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Contract signed for work to start at Rockfield Centre

by Kathie Griffiths
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Building work starts next month on Oban's £3 million Rockfield Centre, transforming the once derelict school into a cultural centre of excellence.

Oban Communities Trust (OCT) announced today (Thursday) that it had 'reached a major milestone in the journey' and had funding to proceed.

It has been a roller-coaster ride taking four years of determined fundraising and a lot of 'dotting 'i's and crossing 'i's to get to this stage, ready to embark on a new and exciting life for the main building.

Mull-based TSL Contractors Ltd has secured the contract, with work to refurbish the building expected to take a year.

If all goes to schedule, the main building should be ready to open next summer when activities already being held in two huts in the former playground will move into their larger home with space to grow and thrive, said Eleanor

MacKinnon, OCT's project facilitator. 'This is a major milestone in our journey. Just four years ago the vision to create a community cultural hub in the former primary school was established and here we are today ready to embark on a new and exciting life for the main building at The Rockfield Centre thanks to the support of our many funders and the wider community,' she added.

The old primary school in the heart of Oban shut in 2007 and lay empty for seven years before OCT was formed in 2014. It was bought by the community in May 2015 with volunteers working to rid the building of dry and wet rot to save it.

The National Lottery Community Fund became its first major funder and a community shares offer raised £210,000 towards the project from supporters in and out of town, which was 'overwhelming', said OCT chairman Gordon McNab.

More funding came from Historic Environment Scotland and Highlands and



Left to right: Ronnie Neil, trustee of Oban Communities Trust, Eleanor MacKinnon, OCT's project facilitator, David Stewart, commercial manager of TSL, OCT chairman Gordon McNab and TSL managing director Andy Knight outside The Rockfield Centre.

Islands Enterprise that flagged up The Rockfield Centre to the area's communities and the Scottish Government Regeneration Capital Grant Fund through Argyll and Bute Council. The Co-op Foundation added its support through its Community Spaces Programme, the first award in Scotland.

And in keeping with a community social enterprise project, other contrib-

utors included The Hugh Fraser Foundation, Scottish Sea Farms Heart of the Community Fund, BID4Oban, MacQueen Bros Charitable Trust, The Crerar Trust, JTH Charitable Trust, Agnes Angus Trust, RBS Community Funding and a Historic Environment Scotland Technical Grant - not forgetting many individual donors and legacies.

Mr McNab said: 'With the

mix of social community benefit and a strong economic boost to Oban and area, we can look to The Rockfield Centre being a hugely important beacon for our town reaching out in so many ways and a shining light as the heart of our creative and caring community.

'Oban is developing at a fast pace with more visitors coming to the town than ever before. With an increasing

population and a burgeoning tourism sector, The Rockfield Centre will be an important and vital part of our town centre - a focal point that will not only provide activities and facilities to benefit Oban and the wider area but become a national destination as a centre of excellence.'

Volunteers are continuing to have a say on the project as it develops, said Mrs MacKinnon, helping various task groups establish what the main building will need inside as well as being on hand for day-to-day operations.

She added: 'We're carrying on as we started and doing things differently. Everyone in the community can be involved and have a say in how The Rockfield Centre will run, what's on offer and how to make it a focal point. This project will make a huge difference to the lives of many in our community and support all age ranges to be active and involved. We are all very excited. It is truly the start of a new era for The Rockfield Centre, for Oban's communities and as part of the national scene.'

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OT

Dramatic competition at fest

by Fiona Scott
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Another highly successful Lorn Drama Festival was enjoyed by large audiences at the Corran Halls last week.

Adjudicator Alan Gray praised the extremely high standard of performance of all the teams and said that he found choosing winners among such a diverse range of plays very difficult.

With a background in youth theatre, he was particularly taken by the enthusiasm of the two youth teams that took part and the obvious sense of fun that the young people took from being on stage.

In the youth section, Taynuilt and District Drama Society took the first prize with *Bad Reception* by Paul Vincent, and this comedy piece was also awarded the Moment in Comedy award for Finlay Brown's comic performance.

Benderloch and North Connel Drama Club juniors were awarded second prize for *Charlotte Holmes: Future Detective*, which was a come-



Lorn Drama Festival prize-winners, from left, back row, Alan Gray, Mike Rowell (festival chairman), Kenny Johnson, Vivienne Price, Caroline Morgan, John Coulson; front row, Anuschka Miller, Carol Thomson, Elaine Graham, Linda Robb and Fiona Young.

dy spin on Sherlock Holmes, with Charlotte investigating a heist of a valuable oil painting aided by her robot companion, Watson.

The adult section of the festival included teams from Dunoon, Campbeltown, Taynuilt, Seil and Benderloch.

Seil Drama Club performed a new play, *(Don't) Throw it Away*, written and directed by club members John Coulson and Caroline Morgan.

The piece explores the relationship between two sisters, who are clearing out their mother's attic and uncovering secrets and stories hidden for years.

The play won the Drama Festival Quill for new writing and Alan said it was only on his second reading of the play that he noticed this was an original script, such was the high quality of the writing.

Seil Drama Club also won

the stage management award.

Similar themes were examined in Dunoon Players, *A Respectable Funeral* by Jimmie Chinn.

A mother's children gather in her house after her funeral and sibling rivalries and long-held secrets are revealed by a combination of grief, humour and whisky.

The play was awarded the JR Smith Trophy for best stage set, for its realistic depiction



Benderloch Juniors, from left, Finlay McLuckie, Ruby Heritage-Crabb, Darcey Miller and Callum Neil perform in *Charlotte Holmes: Future Detective*.

of the elderly mother's cluttered living room.

The theme of death, although with a comic twist, was carried through into *Grave Prospects*, which was presented by Accent Players from Campbeltown.

Revenge was the subject of Taynuilt and District Drama Society's production, *When a Man Knows*.

On a much lighter note, Benderloch and North Connel Drama Club presented two plays by John Finnemore, *English for Pony Lovers* and *Hot Desk*, as part

of his Double Acts series of two-handed plays for Radio Four.

In his closing remarks, festival chairman Mike Rowell thanked all the teams for taking part, particularly Dunoon and Accent for making the trip to Oban and producing a very high-quality festival.

'It is encouraging to see youth drama at the festival and it shows that community drama in Argyll has a bright future,' he added.

For the full list of winners, go to www.obantimes.co.uk.

Advertorial

Eye to eye with John Wallace



Knife crime and vision

Vision is often taken for granted and, mistakenly, many parents think because they can see clearly their children won't have a vision problem. The reality is somewhat different. A recent study found that 19.7 per cent of all children seen in a high street optometric practice in Essex had an undiagnosed vision problem. Much is being made of the current epidemic of knife crime among youngsters. It would appear, according to the various news channels, some 80 per cent of the assailants had been excluded from school typically because of poor behaviour. Other studies have found over 60 per cent of the prison population have undiagnosed reading problems. I suspect there is a significant



link between these children underachieving in school, getting frustrated and then being excluded.

Clear vision is only part of the requirement for maximising performance at school, at work or with sports. We are born with two eyes. Because each eye sees an object from a slightly different angle, when the images are combined we get stereopsis (3D depth perception). Each eye also has a focusing mechanism called accommodation which

enables the eye to change focus from far away to up close and back again. Our two eyes must move in tandem across the page when we read. If any of these aspects of vision are not working properly we can struggle to read or to use smartphones etc.

The basic NHS eye examination is designed to pick up when you are not seeing clearly and also find basic issues about how our two eyes work together. There are many more sophisticated tests which explore reading problems in great depth. At the very least parents should have their children checked every two years. Your optometrist will advise if a more frequent examination is required or a more in-depth vision assessment is appropriate.

John Wallace BSc (Hons), FCOptom, DipCLP

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Trial date set for man accused of killing two pensioners in Oban

A man is to stand trial accused of killing two pensioners in Oban.

Oskars Rancevs appeared on March 28 to face the allegations at the High Court in Glasgow.

The 32-year-old is said to have first murdered Martyn Smith in the town on October 1, 2018. Prosecutors claim he punched, kicked, jumped on and stamped on the 73-year-old.

Rancevs is also charged with the culpable homicide of John White on the same

day in Oban. It is alleged the 75-year-old witnessed the alleged attack on Mr Smith.

Mr White is said to have been calling police when Rancevs then assaulted him. Rancevs is accused of going after the OAP and kicking him on the body.

The indictment claims Mr White was left in a 'state of fear and alarm'.

It is stated, as a result, Mr White suffered a fatal heart attack and that Rancevs killed him.

Both pensioners lived at

the same flats in Oban at the time. Rancevs also faced charges of threatening and abusive behaviour as well as obstructing police.

Keith Stewart, defending, pleaded not guilty on his behalf during a short hearing.

The QC described the case as a 'difficult and sensitive matter'.

Mr Stewart and prosecutor Derick Nelson both agreed a trial could be set.

Lord Arthurson fixed a trial date to begin in July. The case could last up to 12 days.

Oban Rotary gives cash to school pipe band

In line with its support for youth-oriented activities, Oban Rotary Club contributed £500 towards Oban High School Pipe Band's forthcoming visit to New York to celebrate Tartan Day, which is now an annual event. Rotary president Iain MacIntyre handed the cheque to Emma Hill, a leading member of the OHS Pipe Band which operates under the tutelage of world famous piper Angus MacColl.



POLICE FILES

Vandalism

At 12.30am on Monday April 1, in Campbell Crescent, Oban, a man aged 22 was arrested for allegedly behaving in an abusive manner and damaging property. The man was subsequently charged and a report will be submitted to the procurator fiscal.

Misuse of drugs

At about 6pm on Saturday March 30, at a flat on Corran Esplanade, Oban, two men aged 25 and 39, were searched by police. The men allegedly obstructed officers during the search but were found to be in possession of various different drugs. Both men were arrested and charged and are the subject of a report to the procurator fiscal.

Assault

At about 1pm on March 27, a 23-year-old woman was arrested for allegedly assaulting another woman within a common close in Miller Road, Oban.

The woman was later charged with the offence and is subject of a report to the procurator fiscal.

Woman attacked

At about 8.15pm on Friday March 29, a woman allegedly assaulted another woman outside licensed premises in Oban. Inquiries are ongoing to trace the woman involved. Police are appealing for witnesses.

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

'Peeping' cameras did not have permission

by Kathie Griffiths
kgriffiths@obantimes.co.uk



Eight CCTV towers at the centre of a privacy row in Oban were erected without permission.

Despite Oban High School's car park coming under Argyll and Bute Council's responsibility, the developer has only put in a planning application now, months after the eight-metre poles first appeared.

In February, The Oban Times reported tenants in ACHA flats at Glenfoot Terrace were shocked when the cameras in the new high school car park were put up within 'peeping' distance of their homes.

The cameras sparked calls for one of the poles in particular to be removed because some residents felt they were being watched and their privacy being invaded.

One woman, who did not want to be named, said she felt



CCTV cameras are too close for comfort say residents living at Glenfoot Terrace.

like an unwilling star of a Big Brother-style TV show.

A council spokesperson previously told The Oban Times the CCTV cameras were purely for the security of the 907 pupils and 135 members of staff at Oban High School and that steps had been taken to ensure, as far as possible, that the

cameras views did not extend beyond the school boundaries.

Bob Dow, for Hub North Scotland, the developer for the new high school, its pitches and car park, said the cameras were a local authority matter and 'would have been their call'.

The council had also said the cameras were set to avoid look-

ing into private properties to ensure neighbours' privacy but added: 'In the event that they may capture a part of a private property, they are pixellated and blacked out to ensure there are no privacy issues.'

However, tenants remained unconvinced and were furious when they received letters from the council last week telling them that a retrospective planning application had only just been submitted.

Pensioner Violet Bell is one of the residents objecting. She said: 'It's devious. The council can't put this down as an oversight. They wanted to get their cameras up and working first. They did it on purpose.'

'They don't care about us as people, they think they can just ride rough-shod over us. They want their cameras but I want my privacy. The cameras look right into my bedroom and bathroom. I'm already scared of falling, the worry about

the cameras makes me more nervous. I shouldn't have to keep my curtains closed.

'I want the pole outside my home taken down. I will be writing to object.'

In 2016, a planning application submitted for demolishing the old school and building the new one, listed other new facilities but there was no mention of any CCTV cameras.

Oban councillor Jim Lynch has raised this matter with the roads and amenities department so it is aware of concerns but said: 'I will ask again. There can be various reasons why retrospective applications go in but you'd think it would be sensible to have thought it all through,' he said.

The Oban Times specifically asked why the council did not seek permission. The response was: 'This matter will be decided at a future meeting of the Planning, Protective Services and Licensing committee.'

Two appear in private in Oban over drug charges

A man and woman appeared in Oban Sheriff Court in private last Wednesday in connection with drugs charges.

Rita Gatner, 36, and Daniel Guy, 45, were both charged with being concerned in the supply of drugs and being in possession of a controlled drug.

Gatner was also charged with knowingly permitting either cannabis, cannabis resin, or prepared opium to be taken in her premises, as well as attempting to pervert the course of justice.

Both made no pleas and both were granted bail.

The case was continued.



Oban High School pupils have handed over heaps of basic household items to help people make a new start. Brushes, cleaning materials, bedding, mops and cooking utensils were among the donations that students collected in their school clans to give to New Start Oban. On Friday, New Start chairperson Antoinette Mitchell went to thank the students and

their teacher, Alex Craik. 'All this is going to be extremely useful. It's all the things that many of us take for granted but the cost mounts up,' said Ms Mitchell. New Start Oban helps people who are or have been homeless by providing basic items. In the decade since it started, it has provided about 30 starter packs a year probably helping about 300 people.

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OT

Biker fled from police in Oban

A 'moment of madness' last Monday saw a motorcyclist being chased through Oban by police, just minutes after he was disqualified from driving.

John Francis Stephen Frizzel, of Howat Street, Glasgow, was sentenced to eight months in jail on Wednesday March 27 after pleading guilty to dangerous driving.

Sheriff Patrick Hughes deemed Frizzel's driving as one of the worst cases he had come across.

The 39-year-old was banned from driving on Monday March 25 for six months after admitting causing oncoming vehicles to take evasive action during an overtaking manoeuvre on Dunollie Road, Oban, on March 6 last year.

However, after leaving Oban Sheriff Court on the Monday, Frizzel was observed by police getting on his motorbike.

Procurator fiscal Meghan Glancey told the court on Wednesday that Frizzel asked a town restaurant to keep his helmet and jacket before entering court – the conversation was overheard by a member of court staff, who informed police.

Officers then watched him leave court and make his way to the restaurant.

'He was then observed by police to take off on his motorbike. He then accelerated away,' said Ms Glancey.

Officers pursued Frizzel, but he failed to stop and continued up Albany Street. He went across a pedestrian traffic island and through a no entry sign.

The procurator fiscal continued: 'He narrowly missed an oncoming vehicle while negotiating a blind left-hand bend. He continued on to Albany Street and accelerated

the wrong way down a one-way street.'

The accused then made his way north and continued the wrong way up George Street, with oncoming cars being forced to take evasive action.

'On William Street, a pedestrian crossing the road was forced to run due to the accused's speed,' Ms Glancey added. 'The pursuit was stood down due to the manoeuvres being carried out by the accused.'

The search for him continued and his motorcycle was eventually traced in the car park of an Oban hotel and Frizzel was found sitting outside Oban Sheriff Court. He was then taken to the police station and held in custody.

In his defence, Edward Thornton said his client 'regrettably' made the decision to drive to Oban after getting his court days mixed up.

Mr Thornton said his intention was to leave the bike with a friend in Oban and, after being disqualified, Frizzel decided to drive the motorcycle to where he works.

'When he realised he was being observed and about to be arrested, he simply panicked,' Mr Thornton said. 'It was a moment of madness on his part. He eventually drove to the hotel where his friend works, parked the vehicle and made his way back to court with the intention of surrendering himself.'

Sheriff Patrick Hughes said: 'This is one of the worst dangerous driving cases I have come across. Your driving was appalling.' Frizzel, who also admitted driving with no insurance, was disqualified from holding a driver's licence for 40 months, and will have to carry out the extended test of competency.



Rosy Thomson, Gordon Erskine and Melanie Nicol enjoying Freebie Friday at the LORI shop.

Bargain hunters make most of Freebie Friday

Oban's LORI shop at Moleigh Recycling Centre was a magnet for freebie seekers on Friday.

A selection of goods from cabinets to coffee tables and lots more were being given away free to good homes to start a new life.

Among those who went home happy with their finds were Rosy Thomson and

Melanie Nicol. LORI worker Gordon Erskine said: 'We've had a busy day. Everyone loves a bargain and we've got plenty here.'

The shop is open Monday to Friday from 9am to 4pm and Saturdays 11am to 4pm. Delivery can be arranged for the following Wednesday or Thursday for a small extra charge.

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Sentence deferred for man who threatened police officers in Oban

A 28-year-old man has pleaded guilty to threatening police officers and harming himself.

Francis Cannon, of 39 Beechworth Drive, Motherwell, pleaded guilty on Wednesday March 27 at Oban Sheriff Court to behaving in a threatening or abusive manner and to causing fear or alarm.

Procurator fiscal Meghan Glancey told the court that on March 3 of this year, at a flat in Oban, Cannon 'smashed an empty beer bottle over his head and stabbed himself in the neck with the broken glass'.

He then took possession of both a Stanley and kitchen knife and locked himself in a bathroom before stabbing and

slashing himself. After police arrived, Cannon made threats to the officers.

He then lowered himself from the window ledge and police had to grab him. He eventually stopped resisting and officers were able to get him back through the window.

'The accused was taken to [Lorn and Islands] hospital where he continued to threaten police officers,' the procurator fiscal added.

Sheriff Patrick Hughes refused bail and deferred sentencing until April 24 in order for the court to obtain a criminal justice and social work report, a restriction of liberty order assessment, and a psychiatric report.

Seed for life charity keeps on growing

Hundreds of pounds have been raised for a Seil-based charity helping farmers and children in Malawi. A grand total of £340 was made at a Seed for Life – Feed for Life event in Seil Island Hall on March 22.

How Did I Get Here? heard tales from a few people about what brought them to live on the island and there was also a film of the charity's work in Bemvu in Ntcheu province.

The money boosts the £16,000-plus already raised by the charity over the past two years.

The self-sustaining food aid project has been providing farmers with seed and fertiliser to grow crops and is also providing school meals to more than 1,300 pupils a day.

Go to seedforlife.org.uk to find out more.

Man receives community payback order

A 56-year-old man who caused others to suffer fear or alarm by shouting, swearing, emptying ashtrays on a bed, and shooting a framed picture with a crossbow, has been sentenced to a community payback order.

After pleading guilty, William Shaw, of 2 Burnside Court, Main Street, Connel, was ordered to carry out 120 hours of unpaid work at Oban Sheriff Court on Wednesday March 27. Shaw will also be subject to a social

work supervision order for 12 months and had to forfeit his crossbow and other weapons.

Sheriff Patrick Hughes granted a non-harassment order, whereby Shaw will be unable to contact the complainants in any way.

Trust port plan is given backing

by Fiona Scott
fscott@obantimes.co.uk



New legislation, most likely a Harbour Empowerment Order, will be submitted early next year in a further drive to establish a trust port for Oban.

Members of the Oban Bay Management Group (OBMG) backed proposals, in theory, from the Oban Bay Stakeholder Group (OBBSG) to introduce new harbour authority arrangements.

