/club fixture at Oban High School.

West Regional U18 Cup Oban Lorne U18s 10 v Cartha Queens Park RFC 36

After two recent losses in the U18 competition against West of Scotland and Whitecraigs, Oban U18s were looking to salvage some pride with the visit of Cartha Queens Park RFC to Glencruitten on Saturday.

Oban coach Murray Hamilton was left with a pre-match headache with a number of first choice players calling off due to illness or injury meaning he only had a limited squad of 15 players.

A number of players agreed to play out of position including a start for winger Robert McLaughlin at scrum half.

Oban held out in defence in the early stages of the match, but started to fall off the tackles as the first 35 wore on and found themselves 24-0 down at half-time.

Things improved in the second half as the side scored their first points of 2019 with an Angus Neil penalty and a well-taken try from Aaron McCall giving Oban a deserved 10-point haul for their efforts.

Forward Craig Cook and stand off Angus Neil were the standout performers in

the Oban side and should see themselves wearing a first team shirt next season if they continue their good form.

Oban U18s are now likely to find themselves in the semi final of the West Bowl that will be drawn this week.

National U15 Girls Club Cup Preliminary Round Oban U15 Girls 73 v East Kilbride 31

East Kilbride's U15 girls made the trip to Oban on Saturday for the second meeting between the sides this season.

East Kilbride won an evenly-matched contest 21-19 at Glencruitten last September.

Oban's girls have been impressing this season and played on Sunday after a good showing at the Glasgow Warriors Rugby Championship where they won all of their matches.

After a close start to the game, with East Kilbride leading 14-7, Oban improved their performance and beat East Kilbride 73-31 in a match that was closer than the scoreline suggests.

Oban's 11 tries came from Chloe Armour, Amber Russell, Mid Argyll, Eve Campbell, Charlie Johnston, Kate Findlay, Jordan MacIntyre (2) and Poppy McKillop (4). Rona Shearer added a further 20 points with 10 successful conversions.

This was probably the best overall performance from the Oban U15 girls who excelled across the pitch in all areas

of the game. Such was both teams intent to play fast and positively, there was not one line-out in the 60 minutes of action.

Oban have been rewarded with a tie away to Hillhead Jordanhill Girls in the first round. This tie will take place on Sunday March 10. Fellow Argyll side Islay RFC will also be in action that weekend with a visit to Biggar.

U16 West Regional Cup Oban Lorne U16s 17 v Cartha Queens Park 36

It was a double header for Oban and Cartha at the weekend with the U16s following in the U18s footsteps by playing on the Sunday.

Oban were confident ahead of the game after a good run of results and an impressive showing of 25 boys for the match day squad including players from Mull, Lochaber and Mid Argyll.

After a good start where they found themselves 7-0 ahead, Oban eased off in the contact areas of the game against a physical opposition who raced into a 19-7 lead at half time.

Oban put the pressure on early in the second half but were undone with handling errors close to the tryline. In the end, Cartha were deserved 36-17 winners in what was an entertaining game of rugby between two well-structured and skillful sides.

Oban U16s await the draw of the next round.



Ben Fulford is quick off the mark in the Oban Lorne U18s cup match against Cartha Queen's Park. Photograph: Stephen Lawson.



Aaron McCall scores a try for Oban Lorne Under 18s in their cup tie against Cartha Queen's Park. Photograph: Stephen Lawson.

First Dalriada Festival of 2019

P4/5s, P6/7s, U15 girls and U14 boys from across Argyll will be travelling to Mid Argyll's Ropework Park, Lochgilphead, this Sunday for the first Dalriada Festival of 2019.

The action kicks off with the Minis at noon, while the U14 boys and U15 girls will kick off around 1.30pm.

Rugby stars gain Warriors wisdom

Oban High School has been rubbing shoulders with some of the country's top rugby players while competing in the 2019 SP Energy Networks Warriors Championship at Scotstoun Stadium.

Five schools took part in the qualifying day last Wednesday with Oban High School up against Falkirk High School, Cumnock Academy, Maxwelltown High School and winners Lenzie Academy, who qualified for the semi-finals.

A total of 204 tries were scored during an entertaining 30 matches involving an S1 and S2 boys' team and an under-15 girls' team from each school.

Oban High School pupils once again made the long journey down the west coast to compete but their S1 captain Finlay Brown said the trip south was worth it.

'We have a really great team

YOUTH RUGBY

and I enjoy the camaraderie of playing in this competition. I also like the challenge of competing against all the other schools and trying to work out how we beat them.'

Finlay has been involved in rugby since he was in primary two.

'I really enjoy the contact and team work involved,' he added. 'I play full-back and like tackling and running from full-back like Stuart Hogg.'

'I'm also a fan of Edinburgh Rugby's Magnus Bradbury because he is from Oban and I used to know him when I was younger.'

Across their 12 matches, Oban High School's three sides scored an impressive 62 tries, winning eight and drawing one.

Scotland and Glasgow



Oban High School girls' team with wounded Warriors Huw Jones, left, and Stuart Hogg.

Warriors rugby star Huw Jones took time out from his injury rehab to watch the Oban High School players in action. He also passed on

some advice during a break from play.

Jones was joined on the sidelines by fellow Warriors DTH van der Merwe, Ryan

Wilson and Stuart Hogg. Jones said: 'Watching all the girls and boys today reminds me of my past and when I started. Seeing them having

so much fun brings back fond memories.

'My two older brothers played and my dad was a rugby coach when he was a school teacher.

'We had rugby balls lying all over the house and garden so I was playing from a very young age. I played football, cricket and other sports but when I got to 16 I decided rugby was my favourite.'

'It was the sport I was best at and I would say to the youngsters today, if they enjoy playing rugby, keep playing.'

At the beginning of the 2017/18 season, Glasgow Warriors announced a landmark three-year partnership with SP Energy Networks which saw them become the club's official community partner.

More than 1,000 girls and boys from 25 schools are competing in this year's competition.

OT

Martial arts

IAIN RODGER

editor@obantimes.co.uk



Kyokushinkai Karate

The club continues to produce fighters capable of holding their own at the highest level in national and international events.

Club coach and chief instructor for Scotland Iain Rodger said: 'We are taking on beginners until the end of March, after which the next intake will be from July until September, so now is the perfect time to start.'

For further information on the Kyokushinkai Karate club contact Iain Rodger (6th Dan) on 07584 166542 or iain@ikku.co.uk. Alternatively send a message to Caledonia Kyokushin on Facebook.

Kickboxing

Grading tests are currently taking place and details will be in the next report.

Training continues as usual on Wednesdays, five-14 years, 4.30pm until 6pm and 15 years-and-over, 6pm until 7.30pm. New members are welcome at any time. Either message the club on Facebook Senshi Do Kickboxing or email shihanwill@gmail.com for details.

Shukokai Karate

Anyone looking for more details on these clubs should contact Kenny Gray (5th Dan) on kenni.gray@btinternet.com or 07884 183905.

BJJ and MMA

Oban MMA continues to prepare students for the West of Scotland BJJ open, with extra rounds and practice for those involved.

Club members recently enjoyed a seminar with higher level MMA student of the year Cameron Donnelly. Cammy has recently returned from learning under respected coaches John Danahar and MMA 'royalty' George St Pierre. Cammy took time with everyone, showing the small details in attacking the back and finishing chokes. The well-attended seminar was well received and Cammy will be back in Oban teaching again soon.

The MMA side of the class has been concentrating on setting up take downs from punching and improving timing and reaction times. The specific drilling and controlled sparring seems to be helping everyone improve as they try to build a solid foundation of basics.

If anyone would like to try out BJJ or MMA, Oban BJJ can be found on Facebook or they can email using coogie-pots@gmail.com

Wado Kai Karate

The January grading tests were deferred until February 27 due to illness. A full update should be in the next report.

Classes continue at the usual times, Park Primary School on Mondays at 3.15pm and Dunbeg Primary School at 6.30pm.

Use the details below to receive more information about Wado Karate or if anyone would like to talk about their interest in the sport.

Park Primary School: Mike Faulkner, m.faulkner6@btinternet.com

Dunbeg Primary School: Sensei Chris Bruce (7th Dan) at crb999@btinternet.com



Oban BJJ and MMA members recently enjoyed a seminar with MMA student of the year Cameron Donnelly.



The Oban Hockey Club team which defeated Lochaber Hockey Club in a West Highland Mixed Hockey League match on Friday night in Fort William.

Busy schedule for Oban Hockey Club

The men from Oban Hockey Club travelled to Glasgow last Saturday to take on Giffnock Hockey Club.

A strong performance from Oban was necessary as only 10 players were available.

Coach David Love's tactical training on Thursday evenings was put into practise with great effect leading to goals from Jack Johnston (2), Theo Andrews (1), Zeph Petit (1) and Andy Hodge (1). The final score of 5-0 to Oban reflected the supreme effort of everyone who played.

The Oban man of the match was Jack Johnston.

On Friday, a squad from Oban headed to Lochaber High School to take on Lochaber Hockey Club in the West Highland Mixed League.

Stuart Head did a great job umpiring his first game. The second leg of the West Highland mixed hockey league got off to an exciting start last Friday night with a 1-0 win to Oban in Fort William. Having been beaten at home by Lochaber in November, Oban were keen for the re-match.

After a frantic start by both sides, Oban settled into the game and had control of the play for the majority of the first half. Two disallowed goals and numerous narrow misses as well as superb saves from the Lochaber keeper kept the game at 0-0 entering the second half.

HOCKEY

Lochaber re-started strongly, the Oban defence doing well to absorb the pressure. Wing backs Charmaine Love and Leanne Munro were instrumental with some inspired tackles and interceptions.

Oban began to take control of the game once more. A superb passage of passing play between Asher Petit, Andrew Hodge and Jack Johnston led to the ball finally being scrabbled into the back of the net by captain, Julie McGlynn. The game ended 1-0 to Oban. Woman of the match was Charlie Johnston for her tireless tackling on the left wing. The next game will be Oban v Skye at Oban High School on Sunday April 28.

Saturday saw the Oban men in Helensburgh taking on the Western Wildcats. An early goal by Andy Hodge put Oban in the lead. Further shots on goal from Stuart Head and Jack Anderson were disallowed. The Wildcats rallied and Oban were unable to add to the tally leaving the final score 1-0 to Oban.

Man of the match for Oban was George Gauley, who showed great determination and ball work in mid-field. Thanks to Charmaine Love for refereeing the game.

Next weekend the men from Oban travel to Helensburgh to take on the Helensburgh Men's 2 Team.

Carpet fitt

Inverclyde AFC	0
Oban Saints AFC	2
SAFL Premier Division	

A goal apiece from carpet fitters Donald Campbell and Lewis Cameron floored old rivals Inverclyde at Battery Park, Greenock, last Saturday, February 23.

Donald Campbell's strike just before the interval was added to by top goal scorer Cameron with 15 minutes remaining giving Saints a hard-fought victory, their first in Greenock for more than five years.

The match preparations of Saints management duo of Donald Campbell and Willie Gemmell were dealt a blow on the eve of the game when goalkeeper Graham Douglas was forced to withdraw from the squad with a knee injury. With back-up keepers Ben Pollock and Thomas McCulloch also unavailable an SOS call was made to veteran net minder David Dunlop.

The legendary keeper, who made his debut as a teenager, was happy to oblige, stretching his Saints career to an incredible 32 years.

Saints also had captain Dene Cassells, Dougal Graham, Jamie Graham, Craig MacEwan and Kerr Newbigging missing, which meant another opportunity for some of the club's promising youngsters to join the squad.

Saints lined up with David Dunlop between the sticks behind a back four of Ruaridh Horne, Steven MacLeod, Willie Gemmell and captain for the day Scott Maitland. Matthew Kelly and Daniel Croarkin, back from injury, occupied the holding midfield roles with a three of David Beaton, Lewis Cameron and Fraser MacFarlane supporting central striker Donald Campbell. Matt Rippon and James Ford provided experience on the bench, alongside teenagers Kenneth

Black, Aaron McKay and new signing Cameron Hill.

Weather conditions were tricky, with heavy rain driving across the park.

Saints started brightly with Lewis Cameron winning a corner kick on the right inside the first minute. Fraser MacFarlane's short corner to Matthew Kelly was swung in towards the back post where Donald Campbell drew the first save of the game from Inverclyde keeper Robbie Lavery.

David Beaton's pace took him away from Ross McWilliams on the Saints left after 10 minutes, with only the quick reactions of Lavery denying the supporting Matthew Kelly.

A straight ball over the top from the impressive Jamie Campbell gave the Saints defence their first test and sent Jonathan McGilp racing through on goal, however, keeper David Dunlop parried away McGilp's effort from 22 yards.

Inverclyde right back Ross McWilliams made a vital sliding interception to deny Fraser MacFarlane in the 19th minute with the Saints wide man poised to pull the trigger on the end of a perfectly weighted Donald Campbell through ball. From the resulting corner kick, Greg Wilson's clearing header fell to Matthew Kelly on the edge of the box but he sent his effort looping over the crossbar from 20 yards.

The home side received an early setback when Craig Ellis limped off injured after 20 minutes, to be replaced by Nick Jack.

David Dunlop's reactions were still sharp enough to get down to his right hand post and clutch a good 25-yard effort from Inverclyde midfielder Michael McKittrick.

In a good spell for the Greenock men, Martyn Paton lifted a clever ball from the left into the box looking for Neil McCole but Scott Maitland did well to hook it away with

Lochnell Football Club girls' sessions

A weekly girls' session has been set up by Lochnell Football Club.

The sessions take place every Wednesday at Lora View sports pitch, North Connel from 6pm to 7pm.

Sessions are open to girls of all standards and experience from primary five up to and including first year, living in Oban and Lorn.

Younger girls can join in

the mixed sessions also taking place each Wednesday.

Lochnell Football Club also arranges regular participation in games and festivals with other girls' teams in Argyll.

Parents wishing further information or to enrol their child should contact the club by phone on 07867 318583 or message Lochnell Football Club's Facebook page.



The Lochnell girls' team who played in a recent festival in Lochgilphead.

ers floor Inverclyde



David Dunlop.