Plans were revealed at a very positive public meeting at the Argyllshire Gathering Halls last week after an evaluation of the viability of operating a trust port was completed.

The call for change came late last year when Caledonian Maritime Assets Ltd (CMAL) launched plans to run the whole harbour and bay, which currently runs under two



statutory harbour authorities: Argyll and Bute Council, which owns the North Pier, and CMAL, which owns the ferry terminal.

While it was agreed that a single authority would improve safety in the busy port, users were concerned that their interests would suffer if CMAL was to become the sole manager.

OBBSG believes that a trust port can be operated for a significantly lower cost than originally thought and a new Oban Community Harbour Development Association (OCHDA) was formed to drive the proposals forward.

Although the majority of OBMG representatives backed the idea of a trust port, and agreed that safety was the main responsibility of any harbour authority, there were still reservations surrounding the viability of the proposal.

A difference of estimated annual running costs of £475,000 between the stakeholder (£325,000) and the management group (£800,000) raised concerns.

Tony Bennett, chairman of Oban Bay Stakeholder Group, believes that a trust port is the most viable option after a municipal port, which had already been ruled out by the council, and that communication would be key to taking it forward.

'If you don't speak and listen, it comes back to bite you,' he warned.

'The whole thing scares me

a bit, to be honest, but I truly believe a trust port would be the most effective form of governance for Oban Bay, which is becoming busier year on year.'

Next steps include drafting the new legislation, finalising operational governance, determining start-up costs and sourcing funding, appointing a project officer and ongoing consultation with all stakeholders.

In the meantime, while the trust port proposal is being developed, the proposal that CMAL is established as the single harbour authority and the preparatory work needed for a Harbour Revision Order (HRO) has been on hold.

The option of CMAL extending its harbour area remains on the table and the board will review its position if no legislation has been promoted by March 1, 2020.

Oban man remanded in custody for sentence

An Oban man has been remanded in custody after admitting repeatedly kicking another man.

Ryan McAllister, 23, of 1B Castle Road, Dunollie, pleaded guilty to, alongside two others whose identities remain unknown, pulling another man down onto a road, and repeatedly kicking him on the head and body.

He appeared in Oban Sheriff Court on Wednesday March 27.

The incident took place on November 11 last year.

Procurator fiscal depute Meghan Glancy said: 'At 12.30am, the complainer and his wife were walking home from a party.

'The complainer became engaged in a disagreement with the accused and two other males.

'At this point, one of the males grabbed the complainer and dragged him to the ground on the middle of the road, causing his T-shirt to rip.

'All three males began kicking the complainer on the body and the head while he lay on

the ground. This continued for a short time.

'The accused and the two other males fled the locus. The police were called and a description of the three males was passed on. A short time later, police officers traced one male who matched the description, that being the accused.

'He was cautioned and replied, "I was in an altercation and I swung at him". He was taken to the police station where he provided a no comment interview.'

Sheriff Hughes deferred sentencing for four weeks in order for the court to obtain reports.

Despite a 'powerful argument' from his solicitor, Edward Thornton, McAllister's application for bail was refused as he had breached conditions twice previously.

He was remanded in custody until he is sentenced on April 24.

YOURSTORY
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Astoria welcome party, from left, Cynthia McKeown, Oban Community Council; Jennie MacLean, Oban High School Pipe Band; Mairi Malloy, Oban Community Council; Councillor Elaine Robertson, Argyll and Bute Council and Joe Reich, BID4Oban.

Astoria passengers given warm welcome

A party of dignitaries from Oban welcomed the first cruise ship of the season at the weekend while passengers made the most of some early spring sunshine.

The Astoria arrived on the perimeter of Oban Harbour at around 8am on Saturday with the first passengers being delivered onto the pontoons by tender at 9am.

Waiting to greet the vis-

itors in brilliant sunshine were community councillors Mairi Malloy (chairwoman) and Cynthia McKeown, Oban and Lorn Area Committee chairwoman Councillor Elaine Robertson and Joe Reich, a BID4Oban town ambassador.

Jennie MacLean of Oban High School Pipe Band played the passengers in.

After the line of coaches

had departed for their various excursions, and foot passengers had headed for the town centre, Ms Malloy and Ms Robertson and ships' agent Chris Alexander took the tender out to the ship to join Linda Battison from Port of Oban Cruise Group for a champagne reception and presentation hosted by Astoria captain, Antonio Morais.

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OT

Islanders vote on winter timetable

by Kathie Griffiths
kgriffiths@obantimes.co.uk



Islanders on Mull and Iona have until next week to vote on a new ferry timetable for next winter – or to keep this year's.

To help people make up their minds, Mull and Iona Ferry Committee has come up with a list of pros and cons for each.

After the deadline of April 12, votes from each island will be counted separately and the new proposed timetable for 2019/20 will only be accepted if it wins majority support from both of the communities individually.

If there is no majority, the 2018/19 winter timetable will stay as it is.

Under the new timetable put forward by CalMac, the pros for people on Mull would include being able to get a full working day on the mainland every weekday and there would be a bigger window of

opportunity for people to make appointments and get other travel connections, including the 8.57am train out of Oban, Monday to Saturday.

However, disadvantages for both Mull and Iona would be likely 24-hour delays for Royal Mail deliveries and the loss of Saturday's late boat back to Craignure. For those coming from Iona, cons would mean they could only get a full day in Oban on a Monday and, other than that, would not get to the town on other days before 11am.

To compare both timetables, go to mullandionaferrycommittee.org.

As well as being online, the information is being made available in public places across the islands. The voting deadline is at midnight on April 12.

Mull and Iona Ferry Committee says its long-running campaign to get an im-

proved, island-focused ferry service between Oban and Craignure has now reached 'a significant juncture'.

Over the past four months, it has increased its lobbying of Transport Scotland and CalMac to produce a timetable for next winter that would make the sailing day longer and give a full eight to nine hours on the mainland every weekday, the same as the 2019 summer service.

Transport Scotland has agreed to extra funds but CalMac's proposal for the new winter timetable still does not fully match the committee's hopes for what an island-focused community service could achieve.

Elizabeth Ferguson, who is the chairperson of Mull and Iona Ferry Committee, said: 'After years of campaigning, CalMac has offered Mull a possible new winter timetable which could give islanders a

full day on the mainland 12 months of the year.

'Unfortunately, the timetable which CalMac has proposed has a number of key shortcomings, including delaying inward post by 24 hours affecting delivery of essential medicines which come by Royal Mail, severely reduced weekend sailings, and a significant degradation of the service for Iona residents.

'The proposed timetable falls a long way short of what we had hoped, and CalMac would not consider any of our suggested counter offers. On first look, this proposed CalMac timetable may look attractive to some. However, it is really important to read through the pros and cons we have put together before voting, so that people fully understand the implications of this proposed CalMac timetable.'

Vote online via surveymonkey.co.uk/r/J25Y5FG.

Trial and error on

Businesses in Oban, Lorn and the Isles feel they have been sold short as far as the resolution of parking issues is concerned.

A trial scheme offering weekly and monthly permits for off-street parking, at a discounted cost, started on Friday and will run for the next 12 months.

Although the move has been largely welcomed, the business community is concerned that it does not address all the problems relating to parking.

Andrew Spence, chief executive of BID4Oban, whose prime aim is to deliver projects and services to the benefit of businesses, said: 'This will go some way to addressing some of the issues but the council has still not come up with a full solution, despite repeated requests from BID4Oban.

'There does not appear to be any advertising in place to advise people that this service is available.

'What proposal does Argyll and Bute Council have to ensure the town's many visi-



tors are aware of this service, particularly those who may be wanting to park their cars to visit islands?'

The new permit offers monthly tickets at a cost £60 and weekly tickets for £30.

In comparison, paying via a parking machine at Ganavan, Lochavullin or Longsdale car parks for a week, and returning daily, would cost £42 for a week at the current rate.

Argyll and Bute Council insists that the new permits will enhance a service that already offers three-, six-, nine- and 12-month permits as well as the ability to pay by phone through the Paysmarti

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Looking forward to a hectic weekend

Around Oban

KAY MCDONALD

editor@obantimes.co.uk



WHERE IS THIS?



I've just spent a very pleasant wee while listening to all the entries for the Oban Live Unsigned and trying to decide my favourites.

It's not easy as we have some very talented acts to choose from.

It also made me realise that it's not long to go, only nine weeks until Oban Live hits the stage again. Personally, I can't wait – I love the buzz it brings to the town and this year I think the fringe events are going to be even better.

Not that I'm wishing my life away. There are lots of things happening to keep me amused in the meantime.

On Friday, Oban and Lorn Dementia Support is hosting a ceilidh in the Royal Hotel; on

Saturday I'm planning a visit to Oban Phoenix Cinema to see Fisherman's Friends; and on Sunday we'll be welcoming a cruise ship carrying more than 3,000 passengers and crew when the Magellan calls into Oban.

On Monday, I think I'll be glad to go back to work for a rest although we're revving up for the summer season at the moment and it's all go.

New leaflets are being prepared, maps sorted, walking tours arranged and preparation for all the cruise ships

and visitors who will shortly be pouring into the town.

I love the anticipation at this time of year, for the good weather and everything that the summer will bring.

It's nice to see all the businesses getting ready too, with fresh paint everywhere.

Last week's photo was of Brian at the Ranald Hotel doing a fantastic job of keeping his part of town clean. Wouldn't it be nice if everyone did the same?

This week's photo is a different angle to look at things.

Let's give warm welcome to cruise ship

On Sunday April 7, we welcome the cruise ship Magellan to Oban with her 1,452 passengers and 660 crew and hope that you will join us in ensuring that they all feel welcome and enjoy their visit to Oban.

Built by Aalborg Vaerft in Denmark, she entered service

for Carnival Cruises on July 13, 1985.

In 2005, she was used as temporary housing for the victims of Hurricane Katrina and after renovation resumed sailing from Mobile, Alabama, until 2009.

In 2014, she was transformed into a four-star floating hotel

in Port Sochi Imeretinskiy for the Winter Olympics after which, in spring 2015, she began cruising under the name Magellan for Cruise and Maritime Voyages and began cruising out of London, Newcastle and Dundee before going into dry dock in 2018 in Amsterdam.

parking permits



'This does not appear to be happening and it is disappointing we have not had a response to our requests for information,' he said.

'With regard to payment options, the use of the mobile phone payment for parking is only available at car parks and not on-street parking.

'We were advised that parking machines would be retro fitted with either card payment facility or mobile phone payment.

'Parking using the Paysmarti method is cumbersome. You have to enter the time in minutes and BID4Oban had asked for ready-reckoners to be attached to each machine to make life easier for people.'

If successful, the pilot will be rolled out across the whole of Argyll and Bute.

In the meantime, parking permit arrangements throughout the rest of the area remain unchanged.

For more information on parking permits and how to buy them go to: www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/parking.

system. Councillor Roddy McCuish, lead for roads and amenity services, said: 'We want to offer greater choice and flexibility to people wishing to use council car parks.'

'The permits also offer a significant discount to those people who park regularly in town.'

'The weekly ticket should benefit visitors using Oban as a base for visiting the islands, sailing or perhaps cycling round the area.'

Mr Spence is looking for further improvements, however, and claims that his group was given verbal assurances that the changes would be in place for Easter.

Woman spared jail after assaulting staff in Oban pub

A woman has been spared a jail sentence after throwing a bar stool in an Oban licensed premises, punching staff members and scratching a police officer.

Instead, Lisa Marie McCuish, 39, of Flat 0-1, 97 George Street, Paisley, was ordered to complete 250 hours of unpaid work and will have to pay £100 compensation to each of the three victims.

McCuish will also be subject to a restriction of liberty order between the hours of 7pm and 5am and will be under the supervision of the social work department for 12 months.

At a previous hearing, during which McCuish pleaded guilty to the charges, the court heard that on January 19 last year, McCuish got into a heated argument in an

Oban pub. When a barman tried to calm her down, she punched him on the chest and threw a bar stool at another staff member, before grabbing her hair and punching her on the face.

Police arrived and McCuish struggled with them, running her hand across a constable's face, cutting his right eye.

In her defence, solicitor Ruben Murdanaigum said

McCuish regretted being involved in the situation and did not set out that night with the intention of harming anyone.

He added: 'Her decision-making capacity at the time was poor.'

Mr Murdanaigum said at the time of the incident, McCuish had health issues, but had since moved away and was receiving support.



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Double reality check for lifeboat assessors

Oban RNLI lifeboat diverted course from an onboard coxswain assessment to assist in two separate incidents last Friday afternoon.

The vessel was initially launched to allow an assessment to be carried out onboard, for new full-time coxswain Ally Cerexhe.

The first incident unfolded while the lifeboat was already at sea with the volunteer crew and was requested to divert after a person had been spotted in the water alongside two kayakers in Oban Bay, which was only a few minutes away from the lifeboat.

The two holidaying kayakers had been out on the water when one fell out of his kayak. Having no wetsuit on, he quickly became cold and was unable to get himself back on to his kayak.

Once the lifeboat was on the

scene, the person was taken aboard for warming and assessment by crew member and medic Dr Colin Wilson.

The lifeboat went back to her berth where the kayaker was transferred to the care of Oban's Coastguard Rescue Team, allowing the lifeboat to resume its assessment exercise.

Just 20 minutes later, however, at 4.20pm, the lifeboat was in the process of anchoring as part of the assessment when the UK Coastguard requested its help again, this time to assist with an incident at Fort William.

Shortly after diverting, the lifeboat was stood down as the situation had been resolved.

With everyone safely accounted for, Oban lifeboat was free to return to the assessment process, returning back to her berth by 5.20pm.



OT

Woman stabbed ex in self-defence

A woman has received a community payback order for stabbing her former partner in Oban.

Karin Irvine, of 114 The Gardens, Southwick, Brighton, admitted striking him on the body with a knife to his severe injury, however, the plea was accepted under provocation. On Wednesday March 27 she was sentenced to a two-year social work supervision order.

Procurator fiscal Eoin McGinty told the court: 'Had this matter gone to trial, it was anticipated that the evidence would show that the complainer was predominantly the aggressor.'

'It would have been the Crown's case that the accused was subject to what appears to be an ongoing assault and that she was legitimately defending herself.'

However, Mr McGinty add-

ed: 'In doing so, she went over and above what was lawful.'

Irvine's solicitor, Ruben Murdanaigum, said: 'She deeply regrets what has happened, but she did not plan for anything like this to happen.'

'This was an isolated incident and very much out of character.'

Mr Murdanaigum said at the time of the incident, on

April 27 2018, Irvine, 45, had moved out of the family home, but was bringing a takeaway to her son and ex-partner. Mr Murdanaigum said: 'The moment she arrived he

started shouting at her. She went to sit down and at this point he came at her shouting and bawling. He grabbed her by her right shoulder and bit her on the shoulder.

'She ran to the kitchen in order to get out the back door but at that point he caught up on her and started to bite her on the middle finger and was also punching her.'

point he caught up on her and started to bite her on the middle finger and was also punching her.'

Irvine's solicitor said things got worse after this and he

placed his thumbs into her eyes.

It was at this point, Mr Murdanaigum said, that she picked up the knife and hit him. He let go and she realised his injury and dialled 999.

The court heard previously that the man was left with a flesh wound of approximately three centimetres in length in the upper left side of his chest.

Sheriff Patrick Hughes said that while people are entitled to use a degree of violence in self-defence, the threshold for self-defence had not been met in this case.

However, given that the Crown agreed that there was a significant amount of provocation and that the violence was instigated by the complainer, Sheriff Hughes was satisfied that there was no need for a custodial sentence.



David Williams, Graham Cameron, Nick Edgington and Linda Thompson, .

Oban photographers snap up annual prizes

Oban Photographic Club celebrated the end of its 2018-19 session with a buffet supper in the Regent Hotel, where they meet every week through the winter.

Chairman Graham Cameron congratulated members on a very productive and successful year.

Prizes, some of which go

back more than 50 years to the beginnings of the club, were presented to Linda Thompson, David Williams, Graham Cameron and new member Nick Edgington, who had an outstanding year in which he won more trophies than anybody else.

The club will resume in the autumn.

SCOTTISH FIELD'S MAY ISSUE OUT NOW

Northern Isles under the spotlight...
Game hunting on Mull... Beautiful Argyll interiors... Secrets of the Shetland Bus... Olympic treasure Liz McColgan... Rhubarb recipes...

Unsigned Oban Live shortlists are revealed

Oban Live has announced the shortlist of Scottish acts that have made it through to the final stage of its nationwide talent competition.

Musicians from all over Scotland entered the Scottish Sea Farms Unsigned Oban Live competition throughout March.

Scottish Sea Farms teamed up with the event, Argyll's largest outdoor live music concert, this year to give talented musicians the opportunity to win a stage slot at the Oban gig this June. The winners will also receive £300 towards expenses and a slot at the official Oban Live after party at The View, Oban.

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. The panel of judges, which included BBC Radio Scotland's Vic Galloway, selected a shortlist from each category and both shortlists have now been put out to the public to vote for their favourites.

From the local category, the eclectic shortlist includes rapper S-Mac, The Argyll Ceilidh Trail, Crackin' Craic and alternative rock artist 4Below, all from the Oban area.



The acts hoping to win Unsigned Oban Live this year.

Making it through to the Scotland-wide category are November Lights (Monifieth), Lisa Kowalski (Paisley), The Youth and Young (Fife), Banshee (Renfrew) and DMS (Edinburgh).

Votes can be cast online from 8pm Monday April 1 by visiting www.obanlive.com/unsigned. The webpage also has videos and information about each act. Voting closes at noon on Monday April 22.

Scottish Sea Farms' Heart of the Community coordinator Georgie Mackenzie

added: 'Securing a stage slot at Oban Live, which draws an audience of thousands, is a huge break for up-and-coming artists.'

'We're genuinely thrilled to be playing our part in supporting both local and Scottish talent, something we put a lot into with regards to our own teams, and we'll be watching with interest to see which two shortlisted acts go on to win the public vote.'

The winners will join an international stream of Celtic, rock and folk acts on June 7 and 8.

Seil backs waste water proposal

by Kathie Griffiths
kgriffiths@obantimes.co.uk



Stakeholders on Seil have produced handouts explaining why they unanimously agreed to support a hillside site as the 'best solution' for Scottish Water's new £5.6 million water waste treatment plant.

The handouts for Clachan Seil and Balvicar residents were distributed at a lively meeting last week where Scottish Water officials faced a grilling of 29 questions from councillors and the public.

There are now plans to make the handouts available at other places, including Balvicar shop at the time the planning bid goes in so more people can hear how the choice was finally made after 18 months of consultation, scientific research and meetings.

The handout concludes: 'We as local stakeholders believe

that using a small part of grazing land in the centre of the island is a small price to pay for the proper treatment of your sewage and the avoidance of pollution of Balvicar Bay.'

It also encourages people to support Scottish Water's planning application and warns if it is rejected there would be further delays with Balvicar Bay continuing to be polluted.

Scottish Water's original solution was to pump sewage and rainwater over to Seaview and discharge it, only partially treated, into the Firth of Lorne. That solution was opposed at a public meeting in 2015 and by a petition of 265 residents.

If Scottish Water submits its new plans by May to build the new treatment works opposite its current plant, a decision could be made by November with work starting next spring.

Anne-Marie Robin from the stakeholders' group said: 'I

think most of the community think it's all been resolved and we now have to go forward as positively as possible.'