Aaron McKay and Nathan Connelly.



Donald Campbell and Jonathan McGilp.



Good weather for a flying a kite at Battery Park, Greenock.



A Donald Campbell shot is cleared off the line. Report and photographs: Derek Black.

the Inverclyde striker ready to pounce.

Donald Campbell's link-up play once again opened up the home defence in the 35th minute, this time sending Ruaridh Horne through. The young fullback was forced wide by the combined efforts of Fraser Gunn and Martyn Paton and saw his low cross intended for David Beaton cut out at his near post by Robbie Laverty.

The wind gave Laverty an anxious moment in the 38th minute when his clawing effort to deal with a wind assisted Scott Maitland cross from the left dropped inches wide of his left hand post, bouncing behind for a corner.

Another overlapping run and cross from Ruaridh Horne was cleared by central defender Fraser Gunn who fell awkwardly in the process requiring treatment from the Inverclyde physio before he could continue.

A delightful turn and flick from Daniel Croarkin paved the way for Saints' opening goal on the stroke of half-time. Croarkin's flick on the turn opened up space on the right for Ruaridh Horne to run into and send a cross to the far post for Fraser MacFarlane. The scorer of the previous week's opener against Neilston this time turned provider and laid the ball back into the path of Donald Campbell whose net bound strike took a deflection off the unfortunate Fraser Gunn lifting the ball over the dive of Robbie Laverty and into the net.

The hosts received their second injury blow of the afternoon three minutes into the second half when Gunn's painful ankle injury finally proved too much to bear and he was replaced by Tom McKittrick.

The change of ends saw a change in the balance of play as the hard-working hosts took a grip of the midfield.

The woodwork came to Saints' rescue in the 56th minute when Martyn Paton peeled off at the back post to take down a right wing cross and send a half volley crashing off the underside of the crossbar which David Dunlop was happy to see Willie Gemmell head behind on the rebound.

A flurry of changes on the hour mark saw Matt Rippon and Cameron Hill replace Daniel Croarkin and David Beaton, with James Buchanan and Stewart Morrison also entering the fray for the hosts.

Making his first appearance for five months, Matt Rippon put in a good half hour shift in the middle of the park.

Debutant Cameron Hill made a nuisance of himself on the right wing and fired a low cross towards the six-yard line in the 68th minute looking for Matthew Kelly.

Tom McKittrick intercepted Hill's cross diverting the ball into the path of Donald Campbell who had his shot from 15 yards blocked on the line thanks to the combined efforts of Greg Wilson and Michael McKittrick.

Two minutes later, Fraser MacFarlane flashed a danger-

ous cross from the left into the six-yard box but Robbie Laverty got his fingertips to it.

Saints doubled their advantage in the 75th minute with a sweeping move from inside their own penalty area. Steven MacLeod headed clear an Inverclyde corner kick from the right. Cameron Hill carried the ball to the half-way line and sent a diagonal ball to Matthew Kelly on the left. Kelly linked up well with Fraser MacFarlane whose low cross to the near post was thumped home by Lewis Cameron for his 19th goal of the season.

Ruaridh Horne's troublesome hamstring forced him off before play could re-start. He was replaced by James Ford.

Ford was joined five minutes later by young Aaron McKay who took over the wide left berth vacated by Fraser MacFarlane.

Referee John McNab, who handled proceedings well, issued the only caution of the afternoon to Inverclyde's Nathan Connelly for a late, heavy challenge on James Ford in the 82nd minute.

With five minutes remaining, David Dunlop rolled back the years with an excellent finger tip save to turn a Jamie Campbell effort round his left hand post and preserve his clean sheet.

Saints are on the road again this Saturday with a trip to the Donald Dewar Centre in Drumchapel to face reigning Scottish Amateur Football League Premier Division Champions Goldenhill.

Saints U14s pull out all stops in potential league decider

Oban Saints under-14s faced league leaders Celtic Juniors last Sunday in a potential title decider in Oban.

The young Saints started well, with Kyle Cooper getting in a quick goal for Oban which helped steady the team's nerves.

However, Celtic Juniors showed why they are top of the league, playing solid football which soon saw the Saints 4-1 down.

Just before half time, Saints were awarded a penalty, with Ross Mackay

stepping up and placing a perfect penalty into the bottom right-hand corner, bringing the score to 4-2.

After a revitalising half-time talk from Colin Campbell and Robert Gemmell, a different team emerged in the second half.

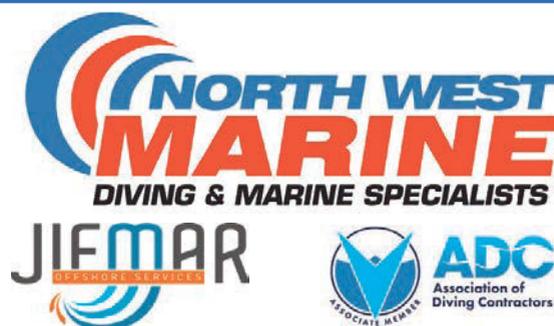
Oban Saints clawed their way back into the match and with a great team performance and some excellent skill from Kyle Cooper the score was all square at 4-4.

Both teams were now fighting tooth

and nail for the points and with only seven minutes left Cooper broke the deadlock with an excellent strike to make it 5-4 to Oban.

The Glasgow youngsters were obviously disappointed and let their heads dip a bit, allowing Saints to finish the game with a couple of late goals – the last a fine finish by Andrew Nichol making the final score 7-4 to Oban.

It was a fantastic display by both teams showing why they are both league title contenders.



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WEATHER

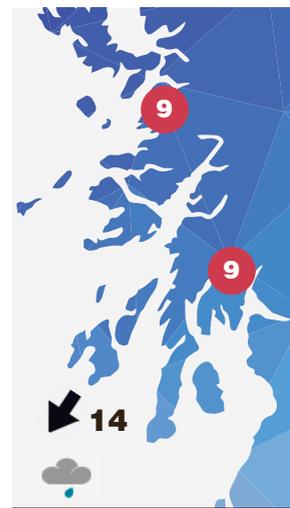
Thursday
Light showers and a moderate breeze
Temperatures 11°C to 8°C.

Friday
Light showers and a moderate breeze
Temperatures 9°C to 7°C.

Weekend Outlook

Saturday
Light showers and a moderate breeze

Sunday
Light showers and a moderate breeze
Temperatures 8°C to 5°C.



FRIDAY

TIDAL INFORMATION

Tide tables for Oban during the week from **Thursday February 28, 2019** are listed below with differences for major ports listed on the right. All times are GMT (add one hour BST)

	00.24	2.8	06.31	1.7
Thur	13.40	2.7	19.37	1.8
Fri	02.07	2.8	08.06	1.8
	16.06	2.8	21.14	1.7
Sat	03.17	3.0	09.43	1.7
	16.38	3.0	22.09	1.5
Sun	04.02	3.3	10.34	1.5
	16.36	3.2	22.49	1.3
Mon	04.39	3.5	11.12	1.3
	17.01	3.4	23.24	1.1
Tues	05.15	3.7	11.44	1.2
	17.32	3.6	23.56	1.0
Wed	05.50	3.8	12.14	1.0
	18.04	3.8	***	**

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

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INSIDE THIS WEEK:
Carpet fitters
floor Inverclyde

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AND TIDES - SEE PAGE 55

Young athletes have a field day at Atlantis

by Fiona Scott
fscott@obantimes.co.uk



Track and field were the focus at Atlantis Leisure on Sunday when the Oban area Sports Hall Athletics competition went under starters orders.

Promoted by Mid Argyll Athletic Club, this event was the third local area competition to be held this winter with the top five in each section qualifying for a regional finals day next month.

After four hours of competition it was Rockfield and St Columba's primary schools that provided the overall winners in the girls' contests and in the boys' events the champions came from Rockfield, Park and Lochnell.

There were no new Argyll age records, but the boys under nine champion Donald Campbell from Rockfield came close in the speed bounce recording 74 jumps in 30 seconds, equalling a record set in 2009.

Donald won five out of the seven events impressing with 27.6 seconds in the two-lap race and 60.6 seconds in the four-lap.

Donald also won the high jump and standing triple jump reaching out to 4.96 metres.

Duncan Hunt from Lochnell Primary School won the standing long jump and finished second on overall points ahead of Joe Hill from Park in third. In the same age group, Innes McKinney from Rockfield won the javelin.

Fergus Hunt from Lochnell was the under seven champion ahead of Rhuraidh Johnstone from Park and Orrim Cumming from Taynuilt. Fergus won the two-lap and four-lap races as well as the javelin, long jump and speed bounce.

James Muir from Rockfield dominated in the under 11 contest winning five events outright and sharing first place in the speed bounce with another Rockfield boy Rufus Hughes.

James won the two-lap race in 25.3 and the four-lap in 57.9 and impressed with his winning marks in the high jump clearing 1.15 metres, triple jump with 5.14 metres and especially in the javelin throwing 17.25 metres.

In the same age group, Daniel Cullen from Rockfield was runner-up just ahead of two other boys from Rockfield primary Rufus Hughes and Marco MacGregor.

Jacques Coates from Park won the under 13 contest ahead of Rhys Millar from Rockfield. Jacques won the two-lap, four-lap, speed bounce and the long and triple jumps, while Rhys won the high jump and shot putt.

Finlay MacLean was the under 15 winner ahead of Gregor Warnock. The boys were evenly matched with Finlay having the advantage by two points at the end of the day after wins in four of the seven events.

There was a disappointing lack of girls in the older age groups but lots of talent on



Trophy and medal winners from the age seven to 15-year-old events.

show in the primary school competitions.

In the under seven contest, Jamie MacIntyre from Rockfield won five out of the six events excelling in the running events as well as winning the long and triple jumps and javelin throw. Runner-up Eilidh Shaw, also Rockfield, won the speed bounce.

Isla Muir from Rockfield

was the under nine champion but had to work hard to finish ahead of Lexie Harris from Park. Isla impressed in winning both running events, the high jump and speed bounce.

Lexie won the standing long and triple jumps and in the long jump cleared 1.72 metres, only four cms short of the Argyll age record set in 2005. In the same age group Gracie Hill from Rockfield

won the javelin. Mia Mason from St Columba's was the under 11 champion ahead of Mabel Rodwell from Lochnell. Both girls excelled in a close contest with Mia winning the two-lap race in 26.1 seconds followed by wins in the high jump, long jump, speed bounce and javelin.

Mabel was highly placed in all the events and won the four-lap race in 55.7 seconds and also impressed with a 5.24 metre leap to win the standing triple jump.

The Argyll Final will be held at Atlantis Leisure on Sunday March 24 starting at noon with registration between 11am and noon.

The final will bring together the best young athletes from the competitions at Lochgilphead, Tobermory and Campbeltown plus the qualifiers from last Sunday at Oban.

See www.obantimes.co.uk for more photographs.



Trophy and medal winners in the Under 7s categories.

I guess that's why they call it 'Les Bleus'

Oban rugby internationals Magnus Bradbury and Abi Evans did not get much of a chance to shine last Saturday as the French ladies' and men's teams ran roughshod over their Scots visitors.

Playing at the Stade de France on Saturday, Magnus contributed greatly to a massive defensive effort from the injury ravaged Scottish side who ultimately fell to a 27-10 defeat.

France ran in four tries to take their first win of this year's Six Nations Championship, hoisting them up to fourth place and leaving the Scots in fifth going into the fourth round when they face new leaders Wales, who beat England last weekend, a week on Saturday.

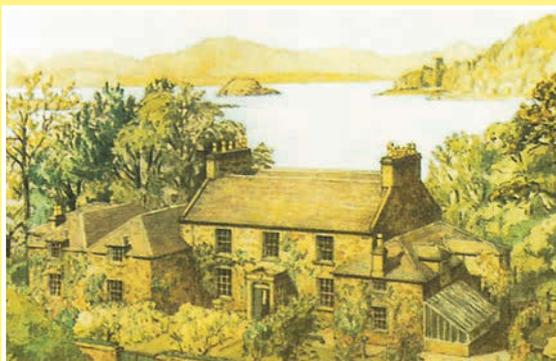
Having only just returned to the professional ranks, following a lengthy spell of injury, the 23-year-old back row man is likely to feature in that game also.

Abi didn't fare much better in Lille when the Scotland Ladies came out on the wrong end of a 41-10 scoreline in their third-round Six Nations clash.

The 22-year-old winger came off the bench for the final 10 minutes of the game.



Abi Evans in action.



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Industry warns against 'dangerous' tourist tax

by Neill Bo Finlayson
nfinlayson@obantimes.co.uk

The head of Lochaber Chamber of Commerce has warned there is 'little appetite' for a tourist tax in the area ahead of a full-scale consultation on the proposal.

With Highland Council facing a £60 million budget gap over the next three years, the establishment of a so-called transient visitor levy is now 'a priority' and a region-wide consultation will be conducted by the council over the next year on whether it is achievable. Early estimations show that such a levy could raise between £5m to £10m a year.

However, CEO of Lochaber Chamber of Commerce Frazer Coupland said there is little support for it in the industry.

'It was apparent at a recent consultation in Inverness, hosted by Kate Forbes MSP, that there was little appetite from the industry representation in the Highlands for the introduction of the tax,' he said. 'For now, Lochaber Chamber of Commerce will

be led by the Scottish Tourism Alliance's (STA) position, with local businesses either being against the idea or needing assurances in relation to collection and distribution of the tax.'

Marc Crothall, CEO of the STA, said the visitor levy is a 'dangerous idea' and could lead to 'spiralling costs and erosion of profit'.

Impact

He explained that rural areas dependent on tourism are already facing 'significant challenges', due to rising business rates and a tight employment market, and a tourist tax could have a real impact on not just profits but also visitor numbers.

Although there are no clear details of what the levy may comprise, the idea of a £1 per night tourist bed tax has previously been mooted by councillors.

Chairman of the Fort William Accommodation Marketing Group (FWAMG) John Jarvis-Jones said: 'I fear that if it is implemented as currently being suggested, it would become a tax on B&Bs,

guest houses and hotels rather than a mechanism to fairly raise any significant revenue from the many visitors to the Highlands each year.'

He continued: 'A tax which applies only to serviced accommodation would almost certainly mean more camper vans and caravans on our already poorly maintained roads and a continuing drain on our other infrastructure. Far from solving our existing problems, it is far more likely to exacerbate them.'

Andy McKenna, founder of Visit Fort William, felt that, rather than a new tax, more could be done to recoup funds through additional car parking charges at tourist spots.

'It's absolutely ridiculous that the car park at the Commando monument is completely free, despite having more than 120,000 visits a year, according to Spean Bridge Community Council,' he said.

'Millions of people from all around the world should not be able to access our most popular scenic and historical places free of charge.'

High honour for outdoors stalwart



Former teacher Noel Williams was presented with the prestigious Scottish Award for Excellence in Mountain Culture by Kerry MacDonal of sponsor Liberty British Aluminium. For more on this year's Mountain Festival, turn to pages two and three.



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Liberty 'monitoring' UK car industry after Honda closure

Liberty bosses will be monitoring developments in the auto industry closely after Honda announced it will be shutting down a major part of its UK operations.

The country's car manufacturing industry was dealt a huge blow earlier this month with the announcement that Honda will shut down its 3,500-employee manufacturing plant in Swindon with thousands more jobs, suppliers and other businesses said to be at risk.

Honda is the second Japanese car company to be pulling their operations from the UK, following Nissan's decision to scrap plans to build its new X-Trail vehicle in Sunderland. The news sparked fears that the move could herald an exodus of other foreign car manufacturers from UK shores and ultimately put pressure on Liberty's plans to build a flagship £120mil-



lion alloy wheels factory in Fort William.

A spokesman for the company told the Lochaber Times this week: 'Liberty is continuing to plan and prepare for the building of the wheels factory at Fort William but naturally our plans are shaped by customer demand and we are monitoring developments in the UK automotive industry closely because that will influence what this investment project will ultimately look like.'

Dr Douglas Dawson, chief executive of Liberty Industries Group, who

heads Liberty's extensive network of factories making key components for the UK and international automotive industry, previously gave assurances that the Fort William plant was 'still on course' despite industry fears.

The multi-million pound plant, which will take its liquid metal directly from the adjacent Liberty British Aluminium smelter, is expected to create around 400 skilled jobs. Some £2m has already been spent on preparatory work, including the creation of 'world class' office facilities.

Organisers' de 'inspiring' mo

by Neill Bo Finlayson
nfinlayson@obantimes.co.uk

Fort William Mountain Festival once again proved a hit with the Lochaber public last week as audiences and huge crowds packed in to enjoy an array of films, events and workshops.

As the festival drew to a close on Sunday night, organisers hailed the success of this year's five-day extravaganza, with almost every event 'bursting at the seams'.

Rod Pashley, chairman of The Highland Mountain Culture Association, which runs the Fort William Mountain Festival, was pleased to see so many sell-out events at what he described as an 'inspirational and extremely successful' festival.

He said: 'Five nights of world-class films, enthralling presentations, lively debates, stunning imagery, jaw dropping journeys, truly inspirational speakers, and an awesome "after-party".'

'Several evenings sold out well in advance of the festival taking place, the theatres were bursting at the seams throughout the event; the whole place was buzzing. This year we introduced exciting and inspirational new events.'



Rob Cochrane, a volunteer ranger, Cub, Scout and Duke of Edinburgh leader from Inverloch, was presented with the prestigious Scottish Youth Award for Excellence in Mountain Culture by Tom Gilchrist on Saturday night.

The opening night of the festival saw a big crowd gather in the centre of Fort William to watch the procession of torchlight runners descend the hills opposite the town and then cross Loch Linnhe, finishing in the High Street with a sensational fire show in Cameron Square.

The first Sunday Matinee was another highlight for the organising team as a large group of all ages gathered at the Nevis Centre for some 'fantastically inspiring family adventure films'.

There was also the opportunity to remember a special member of the Lochaber outdoor community, Vicky Dodman, and raise funds for

The Crocus Group. Saturday evening saw Noel Williams and Rob Cochrane presented with their prestigious awards for excellence in mountain culture in front of a bumper crowd.

Fourteen-year-old Ruaraidh Johnson was also presented with the youth photography award.

Mr Pashley continued: 'A huge thank you to all our fabulous speakers, our generous and supportive sponsors, the hard-working crew and volunteers and our ever-enthusiastic audience.'

'The feedback has been terrific and next year's dates are already in the diary... so keep February 19-23, 2020 free!'

Ballachulish man fined £800 for causing woman fear and alarm

A Ballachulish man has been fined £800 when he appeared at Fort William Sheriff Court for sentencing this week, after admitting to causing a woman fear or alarm over a period of almost four months.

Lewis Bryson, 19, pleaded guilty to an amended charge on January 30, of engaging in conduct which caused the woman - who cannot be named for legal reasons - to suffer fear or alarm between January and April in 2018.

Bryson reappeared at Fort William Sheriff Court on Tuesday (February 26) for sentencing, where Sheriff Eilidh MacDonald ordered him to pay a £800 fine.

Before Bryson pleaded guilty to the amended charge, the victim had told the court that Bryson repeatedly contacted her through text messages

and social media messaging services, threatening to harm himself if she did not meet with him.

As result of these messages, the victim said she felt 'trapped' and she was 'genuinely afraid he was going to kill himself'. She also told the court that Bryson knew the threats were having an affect on her.

After the victim reported these incidents and messages to Fort William police in April 2018, she said she blocked Bryson's phone number and blocked him on all of her personal social media accounts. Bryson continued to contact the victim by mobile phone, using a 'no caller ID' phone number and also left a voice-mail asking her to speak with him.

The victim told the court: 'I didn't feel safe with him at the

time. I didn't know what he was going to do. It was ruining my mental health and I was on anti-depressants.'

In mitigation, at sentencing on Tuesday, defence solicitor Hamish Melrose said that Bryson and the victim had a strong relationship but that it was 'not entirely straightforward'.

He also said that the situation had moved on 'fairly drastically' since the events in the case and there was now no issue between the two parties, adding: 'Hopefully everybody can put this matter behind them, including the complainer, and I think they have, in fact, all moved on already.'

Bryson also appeared at court on Tuesday on a separate charge of breach of bail, however, he was admonished by Sheriff MacDonald.

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Delight at 2019 Mountain festival



Ruaraidh Johnson receives his trophy from Alex Gillespie and Hannah Francis.



Cameron Square was lit up by pyrotechnics on the launch night of this year's festival.



FlameOz's fiery performance at Cameron Square helped welcome home the runners who took part in the torchlight hillside procession to open this year's festival.



Fort Royal legion branch celebrates 65th anniversary



Members of Fort William and District Branch of Royal British Legion Scotland last weekend held their 65th anniversary AGM in the Ben Nevis Hotel. Branch chairman Hugh MacInnes, centre, and branch president Lt Col Kevin Lane MBE, left of the chairman, were joined by a large group to decide the make up of the next committee, assign responsibilities and set an agenda of events in their special anniversary year. Photograph: Iain Ferguson, alba.photos.

£150,000 extra for repairs to Lochaber roads network

Lochaber roads are set to benefit from an injection of almost £150,000.

The investment of an additional £1.5million for roads maintenance was approved for Highland Council's revenue budget with the additional funds earmarked to help boost the annual budget for pothole repairs, clearing culverts, and bridge maintenance.

The Highland Council has the longest road network in the UK with more than 4,000 miles of roads and 1,400 bridges and the funding will be shared out across the region according to the existing roads maintenance allocation model. Each area committee will be able to decide how its share is allocated locally, based on local road condition surveys.

The chairman of the environment, development and infrastructure committee, Caol and Mallaig councillor Allan Henderson, said: 'We



Extra money is being earmarked to deal with potholes.

have the most extensive network of roads in the UK and added to this, we are faced with some of the most severe weather conditions in the Highlands.

'The freeze-thaw conditions in particular cause immense damage to road surfaces and this is very evident in the past few weeks.

'Local roads are vital to connecting our communities and keeping them sustainable.

'Road conditions are a

high priority for residents and this was very clear in our recent engagement with communities and representatives. The additional resource will, I hope, make a noticeable difference and can be allocated to the roads with the most urgent need of repairs, right across the Highlands.'

The area allocations have been calculated using the historic distribution formula which uses weighted road mileage and population.

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Family hopes remains of war hero piper will be found

by Mark Entwistle
mentwistle@obantimes.co.uk

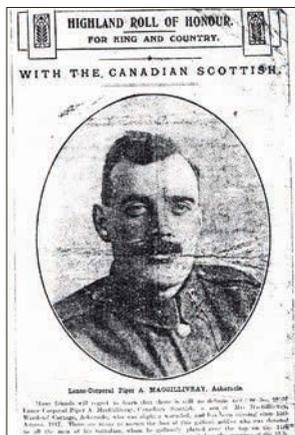
Just below Acharacle Church is a gateway and cemented into it is a tablet bearing the names of local men who gave their lives during the First World War.

One of the names is that of L/Cpl Piper Alexander MacGillivray who was lost during the famous battle of Vimy Ridge in August 1917.

L/Cpl MacGillivray was one of four sons of John and Flora MacGillivray, of Woodend Cottage, Acharacle, who served during the war.

The memorial tablet is located just a few yards from the croft in Acharacle where his family live to this day, and which he left as a young man to seek a new life in Canada.

His name is inscribed on the Vimy Memorial at Pas de



Calais in France, along with those of more than 11,000 other Canadian soldiers posted as missing presumed dead.

At the time of his death, he was serving with the 16th battalion (Canadian Scottish), a unit of the Canadian Expeditionary Force which



took part in many of the major engagements of the Great War, winning four Victoria Crosses, nine Distinguished

Service Orders, 40 Military Crosses, 30 Distinguished Conduct Medals and 204 Military Medals.

The bravery awards came at great cost, however, with the battalion suffering 5,491 casualties of which 1,412 were fatal.

L/Cpl MacGillivray was a piper and the official battalion history quotes his comrades reporting how he had played them over the top.

It was during a skirmish when he was seen to deal with one German attacker in a hand-to-hand fight. He returned to pick up his pipes and was never seen again.

But like many believed to have been killed by exploding shellfire, L/Cpl Piper

Alexander MacGillivray's body was never found and he was posthumously awarded a Military Medal for his bravery.

However, for his descendants, the long wait for confirmation of what actually happened could soon be at an end.

Every year, more and more remains of the 28,000 Canadians who went missing or were left with no known grave are discovered.

In the last decade, the remains of a number of unidentified Canadian soldiers have been unearthed in the fields and woods around Vimy.

Casualty identification experts at the Department of National Defense of

L/Cpl MacGillivray's great nephew, Alistair MacGillivray, left, points to his great uncle's name on the war memorial; and far left, L/Cpl Piper Alexander MacGillivray, who was lost during the famous battle of Vimy Ridge in 1917.

Canada are constantly working to put names to the dead soldiers.

L/Cpl MacGillivray was one of a few likely candidates, given his anthropological profile, including height and age at death, who might be among four sets of remains uncovered in 2011.

DNA was contributed by a great nephew in Dingwall, but in 2016 came the news that no match had been established for L/Cpl MacGillivray.

However, L/Cpl's nephew Alistair MacGillivray, of Woodend Croft, says his uncle's descendants are still hopeful his remains will be found and identified.

'They are still working on it and more and more remains of Canadian soldiers are found every year,' he said.

'It might be the case they can't always establish an identity for every single set of remains found and we might just have to accept that. But it would mean a lot for the family.'

'So we'll keep hoping.'





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Breakdown cancellations – call for ferry plan review

Almost 800 CalMac sailings were cancelled last year because of mechanical breakdowns, figures have revealed.

Scottish Greens transport spokesperson and Highlands and Islands MSP John Finnie has now called on the Scottish Government to urgently review its ferries plan in light of the new figures.

According to the figures obtained from CalMac by Mr Finnie, 780 services were cancelled for technical reasons in 2018, 150 more than in 2017.

Mr Finnie said: 'The Scottish Government has a duty to provide good quality ferry services to support rural and island communities.'

'CalMac runs lifeline

services and contributes significantly to local economies. However, my constituents need to have confidence that, outwith extreme weather events, services will run as planned.'

He added: 'The transport secretary must urgently review the ferries plan to ensure CalMac has a fleet that is fit for purpose and can be relied upon.'

'As vessels get older, they require to spend more time in dry dock for repair. Steps must be taken to ensure the long-term sustainability of Scotland's ferry services.'

A CalMac spokesman said: 'Over the past months we have introduced new in-ser-

vice maintenance teams, preventative maintenance regimes, and targeted investment to help keep vessels in good running order.'

'This, along with other improvements in planned maintenance and procurement, made possible partly through the Scottish Government's £3.5 million Resilience Fund, will improve the technical resilience of the fleet.'

'We acknowledge that losing 780 sailings due to technical breakdown is too many and causes inconvenience to passengers but in the context of nearly 145,000 timetabled departures this represents around one cancelled in every 200 sailings.'

Glen Etive hydro plans – three subject to review

by Neill Bo Finlayson
nfinlayson@obantimes.co.uk

Seven applications for hydro schemes in Glen Etive were granted planning permission by Highland councillors last Wednesday (February 20).

However, three of the schemes – those situated within the designated Wild Land Area in Glen Etive – will be subject to a full council review after a sufficient number of members signed Lochaber councillor Andrew Baxter's motion for a notice of amendment.

This means another site visit and debate has been planned in relation to these three applications.

The controversial proposals were given the green light by councillors at last week's south planning applications committee, despite vociferous objections from walkers, canoeists and Scottish Mountaineering who fear the hydro schemes would have a negative visual and environmental impact on the iconic glen.

Developer William Dickins welcomed Highland

Council's decision to approve the schemes and said he hoped construction would begin by April. He told the Lochaber Times: 'It's a good decision for the Glen Etive community, a good decision for Scottish renewable power policy and a good decision for us. So, we are very happy and look forward to working with everyone on the project.'

Glen Etive is currently designated as a National Scenic Area and three of the seven schemes fall within a protected Wild Land Area in the glen. This prompted



A permanent resident of Glen Etive joined councillors during their site visit.