About 40 people were at last week's meeting, including a number of Save Our Seil campaigners who oppose the decided option and raised concerns about how the stakeholders' group was set up.

Views have been split over the location of the new treatment works.

At last week's question time, Scottish Water's head of public affairs, Alan Thomson, said Scottish Water knew from the start that the stakeholders' group would never be representative of all views but felt everything had been done 'with the best intentions'.

People were put forward after being nominated by the community council. Two people living near the current plant were allowed on to the group

by MSP Michael Russell, who chaired its first meeting.

Ronnie Robinson from Save Our Seil asked Mr Thomson: 'So no particular guidance or legislation?' Mr Thomson replied: 'No.'

Mr Robinson later told The Oban Times: 'It's my understanding there are guidelines on how stakeholder groups operated by public bodies should be carried out and that quite clearly was not the case as Mr Thomson confirmed.' He said campaigners were 'very disappointed'.

Mr Thomson was also asked why Scottish Water had decided to come to a meeting only now when the community council had been requesting it for two years. He said there had been 'no plot' and the company had been doing lots to engage with the public. Scottish Water says it will continue to keep the community up to date.

Integration Joint Board approves 2019-20 budget

Argyll and Bute Integration Joint Board (IJB) has approved the 2019-20 budget proposals for the Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP).

The proposals outline that the total estimated budget for the HSCP is £276.327m and that savings of £6.794m will have to be made to deliver a balanced budget for the 2019-20 financial year.

Kirsty Flanagan, interim chief financial officer, said: 'I am pleased the Integration Joint Board has today (Wednesday March 27) approved the Health and Social Care Partnership's budget proposals for 2019-20. By endorsing these proposals, this will deliver a balanced budget for the HSCP in financial year 2019-20.'

'The approval of the budget proposals and our aim of achieving a balanced budget will also provide reassurance to the public, staff and our stakeholders that the HSCP is determined to work within our budget.'

'There are a number of



Kirsty Flanagan.

recommended savings within the budget proposals which total £6.794m, all of which are in line with the strategic objectives of the HSCP and senior managers will now work towards delivering these within the allocated timescale.

'It is also important to highlight there is still a significant estimated budget gap over the following two financial years (2020-21, 2021-22) and work will need to start immediately on identifying savings proposals to balance the budget for these two years.'

Council is forced to issue apology over email glitch

Argyll and Bute Council has apologised after a technical glitch led to the email addresses of hundreds of residents being leaked during a competition process.

Entrants to the authority's contest to win a year's free council tax were left staggered when a reminder dropped into their inboxes and they were able to view the details of other contestants.

Numerous email addresses belonging to council taxpayers across the area were made visible when the communication went out late last week.

One resident contacted the council to register her concerns – and was told that she wasn't the first to flag up the issue.

The resident said: 'I received the email about the competition to win a year's free council tax and was invited to click a link.'

'When I did so, there was no message, but I could see all these email addresses which had been made visible.'



Councillor Rory Colville.

'I have literally every single email address up on my screen. This is a complete breach of confidentiality.'

'I phoned the council and they said they were aware of a technical error and that I was the second person who had called up.'

A spokesperson for Argyll and Bute Council said: 'We emailed people to remind them that there is still time to enter a prize draw to win a year's free council tax by

signing up for council tax e-billing.'

'Unfortunately, an error resulted in email addresses being visible.'

'We have followed relevant guidance in investigating the matter.'

'We apologise to residents affected, and assure them that action has been taken.'

The competition – which has now closed – was launched by the council at the start of this year to encourage residents to sign up to its new e-billing service.

The online facility enables taxpayers to log in any time to see their bills, access copies of letters and view their current instalment plan.

When launching the competition, Councillor Rory Colville, policy lead for customer services, said: 'It's also a great opportunity to help us cut down on the amount of paper we all use.'

'I hope that people make the most of this great opportunity.'

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OT

Theatre boss bows out as leading man

by Kathie Griffiths
kgriffiths@obantimes.co.uk

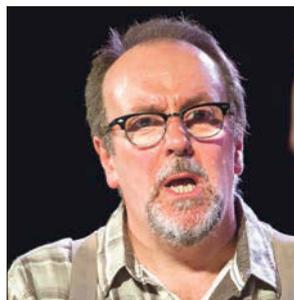


Arts boss Alasdair McCrone is quitting his top job at Comar on Mull.

News that Tobermory-based Mr McCrone is leaving his role as the organisation's chief executive comes almost four years after he and another director, Gordon Maclean, were 'let go' because of cost-cutting measures.

Their job losses as directors resulted in more than 250 people at a public meeting on Mull voting no confidence in the Comar board at that time and calling for the sacked directors' reinstatement. The actors' union Equity also hit out.

A shadow board was then set up to oppose the jobs being axed and the redundancy process was halted, followed by open recruitment for a new convener and board



Alasdair McCrone.

members. Then, in December 2015, major changes were announced, including Mr McCrone becoming the new chief executive.

Mr McCrone's departure was officially announced last week, saying he will be going this spring so he can 'focus full-time on his creative work' instead of balancing it with a desk job.

His employment at Comar cost £38,010 last year, according to the charity's financial

statement ending March 2018.

The online announcement described Mr McCrone's career at Comar as 'memorable'.

He will leave in June after a 'mutual agreement' was made, said Gordon Dougall, co-chairman of the Comar board.

The online statement read: 'After 24 years of balancing acting and directing with a desk job, Alasdair McCrone will be leaving Comar this spring to focus full-time on his creative work. His career with Mull Theatre, and subsequently with Comar, the Mull arts organisation, has been memorable.'

Mr McCrone has directed 63 new productions for Mull Theatre, commissioned or presented more than 30 newly commissioned plays, sent out 66 major tours or residencies in other theatres and appeared as an actor in 30 separate productions. He also forged

co-production partnerships with other companies and creative producers and he says he has given paid professional work to more than 300 people.

'After the collapse of the previous Comar board and management in late 2015, I was asked to step up and take on the role of acting CEO because there was no realistic alternative. In the year following this, we stabilised the company and submitted a successful application to Creative Scotland for continued core funding. Now it is time for me to leave that desk and get back to what I love doing most,' said Mr McCrone.

Two years after Comar was virtually reinvented, it was awarded £1,250,000 from Creative Scotland for 2018-21, working out at just over £416,000 a year. A spokesperson confirmed Mr McCrone's departure had been communicated to them.

Part of US minesweeper washes up on Tiree beach

Volunteer litter collectors on the Isle of Tiree were blown away last week by finding a large segment from a US Navy minesweeper.

Seven-year-old Lachlan Dufour-Christie ran off to chase a man-sized piece of polystyrene the group had been targeting in the strong wind.

The item was among 12 Parley bags, 2m squared, of marine litter cleared away from the shoreline during the beach clean which was organised by Catriona Spink from the SCRAPbook project, OceanGives and Surfers Against Sewage (SAS).

The project, which involves Sky Watch, Civil Air Patrol, pilots and conservation groups, is mapping coastal litter in Scotland and the minesweeper piece is just the latest in a number of unusual items found during beach cleans.

In last week's impromptu clean alone, the group collected bottles, fishing lines, ropes, creels, buoys, bathroom products and, of course, the lump of polystyrene which



Lachlan Dufour-Christie with his latest litter find.

was eventually pinned down.

Ms Spink said: 'We have frontline experience of what comes from the Atlantic... shocking! A beach is cleared then two days later a surge of more tide line plastics, each day another bag - it is madness. We can't keep up.'

'Our whole island is a marine debris sink.'

The group is now hoping that @usnavy may be able to help it find out where and when it was deployed and what its mission was.

Finder Lachlan has the object in his back garden.

MacPhail

ANGUS MACPHAIL

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Rona Lightfoot from South Uist is among the most dangerous people to meet when one is trying to observe Lenten abstinence.

Just five minutes in her company - even first thing in the morning - is enough to put anyone in the mood for a good party.

This soon-to-be 83-year-old legend of piping, Gaelic song and tradition is a woman who has a positive effect on anyone lucky enough to be in her company.

Last Saturday morning she was recording a small bit of backing vocals for the new Skipinnish album and it was a great pleasure to see her again after nearly 10 years.

We played at Rona's 70th birthday party and, a few years after that, at her and her husband Tony's golden wedding. I was delighted that in the decade since seeing her, she's lost none of her vigour and electric charisma.

Long before the current emphasis of gender equality, Rona was breaking down boundaries of sexism in the very much male-dominated world of piping. She had a highly successful solo piping career and is credited as being the first woman to



Rona Lightfoot.

gain a prize in a major piping competition.

She was also the first woman to compete in the prestigious Bratach Gorm, the premier pibroch competition run by the Scottish Piping Society of London. She had to campaign to be allowed to enter this competition because, as with many similar events, women were customarily excluded.

The piping world is not too similar to the Hollywood movie industry but if Harvey Weinstein had ever tried his behaviour with Rona, he would have been very firmly put in his place.

While Rona is full of fun and good humour, she is certainly not someone to be tangled with and her track record of fighting the corner of female piping competitors is a clear indicator of this.

Apart from competition success, Rona is a well-respected piping judge and in fact this weekend is heading to Stornoway to judge at the Donald MacLeod Memorial Piping Competition.

In 2009, she was inducted into the Scottish Traditional Music Hall of Fame in recognition of her achievements as a piper, singer and tradition bearer. The following year, she received the Balvenie Medal for Services to Piping.

She was also the first and yet to be only woman to hold the position of president of the Inverness Piping Society.

Her achievements, her competition success and these other accolades that have been deservedly bestowed upon her are a clear mark of her talents and attributes as a performer, musician and character. However, none of them reflects the incredible experience it is to meet this great woman in person.

To quote someone I know well while talking about Rona, I will finish with this. 'She is so deeply rooted and down to earth but with such a wondrous star quality at the same time.'

I will make sure it isn't 10 years till I see her next.

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Above: the Rotary team of, from left, Walter Burton, Dave Waltho, Peter Tosh, president Iain MacIntyre, Graham Fraser, Alan Hoar, Dave Mudie and Roger Parry, at the Corran Halls on Sunday; Ross Preston (Footprint Alba), student Solene Giraudeau and Terry Donovan from the GRAB Trust; and, below, Beavers, Cubs and Scouts helped in Benderloch.

Cleaners spring into action

by Kathie Griffiths
kgriffiths@obantimes.co.uk

Oban and the surrounding villages are now well and truly sparkling thanks to a mammoth effort from spring cleaners last weekend.

Community groups, organisations, businesses and individuals turned out in their hordes to do their bit for the big Oban Spring Clean 2019.

Coordinator Claire Rizos, from Keep Oban Beautiful, reported that at least 33 separate groups were out working, with a group being anything from one to 30 individuals.

Approximately 145 people took part, an increase from the estimated 100 last year and around 220 bags of rubbish were collected.

Some of the larger discarded items found included a lawn mower, mattress, at least seven traffic cones, three tyres, a wheelie bin from the river, a radiator and a bicycle.

Bag numbers are lower than the estimated 300

last year, but coverage was greater overall with numbers up in Kilmore, a big effort in Benderloch, and a group from Dunstaffnage businesses, including SAMS, all joining in.

This year, some groups gave extra attention to pavements and roadsides by clearing them of debris and cutting back undergrowth – special mention going to Kilmore residents and West Highland Housing Association (Lochavullin Road) and Oban Rotary Club (Corran Halls).

On the organising side, BID4Oban provided extra help with publicity, paying for advertising and design, while CGL printed and laminated the poster and banner for the gazebo free of charge.

Terry Donovan helped by loaning equipment from GRAB, running educational events in the week and also setting up a gazebo in Station Square with marine litter information for the public on Saturday.

Janie Steel from Footprint Alba led the drop-in beach

cleans and ran some events in the week, including with Scouts.

Maurice Wilkins from Keep Oban Beautiful (KOB) led some drop-in Black Lynn sessions and Andy, from Argyll and Bute Council's amenity team, supported the event by collecting the bags before they got in the way.

The council also provided four extra staff over the weekend and the Rockfield Centre gave essential accommodation for the equipment and coordination hub.

Mr Wilkins said: 'Many thanks to Claire for organising the whole event – it wouldn't have happened without her.'

'And, of course, a huge thank you from KOB to all the people who took part in this our second Oban Spring Clean – we're very proud of you.'

Cafes joined in this year by offering free drinks to the volunteers – KOB would like to thank Costa, the Bridge Café, Julie's, Roxy's and Taste of Argyll for providing this service.



Left: Keep Oban Beautiful's Maurice Wilkins, centre, at the clean up of the Black Lynn; and West Highland Housing Association pulled out all the stops in Lochavullin Road.



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OT



Members of various groups welcomed the placement of the new tap in Oban. Pictures: Iain Ferguson, The Write Image

Top-up tap goes down a treat

by Fiona Scott
fscott@obantimes.co.uk



A small blue oasis has appeared in the centre of Oban, and it has been drawing attention from everyone passing by.

Scotland's newest top-up tap was unveiled in Station Square last week as part of a nationwide roll-out by Scottish Water as part of its Your Water Your Life campaign.

It is hoped that the taps will encourage more people to drink tap water on the go to stay hydrated, save money and protect the environment by using refillable bottles.

The location, near the clock tower, was chosen because it is a transport hub close to the railway and bus stations and ferry terminal, and is convenient for thirsty travellers and residents.

Welcoming the installation of the tap, BID4Oban's Andrew Spence said: 'We are delighted that Oban has been chosen by Scottish Water for this new initiative.'

'The new tap is in a central location in a busy thoroughfare and that means it will be very convenient for residents and visitors.'

'Hopefully, this will encourage people to use reusable bottles and so minimise the



Members of Oban High School Pipe Band line up to quench their thirst.

use of single-use plastics and bottles.'

Phil Hammerton, of Oban Plastics Reduction Initiative,

added: 'Scottish Water's Top-up Tap initiative is a huge step forward in providing water for travellers and on-the-go

residents. What we need now is to change our behaviour. We must encourage everyone in the area, whether resident or visitor, to use refillable bottles wherever possible.

'The tap can only help so it's a very welcome addition to the landscape and facilities in the town centre.'

The opening of the tap, at which Scottish Water staff distributed refillable bottles, follows the recent completion of a £29m investment by the utility firm in a new water treatment works at Tullich south of Oban which supplies drinking water to more than 10,000 customers in the area.

Speaking at the tap launch,

Ross Barclay, Scottish Water's water operations team leader, said: 'We're delighted to have opened the top-up tap in Oban, which is one of the first 10 locations in the country to receive one as part of our nationwide roll-out.'

Top-up taps have been installed in locations such as Edinburgh, Glasgow, Ayr, Dumfries, Aberdeen and Inverness and at both ends of the West Highland Way in Milngavie near Glasgow and Fort William.

Members of the Oban High School Pipe Band and local councillors helped Scottish Water celebrate the tap opening.

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Atlantis Leisure centre goes from strength to strength

by Fiona Scott
fscott@obantimes.co.uk



Oban's community-funded sport and leisure facility is in great shape and is building towards an even healthier future.

Reporting at the Atlantis Leisure AGM recently, trustees of Oban and Lorn Community Enterprise Ltd said: '2018 was one of the busiest and most exciting years that we've ever had at Atlantis.

'On top of normal business, we also continued our 25th anniversary celebrations, and a number of significant community and fundraising events took place throughout the year.'

Highlights of 2018 included Scottish Ballet's two-day Highland Fling event, the Muddy Atlantis Day (MAD) obstacle course, dance shows, a gymnastics competition, two editions of



Fitness instructors Max Buchanan, left, and Finlay Carmichael have set their businesses up at Atlantis Leisure's gym.

As well as one-off events, business as usual proved no less busy or evolving. Oban swimming and gymnastics schools saw significant growth, while two new fitness trainers and therapists now base their businesses at Atlantis.

The continued development of Healthy Options, along with the Oban Health Town partnership, also brought positive feedback from the trustees.

The trustees continued: 'Without the commitment and enthusiasm of our staff teams, none of this diverse range of activities would happen.

'It is pleasing that the strength and depth of our management, coaching and

facility teams proves resilient and adaptable to change.

'The strategic direction of the business is an area that the board and management team are actively working on.'

Future plans for the facility include a youth work training programme, complete redevelopment of changing areas and provision of a multi-purpose pitch.

'Delivering the above can only happen with the energy and enthusiasm of our people,' the report continued.

'We are grateful to our brilliant staff and team of volunteers who work tirelessly to ensure our customers have the best possible experience when they visit the centre.

'The Atlantis journey has been an exciting one and over the years it is amazing to think how many people across all ages have benefited in some way from the Atlantis experience - they are all part of the community story.'

the hugely successful Oban High School lock-in, run in partnership with youth charity Hope2Oban and Oban's Community Health Fair.

The 25th-year celebrations culminated in a celebratory dinner with Susie Wolff (one of Atlantis Leisure's first

Elite Squad members) as keynote speaker. This event in particular marked the considerable contribution of the 25th anniversary celebrations committee, whose input steered the success of the year's events and activities.

An integral part of the

25th year was an intention to improve the fabric and facilities of the centre. This meant that a range of projects was delivered during the year, including upgrading of lighting, flooring and CCTV, and the modernisation of air and water distribution systems.