Photograph: Iain Ferguson.

councillor Baxter to successfully request for a review of these applications at a future full Highland Council meeting. Mr Baxter said that Wild Land Area in Glen Etive should be 'sacrosanct'.

He said: 'I am almost speechless that SNH (Scottish Natural Heritage), which is the progenitor of the Wild Land Areas that we have designated in Scotland, yet again feel unable to comment in its entirety on the impact.

'It is useless implementing a policy of Wild Land Area if then no recognition is taken in terms of the planning process – and that saddens me enormously.'

Lochaber councillor Ben Thompson, who voted in favour of all seven applications, spoke about the 'positive economic impact' of hydro power to rural communities and estate management.

'The effect of micro hydro on West Highland estates

cannot be understated. Many, probably all, West Highland estates have been unprofitable for decades, if not centuries.

'Hydro is transformational for West Highland estates. It makes them profitable for the first time probably since 1745. That gives the estates the wherewithal to do important conservation work, looking after buildings, improving buildings, maintaining paths and, vitally, undertaking deer culls.'

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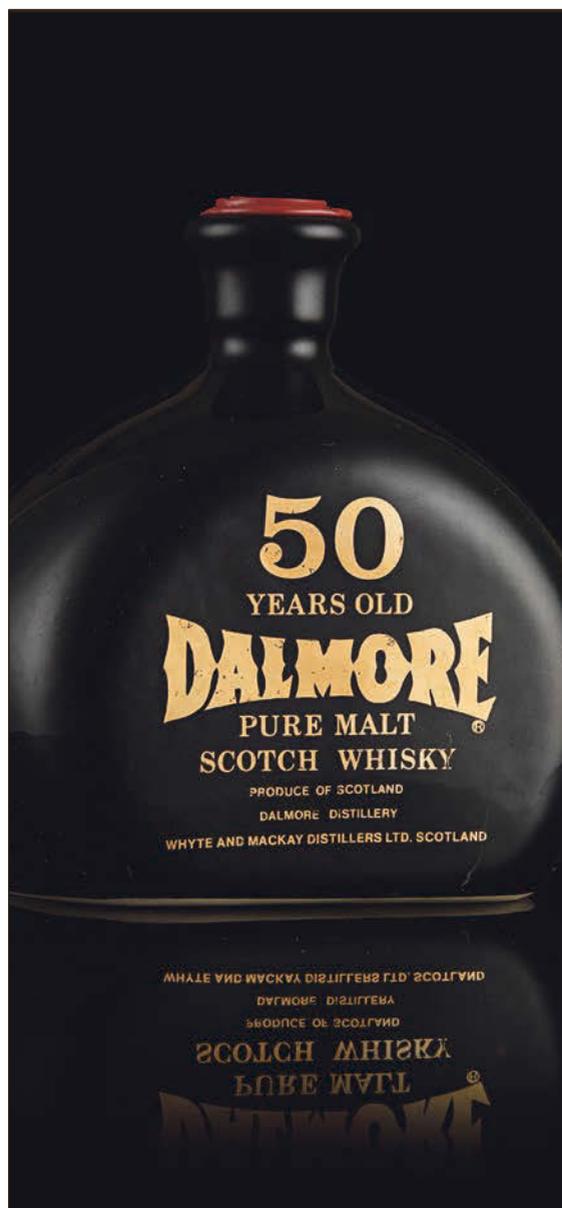
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Excitement mounts for 45th festival

by Neill Bo Finlayson
nfinlayson@obantimes.co.uk

With the 45th annual Lochaber Music Festival getting under way next month, the event's new organiser is looking forward to another year of musical magic.

The annual festival, which takes place from Friday March 15 to Thursday March 21, will be steered by new chairwoman Catherine Cameron, who is proud to showcase the array of talent on offer in the area.

The festival has a huge range of competitions including vocal, instrumental, traditional, speech, country dancing and ensemble competitions, as well as the Rotary-sponsored Lochaber Young Musician of the Year.

This year's esteemed adjudicators, who will be travelling from all over the UK, giving competitors praise and constructive criticism to help



Catherine Cameron.

them in their future performances, are Joan Foster, John Grant, Margaret Tomlinson, Donald John MacIntyre, Gillian Frame and Linda Gaul.

The organisers are delighted that Peter Rose and Robin Versteeg return as the official accompanists, providing professional piano support to those who require it.

As the new festival chairwoman, music teacher

Catherine is looking forward to her first year in charge.

She said: 'Taking part in the music festival is an extremely positive experience for school children and adults alike.'

'We have so much musical talent in this culturally-rich area, with instrumental tuition and weekly class music lessons still part of everyday life for many children; accessibility to excellent private tuition, including the Lochaber Music School which serves a phenomenal number of families, teaching music from babies to their parents; and the existence of many community music, dance and drama clubs.'

'The performances at our festival provide a platform to showcase this talent, to encourage children to "keep playing" into adulthood and to build their confidence.'

She added: 'The programme for this event will be published shortly - watch

this space - and we would encourage you to come along and enjoy it.'

The traditional classes will take place on the Friday and Saturday of the festival and all other classes from Monday to Wednesday.

Should anyone decide to support the young musician competitions, they will happen on the evening of Tuesday March 19, and the final concert, featuring many highlights of the festival, as well as the prize-giving, will take place on the evening of Thursday March 21.

If anyone requires any further details about Lochaber Music Festival, contact Catherine Cameron at chairperson@lochabermusicfestival.co.uk.

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Snow sports bosses have 'fingers crossed' for ski season turnaround

As the country basks in what is set to be the warmest February since records began, Lochaber's ski resorts remain optimistic for a late spring resurgence in the season after one of its toughest years so far, writes Neill Bo Finlayson.

Scotland's ski resorts are having one of their most difficult winters in years, with some experts saying this has been among the most snowless of the last 70 years.

Last year, resorts experienced a record-breaking season, with Glencoe Mountain passing the 40,000 skier mark on some days during a 160-day-long season. This year, however, the resort's numbers are down by 90 per cent.

However, Andy Meldrum, managing director of Glencoe Mountain, remains hopeful of a late spring ski season renaissance.

When asked if Glencoe Mountain Resort was struggling financially due to the poor season, Mr Meldrum replied: 'Of course. It's been tough but thanks to the Snowfactory [snow machine] we have managed to keep some skiing going and maintain a really good sledging slope. There is still plenty of time for the season to come good.'



The snowless summit of Aonach Mor earlier this week as seen from Nevis Range's webcam.

Mr Meldrum, who is also chairman of marketing group Ski Scotland, said there was a risk that developments could 'grind to a halt for at least a season' due to a lack of money to complete any new works.

'It depends how bad the season ends up being,' Mr Meldrum continued, 'but we [Glencoe] planned to complete the build of our new three-man Rannoch chairlift, hopefully this will still happen. We also planned new staff accommodation and additional snow-making infrastructure which is now looking extremely unlikely unless the snow arrives very soon.'

'Due to the stop-start nature of the season we only employed a fraction of the seasonal workers we normally do and already we have had to let some of them go.'

'In a really poor season, it's very difficult to keep wages in line with revenue - we do our best as it is also important to us to look after our staff.'

'We just have our fingers crossed that the season will turn around.'

Despite the UK experiencing the hottest February day and night ever, there are reasons for skiers to be cheerful as the latest weather charts show that Scotland could be in for a cold snap in two weeks' time.

Nevis Range CEO Chris O'Brien believes there is plenty of life left in the ski season yet and said the weather forecast gives 'extraordinary cause for optimism'.

He said: 'The season is by no means over and we're expecting to have plenty of snow in two weeks' time,' he said. 'This is Scottish skiing and sometimes you've got to just hold out.'

The poor season has had a financial impact on resorts, however, and there are concerns over delays to long-term infrastructure projects.

WHAT'S ON in Lochaber

■ Kilmallie Parish Church is hosting a pancake tea in Caol Church Hall on Tuesday March 5 from 2-4pm.

■ Fort William Accordion and Fiddle Club is hosting a musical evening on Tuesday March 5 at 7.30pm at the Railway Club, Inverlochy.

The guest artist is the Marian Anderson Band. Everyone is welcome.

■ Staff and volunteers from Lochaber Sensory Care for Sight and Hearing Support will visit Mallaig on Tuesday March 5. The LSC team will be based in Mallaig Medical Centre from 1.30-3.30pm. They will offer support and advice to those with sight

or hearing loss and will also retube and maintain NHS hearing aids and supply batteries for these. No appointment needed.

■ The March meeting of the Lochaber Local History Society will see Ken Johnston speak on The Rise, Fall and Rise Again of a Highland School, which transformed the Fort William building into the town's Highland Council headquarters. As Lochaber's planning officer at the time, Ken will tell this story for the first time. Learn more at 8pm on Thursday March 7 at the Ben Nevis Hotel. Everyone is welcome.

£20,000 for credit union

Highland Communities Credit Union has been awarded a £20,000 grant by Lloyds Banking Group through its Credit Union Development Fund to increase its digital offering for customers.

The Fort William-based credit union, which has more than 900 members, offers savings accounts and affordable loans to those

living across the Highland Council local authority area.

The Lloyds Credit Union Development Fund is run in partnership with the Credit Union Foundation.

The Highland Communities Credit Union will use its share of the fund to expand its digital offering, which will include the introduction of mobile apps.

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LT

Forbes backs move to halt dog attacks

by Neill Bo Finlayson
nfinlayson@obantimes.co.uk

A Lochaber MSP has backed fresh efforts to tackle sheep worrying across the Highlands.

Kate Forbes MSP described the problem as 'frankly shameful', as her colleague Emma Harper MSP launched an online consultation on her own private member's Bill on the matter.

According to statistics from the Crown Office, the number of offences of dogs attacking livestock has increased by more than 40 per cent during the past decade (2008 to 2018).

Ms Forbes said: 'The frequency of sheep worrying in the Highlands is frankly shameful. Dog owners should know that their dogs need to be on a lead near livestock and yet, despite that, we've



had case after case of sheep worrying.

'The emotional trauma of watching animals suffer is one thing, but the financial cost is significant too.

'I am fully supportive of my colleague Emma Harper's efforts to crack down on sheep worrying and it's good to see my fellow SNP MSP standing up for rural interests.'

A consultation has now launched and Ms Forbes says it is 'well worth all farmers, crofters and others' to engage with the process.

A Cry For The Wild

HOLLY GILLIBRAND

fort@obantimes.co.uk



The sea is rising – so are we

Over the past few months, children around the world have been missing class to demand that our governments do something about the climate and ecological emergency.

Last Friday was the first UK-wide school strike for climate and it was truly a massive and momentous day with an estimated 15,000 students striking around the UK.

Young people like me who have been making a stand for our only planet and sacrificing an hour a week of education to do so have been receiving support and encouragement, but also considerable amounts of hate.

This movement all started with Swedish 16-year-old Greta Thunberg, who does not understand why

people are calling climate change an existential threat and the most important issue of all, yet is not being treated as the crisis it is.

So a few months ago, she sat herself down outside the Swedish parliament and stayed there for three weeks. She school-striking for the climate.

Greta now strikes every Friday instead of every day and tens of thousands of young people around the world are following in her footsteps.

I started striking from school on January 11 this year, every Friday morning for an hour.

A few years ago, I'd heard of climate change but not really thought much of it.

I was looking forward to growing up in a beautiful, healthy world and becoming a veterinary surgeon so that I can heal and

protect the wildlife that I love.

But if our leaders continue down the path that we are on today, that future will be no more. There will be no more wildlife, no more nature, just a planet decimated by humanity's greed.

The diverse and complex mosaic of species on Earth is being threatened by man-made climate change and other human activities. Not only is our biosphere being destroyed even as we speak, we are on our way to causing humanity's own extinction.

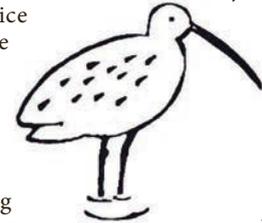
The Arctic and Greenland ice sheets are melting, Australia is burning and parts of America are experiencing temperatures

colder than the Arctic. The ocean is warming, rising and acidifying, countries such as Kiribati are disappearing under the sea and we are seeing increasingly extreme weather events.

And yet, after all this evidence, after all this destruction, we still ignore climate change and ecological breakdown. People do not realise what is going on.

Even when people know about this crisis, many still do nothing, perhaps because they feel powerless in the face of this catastrophe. So, please

join us on Friday March 15 for the global strike for the climate, to demand that our governments take the action that is needed.



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Villagers join forces to clean up their community

Residents and members of Glencoe and Glen Etive Community Council got together on Saturday January 19 for a village clean-up. More than 50 people turned out in Glencoe and the day was so successful that a further event was proposed in March. Many thanks were made to all who contributed to the great effort. Lunch was provided.

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Silence is golden in final push for Knoydart hall

The most remote community hall in the UK is organising one final fundraising push to get its major refurbishment over the line.

Mainland Britain's last wilderness, accessible only by boat or an 18-mile hike over the hills is home to Knoydart Community Hall, a whitewashed 1950s post-war building which sits slap bang in Inverie but is about to be totally transformed, thanks to a Herculean fundraising effort by the community.

Having secured more than £30,000 in a crowdfunder last year, with match funding from Highlands and Islands Enterprise and Leader, three quarters of the funding is secure and building work will start in May.

The final push involves a super silent auction which will help to pay for part of the remaining build and refurbishment costs and with the public's help the community hopes to get it through the chequered flag.



Knoydart Community Hall committee, above, organise dozens of gigs throughout the year in Knoydart Hall.

amazing money-can't-buy experiences, including grandstand tickets for the Grand Prix at Silverstone with dinner and refreshments at the exclusive British Racing Drivers Club (BRDC), an exclusive guided tour of the Tunnocks factory, as well as other big packages. There are also a number of



Knoydart Experiences such as a wood-fired Pizza Party on Knoydart, stargazing, a personalised music composition, deer stalking, and luxury accommodation. Hosting more than 100 community activities per year, including meetings, social events and gatherings, means the Knoydart Hall

really is the heart of the community. The 'new' hall will look very similar from the shore and will retain that 'old-style' feel but the interior will be refurbished to make it fit for purpose. After the works, the hall will have higher occupation levels, a larger stage, dedicated meeting rooms, which can double

as social areas, and lots of storage. New toilets, wheelchair access, outdoor spaces and a modern kitchen, which will double as the bar for events and functions, mean the community will finally have the facilities it deserves. And with this new asset, the community can better plan for the future.

Bidding in the silent auction begins on Friday March 8 at 7pm, the full details of which can be found at knoydarthall.com/auction

The auction closes at 7pm Friday March 22. Bid the most to win the prize – if more than one person bids the same amount it will be the first bid in that wins.

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Kate Forbes MSP

Photo call for budding West Highland snappers

Budding photographers from Lochaber and Skye have the unique opportunity to showcase their work at Scottish Parliament as the prize in a new competition run by Kate Forbes MSP.

After the success of the annual Christmas card design competition, which attracts hundreds of school pupils every year, the MSP wanted to encourage people of all ages to get creative and engage with the Parliament.

The Skye, Lochaber and Badenoch MSP has said budding snappers of all ages and abilities are welcome to enter, with entries fitting the theme of 'made in the Highlands'.

Kate Forbes MSP explained: 'I am keen to encourage budding photographers of all ages and stages, and I thought this competition would provide one of them with a new platform.'

'One of the drawbacks of this job is that I've got to spend a lot of time away from home, and so my walls are covered with images and scenes from the Highlands.'

'There is one notable space,

though, which I'd like to fill with some cracking photography.'

'Plenty of people visit my office every week and often comment on the pictures and so I thought it would be nice to showcase some home grown talent on the walls.'

'All are welcome to take part and I look forward to seeing the entries.'

All entries can be emailed to kate.forbes.msp@parliament.scot and the competition has a closing date of Monday March 18 at noon. Finalists will be announced the next day.

Competition rules:

- Entrants must be constituents living in Skye, Lochaber and Badenoch and is open to all ages.

- The competition runs until Monday March at noon.

- Photographs must be at least 1800 x 1200 pixels.

- Entries must include the entrant's name, full address and caption.

- The place featured must be within the Skye, Lochaber and Badenoch constituency boundary.

Campaign highlights housing crisis in highlands

A rural housing crisis has been brought to light in a damning residents' survey.

Scottish Rural Action met last Friday at the Rural Housing Scotland conference to discuss the shortage of affordable housing in rural Scotland.

The Rural Homes, Rural Lives campaign is looking to the Scottish Government, local authorities and housing associations to make changes that will revitalise the rural economy.

A survey carried out in January revealed existing

shortages could be pinned on the increase of tourism, with platforms such as Airbnb an enemy of affordable housing.

With almost 200 survey applicants, Scottish Rural Action has been able to devise a list of 10 'asks' for the Scottish Government which will focus on equity and development.

Tackling other issues, such as education and local services, as well as housing, has successfully rallied support from locals, with the aim to 'unlock rural potential'.

Raigmore Helipad upgrade work completed

Work to upgrade the helipad at Raigmore Hospital has now been successfully completed with the helipad now fully operational and equipped to meet increasing demands.

With more than 500 flights each year it is a common sight to see helicopters arriving and taking off from the helipad based at the Inverness hospital.

The upgrade will allow the helipad to meet the increasing demands due for larger and more frequent aircraft use as well as new standards such as landing

lights and helipad size. At a cost of just under £600,000 the upgrade was only possible thanks to two charitable donations. A financial grant of £480,000 was offered to NHS Highland from the HELP Appeal – the only charity in the country dedicated to funding hospital helipads and just under £120,000 was received from the Highland Health Board Endowment Fund.

The work, which took approximately three months to complete, was carried out by Kier Construction.



The helipad was upgraded to meet current demand.



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LT

Islands council tax to rise by 4.79 per cent

Comhairle nan Eilean Siar has set its budget for this year.

It was described by leader Roddie Mackay as 'more challenging than the comhairle has faced in its history'.

The comhairle agreed recommendations for a maximum 4.79 per cent increase in Council Tax which will mean an increase of between 60p and one pound per week for most people in the Islands.

Comhairle leader Mr Mackay also moved that care home charges be increased by three per cent, overturning a recommendation from the integrated joint board (IJB) of substantial increases.

He said: 'While I understand the requirement on the IJB to recover its costs for care homes I do not consider it acceptable to move to this position in a single year.'

'I would therefore propose that we agree an increase of three per cent for 2019/20.'

'The IJB chief finance officer has confirmed that this would not directly affect its draft budget.'

He continued: 'In addition I suggest that we ask for a further report on increases in future years, together with their impact on the IJB financial plan.'

Mr Mackay highlighted that since 2010 the comhairle had faced huge funding reductions and that for the

current year the comhairle had £1.7million less cash to spend on core services.

He said: 'Our service redesign programme that we started last year means that we are already on the road to realising the necessary savings but difficult decisions around economic development, bus services and waste in the coming months are only the first we will have to address.'

'Our transformation programme seeks to tackle the reduction in core funding by empowering our communities, and growing alternative income, both revenue and capital. I was very much encouraged by the engagement in our community conversations last year and am looking forward to seeing what can be achieved in the second round which will start later this month.'

On capital, Mr Mackay highlighted that the available money was less than anticipated but that the comhairle had made big commitments to the Lewis Residential Care Project and Castlebay and could look forward to progress on both projects.

However, Mr Mackay warned that projections showed 'no sign of any easing of the pressure on budgets' and there remained considerable uncertainty over Brexit.

Rebekah is first Harris apprentice distiller

by Neill Bo Finlayson
nfinlayson@obantimes.co.uk

After an island-wide search Harris Distillery recently appointed school-leaver Rebekah Morrison as its first apprentice distiller.

Rebekah's new role embodies the distillery's ambition to create secure long-term employment in the Outer Hebrides, particularly for young people who wish to remain in the community and set down roots of their own.

Rebekah, who lives in the village of Bowglass, said: 'I really enjoyed doing my work experience at the distillery and I was keen to learn more about the process of distilling; whisky production in particular fascinates me, but it was never something I had thought would be possible for me to do, especially not



Rebekah Morrison is the first apprentice distiller at Harris Distillery.

here at home. When I saw the new role on social media my family gave me lots of encouragement to apply.'

Head distiller Kenny Maclean, who interviewed a wide range of candidates, was impressed by what he saw and heard from Rebekah: 'It was clear how able and enthusiastic she was, not

only in her approach to the work required but also to the importance of being part of a team. Combined with her positive demeanour and obvious interest in distilling, I felt she was the right person for our first apprenticeship.'

Rebekah has just begun her long journey to becoming a fully-accredited distiller,

taking her first steps in a craft which often takes a lifetime to fully master. She said: 'Being a distiller is definitely the career path I want to pursue and I'm very excited about what the future has in store. The people and being a part of the community makes the island home for me, so it's amazing to have this chance to stay and work right here in Harris.'

Managing director Simon Erlanger said it had always been the company's intention to 'make young people central to the business'.

He said: 'We are confident that this young woman will thrive in her apprenticeship and will go on to inspire new generations of young people to remain here in the islands, carving out careers and playing their own vital role in ensuring our island's revival as the decades go by.'

MSPs meet with island TalkTalk workforce

MSP Alasdair Allan and Deputy First Minister John Swinney MSP have met with staff and management at the closure-threatened TalkTalk call centre in Stornoway.

The telecoms company recently announced that it would be making all 59 staff at its site in Stornoway redundant as of July this year. Talktalk is

one of the largest private sector employers on the island.

The island's MSP has been in contact with the company, HIE and the Scottish Government since the impending redundancies were first announced, recently raising the issue at First Minister's Question time.

Alasdair Allan MSP said: 'This was a good opportunity

for the deputy first minister and I to hear directly from TalkTalk staff about the situation they find themselves in.'

'While TalkTalk have guaranteed their employees jobs elsewhere in the company, most people are not going to want to, or be able to, uproot their lives from the island. The loss of nearly 60 jobs is equivalent

to the loss of thousands of jobs in Glasgow, so this could have a very significant impact on the local economy.'

'It is, therefore, imperative the site and the availability of a skilled and loyal workforce for other potential operators is promoted as much as possible, and I know HIE are actively engaging on that front.'









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Volunteers from Rabbie's and Highland Council access officer Donald Kennedy next to the completed path.

Coach drivers and Skye staff repair historic path

A group of determined coach drivers and office workers have completed badly-needed repairs on a 19th-century lifeline route in north Skye.

For the fourth time in under two years, staff from Rabbie's Trail Burners have teamed up with Staffin Community Trust (SCT) to carry out significant repairs to key footpaths.

Eight volunteers from the company spent two days at the path to Staffin Slipway digging out new and improved drainage and resurfacing after water and thick vegetation had affected the route in recent years. The path is an important part of Staffin's history as it

was a lifeline for generations of people with essential supplies being delivered by boat, decades before a road was built.

A stone path leads from the slip, which was built by the Congested Districts Board in the early 1900s, at Ob nan Ron to the crofting township of Garafad.

Indeed, the zig-zag path higher up, near the CadhaRiach, is marked on the first edition Ordnance Survey maps between 1843-1882.

The path is still hugely popular with all people, and is frequently used by Columba 1400 Centre staff and course participants for accessing the

slip and Staffin beach.

Rabbie's, a popular tour company which runs trips to the island all-year round, and SCT, have a productive working partnership, as part of the Skye Ecomuseum heritage project.

Staff have previously carried out repairs to routes at the Quiraing and Brogaig.

Highland Council's Skye access officer Donald Kennedy, who is a key member of the ecomuseum steering-group, had identified the work as a priority with SCT's programme manager Angus Murray.

Mr Kennedy supervised the latest group and was delighted with their efforts.

Study to review the impact of tourism on Skye

Visitors, residents and businesses in Skye are being encouraged to take part in a major new study on the economic impact of tourism on the island.

The survey, carried out by researchers from Glasgow Caledonian University (GCU), will address the concerns and challenges posed by a huge growth in visitor numbers.

The findings will help shape a tourism masterplan for the island for the next 10 years.

Stunning

Skye attracts more than 500,000 tourists a year with stunning areas of natural beauty, such as The Fairy Pools, Cuillin Ridge and The Old Man of Storr, proving extremely popular with both domestic and international visitors. Estimates show around one in eight properties on the island are let via Airbnb.

Experts from GCU's Moffat Centre for Travel and Tourism will examine the impact the surge in numbers has had on the island's employment and the wider economy.

Researchers will also provide the first detailed breakdown of visitor spending behaviour, nationality, tourist activities and motivation to travel.

Thousands of people will take part in the survey, which has been commissioned by SkyConnect, the island's official destination-management organisation.

Residents, accommodation providers, activity operators, restaurateurs, shop owners, and outdoor activity providers, are amongst those who will take part in the study, which will also look at the impact on the local transport infrastructure.

Marina Martinolli, research project manager at the Moffat Centre, said: 'The island was traditionally viewed as a walking or outdoor activity destination but with the opening of the Skye bridge making the island more accessible, this has changed dramatically.'

'Alongside Edinburgh, Skye is now Scotland's most iconic visitor destination. A number of residents have already been in touch to say they want to get involved.'

'We hope anyone with an interest in the economy of Skye will assist our researchers in carrying out this important study.'

Researchers will quiz visitors at areas including Dunvegan Castle, Kyleakin, Uig, Armadale, Broadford and Portree town centre. The results will be showcased at a public event in early 2020.

Visitors

Alistair Danter, project manager for SkyConnect, said: 'As a destination management organisation, we need to have a detailed understanding of visitors, their views, their behaviours and their impact on the whole of Skye - not just the tourism sector.'

'The results will allow us to shape the strategy for tourism development on the island for the next decade. We are delighted to award the contract to the Moffat Centre for this vital piece of work.'

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LETTERS

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Mountain festival success has been well deserved

It is not without reason that Lochaber is now known as the Outdoor Capital of the UK.

The spectacular and rugged landscapes, with Britain's highest peak at its centre, make the area a magnet for outdoors types, including climbers and walkers.

A significant element in promoting the area so successfully has been the annual Fort William Mountain Festival, which concluded on Sunday night.

As we report this week, the festival's organisers hailed the success of this year's five-day extravaganza, with almost every event 'bursting at the seams'.

Rod Pashley, chairman of The Highland Mountain Culture Association, which runs the Fort William Mountain Festival, is justifiably thrilled with the event's triumph.

He said: 'Five nights of world-class films, enthralling presentations, lively debates, stunning imagery, jaw dropping journeys, truly inspirational speakers, and an awesome "after-party".'

'Several evenings sold out well in advance of the festival taking place, the theatres were bursting at the seams throughout the event; the whole place was buzzing. This year we introduced exciting and inspirational new events.'

We commend the organisers for their deserved success.

Worrying times for Liberty's workers

There was widespread shock last week when Honda announced it would close its major plant in Swindon, with thousands of jobs to be lost.

Swindon might be a long way from Lochaber but there could be a genuine and serious knock-on effect for the Liberty plant in Fort William. This is a very worrying time for all concerned.

Rise in Corran Ferry fares is unfair for residents

Highland Council approved its budget on February 14, including an increase in council tax of three per cent, with the probability that it will go up by the same amount next year and the year after.

This comes alongside various planned cost savings, and an increase (also three per cent per year for three years) in the cost of cremations, burials, bulky uplift, Corran Ferry fares, fish export certificates and a few others. So that's okay then, it's only in line with inflation and at least we are all being treated fairly and equitably.

But hang on a minute. It isn't fair or equitable because the small communities of Sunart, Ardgour, Morvern and Ardnamurchan are required to pay higher charges to make use of a ferry to get to their only nearby town, Fort William.

Approximately 1,500 people who have no reasonable option but to make use of the Corran Ferry to get to work, healthcare, shops and meetings are going to have to pay more to do so.

This specific group of people have been targeted for an increase in their day-to-day costs, whereas all other cost increases are either applicable to all, or may be required by us all at some time.

As far as I can see, this is the only example of an increase in costs being applied specifically to one group of people, according to where they live. Imagine if the council tax increase was only applied to those people living on Skye. Or if the cost of burials only went up for people living in Nairn.