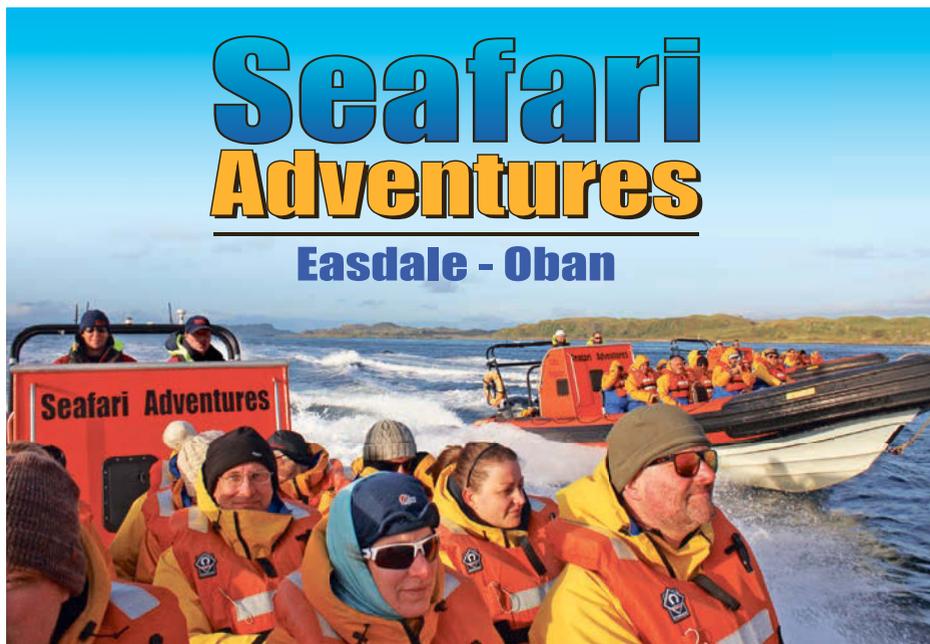
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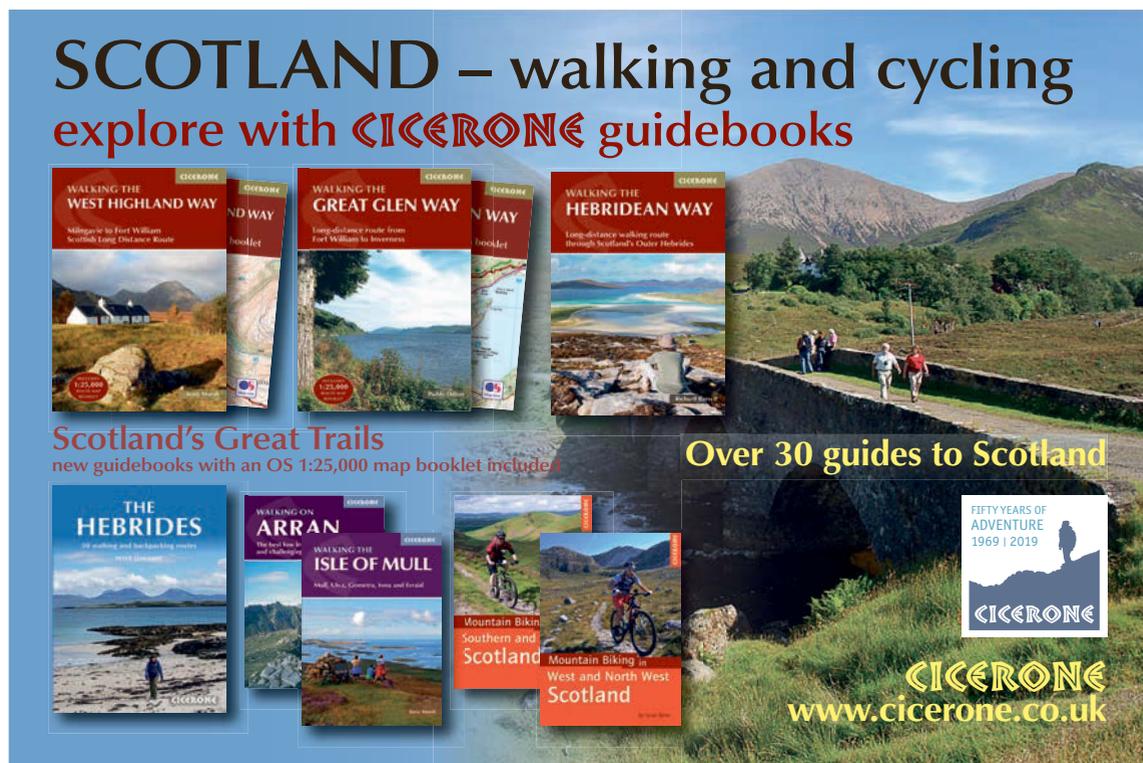
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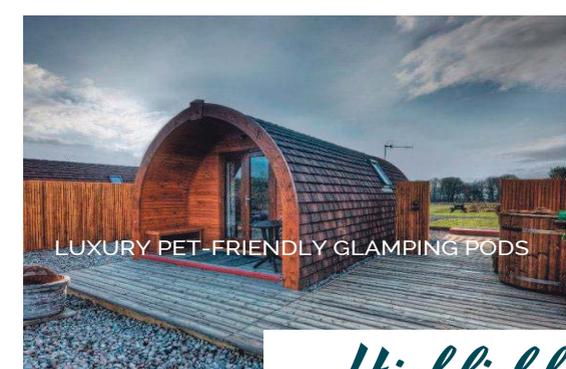
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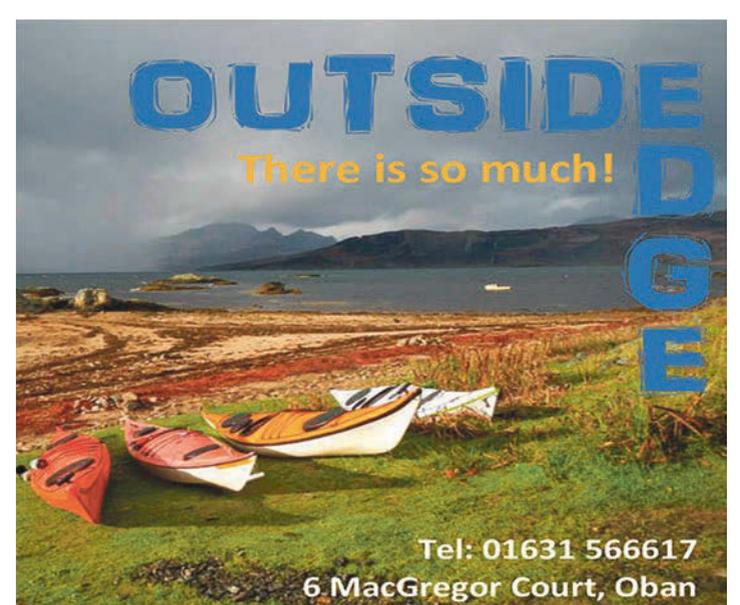
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BUSINESS NEWS

Businesses are credited at Scottish Rural Awards

A host of Scottish businesses are celebrating after taking home awards at the 2019 Scottish Rural Awards last month.

Veteran broadcaster Dougie Vipond took to the stage as compere for the evening, hosting more than 450 guests and presenting two awards in each of the 11 open categories – a winner and a runner-up.

Winners included Ayrshire's Mossgiel Farm, who took home first prize in the Agriculture category and Macphie, who won the Rural Employer category.

There were also wins for GlenWyvis Distillery (Artisan Drink), eco warriors KIMO UK (Conservation and the Environment) and North Coast 500 (Rural Tourism category).

The judging panel praised businesses that showed they could attract people to remote places, businesses that were helping their local area, and businesses that were ethical and sustainable.

The Scottish Rural Awards are the ultimate benchmark of success in Scotland's countryside, highlighting the enterprise, skill and innovation of those who live and work in rural areas.

The event, held at Dynamic Earth in Edinburgh, is the culmination of a fifth year of partnership between Scottish Field and the Scottish Countryside Alliance to host the awards, in association with the Royal Highland and Agricultural Society of Scotland.

The awards are backed by category sponsors including ArdMoor, Chiene + Tait and Gillespie MacAndrew.

Brian Cameron, sales director for Scottish Field magazine, said: 'We were delighted with the quality and sheer diversity of finalists and winners across all categories and look forward to hearing more of their stories in the coming months.'

See the full list of Scottish Rural Awards winners at www.scottishruralawards.org.

Argyll firms urged to enter green awards

Businesses in Argyll and Bute are being encouraged to become leaders in sustainability and embrace the economic opportunities that environmental changes can bring.

The VIBES Scottish Environment Business Awards (VIBES) are celebrating their 20th year and are calling on Scottish businesses to mark the milestone by helping to tackle the environmental challenges facing Scotland and the rest of the world.

Last year's VIBES saw Oban firm Xanthella win the Innovation award. The biotechnology company collected the award for its ambitious ASLEE project which seeks to boost the economy in rural Scotland by using renewable power to produce high value microalgae.

Businesses in Scotland have already seen an impact first-hand on the risks associated with climate change, when food producers and whisky distillers were faced with water scarcity last summer.

Recent studies have shown that there are only 12 years to avert a climate change disaster.

Environment Secretary Roseanna Cunningham said: 'We are all aware of the urgent environmental issues affecting our planet, and businesses across Scotland have a vital role to play in helping to safeguard it for future generations.'

Since its inception in 1999, the VIBES Scottish Business Awards have recognised and rewarded more than 150 businesses that have championed sustainability by identifying ways to tackle the impact on the planet by reducing consumption on its resources.

This has included everything from increasing recycling and facilitating active travel to reducing consumption of raw materials by adopting a more circular approach.

Bob Downes, chairman of the Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) and head of the VIBES judging panel, said: 'The scale of environmental challenges facing humanity is enormous and there is a real urgency to act in light of what science is showing us.'

'As the VIBES Awards have shown, many



Winners in 2018 were Douglas McKenzie and Carole Shellcock, of Xanthella in Oban.

businesses in Scotland are doing great work and SEPA's own figures reinforce this, with the environmental compliance of Scottish regulated businesses exceeding 90 per cent for a third year running.

'However, we cannot rest on our laurels. We want to help Scottish businesses respond to these environmental challenges and reap the benefit and as we enter the 20th year of VIBES, we hope to inspire others to instigate change.'

This year's award categories include: Leadership Scotland, Innovating Scotland, Product Scotland, Service Scotland, Hydro Nation Scotland, Circular Scotland, Moving Scotland, Adapting Scotland, Engaging Scotland, Partnership Scotland, Small Business Scotland.

As part of this year's anniversary celebrations, a special Best of VIBES Award will be presented at the ceremony and will recognise a past winner – from a shortlist of 10 – that can

demonstrate their continuous improvement and contribution to Scotland's sustainable development.

The 10 are Aqualution Systems Ltd, Castle Group Scotland, Chivas Brothers Ltd, CMS Window Systems, Emtelle UK Limited, Farne Salmon, Paterson Arran Ltd, The Bay Fish and Chips, The Deep Project – The Glenmorangie Company and Vegware. The winner will be selected via a public vote at the official awards ceremony in November.

The 20th anniversary awards ceremony will be held on November 14 in Glasgow. Award sponsors to date include Adaptation Scotland, Mabbett and Associates Ltd, the Scottish Government, ScottishPower, The Glenmorangie Company and headline sponsor, Chivas Brothers Pernod Ricard.

Businesses have until 5pm on May 10 to submit their application. To obtain an application form contact vibes@sepa.org.uk.

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Oban company awarded energy advice contract

Nine Scottish SMEs – including an Oban company – have been awarded a place on Scotland Excel's new Energy Advice Framework for services that will help people who live in fuel poverty.

This is the first time a national, public sector contract has been put in place for the delivery of face-to-face energy advice for people in communities across Scotland.

The contract will give councils and housing associations quick and easy access to companies that can provide bespoke energy advice to tenants and residents to help them make savings on their bills.

Argyll, Lomond and the Islands Energy Agency (ALlenergy), an SME based in Oban, is among the list of suppliers that now have the chance to secure a share of the framework's business.

John Shaw, convener of Scotland Excel, said: 'I welcome the launch of the new Energy



ALlenergy was the winners in the Bioenergy category in last year's Rushlight Awards.

Advice Framework which will help to alleviate fuel poverty and reduce carbon emissions. This is a unique approach in Scotland as it's the first time a national framework for face-to-face energy advice has been put in place for the local government sector.

'This is good news for citizens as it gives councils and housing associations easy access to a range of specialist energy advice

companies that are ready to offer support out in communities. Councils can use energy grant funding and their own resources to source advice services through our framework.

'Current Energy Action Scotland figures say 24 per cent of Scottish households are fuel poor, and we're therefore pleased to give the local government and social housing sectors access to Scottish companies who are ready to work one-to-one with residents in their homes.

'The framework is also good for business, as all nine suppliers that have been awarded a place are Scottish SMEs – one of which is a social enterprise. It will also bring value for money for the public purse, with all nine companies committed to fixed pricing for 24 months.'

Services offered through the framework include advocacy advice with utility companies, making sure metering issues are dealt with, working with

householders on the best heating regimes, advising on efficiency measures, and ensuring householders are on the best tariff.

The framework will complement the existing national Home Energy Scotland telephone advisory service run by the Energy Saving Trust.

Framework suppliers are: Argyll, Lomond and the Islands Energy Agency, small business based in Oban; Changeworks Resources for Life, medium business based in Edinburgh; Energy Agency, medium business based in Ayr; Greener Kirkcaldy Ltd, small business based in Kirkcaldy; MPC Energy Ltd, micro business based in Clydebank; Scarf, medium business based in Aberdeen; Social Enterprise Direct, small business and social enterprise based in Glasgow; The Wise Group, medium business based in Glasgow; and Tighean Innse Gall, small business based in Stornoway.

PDK Shellfish is in Parliamentary Review

Oban firm PDK Shellfish has been recognised for its national best practice in The Parliamentary Review.

The Parliamentary Review shares best practice between policymakers and business leaders. Each edition of the Review covers a range of topics across specific industries, featuring commentary from leading journalists and politicians.

PDK Shellfish was established in 1998, initially operating as a sole trader but now has 15 full-time staff.

Managing director Paul Knight explains in this year's Review how the firm expanded its operations and discusses its bid to diversify the business to secure further growth.

The director of The Parliamentary Review, Craig Wilmann, said: 'By bringing together leaders in all fields from across the country, this year's Parliamentary Review, with its customary candid language and intelligent thought, is uniquely placed to offer insight and ideas for politicians and industry leaders, and indeed every type of organisation in modern Britain.'

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Veterans are invited to revisit old battlegrounds

Veterans from the Second World War, who fought in the Italian campaign, are being invited by the Royal British Legion to take part in special 75th anniversary journeys of remembrance.

Those who fought in Italy can opt for a tour to either Monte Cassino and Salerno or Monte Cassino and Anzio, and a special tour to the National Memorial Arboretum is also on offer for those unable to travel overseas.

The Treasury is enabling these free-of-charge tours, which are funded by LIBOR fines, and will enable veterans to return with a family member and carer.

The Italian campaign proved to be a major turning point in the Second World War but was also one of the hardest-fought battles. The Allies came under heavy artillery fire and at times were knee-deep in mud and snow but in May 1944, the Allies prevailed.

This year marks the 75th anniversary of the Italian campaign and the Royal British Legion is inviting veterans back.

Nichola Rowlands-Smith, head of travel for the Royal British Legion, said: 'The Italian campaign seems to be less well-known in the nation's history than other battles such as D-Day, yet it was another pivotal turning point in bringing to an end the Second World War.'

The five-day Italian-based tours will include a service of remembrance at the Cassino War Cemetery plus visits to Anzio War Cemetery, Salerno Commonwealth War Cemetery and the Beach Head War Cemetery. The tour will also take in significant battle sites, such as the Monte Cassino Abbey as well as visits to tourist locations. Veterans heading to the National Memorial Arboretum will take part in a four-day tour staying at the Hilton St Georges Park hotel in Burton-upon-Trent. The tour will include a service of remembrance as well as visits to Cannock Chase Cemetery and Staffordshire Regiment Museum.

To find out more, or to sign-up to one, call the Royal British Legion's tour operator, Arena Travel, on 01473 660800, or visit <http://www.arenatravel.com/our-holidays/remembrance-travel>.

Charting our native

Morvern lines

IAIN THORNER

ian.thorner@btinternet.com



Although this year's winter has been relatively mild, wild goat kids are scarcer than usual on Islay, Jura, Rum, Kingairloch, Kilmalieu and elsewhere on the west coast.

The reason suggested to me is predation by an expanding sea eagle population vying with the golden variety for what little food there is. This explanation may or may not be the case as these and other raptors have not yet produced hungry young. Doubtless the growing scarcity of red deer calves through over-shooting of hinds on many estates is having a knock-on effect.

Ever since goats were introduced by man in early times they have proved to be useful. Many seem to have been allowed to run wild or were turned loose even before the great Highland clearances.

Thomas Pennant, who wrote about a tour he made in Scotland and a voyage to the Hebrides in 1772, remarked that the goat, 'most local of our domestic animal, confines itself to the mountainous parts of these islands'.

There are early reports of them being in Sutherland, Ross-shire, Dochfour on Loch Ness, and North Morar, where there used to be an old established herd, advertised as among the attractions of that estate when it was put on the market in 1930. The late Lord Burton, who owned Dochfour and much of Glenelg, used to tell an amusing story recounted by his grandmother who was present, of Queen Victoria coming off the royal yacht when it was anchored in Loch Duich on the Sabbath and going to church at Balmacara.

The minister was a Gaelic speaker with very poor English, and had to translate all his prayers and the sermon in his mind as he went along. One of his supplications was: 'Oh Lord bless our gracious Queen, and make her skip like the goats upon the mountains, naked and unshamed.'

Goats were mentioned in 1835 as being numerous in Glenmoriston and Glen Urquhart but were shot because they were injurious to woods and plantations. Before the Second World War, there are records of them on Lochnagar, the Slochd and Glen Callater.



Goats, along with their kids in the latter, have been photographed at about 3,000ft above sea level.

In Perthshire, an account dating back to 1829 says: 'The only novelty from the hills this season is the murder of half a dozen goats by an English shooting party in Atholl, who had mistaken their prey for deer.'

The goats of Inversnaid, on Loch Lomond, are reputed to possess a pedigree dating from the time of King Robert the Bruce, who ordered that they should never be molested. That is until they killed off the yew trees on the island of Inchlonaig on Loch Lomond which he had planted for his archers. It is said that the bows from these were used at the Battle of Bannockburn.

Ulva, off Mull, had what is called a 'trip' numbering 20 to 50 shy, agile animals of mixed colour. Not so many years ago they were marooned on a tidal islet in the Sound of

Loch Tuath and, on trying to return through a high tide and strong wind, about 20 out of 25 were drowned.

Goats were not encouraged on the Argyll estates. In 1750, the Duke of Argyll wrote to his chamberlain [factor]: 'It is my special order than no goats be kept in any tenement on my estate of Mull and Morvern upon which there are woods, or stool of woods, and you are to give the possessors of such land whither in tack [lease] or not, notice in writing to dispose of their goats on or before Whitsunday, otherwise that such as refused to comply shall be prosecuted for all damage done to my woods by keeping goats.'

Two years later, the Duke wrote again to the factor on the subject: 'I take it much amiss that any of my tenants in Mull and Morvern should presume to keep any goats having repeated orders to the contrary. I therefore desire that you intimate to the tenants by

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ve wild goats



A Mull goat from Allan Wright and Marianne Taylor's new book, Scotland's Islands, launching shortly.

Photograph: Allan Wright

Islands, it will come as no surprise to hear that they feature in many Gaelic songs. The best I know of is a song-poem called *Of Goats and Men* and is one of the longest surviving Scottish Gaelic poems composed in Canada. It is set as a dialogue between the poet and a goat who meet in a Gaelic township in Ontario and reminisce about life in the old Highlands.

It was composed by Alasdair MacMillan, whose father belonged to a branch of Lochaber MacMillans known as 'Clann Iain Leatha na Coille'. His mother, also a MacMillan, belonged to Sunart. Alasdair was born in 1764 at Resipole but was raised in Lochaber. In 1802, he left Glenkingie for Glengarry, Ontario where he died in 1853.

Poems of this nature and quality were written not only as a reminder of happier days in the old country, but as a means of expressing tongue-in-cheek comments about landlordism and the injustices foisted on the Highlanders – something established bards could do without fear or favour.

I often think some of today's landowners and government quangos are fortunate there are few, if any, bards around with the literary skill to name and shame – there is certainly no shortage of material.

The human-animal dialogue in Alasdair MacMillan's poem was fairly common. The best known examples are a complex 430-year-old one called *Oran na Comhachaig* (The Song of the Owl), in which an owl recalls the glories of olden days in Lochaber to a poet-hunter, and a poem by a Badenoch bard in which the author poses as a hunter having a conversation with a deer, with the deer teasing him for having to wear trousers after kilts were banned for civilian males in 1746.

The text of *Of Goats and Men* moves around Knoydart, Morar, Ardgour, Conaglen, Arisaig, Morvern and Moidart commenting on the haunts of the poet's boyhood rather than in Ontario where it was composed. It engenders a strong sense of belonging and of 'dutchas' and contains many place names which are no longer used and have not been recorded.

■ Acknowledgement: I am grateful to His Grace the Duke of Argyll for permission to quote from the Inveraray Castle Archives.

the ground officers and by public intimation at the several churches after Devine Service, that such tenant or tenants who shall keep goats in their possession, wither pertaining to themselves or servants after Whitsunday 1753, shall be turned from their possessions by Whitsunday 1754. If they have no tacks and in case of tacks that they are not to expect a renewal of them.'

I don't quite know where my sympathies lie. It was all very well for the Duke to issue these instructions from London, but quite another for the poor factor to carry them out given the remoteness of Mull and Morvern at the time. It must also have been difficult and hard for the tenants to give up their goats when there was precious little else in the way of stock to sustain them, although the Duke seemed to accept sheep weren't quite as destructive.

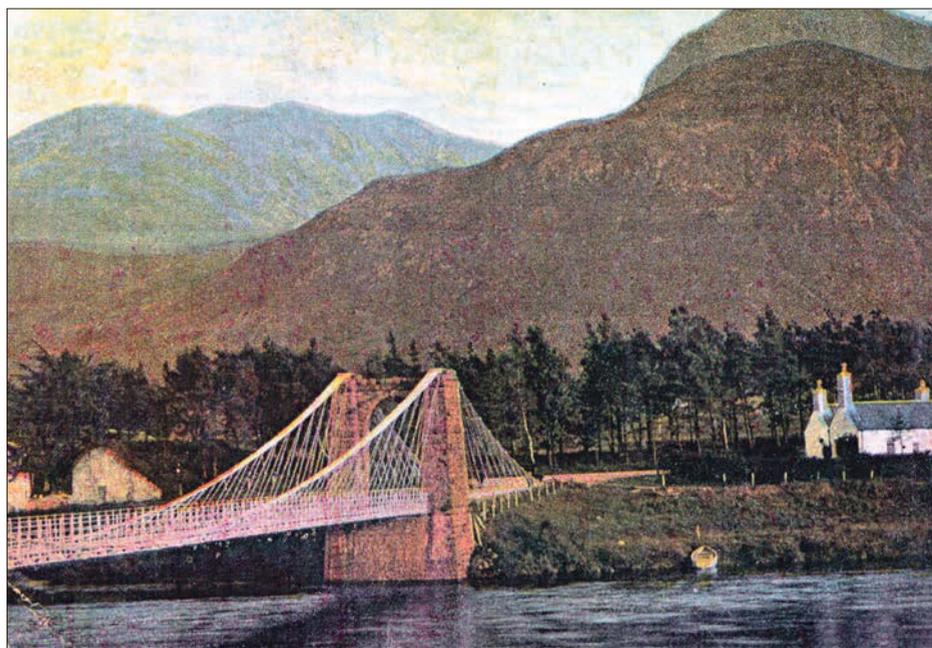
Given the popularity of goats among cottars, crofters and farmers in the Highlands and

DOWN MEMORY LANE

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



This week's photograph comes from December 1995 but has very little information other than that it shows students and teachers from Oban High School. Can anyone tell us what the event was? We received a letter from Mary Logan in Port Askaig, Islay, following our publication of a photograph on March 21 of men from Dunlossit Estate receiving retirement and long-service awards. The men were, back row: John Logan, Alick Morrison, James Logan, Willie Stitchell, Jock Campbell and Robert MacLellan; front row: Duncan MacIndeor, Jim Logan and DJ MacPhee.



The suspension bridge with Ben Nevis above. Photograph from the Roamer archive.

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LETTERS

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Brilliant news for The Rockfield Centre campaign

At its beginnings, it seemed to some to be an unachievable, over-ambitious and daunting prospect to resurrect The Rockfield Centre and return it to use by the public.

So it is to the enormous credit of all who dared to dream that work is now imminent to restore the building at the heart of Oban and to create within its walls a community cultural hub and centre of excellence.

As we report this week, it has taken five years, a major fundraising effort and dogged determination by a host of selfless souls to reach the point where the money is now in place and the contract for the building work has been signed. It is fitting, too, that a construction company based on Mull, TSL Contractors Ltd, has won the right to do the work.

It is also to the great credit of countless people who have so generously donated to the fundraising in myriad different ways, including the purchase of community shares, which raised a staggering £210,000.

The timescale involved has been predicted to see the building re-open next summer.

Well done to all those who have brought us to this moment.

Parking issue simply will not go away

The influential business representative body BID4Oban has roundly criticised a new pilot scheme designed to address fierce criticism of parking regulations in Oban.

Argyll and Bute Council has attempted to address public anger by coming up with new weekly and monthly permits but, given the degree of concern, it must fine-tune its policies still further.

Students should not be protesting in school time

I am astounded that anyone (Letters, March 28) should find it praiseworthy that school pupils are protesting – in school time – no matter how worthy the cause.

Scottish educational standards are at their worst ever: of 34 developed countries, Scotland only ranks 24th in maths and 26th in reading. This is, or should be, a source of national shame.

Furthermore, some Scots universities provide remedial courses for domestic students to bring them up to the equivalent standard of overseas students.

Protest all you like but, please, not in valuable school time.

Catriona Kearney, Fort William.

Highland Council is making climate change worse

There is no shortage of evidence on the rapid rate of climate change and its likely harmful impacts on all of us.

We all have to play our parts in reducing our individual carbon emissions, especially for the sake of young people who have not made the mess but will be ones who will have to live with it and attempt to deal with damage. Young people themselves have paid attention to the evidence, as demonstrated by their global Friday school strikes, including in Fort William.

However, the major reductions in carbon emissions which will effect significant change need to come at a governmental and regulatory level. But Highland Council, far from acting in a responsible and forward-looking manner, seems to be going out of its way to sabotage the efforts of those trying to limit climate change.

The council is already enacting plans to dig up the peat bog on the Blar in Fort William, seemingly without having carried out any calculations of how much carbon this will release, in contravention of its national and international obligations. Peat bogs are especially important for storing carbon and extracting carbon dioxide from the atmosphere, and destroying them is particularly irresponsible.

Building houses and facilities for people is an important aim, but not if it bequeaths to young people and future generations an environment wrecked by climate change. It is simply not fair on them to be so short-termist about planning decisions.

Anyone who wants to get Highland Council

YOUR PICTURES



We know our readers love to take photographs so we are happy to create this space to showcase these each week. If you have a photograph you would like to see published here, send it to editor@obantimes.co.uk

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 photograph

to do anything around here knows that the answer will invariably be that it doesn't have enough staff and it doesn't have enough money. However, when it comes to environmental damage, resources don't seem to be a problem. Highland Council has already awarded a £2 million contract to dig up yet more of the Blar, on an area that has not even yet been confirmed in the new Local Plan as being allocated for development, and for which it has not received detailed planning permission.

Highland Council should be a force for good rather than deliberately making matters worse.

**Susannah Calderan,
Banavie, Fort William.**

Lateral thinking is needed to address Mull ferry

Reg Pedersen's suggestion (Letters, March 21) for an all-weather Mull ferry service makes a lot of sense: maybe it is almost a no-brainer.

Regrettably, without some lateral strategic thinking on the part of those in charge, it stands little chance.

The history of state-owned monopolies is one of great reluctance to embrace radical change. When the islands' ferry operation was recently put out to tender, it produced no perceptible changes and the status quo has continued, though this year, to be fair, the

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was sent in by Fiona MacKinnon from Strachur and show the Hebridean Princess cruising up Loch Fyne. Fiona said the photo was taken from St Catherine's across the loch.

summer timetable did appear in print before the summer.

The current 'partnership' (Argyll and Bute Council/CalMac) seems very unlikely to sort out Craignure pier on its own, as it is only one piece of the jigsaw. Watching the Isle of Mull berthing at Craignure in a stiff north-westerly is a painful process as it struggles to avoid taking the pier too hard and demonstrates the need for action sooner rather than later.

A positive way forward might be for Mull to petition the Scottish Government to carry out a detailed comparison between these two options for serving Mull: one, which is the least disruptive to CalMac's operation but very expensive

(£150m?), versus the other, which offers a more attractive service plus significant cost savings. It need not take too long.

James Harmer, Isle of Mull.

Breastfeeding is hard work but well worth the effort

I wish to thank Oban Phoenix Cinema for the showing of the film *Tigers in March* and also to thank The Oban Times and Oban FM very much for helping with the publicity of this powerful and eye-opening film. Money raised has been sent to the NGO Baby Milk Action.

As the film exemplified, worldwide we allow giants like Nestlé to dominate infant feeding, which often violates internationally agreed marketing standards for breast milk substitutes, putting profits before infant health.

Corporate interests don't operate in a vacuum though. 'The buying public [of formula] is as responsible for creating, accepting and maintaining an artificial child-feeding status quo as are formula manufacturers themselves,' says CEO of the International Breastfeeding Support Collective and member of the Scientific Advisory Committee La Leche League, France, James Akre.

Author Allison Dixley explains in the book, *Breast Intentions*, that 'the number of mothers failing at breastfeeding and promulgating excuses strengthens the illusion of a generation of "broken-breasted" women and breast-evasive babies. Mothers succumb to an illusion how sizeable the biological probability of success really is.' (Only 0.07 per cent of women have a real lactational dysfunction).

'Some women, perhaps more than we care to imagine, don't quit breastfeeding as reluctantly as they would have you believe,' Dixley says. 'Rather, they have an implicit desire to quit. They then apply all kinds of strategies to manipulate events to this end. That way, they can quit, but at the same time keep up the appearance that they were victims of circumstance. The optimistic voices of breastfeeding advocates are being drowned out by the torrential noise of excuse-makers who vastly outnumber them.' Hard to read for many, I'm sure, but I think it needs to be said.

Breastfeeding isn't down to luck. For most, it is about determination, effort and commitment.

It is hard work and, unfortunately, it is a very under-valued but important occupation and contributor to public health in today's UK society.

Valerie Cleave, Mid-Argyll.

Beachd Ailein

ALLAN CAMPBELL

editor@obantimes.co.uk



Libhrig Dihaoine seo chaidh ceann-bliadhna dhòmhsa agus do dh'iomadh neach eile ach cha robh sgeul air an sgaradh mòr Brexit a bha gu bhith an tachairt air an latha sin.

Nach dòrainneach an deasbad gun sgaradh agus gun cho-dhùnadh a tha sinn air a bhith a' fulang mu Bhrexit bho nochd fios gun robh beagan is leth an t-sluaigh a chuir bhòt an reifreinn ag iarraidh sgaradh bhon Roinn Eòrpa.

Am falbh mi neo am fuirich mi, mar fhaclan an òrain aig a' chòmhlán The Clash. Tha e follaiseach ag èisteachd ri mòran a' bruidhinn air cùis Bhrexit gum bheil iad air sealladh a chall air cho beag 's a tha de dh'aireamh eadar dà thaobh na h-argamaid. Bha sin riamh a' ciallachadh gum biodh còrdadh sam bith an urra ri conaltradh agus co-obrachadh ealanta eadar an dà thaobh. 'S e nach do thachair sin a dh'fhàg Pàrlamaid Bhreatainn na cùis-bhùird 's gun buill ag amas air aontachadh air slighe sam bith a-mach às a' bhoglaich sam bheil iad. Bogleach dhan tug iad sinne uile cuide riutha.

Ged a tha am Prìomh

Mhinistear air a bhith darribh righinn agus dioghrasach a' leantainn a beachd fhèin, 's e cho mì-dheònach 's a bha i èisteachd ri daoine eile a thug cùisean chun na h-ìre aig am bheil sinn. Ghèill i le gealltainn gun leigeadh i às a dreuchd nuair a thèid aonta a ruigheachd, ach aig àm sgriobhaidh seo chan eil ceann-latha dearbhta air a h-aon seach aon de na tachartasan sin.

Ma dh'fhalbhas mi bidh buaireas ann their an t-òran aig The Clash, agus na mo bheachd fhìn bidh ceannach gu math daor aig co-dhiù ceann a tuath na dùthcha air an sgaradh, ma thachras e. Ged nach biodh mar chuimhneachain ach a liuthad rathad agus drochaid air feadh na Gàidhealtachd is nan eileanan nach biodh idir ann as aonais calpa leasachaidh Eòrpaich.

Bidh iomadh bliadhna ann, ma thachras e idir, mu faic sinn an seòrsa taice sin ga chosg air sgìrean iomallach na dùthcha a-rithist oir ged a bhiodh rùn phoilitigeach ann chan eil na sporain phoblach comasach.

Gu cuspair nas togarraiche agus bu mhath ionnsachadh

gun robh co-latha breith aig Alfred Mac a' Ghobhainn, St Madoes, Sgìre Pheairt, agus Bod Weighton, Alton, Hampshire, Dihaoine seo chaidh cuideachd. Agus bha na ceatharnaich seo a' comharrachadh 111 bliadhna a dh'aois.

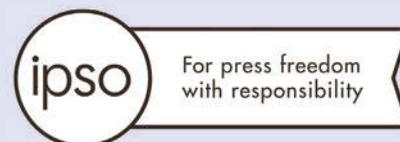
Mo bheannachd aca! Thuirt Bob gun robh e air atharrachadh mòr fhaicinn air an t-saoghal ach gum bheil daoine an ìre mhath mar a bha. Deagh naidheachd?

While March 29 brought another birthday for me and many others, it did not deliver Britain's divorce from the European Union, and at the time of writing the issue is still clouded in ill-tempered obfuscation.

Against such a depressing news background it was good to learn that I was sharing a birthday with Alfred Smith, St Madoes, Perthshire, and Bob Weighton, Alton, Hampshire. They were both 111 on that day.

Warmest congratulations to them both.

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



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DISTRICT NEWS

KINTYRE

For the second year running, leading renewables developer SSE will be taking part in the Kintyre Way Ultra 2019.

Running is just one of the things SSE, owners of Tangy wind farm in the Kintyre peninsula, will be doing in support of this fantastic event. SSE will be powering the very people taking part in the event by contributing towards the sponsorship.

Seventeen members of the Tangy wind farm team will be either volunteering to help participants find their way along the route or taking on the gruelling endurance challenge, running the 32-mile track on the northern part of the Kintyre Way, beginning at Tayinloan and finishing at Tarbert.

Sponsoring the catering, goody bags and T-shirts was a no brainer for SSE.

Project manager Andy Gregory explained: 'This community has been so supportive of us over the years and we are so pleased to have a chance to give back to them by helping with an event so close to the community's heart.'

'We had a great time helping and taking part last year so we're thrilled to be back again this year.'

'I guess you could even say that it's fitting we're providing the catering on the day.'

'After all, our Tangy wind farm has been providing energy for more than 15 years and now we're able to provide some much-needed energy to the competitors on the day as they take on this tremendous race.'

On behalf of SSE and the Tangy wind farm team – good luck.'

WESTERN ISLES

Leisure users on the Western Isles will be able to access centres in four other areas of Scotland at no extra cost.

Comhairle nan Eilean Siar has announced the new leisure link partnership that will give people access to gym, public swimming and fitness classes across Highland,



Chalmers of Oban supports the Dove Centre

The Friends of Oban Hospice, the fundraising arm of the Oban Hospice movement based at the Dove Centre in Stevenson Street, is enormously grateful to the manager and staff at Chalmers of Oban, who on their own initiative, operated a

tombola stall in the store during March to raise funds for the Dove Centre.

Prizes were donated by staff and the shop and the sum of £275 was raised for hospice funds.

Friends chairman Iain MacIntyre is pictured receiving

the cash from Chalmers' manager Helen Hetherington alongside her colleagues Hannah Williamson and Jane Duffy.

Iain once again expressed his astonishment at the local community's support for the Dove Centre.



The SSE team from the Kintyre Way Ultra event in 2018.

Moray, Orkney, and Argyll and Bute. The scheme will be known as the Leisure Link Partnership.

ISLAY

The March 31 issue of The Iealach magazine says: 'Following the report within the "Blast From the Past" section in our last edition of The Iealach, issued March 16, concerning the "Earthquake heard on Islay on March 13 1999", it seems we may have specialist powers of premonition.'

'As our last issue hit the streets of Islay on March 16 2019, there was a report of an earthquake on Islay at around 10am on the same day.'

'This has subsequently been confirmed by the British Geological Survey as occurring at 10.11am with a magnitude of 1.8.'

'Looking at the BGS map, it looks like it centred around Bruichladdich, so you may want to check the bottles in the bottling hall!'

'But what are the chances of there being two reported and confirmed earthquakes occurring in the same week of the year exactly 30 years apart, and the second occurring on the day we report the first?'

'Surely that's a million to one chance.'

EASDALE

Photography enthusiasts on Easdale are invited to attend a number of two-day courses.

Colin McPherson of Easdale Experiences will be running the events with Adam Lee on Saturday June 29, Wednesday July 3, Saturday September 7 and Wednesday September 11.

Participants will be accommodated for three nights in two cottages on the island.

Places are restricted to a maximum of six participants per course.

The courses, designed for photographers of any level, aim to teach participants how to weave photographs together to tell a story.

For more information, visit www.easdale-experiences.com/courses



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At random

MARTIN LAING

mlaing@obantimes.co.uk



LOCHABER



Lily Jane Robertson, above, with the premier junior vocal award and the Maureen McSherry Memorial Cup and, below, Nia Reid with the Rosemary Galer Trophy for solo violin or viola (primary).



Lochaber primary pupils Lily Robertson and Nia Reid both won top prizes at the area's premier music festival recently.

Owing to the size of the trophy list we were unable to print photographs of all the winners from the Lochaber Music Festival 2019 in last week's Lochaber Times.

Lily took the premier junior vocal award for under 18s, despite only being nine years old.

Nia scooped the Rosemary Galer Trophy for primary solo violin.

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Oban couple Eric and Mary Black celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary last week surrounded by the good wishes of family and friends. Married on March 25, 1959, at Oban Old Parish Church by the Rev MacDonald, the couple are still very much in love after all these years.

Objectors rally against care home plan

Plans to build a four-storey care home next to Hermitage Park in Helensburgh have sparked objections from people living nearby.

Almost 20 members of the public have contacted Argyll and Bute Council to lodge official objections to Simply UK's plans for a former local authority depot on Sinclair Street, next to the town centre park.

The planned care home would include bars and a beauty salon, but residents submitting responses to Argyll and Bute Council's website have concerns about access arrangements along with hedge and tree boundaries.

Richard Cullen said: 'I and a number of other residents have consulted our title deeds and plans, and I wish to advise you that the hedges and trees running along the back of the terrace, bordering the grassed rear entry lane and forming the northern border of the depot site, is the property of the residents of

Prince Albert Terrace, and does not constitute any part of the development site. As such, we would expect that any development maintains the integrity of the hedge and trees and has no impact on the border of our properties.'

A planning and access statement by Simply UK at the time of the application's submission in March said: 'The new care home aims to offer superior levels of care in luxurious surroundings and will provide residents with hotel-like services such as a beauty salon, bars, top class food and round-the-clock care all set within a leafy and peaceful setting.'

The authority is expected to deliver its verdict on the proposals by April 24, although the number of objections lodged so far makes it more likely that the application will be decided by the council's planning, protective services and licensing committee, rather than by officials.

Raising awareness

Here's a thing: I have Parkinson's.

Why am I telling you this? Because next Thursday, April 11, McCaig's Tower in Oban will be illuminated in blue as part of World Parkinson's Day, an event to raise awareness of the illness.

Now, I'm not trying to elicit sympathy (who could possibly tolerate that?), but I do want to try to spread the message that more research needs to be done.

The director of Parkinson's UK Scotland is Annie Macleod, an Argyll mum of two with strong connections to the Oban area. Annie was previously the Oban, Lorn and the Isles locality manager for the Argyll and Bute Health and Social Care Partnership, and lives with her husband on the Morvern peninsula, north-west of Oban. She has two grown-up daughters.