We are appalled when we read about the so-called 'postcode lottery' whereby people get differing healthcare according to where they live, and yet most of our councillors, including four out of the seven Lochaber ones, were prepared to support this particular penalty.

This is unfair, and Highland Council should be ashamed.

Joanne Matheson, Acharacle.

Urgent need to address the problem of potholes

There is a real need to address the large quantity of potholes on Islay between Port Charlotte and Portnahaven and the long overdue resurfacing of the Claddach road is still

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. This week's

needing to be done. The constant flooding of roads across Islay is rapidly accelerating their deterioration.

Even in the areas that don't flood, the amount of heavy traffic on our roads means that pothole repairs only last a few weeks at best. We can see evidence of this on Mansfield Road in Port Ellen and at the bottom of Main Street in Bowmore.

As part of the current council administration, I will continue to lobby relentlessly for better infrastructure for my council ward.

Councillor Alastair Redman, Kintyre and Islands.

Proper management of MPAs is needed urgently

I read with interest and anger that a further incursion of illegal dredging has been tracked in a Marine Protected Area (MPA) in the Sound of Mull (The Oban Times, February 14).

It would seem to me that seabed damage by such activity is unacceptable, not just in MPAs but in much of our inshore waters, since these seabeds in fairly shallow waters are the nursery ecosystems for many of our valued marine creatures, be they immature fish, and sustainable shellfish

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DISTRICT NEWS

Lochaber Women's Aid seeks ambassadors

Guest speakers at Lochaber Rotary Club's Annual Partners' Lunch on February 13 were Lorraine Revitt and Cathie Way from Lochaber Women's Aid.

In an absorbing 10-minute presentation, Cathie and Lorraine gave the 40 Rotarians and their partners a broad account of the specialist work being undertaken by their eight staff all across Lochaber in providing support to women, children and young people affected by domestic abuse.

The support addresses a myriad of issues, ranging from physical, sexual and emotional violence against women to financial issues, homelessness, confidence building, providing safe refuge, bullying and legal advice. The service is completely free and confidential.

To help address the demand for support, particularly in the remote rural reaches of Lochaber, the service has launched a pilot Ask Me Scheme that aims to build a network of community ambassadors.

These ambassadors will provide local contact on the basis of 'I'm here to listen, I'm here to believe'.



Lorraine Revitt and Cathie Way from Lochaber Women's Aid gave an interesting presentation at Lochaber Rotary Club's annual partners' lunch on February 13. Photograph: Iain Ferguson, alba.photos.

They will raise awareness of domestic abuse and help to create safe environments for survivors to feel able to disclose abuse.

These ambassadors can be both men and women, they will be given 12 hours' training, and it is hoped that many Rotarians, with their community service ethos, will volunteer to become ambassadors.

On behalf of the club, vice president Richard Baxter thanked Lorraine and Cathie for a thoughtful and insightful presentation and added: 'We appreciate you coming and sharing your project with us. You provide real help and real support.'

'The community is grateful for the work that you are doing.'

next financial year as will the resurfacing on the A82 at Altrua seven miles north of Spean Bridge.

The long-awaited A86 Inverroy Safety Report is with Transport Scotland's Strategic Road Safety team for review, and hopefully the community council will hear shortly about their findings.

The remaining night road closures during the work to replace rear track at Fort Augustus Swing Bridge are no longer required. The work was completed ahead of programme. The remaining works will be carried out during the day.

Report by Inspector Nick Hough of the Scottish Police Service: Inspector Hough said that following a review of community policing he had taken responsibility for the area. He spoke on road traffic and anti-social behaviour issues, and encouraged the community to report any concerns they had so police could improve their intelligence gathering.

In answering questions about delays following serious accidents he explained that it was the investigation of the accident that was the time consuming portion not getting the police officers to the scene.

He was aware of road traffic infringements and they were trying to address them robustly but had scant resources. He did feel that Road Safety Speed Awareness Courses might be preferable and prove more effective than fines and penalties.

Community Benefit: The chairman reported on the workshop that Liz and he attended in Inverness on January 16 on the Scottish Government's Good Practice Principles on Shared Ownership and Community Benefit. The review conducted by the steering group had proposed that community benefit should be set at £5,000 per MW, and that developers should be encouraged to embrace the wider community when assessing community benefit. It was agreed that funding be sought to secure a community plan

so that all residents were consulted on how any community benefit secured was spent to provide a lasting legacy for communities.

Community Council Review: The chairman reported that following a Highland Council meeting the next stage of the community council review was available for discussion. The various proposals were discussed in detail, and it was agreed that the community council would support all of the proposals.

Minibus: The sub committee met with the Spean Bridge, Roy Bridge and Achnacarry SCIO in an effort to secure funding to support the project.

As Care Lochaber had secured Highland Council funding for an additional year, and others could access the SSE Stronelaig Wind Farm Funding, it was felt there was no urgency to take a final decision on whether to accept Killiechonate Woodlands' generous offer.

The chairman had been in correspondence with Mr Eppens, and a number of alternative options were being explored, and the sub committee would meet with him on his return to Spean Bridge later in the month.

Any Other Business: The chairman reported a number of complaints about missing mail both in and out of the area had been received, and it was agreed to write to Royal Mail seeking an explanation.

Locheilnet was seeking to expand its high-speed broadband service throughout the community council area, and any prospective clients should contact it directly via its website.

The next meeting will be held on March 5 in Kilmonivaig Church Hall at 7pm.

GETINTOUCH
email us at fort@obantimes.co.uk
telephone 01397 703003



Money raised from a recent Masonic lodge shinty match has been donated to two Lochaber causes. Masonic lodges Fort William 43 and Lochiel 1200 took part in the inter-lodge shinty match on January 2, played for the first time in 11 years. Cheques for £250 were given to Lochaber Mountain Rescue Team and Invernevis House care home.

Pictured are, from left, Chris Stirrup (MRT), Donald Patterson (MRT), George MacKay lodge 43, Mike Smith (MRT), Iain Rodger (Lodge 43), Helen Smith (Invernevis), Les Gow (Lodge 1200), and David Stafford (Invernevis). Photograph: Abrightside Photography.

SPEAN BRIDGE, ROY BRIDGE AND ACHNACARRY

Spean Bridge, Roy Bridge and Achnacarry Community Council met on Tuesday February 5 at Kilmonivaig Church Hall. The following matters were discussed: **BEAR and Transport Scotland:** The chairman reported significant success in securing improvements to the trunk road system, with resurfacing planned for the A82 south of Spean Bridge, and on the A82 at the Cattle Ranch both in March 2019.

The drainage issues on the hill to the north of Spean Bridge will be resolved in two phases, starting in March 2019 and ending in the



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Firms help Ballachulish pupils' green ambitions

Two Lochaber companies recently answered a call to support nature from primary school pupils.

Steven Davitt and Stuart Robertson, of Argyll and Lochaber Joiners, and Argyll and Lochaber Plumbing and Heating Services, have lent a hand to Ballachulish Primary School to help with its environmental ambitions.

The school's ECO committee wrote to local businesses, sharing its vision of having its own polytunnel after previous attempts at growing

vegetables saw the pupils struggle, with plants unable to survive due to the Lochaber weather.

Stuart and Steven decided to help the youngsters in their campaign for a new polytunnel by donating a cheque of £500 to the committee.

Pictured above is Stuart Robertson presenting the cheque to P2 pupils of the Ballachulish Primary School ECO committee, led by Mr Andrew Kent. The committee was 'overwhelmed' with the generous donation.

Rosie's service medal celebration

Rosie Curtis from Kilchoan was recently presented with the Queen's Fire Service Medal at Buckingham Palace by Prince William, the Earl of Strathearn, for her service to the local community.

On February 15, family and friends organised a party in the community centre to celebrate her award.

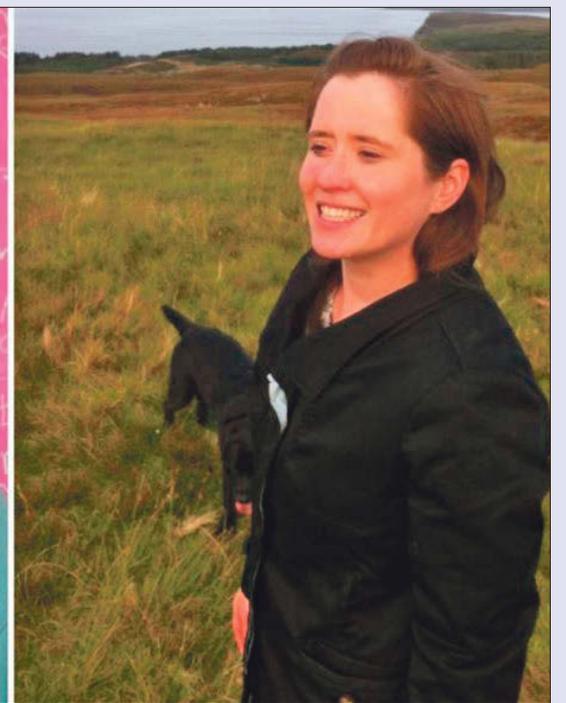
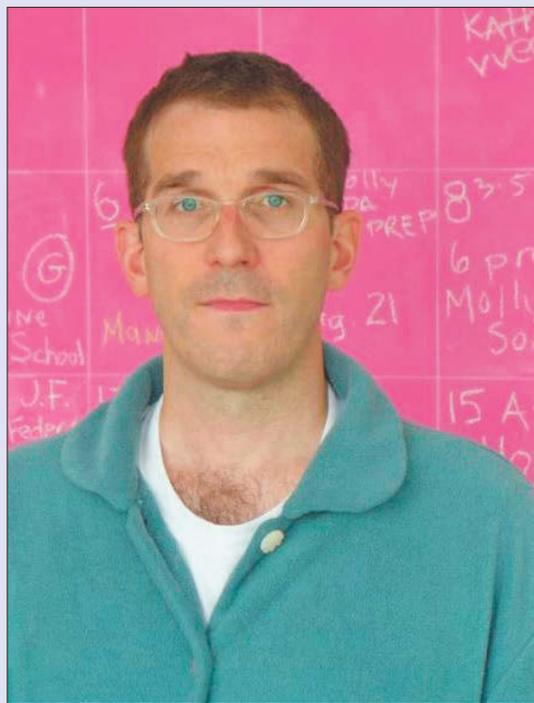
Rosie's cousin Morag Doherty recounted how Rosie had been with Kilchoan's fire team for more than 20 years and was now the watch manager.

As well as being involved with numerous other local groups, Rosie is married to Dave, mother to Chloe, Megan and Alan, and manager of the Mowi fish farm at Macleans' Nose.



Rosie with a specially-made fire fighter themed cake at her party.

Rosie said how proud she was to receive the honour and to be part of the West Ardnamurchan community.



Rob Blackson, left, and Caroline Winn will take up positions at ATLAS Arts in a year devoted to research and development.

Skye arts group makes ATLAS international appointments

Three leading figures from the international arts scene are to take up positions at ATLAS Arts in a year devoted to research and development, writes Neill Bo Finlayson.

International curator Rob Blackson will join ATLAS as a consultant curator and will develop a new series of art projects. Director of Temple Contemporary, Philadelphia, and previously at Nottingham Contemporary, Mr Blackson is internationally respected for his radical methods in putting communities at the heart of programming and commis-

sioning renowned artists to work collaboratively with them.

Scottish arts leader Caroline Winn will take up the post of research and development director, and will focus on the development of ATLAS as an organisation. Well respected for her work as festival manager for Glasgow International, and international projects manager for Festivals Edinburgh, Ms Winn was also the first director of Mull arts organisation Comar, developing the strategic plan that won it significant investment.

Finally, Donald Macfarlane

Hyslop will join board of directors of ATLAS Arts. Donald is an urbanist and head of regeneration and community partnerships for Tate Galleries. He was the lead curator on the Tate Modern Turbine Hall commission 2017 with artists Superflex, and has worked on projects with culture and communities all over the world.

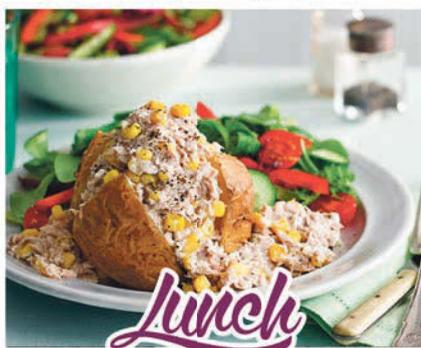
ATLAS will continue to deliver its award-winning programme, including projects such as CLIMAVORE: On Tidal Zones, and the popular Screen-It film series, while developing and testing these new proposals.

A typical day - At last, an eating plan that fits into your life



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LT

Martial arts

IAIN RODGER
editor@obantimes.co.uk

Kyokushinkai Karate

The club continues to produce fighters capable of holding their own at the highest level in national and international events.

Club coach and chief instructor for Scotland Iain Rodger said: 'We are taking on beginners until the end of March, after which the next intake will be from July until September, so now is the perfect time to start.'

For further information on the Kyokushinkai Karate club contact Iain Rodger (6th Dan) on 07584 166542 or iain@ikku.co.uk. Alternatively send a message to Caledonia Kyokushin on Facebook.

Kickboxing

Grading tests are currently taking place and details will be in the next report.

Training continues as usual on Wednesdays, 5-14 years, 4.30pm until 6pm and 15 years-and-over, 6pm until 7.30pm. New members are welcome at any time. Either message the club on Facebook Senshi Do Kickboxing or email shihanwill@gmail.com for details.

Shukokai Karate

Anyone looking for more details on these clubs should contact Kenny Gray (5th Dan) on kenni.gray@btinternet.com or 07884 183905.

BJJ and MMA

Oban MMA continues to prepare students for the West of Scotland BJJ open, with extra rounds and practice for those involved.

Club members recently enjoyed a seminar with higher level MMA student of the year Cameron Donnelly. Cammy has recently returned from learning under respected coaches John Danahar and MMA 'royalty' George St Pierre. Cammy took time with everyone, showing the small details in attacking the back and finishing chokes. The well-attended seminar was well received and Cammy will be back in Oban teaching again soon.