Annie says: 'The perception that Parkinson's is an inevitable part of growing old and is just a bit of shakiness couldn't be wider off the mark. Parkinson's can be brutal and has more than 40 recognised symptoms. It affects people of all ages, and typically has a massive impact on every aspect of someone's life.'

'That's why, on World Parkinson's Day, we are launching our biggest ever awareness campaign to highlight just how serious the condition is. We're delighted that so many places will be showing their support for the Parkinson's community by lighting in blue. People with Parkinson's and their families often feel isolated, so it means a lot to the community to know that people care and are aware of the condition.'

There is an active support network in the Oban area, with North Argyll Carers Centre in Albany Street coordinating events, including a self-help group under Morag MacLean, and specialist Parkinson's nurse Cheryl Howe. If anyone needs advice, contact Morag at morag@northargyllcarers.org.uk

Parkinson's gets worse the longer people have it, and it is currently incurable. Parkinson's UK is helping to invest in pioneering research in Scotland and around the world to deliver better treatments and a cure.

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.

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Cut the remaining lemon into chunks and thread on to metal skewers with courgettes and peppers and meat. Grill for 15-20 mins.

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OUTDOORS

Argyll blossoms for fifth annual rhododendron fest

Sixteen gardens, estates and woodlands across Argyll and the islands will be taking part in the Scottish Rhododendron Festival.

The festival is geared up to be vibrant from day one, as many of these wonderful plants are already in bloom because of the recent warmer temperatures.

Taking place from now until May 31, the festival comprises more than 50 events across Scotland. These include many activities and guided walks throughout Argyll as gardens, estates and woodlands open to showcase their displays.

Returned for its fifth year, the annual festival is organised by national garden tourism group Discover Scottish Gardens and supported by VisitScotland. It aims to encourage local audiences and tourists to enjoy the wonders of Scottish gardens during the rhododendron flowering period and highlight the diversity of collections that can be found in Scotland.

The gardens of Inveraray Castle, also a four-star attraction, hold an interesting selection of rhododendrons, as well as azaleas, maples and magnolias. Visitors can also enjoy woodland walks and the wide variety of wildlife, including red squirrels.

The list of venues in Argyll are: Achamore Garden, Isle of Gigha; An Cala, Isle of Seil; Angus's Garden, Barguilean, Taynuilt; Ardinglas Estate Ladies Garden, Cairndow; Ardmaddy Castle Gardens, by Oban; Ardtornish Garden, Morvern; Arduaine Garden, Arduaine, Oban; Ascog Hall Garden and Fernery, Ascog Hall, Ascog, Isle of Bute; Crarae Garden, Crarae, near Inveraray; Glenarn, Rhu; Geilston Garden, Cardross; Kinlochlaich Octagonal Walled Garden, Appin, and Woodland Walk, Isle of Bute. www.visitscotland.com/blog/scotland/rhododendron-festival/

Monstrous interest in our native birds

Notes from a windy island

STEPHANIE COPE
ranger@treetrust.org.uk



Small (and doubtless sticky) fingers thumbed through the book again. It was my favourite, with all the very best dinosaurs in it.

Across pages filled with plus-size font, pastel-coloured herbivores and carnivores were busily engaged in bloodless combat.

It was the Ladybird 1989 first edition of *Dinosaurs* – glossy hardback – which described 'a large number of these exciting creatures'.

The book also showed how fossils formed, how palaeontologists found and interpreted these fossils and how birds were now thought to be relatives of dinosaurs.

My eyes (swimming behind ultra-thick NHS glasses) slid from the large typeface, up through my grandmother's sparkling patio doors, and out to the bird table.

Scabby sparrows and blackbirds were tugging at bits of dry bread. Wood pigeons bimbled fatly around its freshly creosoted base, pecking at the fallen scraps of scraps. It wasn't exactly the cretaceous out there.

But maybe birds were worthy of a second glance. Perhaps, upon closer inspection, interesting ghosts of their more glamorous past might still be discernible. I picked my nose, thoughtfully.

Fast-forward to 2019, and birds have delighted me for 30 years. Everything they do is intriguing. The satisfaction that I get from watching birds go about their business is mere shorthand for the uncountable riches that a love of nature has conferred.

My life has been better, more interesting, more fun (not to mention more eccentric) because of birds.

No surprise, then, that I love being on Tiree, where they zoom in and out of my day with joyous regularity.

But this isn't the case everywhere. Many spe-



A poster from a Tiree Primary School P1-3 pupil showing a lapwing.

cies that are locally abundant in the Hebrides face precipitous declines elsewhere in the British Isles. On the Cheshire farm where my father lived, the glitzy swooping of lapwing and the burbling crescendo of curlew have dwindled to a tragic silence.

Standing in those ragged fields, all I hear instead is the dull, exhaust-fumed banality of commuter traffic. This loss happened in my lifetime: we loved to watch the birds, but now they are gone.

Last week, I visited Tiree Primary School to talk with some of the younger children about lapwings, oystercatchers and ringed plovers. By teaching them about ground-nesting birds (and how to keep their tiny families safe when enjoying the countryside), I hope the children might want to look closer.

Next time they see a lapwing, oystercatcher or ringed plover, maybe they'll have their own 'dinosaur moment' – and be enthused and empowered by the knowledge of its name.

Fabulous posters were dutifully produced for the ranger service office – to educate island guests about our vulnerable ground-nesters and how to help them. Admittedly, some young artists adopted quite a firm stance on the issue.

A personal favourite depicted ringed plovers, gathered in a demure family unit at the head of a beach. Above them, in the screaming white

void between the bottom of the sky and the top of the dunes, the words 'STAY AWAY OR WE'LL GET ANGRY!' were boldly inscribed.

Protecting birds on Tiree is all the more important because of declines elsewhere. Encouraging people to stay alert to distressed adults, to keep their pets under close control and to avoid driving off-road away from marked areas helps to safeguard nests and nestlings against accidental disturbance, damage or predation.

But the problems faced by these species are highly complex, and they are national.

Nature makes our lives richer. It enhances our existence however (and however much) we choose to engage with it. A less diverse world has a negative impact on all of us – not just binocular-toting bird nuts like me.

Biodiversity is linked to the health and functionality of our ecosystems, the security of our food supply, the quality of our immediate environment and our emotional wellbeing. Perhaps saddest of all, species loss insidiously prunes away opportunities to enjoy the magic of discovery.

When I first saw dragon-green lapwings swatting the air above their secret nests, it left an indelible mark. At heart, I'm still that 1980s kid in bottle-bottom glasses, slack-jawed with amazement at how very beautiful they were.

So, as you enjoy the countryside between April and August, please spare a thought for my beloved ground-nesters. They're really up against it – and every considerate act will help to secure their future. Be alert to anxious parent birds, and move carefully away if you're disturbing them. Keep your pets under close control so that eggs and chicks aren't hoovered up. Don't off-road drive away from signed areas, where eggs and baby birds might be hidden.

In the words of John Buxton, a prisoner of war who passed his Second World War captivity studying redstarts: 'What mattered to me is that the redstarts lived, and lived untroubled except by their own necessities, where I could see them.'

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This week's walks



Red squirrels have been reintroduced to the Highlands. Photograph: Peter Cairns www.scotlandbigpicture.com

Scientists to study health of red squirrels

The health and genetics of red squirrels reintroduced to woodlands in the Highlands by conservation charity Trees for Life are to be studied by scientists at the University of Edinburgh.

Trees for Life will send hair samples from relocated squirrels for analysis by researchers at the university's Conservation Science Group at the Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies, as part of the scientists' research into Scotland's wild red squirrels.

Only an estimated 120,000 reds remain in Scotland, their numbers decimated by habitat loss and persecution. Despite restoration of good habitats in certain areas, reds cannot return to isolated woodlands on their own, because they avoid crossing large open spaces – so the species is missing from

many suitable Highland woods.

Since 2015, Trees for Life has relocated 140 red squirrels from strongholds in Inverness-shire and Moray to isolated fragments of forest where reds once lived – at Shildaig, the Coulin Estate near Kinlochewe, Plockton, Inverewe, the Reraig peninsular, Attadale, Letterewe and Gairloch.

There have been positive signs of these populations establishing at all the reintroduction sites, including successful breeding. Young squirrels have already been seen at Letterewe and Gairloch, Trees for Life's 2018 release sites.

The reds are also dispersing well. A population has become established at Torridon, some 15 kilometres from the release site at Shildaig – a greater dispersal distance than expected.

Red squirrels are also threatened by disease and competition from introduced non-native grey squirrels. Greys spread squirrel pox virus, to which they are immune but which is lethal to reds.

Through its The Reds Return appeal, Trees for Life is seeking funding for more reintroductions at six woodlands on the Morvern peninsula and north of the Dornoch Firth. This will further extend the squirrels' range, in areas safe from disease-carrying greys and squirrel pox. It will also help pine forests to naturally expand, because reds plant new trees by forgetting where they have buried their winter stores of nuts and seeds.

To support the red squirrel reintroductions, see www.treesforlife.org.uk/appeal or call 01309 691292.

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.lochaberandlorn-ramblers.org.uk. Lochaber and Lorn Ramblers Group can be contacted by email on info@lochaberandlorn-ramblers.org.uk

Thursday April 11: Loch Oich circuit, Loch Oich

Loch Oich is the summit of the Caledonian Canal. A circuit of its shores is full of variety and points of interest.

Start at the Post Office in Invergarry, NH301010, where limited parking is available. A short distance W along the A87 turn left on to a path leading S, across a bridge over the River Garry, and turn right along the bank.

Pass through a gate, turn S across a field to reach the minor road at Easter Mandally. Turn left then take the right fork on to a forest track just after a cattle grid. Follow the Great Glen Cycle Route to the A82 at NH300986. Follow the A82 to Laggan Bridge and cross to the Water Park. Head NE on the path along the side of Loch Oich, which more or less follows the line of the dismantled railway.

At the far end of the loch, leave the main path to cross the Calder Burn on the old railway bridge and continue to the A82. Turn left, over the swing bridge and visit the old Bridge of Oich. Diverge from the main road near a milestone at NH335035 and follow a footpath SW through a conifer plantation. This eventually becomes a forest road, which ends at a turning space above the village of Invergarry. Turn right on to a footpath just before this, at NH306013, descend to the A87 and turn right, back to the Post Office.

Grade: M; distance: 17km; height to climb: 400m; map(s): LR34, EX400, Meet at Fort William Woollen Mill NN112742 at 0930. Start of walk at 10.00. Leader: Ann Jones 07770 434114.

Saturday April 13: Ben Oss and Beinn Dubhcraig, Glen Spean

Two Munros giving good views of many of the other southern tops.

Start at car park at Dalrigh NN 3442 2905 head south east to cross old road bridge over River Fillan then take track leading west to railway bridge then follow track south to bridge over Allt Gleann Auchroch NN 3303 2770. Follow track through wood onto open hillside following ridge up to a small lochan NN 3301 2585 turn easterly to top 978 m.

Retrace steps to lochan then head down to bealach and follow path by spot height 941 m to top at 1029 m. Return to bealach and back by outward route.

Grade: S; distance: 17km; height to climb: 1260m; Maps LR50. Meet at Glencoe car park at 0845. Start of walk: 0930. Leader: Toril Frantzen 07788 264007.

NEVIS HILLWALKING CLUB

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

Saturday April 6: Beinn na h-Eaglaise (805m, Corbett), Beinn Sgritheall (974m, Munro), Beinn Sgritheall NW Top (928m, Munro Top), Beinn a' Chapuill (759, Graham), Arnisdale

From Gavin: 'These are my last hills for a second round of Munros, Corbetts and Grahams, and a first round of Munro Tops. Please join me for one or more of these. I finished my first round of Munros, Corbetts and Grahams on the same three hills with the club in 2009 (and failed to do the Munro Top). On that occasion, we had a turnout of 20 people and some magnificent weather for a fabulous day.'

Distances and height to ascend vary depending on how many hills are attempted. Either: 10km, 13km or 20km, and either 1050m, 1250m or 1550m ascent.

Suggested by Gavin Theobald, coordinated by Suzanne Theobald.



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29th June,
27th July,
24th August,
21st September***
11am - 3pm
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Oban Business Improvement District
www.bid4oban.co.uk



BONNIE babies competition 2019



**WIN
£500**

Vote now for your top 50!

Readers now have the difficult job of voting for the top 50 bonniest babies and toddlers. You can vote by simply completing the coupon provided on this page and sending it to The Oban Times, Bonnie Babies VOTE, PO Box 1, Oban, PA34 4HB. Votes must be received by 10am, Monday April 15, 2019. You can vote for as many babies as many times as you like. Just make sure you quote the number stated on the child's photograph when voting. Photocopied coupons will not be accepted. One coupon counts as one vote. We'll also accept multiple vote coupons in one envelope. Good luck to all babies and toddlers! Coupons can also be handed in to our offices in Oban and Fort William.

Letter from the Editor, Susan Windram

Bonnie Babies is back – Spring must be in the air!

Welcome to our Oban Times and Lochaber Times Bonnie Babies 2019 supplement.

Firstly, a massive thank you to all those who entered their little munchkins from across Argyll and Lochaber. Once again, we were overwhelmed by the number of entries and have had brilliant fun looking through all the adorable photographs while putting this supplement together. We can't wipe the smiles from our faces and hopefully you will share in the sheer joy by helping us crown our bonniest baby.

The winner will receive a whopping £500. Just think, that could be your monthly family food shop covered or a chance to treat the family to toys, clothes or maybe even a holiday. There will also be two runners-up prizes of £50 each.

The most difficult part is choosing the winner and that is where you, the reader, comes in. The Oban Times and Lochaber Times need your help to tell us which babies and toddlers you think should win the title of bonniest baby. Readers will start by voting for their top 50 from this supplement. It will then go to top 30, top 20, top 10 and then the winner will be revealed.

To vote for your favourite, simply complete the coupon, remembering to provide the number that is stated on the child's photograph and send it or hand it in to our office in either Oban or Fort William. We are happy to accept multiple coupons at one time. Just remember to get them in by 10am, Monday April 15, 2019. Full instructions below are below.

After the voting deadline, look out in future issues of The Oban Times and Lochaber Times to find out who made the top 50 when the voting starts again.

We wish all entrants the very best of luck and we hope everyone enjoys looking at these cheeky wee faces as much as we have.

Susan Windram

VOTING COUPON

LOCHABER TIMES
& Oban Times

The Oban Times
& WEST HIGHLAND TIMES

I would like to vote for:

Baby number*:

Baby's name:

Please post to The Oban Times, Bonnie Babies VOTE,
PO Box 1, Oban, Argyll, PA34 4HB.

*Baby number must be supplied. This can be found at the top left of each baby photograph.

**Photocopied voting coupons will not be accepted
and will not count as one vote.**

**You may send in multiple voting coupons in one envelope.
Coupons can also be handed in to our offices in Oban
and Fort William.**

**BONNIE
babies**
competition 2019

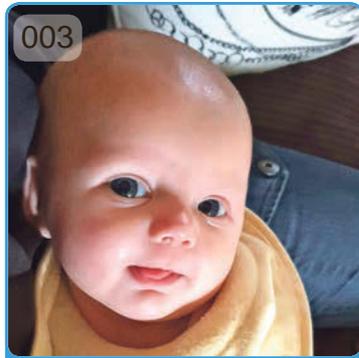
Terms & conditions: Photocopied voting coupons will not be accepted. The deadline to receive votes is 10am, Monday April 15, 2019. One coupon counts as one vote. Paid for Digital Subscribers can vote for their favourite by emailing the number and name of chosen baby to bb@obantimes.co.uk – your email will be checked against our live subscribers records and if valid one vote will be allocated to your chosen entry. Only one vote per week per valid subscriber. Your email address will only be used to validate your vote and will then be deleted – it will not be used for any other purpose. Full terms and conditions at www.obantimes.co.uk/bonniebabies. Customer services: 01631 568000.

001

 Logan Khan
 Born February 2018 Dunbeg

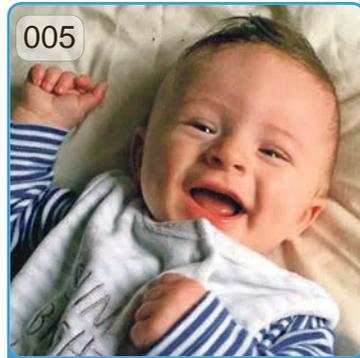
002

 Laura Rose MacDonald
 Born September 2018 Dunbeg

003

 Makayla-Leigh Lawrie
 Born October 2018 Caol, Fort William

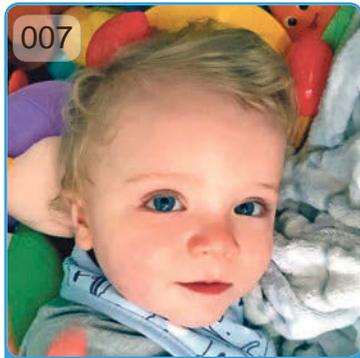
004

 Chanel MacDougall
 Born December 2018 Oban

005

 Myles O'Neill Gibson
 Born October 2018 Fort William

006

 Dylan Leister
 Born March 2018 Stirling

007

 Tony Cranston
 Born February 2018 Ardrishaig

008

 Jessica Gibb
 Born November 2018 Lochgilhead

009

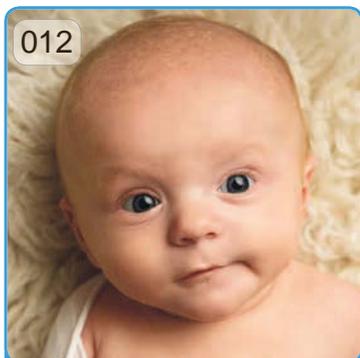
 Chanel Aitkenhead
 Born December 2018 Oban

010

 Caleb Ellis
 Born January 2019 Edinburgh

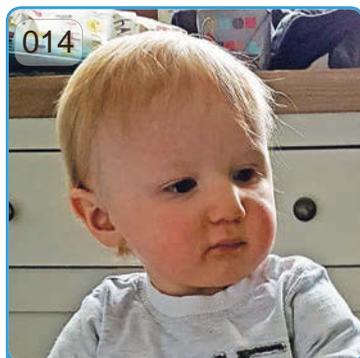
011

 Aaron Maclean
 Born February 2017 Oban

012

 Elliot Martin
 Born November 2018 Benderloch

013

 Kendall Cameron
 Born December 2018 Fort William

014

 James Aitchison
 Born February 2018 Fort William

015

 Koa Eldon
 Born December 2017 Fort William

016

 Eva Anna Varadi
 Born May 2018 Oban

017

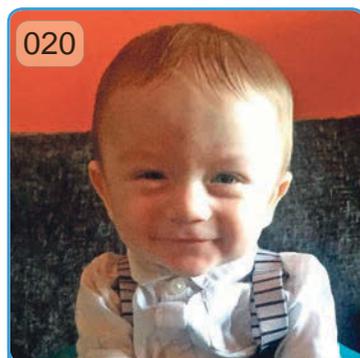
 Matthew Russell
 Born October 2018 Oban