The MMA side of the class has been concentrating on setting up take downs from punching and improving timing and reaction times. The specific drilling and controlled sparring seems to be helping everyone improve as they try to build a solid foundation of basics.

If anyone would like to try out BJJ or MMA, Oban BJJ can be found on Facebook or they can email using coogiepots@gmail.com

Wado Kai Karate

The January grading tests were deferred until February 27 due to illness. A full update should be in the next report.

Classes continue at the usual times, Park Primary School on Mondays at 3.15pm and Dunbeg Primary School at 6.30pm.

Use the details below to receive more information about Wado Karate or if anyone would like to talk about their interest in the sport.

Park Primary School: Mike Faulkner, m.faulkner6@btinternet.com

Dunbeg Primary School: Sensei Chris Bruce (7th Dan) at crb999@btinternet.com



Oban BJJ and MMA members recently enjoyed a seminar with MMA student of the year Cameron Donnelly.

Round-up of final pre-season friendlies and beginning of ladies fixtures

Shinty continued from p51

Lovat by beating Kinlochshiel 5-4 in their derby encounter at Pairc nan Laoch, Portree.

Kinlochshiel took the lead on 12 minutes when John MacRae brought down Duncan 'DA' MacRae's long ball from the left. MacRae got a shot in from the edge of the 'D' and although Skye keeper Ryan Morrison got a foot to the ball, he couldn't keep it out.

Kinlochshiel introduced Keith MacRae for youngster Martin MacRae on the half hour and he played for 30 minutes as he works his way back from injury.

Skye levelled when James Pringle's shot was saved by new Kinlochshiel keeper Stuart MacRae but the former Inverness and Boleskine player could do nothing to prevent Jordan Murchison turning home the re-bound.

Skye keeper Ryan Morrison saved a John MacRae penalty which meant the sides went into the break level.

Skye went in front when James Pringle ran onto a ball from Ally MacLeod before cutting inside and finishing low into the net.

Duncan Matheson latched onto a John MacRae flick to make it 2-2 with almost an hour gone.

Skye's William MacKinnon, who had a great game throughout, held off a challenge before taking the ball to his left and firing across the keeper and into the net to put Skye back in front. Jordan Murchison scored twice more to complete his hat-trick, giving Skye a 5-2 cushion.

And they needed it as John MacRae and Duncan 'WD' MacRae pulled goals back but it finished 5-4 to Skye.

Beaulieu 1
Lochcarron 2

The young Beaulieu seconds lost 2-1 against Lochcarron in their noon throw-up at Braeview Park.

Finlay MacLennan scored for the hosts, but Gregor Cushnie and Angus Urquhart gave Lochcarron victory.

Kingussie 1
Glasgow Mid Argyll 1

Kingussie and Glasgow Mid Argyll played out a hard-fought friendly at Dunbarry.

Kingussie went in front in the second minute with a goal from Ryan MacWilliam. Calum McLay equalised for Glasgow Mid Argyll late in the first half to make it 1-1 at the break.

It was an entertaining second half, but neither side could find a winner.

Strathspey 3
Newtonmore 0

Strathspey Camanachd beat Newtonmore's second team 3-0 in their pre-season friendly at Grantown Grammar School.

With some of the Newtonmore seconds having to cover absences in the first team, Strathspey took advantage.

Connor Aubrey scored for the hosts, whilst John MacKenzie, who had a fine game, netted twice.

Aberdour 3
Glasgow Mid Argyll 1

The Aberdour seconds beat Glasgow Mid Argyll seconds 3-1 at Silversands.

Aberdour, with Roddy MacColl as player/manager this term, resisted the temptation to use any first team players and Mack McKean, Chris Bowerman and Martin Cameron sealed the win.

Angus MacInnes scored for GMA.

WCA fixtures

under way
Mowi National Division
Skye Camanachd 1
Badenoch 2

Match of the day was the clash between Skye Camanachd and Badenoch at Pairc nan Laoch, Portree.

These sides took last year's title race to the final day of the season before Skye took the honours.

Badenoch's Rona Stewart came closest to breaking the deadlock when she hit the post before Skye took the lead through Lorna MacRae's low shot.

Kirsty Deans made it 1-1 when she took a touch before crashing home Rona Stewart's cross from the left.

With just 90 seconds remaining, Badenoch broke forward and Zoe Reid found Kirsty Deans who squeezed the ball low into the corner of the net to clinch a 2-1 win.

Aberdour 1
Lochaber 4

Lochaber got off to a winning start defeating Aberdour 4-1 at Silversands.

Kirsty Delaney grabbed a hat-trick with Natalie MacDonald getting the other. Katie Booth netted for the home side.

Strathspey 4
Glasgow Mid Argyll 5

A last minute goal gave Glasgow Mid Argyll a 5-4 victory over Strathspey at Grantown Grammar School.

Arabella Kennedy, Beth Rodgers, Jade Callum and an own goal counted for

Strathspey. But Christy Doherty's hat-trick and Shannon Birnie's double gave GMA the points.

Countdown to the new season

Clubs are making their final preparations ahead of this year's competitive action.

Mowi Premiership

Kilmallie's return to shinty's top flight could hardly be more difficult as they travel to the Eilan to play champions Newtonmore. Steven MacDonald is suspended for the home side.

Oban Camanachd's opening fixture is at the Winterton against newly-promoted Inveraray.

Manager Stephen Sloss said: 'We hope to have a full squad available. The pre-season has been good but it's always difficult to properly gauge when there are so many changes during these games. We want to get off to a winning start.'

Lochaber's meeting with Caberfeidh at Spean Bridge will mark Michael Delaney's latest term as manager. Caberfeidh will include Robbie Brindle who has signed from Beaulieu.

New Kyles Athletic manager Dunky Kerr leads his side out against Kingussie at Tighnabraich. James Falconer is banned for the visitors.

Lovat and Kinlochshiel clash at Balgate.

Mowi National Division

Oban Celtic open at home to Bute and whilst the islanders had the better of their meetings last season, Celtic will be looking to get their competitive campaign off to a winning start.

Craig MacMillan is banned for the hosts, but new boss Dougie MacIntyre hopes to have Rory Bruce and George MacMillan back.

The Fort William squad travel to Braeview Park to play Beaulieu. Fort William co-managers Victor Smith and Adam Robertson will be without influential defender James Tangney for the opening part of the season.

Regional leagues
Amongst the regional fixtures, Lochside Rovers have home advantage against the Inveraray second team in Brian MacCallum's first competitive match in charge.

Taynuilt travel to Col Glen and Ballachulish host the Glasgow Mid Argyll colts.

The Oban Celtic second team will be led by Iain MacFarlane and Johnny

MacNeil against Kilmory.

Ardnamurchan's return to league action starts with a trip to Glenorchy.

Glangarry are at Aberdeen, whilst the Kilmallie seconds host their Beaulieu counterparts.

Oban Celtic captains

Oban Celtic have confirmed their first and second team captains ahead of the new shinty season.

Scotland U21 player Ross MacMillan has been named as first team captain, supported by vice captain Andrew MacDonald.

Robert Gillies skips the Oban Celtic seconds, whilst youngster John Douglas is vice captain.

Strachur drop out of league and cup

Strachur have informed the Camanachd Association that they have no alternative but to withdraw from league and cup competitions this season.

Chairman Colin Cameron said in a club statement: 'Following a meeting on Tuesday February 19, the club took the extremely difficult decision to withdraw from league and cup competitions because we could not guarantee enough players every week to field a team. Work will begin shortly, in partnership with the Camanachd Association, to develop structures for the club's future.'

Strachur returned to league action in 2017 after a 12-month break. They came second in South Division 2 in 2017 and topped the league at the end of last season. Strachur had already indicated they were not in a position to accept promotion to South 1 and had been included in the draft 2019 fixture list. Their absence means the league will go ahead with six teams.

Kinlochshiel enforce helmets

Kinlochshiel agreed a new club policy at their recent annual general meeting which means any player born after January 1 2002 must wear a Camanachd Association approved helmet when playing for the club.

Kinlochshiel Ladies introduced the policy when they joined Mowi North Division 2 at the start of last season.

Cup ties and friendlies

Oban S1 24 v Helensburgh 31
Oban S2 17 v Helensburgh 43

Oban Lorne/Oban High Schools' first and second year sides welcomed Helensburgh and Lomond to Glencruitten for friendly fixtures on Saturday February 23.

All four teams had great numbers on the day showing the ever-increasing popularity and growth of the game throughout the area.

The first years played out a close-fought affair on Glen 3, with Helensburgh eventually running out 31-24 winners after scoring a late try.

Oban's four tries came from Murray McDonald, Mid Argyll, (2) and Thomas Jackson (2). This fixture could have gone either way with both sides playing fantastic, free flowing rugby.

On the main pitch, the second year game was a comfortable win for the visitors who ran out 43-17 winners. Oban did have their moments in the game and hit back with a hat-trick of tries from the impressive Gregor Warnock.

Both clubs enjoyed fantastic pre-match hospitality provided by a great team of Oban parents. It is hoped Oban can return the favour and travel to Helensburgh before the end of the season.

Oban's first and second year players were due back in action yesterday (Wednesday February 27) in their next

YOUTH RUGBY

Bulls v Sharks inter-school/club fixture at Oban High School.

West Regional U18 Cup Oban Lorne U18s 10 v Cartha Queens Park RFC 36

After two recent losses in the U18 competition against West of Scotland and Whitecraigs, Oban U18s were looking to salvage some pride with the visit of Cartha Queens Park RFC to Glencruitten on Saturday.

Oban coach Murray Hamilton was left with a pre-match headache with a number of first choice players calling off due to illness or injury meaning he only had a limited squad of 15 players.

A number of players agreed to play out of position including a start for winger Robert McLaughlin at scrum half.

Oban held out in defence in the early stages of the match, but started to fall off the tackles as the first 35 wore on and found themselves 24-0 down at half-time.

Things improved in the second half as the side scored their first points of 2019 with an Angus Neil penalty and a well-taken try from Aaron McCall giving Oban a deserved 10-point haul for their efforts.

Forward Craig Cook and stand off Angus Neil were the standout performers in

the Oban side and should see themselves wearing a first team shirt next season if they continue their good form.

Oban U18s are now likely to find themselves in the semi final of the West Bowl that will be drawn this week.

National U15 Girls Club Cup Preliminary Round Oban U15 Girls 73 v East Kilbride 31

East Kilbride's U15 girls made the trip to Oban on Saturday for the second meeting between the sides this season.

East Kilbride won an evenly-matched contest 21-19 at Glencruitten last September.

Oban's girls have been impressing this season and played on Sunday after a good showing at the Glasgow Warriors Rugby Championship where they won all of their matches.

After a close start to the game, with East Kilbride leading 14-7, Oban improved their performance and beat East Kilbride 73-31 in a match that was closer than the scoreline suggests.

Oban's 11 tries came from Chloe Armour, Amber Russell, Mid Argyll, Eve Campbell, Charlie Johnston, Kate Findlay, Jordan MacIntyre (2) and Poppy McKillop (4). Rona Shearer added a further 20 points with 10 successful conversions.

This was probably the best overall performance from the Oban U15 girls who excelled across the pitch in all areas

of the game. Such was both teams intent to play fast and positively, there was not one line-out in the 60 minutes of action.

Oban have been rewarded with a tie away to Hillhead Jordanhill Girls in the first round. This tie will take place on Sunday March 10. Fellow Argyll side Islay RFC will also be in action that weekend with a visit to Biggar.

U16 West Regional Cup Oban Lorne U16s 17 v Cartha Queens Park 36

It was a double header for Oban and Cartha at the weekend with the U16s following in the U18s footsteps by playing on the Sunday.

Oban were confident ahead of the game after a good run of results and an impressive showing of 25 boys for the match day squad including players from Mull, Lochaber and Mid Argyll.

After a good start where they found themselves 7-0 ahead, Oban eased off in the contact areas of the game against a physical opposition who raced into a 19-7 lead at half time.

Oban put the pressure on early in the second half but were undone with handling errors close to the tryline. In the end, Cartha were deserved 36-17 winners in what was an entertaining game of rugby between two well-structured and skillful sides.

Oban U16s await the draw of the next round.



Ben Fulford is quick off the mark in the Oban Lorne U18s cup match against Cartha Queen's Park. Photograph: Stephen Lawson.



Aaron McCall scores a try for Oban Lorne Under 18s in their cup tie against Cartha Queen's Park. Photograph: Stephen Lawson.

First Dalriada Festival of 2019

P4/5s, P6/7s, U15 girls and U14 boys from across Argyll will be travelling to Mid Argyll's Ropework Park, Lochgilphead, this Sunday for the first Dalriada Festival of 2019.

The action kicks off with the Minis at noon, while the U14 boys and U15 girls will kick off around 1.30pm.

Rugby stars gain Warriors wisdom

Oban High School have been rubbing shoulders with some of the country's top rugby players while competing in the 2019 SP Energy Networks Warriors Championship at Scotstoun Stadium.

Five schools took part in the qualifying day last Wednesday with Oban High School up against Falkirk High School, Cumnock Academy, Maxwelltown High School and winners Lenzie Academy who qualified for the semi-finals.

A total of 204 tries were scored during an entertaining 30 matches involving an S1 and S2 boys' team and an under-15 girls' team from each school.

Oban High School pupils once again made the long journey down the west coast to compete but their S1 captain Finlay Brown said the trip south was worth it.

'We have a really great team

YOUTH RUGBY

and I enjoy the camaraderie of playing in this competition. I also like the challenge of competing against all the other schools and trying to work out how we beat them.'

Finlay has been involved in rugby since he was in primary two.

'I really enjoy the contact and team work involved,' he added. 'I play full-back and like tackling and running from full-back like Stuart Hogg.'

'I'm also a fan of Edinburgh Rugby's Magnus Bradbury because he is from Oban and I used to know him when I was younger.'

Across their 12 matches, Oban High School's three sides scored an impressive 62 tries, winning eight and drawing one.

Scotland and Glasgow



Oban High School girls' team with wounded Warriors Huw Jones, left, and Stuart Hogg.

Warriors rugby star Huw Jones took time out from his injury rehab to watch the Oban High School players in action. He also passed on

some advice during a break from play.

Jones was joined on the sidelines by fellow Warriors DTH van der Merwe, Ryan

Wilson and Stuart Hogg. Jones said: 'Watching all the girls and boys today reminds me of my past and when I started. Seeing them having

so much fun brings back fond memories.

'My two older brothers played and my dad was a rugby coach when he was a school teacher.

'We had rugby balls lying all over the house and garden so I was playing from a very young age. I played football, cricket and other sports but when I got to 16 I decided rugby was my favourite.'

'It was the sport I was best at and I would say to the youngsters today, if they enjoy playing rugby, keep playing.'

At the beginning of the 2017/18 season, Glasgow Warriors announced a landmark three-year partnership with SP Energy Networks which saw them become the club's official community partner.

More than 1,000 girls and boys from 25 schools are competing in this year's competition.

LT

10-PIN BOWLING

Alleycats continue scratch domination

After week 15 of the Lochaber Building Supplies ten-pin bowling leagues at the Nevis Centre in Fort William the top three teams in the scratch division ran out 5-0 winners which means Alleycats continue to lead with 69 points followed by Council in second place with 63 points and The Empire in third place with 57 points.

In the handicap division, The Empire are the new leaders with 57 points. Alleycats fall to second place on 56 points after dropping two points to Rotavators. Council are also in close attendance in third place on 52 points.

The top individual scratch game this week came from Brian Johnstone (Alleycats) with 197. Brian Johnstone also had the top handicap game of 229 and the top two-game scratch series of 334 whilst Simon Hardiman (Rotavators) had the top two-game handicap series with 412.

The best team scores this week came from Alleycats with the top scratch game of 604, the top two-game scratch series of 1,121 and the top handicap game of 794 whilst British Legion Fort William had the top two-game handicap series of 1,512.

The top scratch averages are currently held by Brian Johnstone on 161 followed by Pam Weller (Alleycats) on 148 with Brian Stewart (The Empire) on 146.



World's most unusual ski race comes to Glencoe

Red Bull Homerun has attracted daredevils from around the globe for the past 10 years.

Now, it will take place on UK snow for the very first time at Glencoe Mountain Resort.

Adrenaline junkies will have the opportunity to take part in the one-of-a-kind downhill race – but they'll have to move quickly as only 300 places are available.

The race, which takes place on Wednesday March 13, begins with competitors making a Le-Mans style mass sprint to grab their skis and snowboards, before clipping in for a top-to-bottom downwards dash.

Among those taking part will be one of Britain's top freeskiers Paddy Graham, who will put personal pride at stake as he races against 299 other competitors.

The Red Bull athlete said:



'Personally, I've never prepared for any kind of race as a freestyle skier or had to work on a sprinting technique, but that's just one of the things that makes the Red Bull Homerun stand out, being my first!

'I know I'll have 299 other people trying to beat me, so I'll be doing everything possible to make sure I'm

the quickest out of the blocks come race day.

'This is a unique race and Glencoe is the perfect place to host the UK's first edition of the Red Bull Homerun, I can't wait to test out my technique.'

The event is open to all intermediate skiers and snowboarders over the age of 16. The fastest skiers and snowboarders across the line,

The race, which takes place on Wednesday March 13, begins with competitors making a Le-Mans style mass sprint to grab their skis and snowboards.

both male and female, will be crowned winners.

Shortly after the event, all competitors will enjoy an unbeatable après-ski party at the bottom of the mountain.

Free coach transport from Glasgow and Edinburgh will be provided for any competitors travelling to the event from Scotland's two biggest cities.

Red Bull Homerun will take place on Wednesday March 13 at Glencoe Mountain Resort with the race set to get under way at 3pm. To take part, visit redbull.co.uk/homerun.

Spectator tickets will be available on the day from Glencoe Mountain Resort.



Pictured from left: Jack Hamilton, boys' swimmer of the year and Gardner Trophy for 100m freestyle; Andzelina Gerasimuka, 12-and-under most improved girl; Jenna MacLean, girls' swimmer of the year and fastest 100m freestyle; Gabriel MacCallum Boys' 15-and-under most improved; Dobrochna Czaplá girls' 15-and-under most improved girl; and below, The entire Lochaber Leisure Centre Swim Team. All photographs Abrightside Photography.

Lochaber Swim Team celebrate year of success

Lochaber Leisure Centre Swim Team enjoyed their annual awards night recently at Fort William Shinty Club's clubhouse after a successful year.

Coach Stevie Martin said all of this year's prizes reflected the commitment and great work ethic of the youngsters towards their swimming.

Among the award winners was nine-year-old Andzelina Gerasimuka, who is currently the fastest at her age in Scotland at both 50 metres



butterfly and breaststroke and a real star for the future.

In February, Jenna MacLean, 15, won a silver medal at the North District champs in

Aberdeen and was presented with the girls' swimmer of the year award, while Dobrochna Czaplá, 13, also secured new pbs in all her four swims at that

event and won most improved girl under 15.

Jenna and Dobrochna swim eight hours each week plus a weekend every month in Inverness consisting of eight hours per day as members of the Highland swim team.

Jack Hamilton, 17, won his second club championship this year and is hoping to qualify for the Scottish champs this year.

He was named boys' swimmer of the year and was pre-

sented the Gardner Trophy for winning the 100m freestyle.

Most improved boy under 15, Gabriel MacCallum, 15, has been a member since he was 11 and has made a massive improvement this year which helped bring him this award.

The club's sprint championships took place recently on Wednesday January 16 and 23, in which 50 swimmers participated in some exciting racing.

The team had 180 personal best times, which included the

five races to complete the club championships: all four x 50m races, as well as the 100m IM. Some of the younger swimmers also completed three extra 100m races.

The team also had nine new age group records and two new club records.

If the event had been accredited, Andzelina Gerasimuka would have set the fastest times in three of the events in the 10-year-old category in Scotland.

Fort William Shinty Club awards night



Fort William Shinty Club held its annual awards night at the An Aird clubhouse last week.

James Tangney was named as the first team player of the year for the 2018 season, while Stuart Disher picked up the second team player of the year award. Lachie Shaw was also named the under-17s player of the year.



Kim Boa took home the women's player of the year awards, while Leah Maxtone was named women's development team player of the year.

Picture clockwise from above left: Stuart Disher, second team player of the year; Kim Boa, women's player of the year; Lachie



Shaw, U17s' player of the year; Liz Tangney accepted the player of the year trophy on behalf of her son James, who is injured; and Hazel Maxtone, right, accepted the development player of the year (women's) trophy on behalf of her granddaughter Leah Maxtone.



All photographs: Abridge Photography.

Jags frustrated by Strathclyde win

South Lochaber Thistle	1
Strathclyde University	2
Greater Glasgow Premier AFL Division 2	

A depleted South Lochaber squad were disappointed not to pick up any points on Saturday after a surprise defeat to Strathclyde University in soaking conditions at Kinlochleven.

The early exchanges saw SLT carve out several opportunities only to find the Strathclyde keeper in incredible form. Easily the man of the match, the young keeper stopped everything that the Jags could throw at him.

Despite the early barrage on the university goal, Strathclyde opened the scoring against the run of play after the forwards pounced on a slack pass out from the home keeper.

They made it two shortly before half time when another loose pass, this time from midfield, was picked off and resulted in another goal to put the visitors two up at the break.

A change to 4-4-2 early in the second half seemed to spur the Jags on, but they toiled against a fit and youthful Strathclyde side. Despite

some good play the Jags goal came from Andrew McLean, who headed in from a corner with 15 minutes remaining.

SLT pushed on to the end, keeping most of the play in the opposing team's half, but sadly the elusive equaliser was not to be.

Next week the Jags take on Boswell at Rosshall Academy where they hope to get their season back on track.

Right, Danny MacKintosh in possession. Photographs: Iain Ferguson, alba.photos.



Left: Andrew MacLean wins a header; and above, Sean Noble shrugs off his marker.



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WEATHER

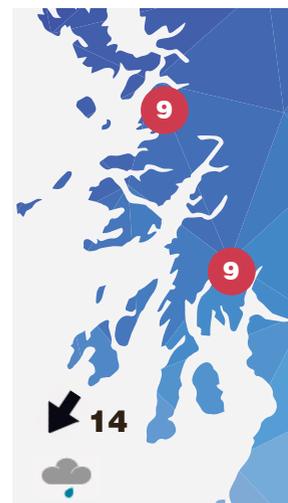
Thursday
Light showers and a moderate breeze
Temperatures 11°C to 8°C.

Friday
Light showers and a moderate breeze
Temperatures 9°C to 7°C.

Weekend Outlook

Saturday
Light showers and a moderate breeze

Sunday
Light showers and a moderate breeze
Temperatures 8°C to 5°C.



FRIDAY

TIDAL INFORMATION

Tide tables for Oban during the week from **Thursday February 28, 2019** are listed below with differences for major ports listed on the right. All times are GMT (add one hour BST)

	00.24	2.8	06.31	1.7
Thur	13.40	2.7	19.37	1.8
Fri	02.07	2.8	08.06	1.8
	16.06	2.8	21.14	1.7
Sat	03.17	3.0	09.43	1.7
	16.38	3.0	22.09	1.5
Sun	04.02	3.3	10.34	1.5
	16.36	3.2	22.49	1.3
Mon	04.39	3.5	11.12	1.3
	17.01	3.4	23.24	1.1
Tues	05.15	3.7	11.44	1.2
	17.32	3.6	23.56	1.0
Wed	05.50	3.8	12.14	1.0
	18.04	3.8	***	**

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

Chain, Shackles and buoys all available to purchase.



Lochaber Swim Team celebrate year of success

Fort athlete looking to lift world record

by Neill Bo Finlayson
nfinlayson@obantimes.co.uk

A Fort William weightlifter has set her sights on the bench press world record after smashing the British record at the recent national championships.

Emma Hebborn, 29, eclipsed her rivals at the recent British Powerlifting Association national championships to break the national bench press record for her weight category – not once but twice.

Her record-breaking performance is made all the more remarkable considering she has not long recovered from career-threatening injuries and two failed knee operations.

Hebborn, who lives in Fort William and runs her own personal training company, ruptured her ACL (anterior cruciate ligament of the knee) just two years ago, an injury which has ended many professional athletes' careers.

At that time, having been forced to quit training for squatting, deadlifting and other sports, the former Lochaber High School pupil decided instead to work on her bench press and within a month she went on to compete at the National Championships and scored herself the first British record.

After focusing on the bench press for another two years, Hebborn returned to the national championships on Saturday February 16 and opened the competition with a British record, lifting 95.5kg, despite only weighing 75kg herself. For her second lift, she broke the record again, this time lifting an incredible 97.5kg. She did not have it all her own way, however, as her third attempt, at 100kg, was



unsuccessful. After that blistering return to national competition, Hebborn has firmly set her sights on the world record.

She told the Lochaber Times: 'Having automatically qualified for World Championships, I am now already back in training, just three days after the last competition, and working towards my ultimate goal of bench pressing 103kg which will be a new world record in my weight class. I am now working very hard to come up with enough funds to get me to the USA to compete and attempt a world record.'

The World Championships will

be held in Henderson, Kentucky, between June 7 and 9, 2019.

Hebborn was a late comer to the world of weightlifting and it was only after she joined the Royal Navy as a communications technician, travelling round the world working as a signaller, that she discovered her passion for the sport.

'I began weightlifting to recover from a serious injury sustained in service. I also used training in the gym as a way to improve my mental health following hard times as a result of serving in Afghanistan and losing friends, colleagues at war.

Emma Hebborn smashed the British bench press record for her under 80kg weight category at the recent powerlifting national championships.

Photograph: Iain Ferguson.

'In 2016 I returned to Scotland to finish my career at the Naval base HMNB CLYDE, otherwise known as Faslane. I was working within the physical training department when a colleague suggested I enter a powerlifting competition, since there wasn't much interest from female competitors.

'In my debut competition I broke the Royal Navy record – then set at 72.5kg. I broke it by just 2.5kg. But I was hooked! I wanted to compete in powerlifting after this event.

'I competed in a number of Joint Service (military) competitions across the country in all three disciplines: squat, bench press and deadlift. However, I soon realised I had a talent for the bench press. I went on to break a number of military records.'

Hebborn went into business with friend Colin Morley, with the aim of opening a weight training gym in Fort William by the end of 2019. The pair plan to open a facility giving men, women and teenagers in Fort William access to top class weightlifting equipment.

She explained: 'Being a weightlifting coach myself, I want to teach people how to get stronger. Not necessarily for competition but for life in general.

'We want to attract all members of the community – from teenagers to people over 50 years old. We also aim to start a weightlifting club to make the sport more accessible to people in the Highlands and potentially host our very own competitions.'

Vale hit Fort for six

Deveronvale	6
Fort William	0
Highland Football League	

Fort William were comfortably beaten on Saturday despite a spirited defensive performance.

It took a late flurry of goals from Deveronvale to make this a comfortable win in the end, after the home side were made to work for their lead in the opening 80 minutes of the match.

The first half saw Vale create a number of chances but a resolute Fort defence, helped by an inspired performance from goalkeeper Calum Ligertwood, kept the half-time score to 2-0.

Vale opened the scoring after 13 minutes after a neat passage of play that saw Robbie Allan slot past Ligertwood. Twenty minutes later the home side got their second from a penalty, awarded for a handball in the crowded Fort box. Grant Noble coolly slotted the ball home for his eighth goal of the season.

The second half saw further sustained pressure on the Fort goal but, again, keeper Ligertwood pulled off a number of fine saves. Another Vale goal was inevitable and Kev Adams duly put the ball in the net on the hour mark from a corner.

The home side continued to press for further goals, but a number of attempts went over the bar, past the post or were saved by the Fort keeper.

The final 10 minutes saw Vale play with a bit more fluency and penetration and further goals came from Robert Scott in the 83rd minute, Lewis Dunbar in the 87th and Liam Forbes in the 89th.

The win moves Vale up to ninth place in the SHFL while Fort William remain rooted to the bottom of the Highland League.

The Fort are at home this Saturday against Wick Academy.



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