018

 Olivia Kerr
 Born December 2018 Oban

019

 Ryan Ward
 Born October 2018 Oban

020

 Joshua Eddleston
 Born April 2018 Oban

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021

Sydney Bain-Tully
Born December 2018 Airdrie

022

Arianna Holban
Born August 2018 Taynuilt

023

Lucas Alan Beckett
Born October 2018 Islay

024

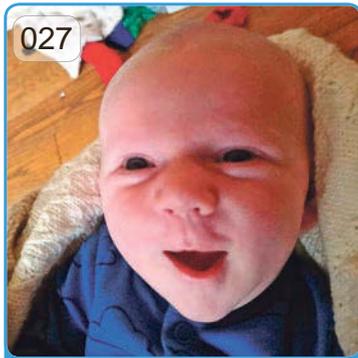
Olivia Anderson
Born October 2018 Maybole

025

Ellie Jamieson
Born April 2017 Glasgow

026

Angus John Telfer
Born March 2018 Oban

027

Hunter Smith
Born December 2018 Lochgilhead

028

Norrie James Fisher
Born October 2018 Isle of Mull

029

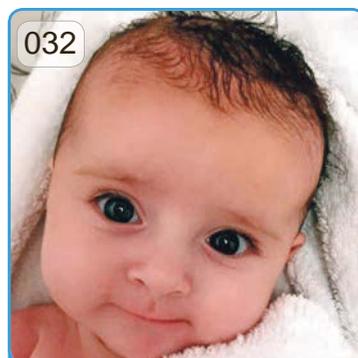
Alba McNicholas Smith
Born February 2019 Helensburgh

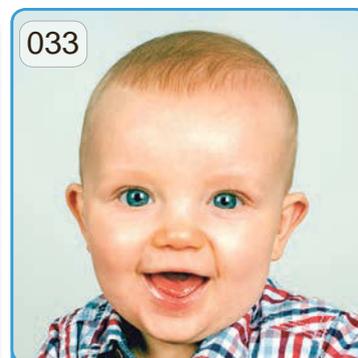
030

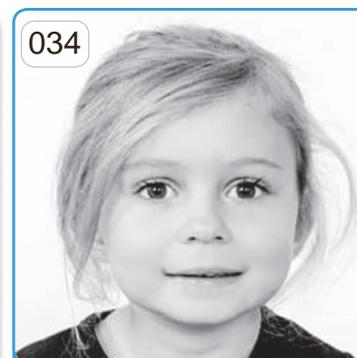
Eva Lopes
Born May 2018 Isle of Mull

031

Finn Oliver Mortimer
Born January 2019 Isle of Mull

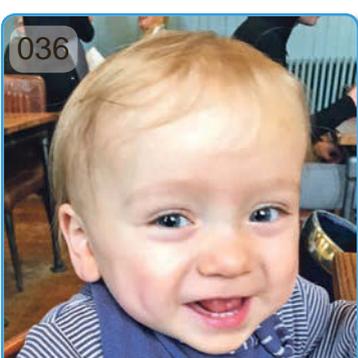
032

Hollie McMillan
Born October 2018 Oban

033

James Donald Morrison
Born April 2018 Isle of Islay

034

Amy Freitas
Born July 2015 Oban

035

Aneela Warham
Born March 2018 Dunbeg

036

Teddy Greener
Born July 2017 Barcaldine

037

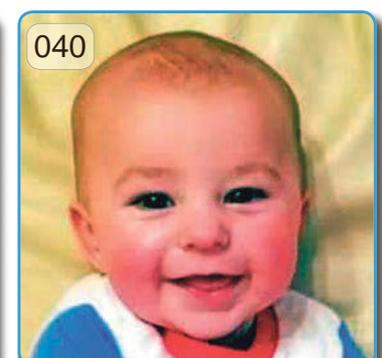
Nathan MacKechnie
Born July 2018 Oban

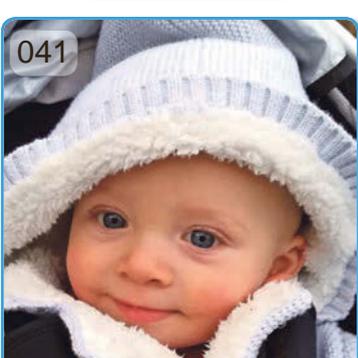
038

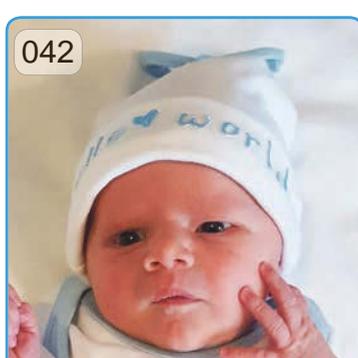
Amelia Jay MacLeod
Born January 2019 Oban

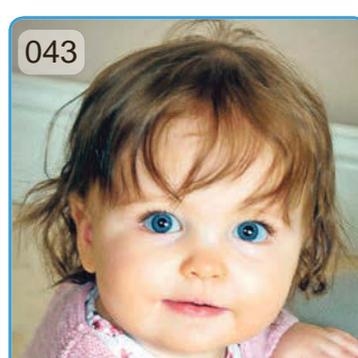
039

Cooper Stewart Cunningham
Born June 2018 Connel

040

Fraser Shaw
Born September 2018 Lochgilhead

041

William Wade-Edwards
Born March 2018 Dunbeg

042

Oliver MacNeill
Born February 2019 Isle of Barra

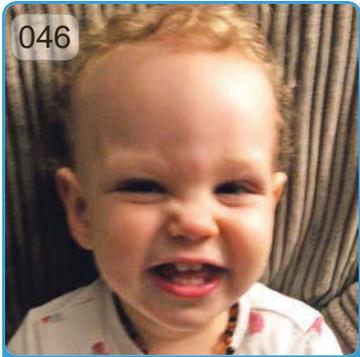
043

Madison Cline
Born June 2018 Glasgow

044

Darcy Poulton Watson
Born May 2016 Isle of Mull

045

Willow Durkin
Born December 2017 Oban



046

Evie Mackinnon
Born July 2017 Oban



047

Nathan Waddell
Born June 2018 Oban



048

Tommy Kennedy
Born June 2018 Fort William



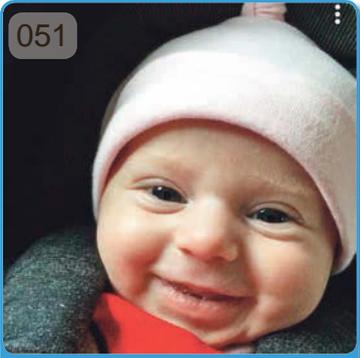
049

Alice Muir
Born April 2017 Glasgow



050

Allan Alvadia
Born September 2018 Oban



051

Amelia MacDonald
Born January 2019 Glasgow



052

Darcie Kate Toal
Born January 2018 Fort William



053

David Laird
Born July 2016 Oban



054

Jamie Madden
Born May 2017 Oban



055

Charlotte Grace MacGillivray
Born August 2018 Barcaldine



056

Harrison Davie
Born June 2018 Isle of Mull



057

Lewis Peterson
Born February 2019 Kilniver



058

Mila Mccracken
Born November 2017 Oban



059

Ella Fyfe
Born September 2018 Caol, Fort William



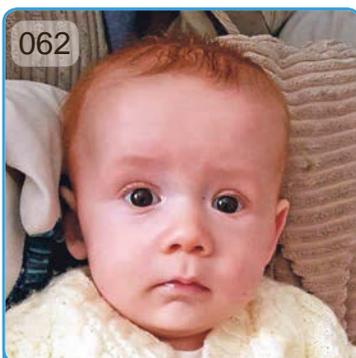
060

Hamish Sandenbergh
Born May 2018 Aberlour



061

Emma Maclean
Born September 2018 Oban



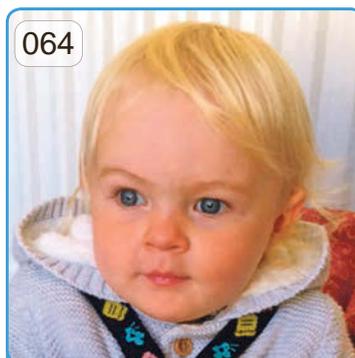
062

Steven TC Campbell
Born August 2018 Fort William



063

Lauren Gillies
Born September 2016 Arisaig



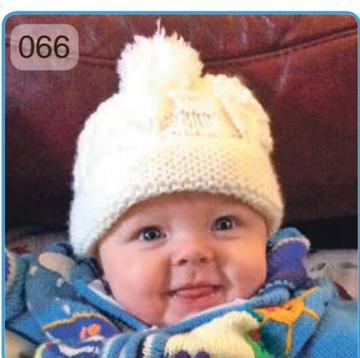
064

Andrew Kea Innes
Born November 2016 Easdale



065

Carter Harvey
Born May 2018 Oban



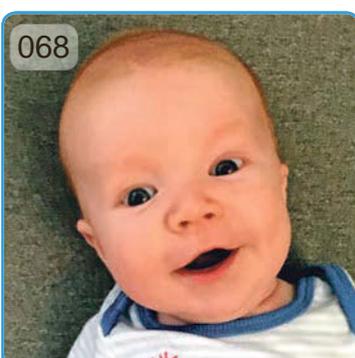
066

Ruaridh Freo Innes
Born October 2018 Easdale



067

Henry Hainsworth
Born May 2018 Fort William



068

Seumas Duncan MacNeil
Born January 2019 Barcaldine



069

Rowan Ewen Kelly
Born August 2016 Fort William



070

Victoria Zal
Born November 2018 Fort William

LEISURE & ENTERTAINMENT

YOUR GUIDE TO WHAT'S ON IN ARGYLL AND LOCHABER

Lewis and Harris Youth Concert Band brings home the gold

It was in November that the Lewis and Harris Youth Concert Band, conducted by Gavin Woods and Callum Watt, qualified for the finals of the Scottish Concert Band Festival.

Since then, the build up to the final on March 16 saw the young musicians meeting every Tuesday to rehearse a programme of different genres including: Fanfare for the common man, A million dreams and Cyclone by American composer Michael Ore.

The day before the final,

38 pupils from the Nicolson Institute and Tolsta Primary set off in three minibuses accompanied by an equipment van.

They had a busy weekend ahead of them with a rehearsal in Trinity Church, Stirling, that evening followed by a stay in Stirling Youth Hostel.

The next morning saw a final rehearsal, once again in Trinity Church, before the band made its way to Perth where the finals were being held in the town's Concert Hall.

Perth Concert Hall is a large venue and one of the biggest

the band has every played in, making the performance a daunting prospect especially for some of the younger members.

Despite this, the Lewis and Harris Youth Concert Band rose to the occasion and delivered a performance they could be proud of.

A nervous wait ensued with performances from the Orkney Schools' Concert Band as well as several larger bands from the Central Belt, before the competition concluded with the adjudicators' announcement.

All the hard work had paid off with the Lewis and Harris Youth Concert Band winning the coveted gold.

And it was conductor Mr Woods who led the praise: 'The standard of the band has increased dramatically over the last two years as a result of their hard work in preparation for the Scottish Concert Band Festival.'

'We are delighted to now have reached gold standard and will look to continue working at this level as the competition's standards continue to rise.'



The winning Lewis and Harris Youth Concert Band.

WIN
2 weekend tickets to



AH Live is proud to announce that the 80's Weekender will make its debut in 2019. The fantastic, all-star 80's lineup will be appearing at Hunters Quay Holiday Village from 10th-12th May with appearances from the likes of Go West, Katrina (Katrina & the Waves), Limahl + Jive Bunny. Onsite accommodation from just £240.

For your chance to win 2 weekend tickets to this fantastic event answer this simply question., complete the coupon and send to 80'S AH LIVE COMP, Wyvex Media, Lochavullin Industrial Estate, Crannog Ln, Oban PA34 4HB by 22nd April, 2019.

Question: Where is the 80's AH Live taking place? The Oban Times LOCHABER TIMES

Answer

Name

Address

Postcode Tele

Email

Terms and conditions: The prize is 2x2-day standard tickets to 80s AH Live per winner. Two winners with the correct answer will be chosen at random. Entrants must be over 18. Under 18s must be accompanied by an adult. Winners will be selected at random after the closing date and will receive a 2x2-day standard tickets 80s AH Live (10+12th May). The prize is not transferable or redeemable for cash equivalent. The Editor's decision is final. Photocopied entries will not be accepted. Winners may be asked to take part in publicity and may appear in a Wyvex Media publication and website. The competition is not open to Wyvex Media and associated company employees and their families. Digital subscribers can enter by printing this page and submitting their entry accompanied by a letter explaining that you are a digital subscriber. The closing date for entries is midnight, 22/04/19. We will protect your personal data. We only gather what we need for the requirements of this competition. Entry data will be deleted/disposed immediately upon the competition entry deadline and in a manner appropriate to GDPR regulations. Entrant's details will not be used for any other activity'.



GO WEST

KATRINA
(Katrina & The Waves)

LIMAHL
The Voice of Kajagoogoo

FIVE STAR

JIVE BUNNY
& The Mastermixers

BROTHER BEYOND
(Nathan Moore)

MAJESTY
A Tribute to Queen

All About the 80's Stargyll Production • Lynsey Brown's 80's Revival
Steph Collis Rocks the 80's • I ♥ the 80's
Ant Collesso in Purple Rain • Clyde 1's Gavin Pearson
+ more acts to be announced

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argyllholidays

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or visit us online

M'ALBA

MY ALBA

DIARDAOIN 04 AN GIBLEAN THURSDAY 04 APRIL

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 North Coast 500 – Le Anne London (rpt)
21.00 **UR | NEW:** Opry le Daniel
22.00 **UR | NEW:** An Sgrùdaire
22.15 Belladrum 2017: Vukovi (rpt)
22.40 Ameireaga air Film (rpt)
23.30 **UR | NEW:** Seòid a' Chidsin S3

DIHAOINE 05 AN GIBLEAN FRIDAY 05 APRIL

17.00 Prògraman Chloinne – Children's programming
17.40 An Là – News
17.50 **UR | NEW:** International Friendly – Scotland v Chile
20.00 Òran na Mnà (rpt)
20.30 Fuine (rpt)
21.00 Jock Stein (rpt)
22.00 Corp agus Anam (rpt)
22.50 Belladrum 2016 – Lucy Spraggan (rpt)
23.00 ALT (rpt)

DISATHAIRNE 06 AN GIBLEAN SATURDAY 06 APRIL

16.00 Prògraman Chloinne – Children's programming
17.45 An Là – News
18.00 **UR | NEW:** Scottish Premiership – Hamilton Academical v St Mirren
20.00 Machair (rpt)
20.25 Fraochy Bay (rpt)
20.30 Kerry is Kirsty: A' Chomraich (rpt)
21.00 **UR | NEW:** ALT
22.00 Jock Stein (rpt)

23.00 Scottish Premiership – Hamilton Academical v St Mirren (rpt)

DIDÒMHNAICH 07 AN GIBLEAN SUNDAY 07 APRIL

16.00 Prògraman Chloinne – Children's programming
18.15 An Là – News
18.30 Seachd Là – News Review
19.30 Sorchar nan Reul (rpt)
20.00 North Coast 500 – Le Anne London (rpt)
20.30 Dealbhan Fraoich (rpt)
21.00 Farpaisean Chon-Chaorach (rpt)
22.00 ALT (rpt)
23.00 Corp agus Anam (rpt)
23.50 Dhan Uisge (River Douchary) (rpt)

DILUAIN 08 AN GIBLEAN MONDAY 08 APRIL

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 Fuine (rpt)
21.00 **UR | NEW:** Trusadh – Làithean Sgoile: An Rum Beag
22.00 Port (rpt)
22.30 Gaol is Call (rpt)
23.00 An Sgrùdaire (rpt)
23.45 Belladrum 2016: C. Duncan (rpt)

DIMÀIRT 09 AN GIBLEAN TUESDAY 09 APRIL

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 Kerry is Kirsty: Stafainn (rpt)
21.00 Farpaisean Chon-Chaorach (rpt)

22.00 Trusadh – Làithean Sgoile: An Rum Beag (rpt)

23.00 Òran na Mnà (rpt)
23.30 Sorchar nan Reul (rpt)

DICIADAIN 10 AN GIBLEAN WEDNESDAY 10 APRIL

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:** Dealbhan Fraoich
21.00 Iùl a Chiùil (rpt)
22.00 **UR | NEW:** Seòid a' Chidsin
22.30 Port (rpt)
23.00 Opry le Daniel (rpt)

DIARDAOIN 11 AN GIBLEAN THURSDAY 11 APRIL

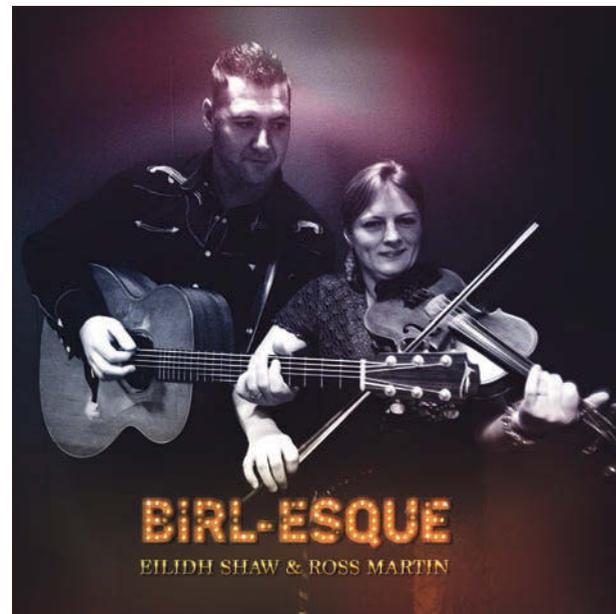
17.00 Prògraman Chloinne – Children's programming
19.00 Turas a' Bhradain (rpt)
19.30 Speaking our Language (rpt)
19.55 Earrann Eachdraidh (rpt)
20.00 An Là – News
20.30 North Coast 500 – Le Anne London (rpt)
21.00 **UR | NEW:** Opry le Daniel
22.00 **UR | NEW:** An Sgrùdaire
22.15 Belladrum 2016: Tiggs Da Author (rpt)
22.35 Ameireaga air Film (rpt)
23.20 Dhan Uisge (River Douchary) (rpt)
23.25 Seòid a' Chidsin (rpt)



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Great music on Good Friday



Eilidh Shaw and Ross Martin, who performed on Birl-esque, will be at Benderloch's Victory Hall.

Great music is promised from Morar-based popular duo Eilidh Shaw and Ross Martin when they land at the Victory Hall Benderloch on Good Friday.

Part of a four-date April tour of the west – incorporating two homecoming gigs – the pairing take in Sleat on April 9, Arisaig on the 10th, Bunessan on the 16th before arriving at the Benderloch Palladium on Friday April 19.

Taynuilt-born Eilidh is, of course, part of the amazing Shaw family who have not only been entertaining Argyll folk with the ceilidh band for years but produced a founder member of Capercaillie in the form of brother Donald.

Her fiddle has taken her

along a varied musical route since the folk band, the crazy Harem Scarem (with Ross) via the fabulous Poozies and most recently landing the key spot in Acid Crofters – Shooglenifty.

In between, Ross and Eilidh have played on more than 100 albums as they toured the world with their music.

Ross is guitarist with Lochaber band Daimh (pronounced Dive) and playing along with Karan Casey and

Julie Fowles has kept the digits well exercised. Last year Eilidh and Ross launched their own album Birl-esque featuring great Highland tunes interspersed with unexpected rock and roll influences to much critical acclaim – it's well worth checking out ahead of their gigs across the Gaeltacht.

Tickets for the Benderloch concert are available on the door for £12 or for £10 in advance by calling the Palladium hotline – 01631 720247.

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Club has focus on rewilding Mull

Mull Through The Lens photography club is focusing on a show this May all about rewilding Scotland.

Some of Scotland's top photographers and filmmakers have spent three years capturing the beauty of the country's landscape and its wild inhabitants and on Friday May 24 at 7pm Peter Cairns, one of those photographers, will be at Craignure Village Hall to give a spellbinding presentation of just some of the images and film footage captured as part of the Scotland: A Rewilding Journey project.

Mr Cairns, who is also director of Scotland: The Big

Picture which is behind the project, will explain the principles of rewilding, why it is needed and why it is needed now.

He will also be posing an intriguing question: What should Scotland look like?

The vision of a rewilded Scotland is a place where nature works, where wildlife flourishes and where people prosper.

Natalya Jagger, chairman of Mull Through The Lens, said the event was open to anyone interested in photography, wildlife, Mull and the rest of Scotland.

'We'll have the opportunity to ignite exciting conversa-

tions about rewilding Mull, Argyll and the whole of Scotland,' she added.

Tickets, £8 including refreshments, are available on scotlandbigpicture.com/events or from Tackle and Books in Tobermory,

Spar Shop in Salen, VisitScotland Tourist Information in Craignure and the Spar Shop in Bunessan.

Mull Through The Lens is a community club for photography enthusiasts of all levels which meets in Salen Parish Church Hall once a month, as well as running workshops. See mullthrough-thelens.org.uk for more.



Scotland rewilded. Photograph by Scotland: The Big Picture.

WHAT'S ON



In partnership with Oban Town Diary BID4oban.co.uk

THURSDAY 4TH APRIL

Slimming World
Salvation Army Hall, Fort William
9.30am, 11.30am, 3.00pm, 5.00pm
& 7.00pm
Tel: Gillian 07796 040803

Oban Accordion & Fiddle Club
The Royal Hotel. 7.30pm
Live Music & Entertainment @ Markie Dans
FREE JUKEBOX EVERY THURSDAY

FRIDAY 5TH APRIL

Lorn Archaeological & Historical Society
St Columba's Cathedral Hall. 7.30pm
Reminiscence Group
Oban Library. 12-1.30pm

Live Music & Entertainment @ Markie Dans
Gregor Coleman. Open till 2am
Live Music & Entertainment @ The Lorne Bar Oban
From 9pm. Free Entry

SATURDAY 6TH APRIL

Parkrun
Ganavan Sands, Oban. 9.30am
Oban Gaelic Choir Soup & Pudding Lunch
Glencruitten Church Hall
12noon - 2pm

Cearcall Comhraidh (Gaelic conversation group)
Furan Gaelic Centre. 12noon-1.30pm
Reminiscence Group
Oban Library. 12-1.30pm

Live Music & Entertainment @ Markie Dans
Slider. Open till 2am
Live Music & Entertainment @ The Lorne Bar Oban
From 9pm. Free Entry

SUNDAY 7TH APRIL

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

MONDAY 8TH APRIL

Drumming & Music Making
Taynuilt Sports Pavilion
6.30pm - 7.30pm

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

TUESDAY 9TH APRIL

Carers Coffee Morning
North Argyll Carers Centre
10.30am-12pm

WEDNESDAY 10TH APRIL

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

Beach Clean
Slip opposite Stafford Street
10.30am - 12pm

Inveraray & District Accordion & Fiddle Club
Inveraray Inn. 8.00pm

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 5TH APRIL

12.30 HARVIE AND THE MAGIC MUSEUM U
12.45/ 15.15/ 17.45 DUMBO PG
14.30 THE KID WOULD BE KING PG
17.15 FISHERMAN'S FRIENDS 12A
19.45 WHAT MEN WANT 15
20.15 SHARKWATER: EXTINCTION 12A

17:00 FISHERMAN'S FRIENDS 12A
19:30 SHARKWATER: EXTINCTION 12A
19:30 WHAT MEN WANT 15

SATURDAY 6TH

12.45/ 15.15/ 17.45 DUMBO PG
13.45 HARVIE AND THE MAGIC MUSEUM U
15.45 THE KID WOULD BE KING PG
18.15 SHARKWATER: EXTINCTION 12A
20.15 FISHERMAN'S FRIENDS 12A
20.15 WHAT MEN WANT 15

TUESDAY 9TH

12:00/ 14:30/ 17:00 DUMBO PG
12:30 THE KID WOULD BE KING PG
15:00 HARVIE AND THE MAGIC MUSEUM U
17:00 SHARKWATER: EXTINCTION 12A
19:00 WHAT MEN WANT 15
19:30 FISHERMAN'S FRIENDS 12A

SUNDAY 7TH

12:00/ 14:30/ 17:00 DUMBO PG
12.30 HARVIE AND THE MAGIC MUSEUM U
14.30 ALL IS TRUE 12A
16.45 FISHERMAN'S FRIENDS 12A
19.15 WHAT MEN WANT 15
20.15 SHARKWATER: EXTINCTION 12A

WEDNESDAY 10TH

12:00/ 14:30/ 17:00 DUMBO PG
12:30 THE KID WOULD BE KING PG
15:00 HARVIE AND THE MAGIC MUSEUM U
17:00 SHARKWATER: EXTINCTION 12A
19:00 WHAT MEN WANT 15
19:30 FISHERMAN'S FRIENDS 12A

MONDAY 8TH

12:00/ 14:30/ 17:00 DUMBO PG
12:30 THE KID WOULD BE KING PG
15:00 HARVIE AND THE MAGIC MUSEUM U

THURSDAY 11TH

12:00/ 14:30/ 16:45 DUMBO PG
12:15 THE KID WOULD BE KING PG
14:45 HARVIE AND THE MAGIC MUSEUM U
17:00 SHARKWATER: EXTINCTION 12A
19:00 NT LIVE: ALL ABOUT EVE 12A
19:15 FISHERMAN'S FRIENDS 12A

OFFERS & competitions

To enter, send separate entries (in the same envelope) with your name, address, telephone number and email address to **Scottish Field Competitions, Fettes Park, 496 Ferry Road, Edinburgh EH5 2DL** or enter at www.scottishfield.co.uk. Closing date, unless otherwise stated, is 31 May 2019. **Winners drawn from all competitions also enter a prize draw to win a bottle of Whitetail Gin.**

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FOR YOUR CHANCE TO WIN, just answer the following question:
What date do the Cottage Suites date back to?

Prize details: The prize includes four nights' accommodation in a new Cottage Suite, valid for stays Monday to Friday. Prize must be redeemed by 16 December 2019. Bookings are subject to availability. This prize is non-transferable, cannot be exchanged and no cash alternative will be offered. The prize is not available in conjunction with any other Trump Turnberry offer.

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

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New exhibitions are lighting up Luing

A small but beautiful exhibition celebrating the life and times of Robert Louis Stevenson and his connection to the romantic Isle of Erraid opened on Luing this week.

Luing History Society and the trust which runs the Atlantic Islands Centre are funding the exhibition's month-long visit, straight from a showing at Scottish Parliament.

They hope people will take a day trip across the Cuan Sound just to see it, bringing family and friends with them.

The exhibition features four prints based on unique postage stamps created by an artists' collective called 6° West which was funded to come up with the designs while they lived on Erraid.

Artists Anne Devine, David Faithfull, Alicia Hendrick and Mhairi Killin all lived in the lighthouse-keepers' cottages during their time on the tiny isle off the south-west of Mull.

They each followed their own perspective on the history and topography of the island landscape, incorporat-

ing Stevenson's relationship with the island, where in his youth he contemplated his future as a traveller and a writer, going on to feature the island in his famous novel *Kidnapped*.

Zoe Fleming from Luing History Group spotted an article in *The Oban Times* last February about the Erraid residency and its plans to go on a short tour so decided to get in touch to invite them over.

As from Monday, four prints and a desk from the Erraid exhibition finally reached Luing shores and set up home in the foyer of the Atlantic Islands Centre next to the original lens from nearby Fladda lighthouse, which, as a Stevenson creation, ties in nicely, says Zoe.

Erraid was a shore station for two other Stevenson lighthouses, Skerryvore and Dubh Artach which carries the connection to Luing and inspired members of the history group to set up a complementary lighthouse themed exhibition of their own upstairs all about Fladda and its keepers, Erraid

and the Stevensons.

The last of the Fladda lighthouse keepers left in 1956 after it became automated but some of its history has been revealed in Census documents studied by local enthusiasts.

The largest recorded population of the island of Fladda, living in its two cottages, was taken at the 1861 census.

In the four-roomed cottage lived the principal lightkeeper, his wife and 10 children, apparently including two pairs of twins.

In the three-roomed cottage lived the assistant lightkeeper, his wife and two children.

One of the keepers stationed there in 1861 also came back for another stint in 1891, he must have liked it that much, says Zoe.

In 1956 the light was automated by turning it into a gas-powered light, which could be controlled by Northern Lighthouse Board from Edinburgh.

Lachlan MacLachlan of Cullipool became the Northern Lighthouse attendant keeper in addition to



The Erraid exhibition is on display now at Luing's Atlantic Islands Centre.

his previous job as Northern Lighthouse attendant boatman, as his father and grandfather before him.

In 1989 the gas-powered light was changed to a solar-powered light and at

this time the original lens was removed and stored at Cullipool until it took its place in the Atlantic Islands Centre in 2015. It was unveiled at the official opening by Brendan O'Hara MP on

his first official duty, together with the help of Luing Primary School pupils.

Before the exhibition opened this week, Jane MacLachlan was helping centre volunteers give the

Ceol

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SATURDAY & SUNDAY, 20-21 APRIL 2019

SATURDAY

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STABLEFORD COMPETITION
AT DUNAVERTY GC

*Both pairs' scores count
toward overall team score*

SUNDAY

INDIVIDUAL STABLEFORD
COMPETITION AT MACH DUNES GC

*Best 3 out of 4 scores count
toward overall team score*

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Luining History Group's Zoe Fleming with Jane MacLachlan polishing the original lens from Fladda lighthouse built in 1860.

Fladda lens a special polish. The MacLachlan family are still keeping up the boat tradition as two of Lachlan and Jane's five children run the Cuan ferry.

Zoe said: 'The MacLachlan family have looked after Fladda lighthouse for at least three generations. Polishing the lens has been a family job for many years!'

She added: 'The Erraid exhibition is small and beautiful. Combined with our exhibition upstairs, it should make for an interesting experience.'

'We hope the community and visitors will come to see it at our lovely centre.'

'Luining has so many reasons why it makes a good day out and these exhibitions are definitely among them.'

The Atlantic Islands Centre in Cullipool is now open Monday to Friday from 10am to 5pm, Saturday from 10am to late and Sunday from 11am to 4pm.

GETINTOUCH
email us at editor@obantimes.co.uk
telephone 01631 568000

Party time for music club

March was party time for Inveraray and District Accordion and Fiddle Club when chairman Niall Iain MacLean celebrated his 90th birthday.

Among supporting players at the celebration meeting were Fyne Folk with Sally Hall, Alex John MacLeod and Jake MacKay on fiddles and Agnes Liddell on keyboard.

Jim and Jane MacKay sang, accompanied by Jake and Agnes - this caused great hilarity with the audience.

Before the interval, a birthday cake was brought in and committee member Roddy MacDiarmid congratulated Niall Iain on achieving this great milestone and presented him with a card signed by all present and a gift voucher from the club.

The guest artistes were Marie Fielding on fiddle and Duncan Black on accordion, great favourites of the 'birthday boy'.

Marie had composed a tune to mark his birthday - a 6/8 pipe march, Niall Iain



Niall Iain MacLean with committee member Roddy MacDiarmid.

MacLean's 90th - which they played and then presented him with a framed copy and also included it in their recent Take the Floor broadcast.

The chairman was quite overwhelmed by all the

'surprises' of the evening and thanked everyone for making his birthday so special.

Next week the club welcomes back Matthew MacLennan and his Scottish Dance Band for the grand finale of the season.

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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



A Jolie trip to Govan!

Recently, myself and the Tide Lines boys were doing a bit of filming in a big empty warehouse in Govan.

In the days when shipbuilding boomed on the Clyde, this place was used to build parts of ship engines, but now it is rented out as a massive, empty, multi-purpose space.

One of its most significant hires of late was the cast and crew of the Hollywood hit movie, World War Z, starring Brad Pitt, and filmed in George Square.

In conversation, I asked the proprietor about his experience of dealing with the Hollywood star-studded cast.

He told me the brilliant story of when the bus arrived with Brad Pitt and Angelina Jolie. The floor of the building is extremely rough rubble - probably unchanged from its former days in the ship building industry - and, when

Angelina Jolie stepped out, she was in her bare feet.

Immediately, she was greeted by a local Govan employee shouting: 'Angelina, you'll need tae pit yer shoes on, hen!'

A typically down-to-earth welcome to Glasgow for an A-list celebrity.

Raising money for veterans

Clydebank and District Highland Association had a great night at its annual cèilidh in aid of Erskine Hospital.

The chairman was Donald Iain Brown, and singers were Norman MacKinnon, Jimmy Cameron and Donald Iain. Willie Scott played some tunes on the accordion, the piper was Iain MacPhee, and the accompanist was Kirsteen Grant.

A representative from Erskine, Colin MacPhail, gave an update on what is going on at Erskine and acknowledged that, to date, the Clydebank

Highlanders have donated in excess of £30,000 for this very worthy cause over the years they have been holding this function.

Veterans from Erskine were in attendance and the generosity of patrons, especially Katie MacDonald and Dave and Jean Colrairie, ensured they all went home happy with bags of bottles.

The association extended its thanks to everyone who has supported the event over many years.

The AGM is to be held in the Napier Hall Old Kilpatrick on May 22 at 7.30pm.

Edinburgh cèilidh

Comunn Tir Nam Beann Dùn Èideann are holding a cèilidh this Saturday April 6 in Augustine United Church, George IV Bridge, Edinburgh - opposite the Elephant House Café.

There will be Gaelic songs from James Graham, Rena Gertz and Linn Phipps; and

music from Linda Campbell (accordion), Debbie Davidson (fiddle), Magnus Turpie (accordion), Mike Turpie (small pipes), and Neil MacLure (Highland pipes).

The cèilidh runs from 7.30pm to 10pm; with doors opening at 7.15pm. Admission is £5 for members and £6 for non-members and it is free for children - although under-16s must be accompanied by an adult.

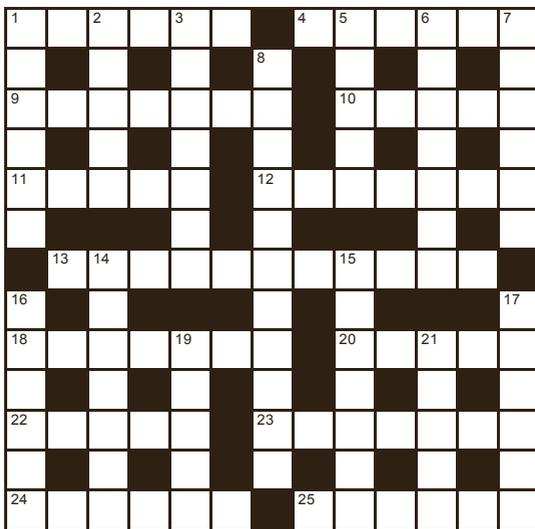
There is no need to book and tea, coffee, and home baking will be served at the interval.

What's on

Saturday April 27: Glasgow Skye Association annual spring concert (Wee Skye) in the Crawford Hall, Beith Street, at 7:30pm.

Saturday April 27: Glasgow Islay Association to host Tartan Pimpernel play in Partick Burgh Halls at 3pm. Tickets £8 or free for senior citizens.

Crossword



Across

- 1 Smoke out (6)
- 4 Respiratory problem (6)
- 9 Instrument to keep sheets together (7)
- 10 Fairy (5)
- 11 Shrub with large purple flowers (5)
- 12 Sounding pompous (7)
- 13 Sub sinker (5,6)
- 18 An action to conceal (5-2)
- 20 French red (5)
- 22 Large juicy fruit (5)
- 23 State of decline (7)
- 24 Male relative (6)
- 25 Problem of the skin (6)

Down

- 1 Storage on a farm (6)
- 2 Oyster's prize (5)
- 3 To make a petition for something (7)
- 5 A carved religious figure (5)
- 6 Felt hat (7)
- 7 Insects (6)
- 8 Thoughts are elsewhere (11)
- 14 Wrap (7)
- 15 Type of exercise (7)
- 16 Shrewdness (6)
- 17 Swelling from fluid (6)
- 19 Extensivity (5)
- 21 Wed (5)

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION



Boxer Benny Lynch tour hopes to pack a punch in Oban

The story of Scotland's first ever boxing world champion comes to Oban in June with a celebrity cast.

Tickets are on sale now to see the national touring production of The Benny Lynch Story when it comes to The Corran Halls on Saturday June 22.

It takes a poignant and entertaining look at Benny's life, from his childhood in the

Gorbals' slums to his boxing success and world stardom before his demise and untimely death in 1946 when he was just 33.

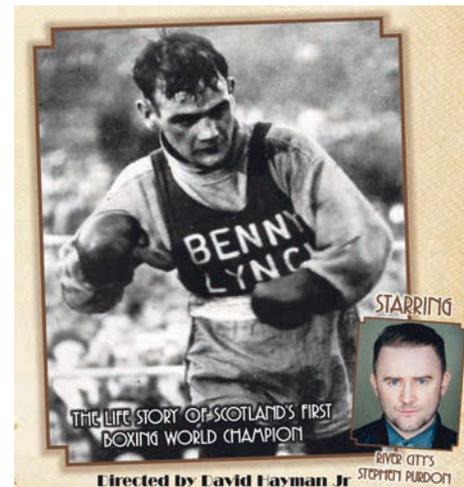
Show makers say audiences do not have to be boxing fans to enjoy the tale of this Scottish icon because it is 'the ultimate rags to riches to rags story'. The cast includes River City actors Stephen Purdon, Holly Jack and Simon Weir, also known

for his roles in Taggart and Trainspotting 2.

Scottish acting legend David Hayman plays Benny's coach and mentor Sammy Wilson - the play is directed by David Hayman Junior.

The show contains strong language so it is recommended for an audience aged 14 and over.

Go to citizenticket.co.uk/event/the-benny-lynch-story-oban/



The story of Benny Lynch is coming to Oban in June.

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MAXUS Vans arrive in Scotland - from only £11,995 + vat

Auto Services commercial vehicles outlet in Crieff Road announces an expansion to their operations with the addition of the Maxus Vans range. Dealer principal, Steve Crozier, is delighted to announce that from the 1st of April 2019, Auto Services have been appointed as Maxus main dealer and distributors in Scotland.

This is a major addition to a business that has expanded dramatically over the past few years and who already provide repair, service and recovery to Mercedes-Benz, Iveco, Isuzu, Fiat (LCV) vans and motorhomes and the recently acquired Renault Trucks service and repair franchise.

Two new Maxus models are available for early delivery. The short wheel base V80 starts from only £11,995 and boasts a load carrying capacity of 1,200kgs and a load space of 6.4cm while the larger long wheel base models comes in at a mere £12,995 with a load carrying capacity of 1,400kgs and a load space of 11.6cm. All prices are for April orders and are plus Vat and vehicle road tax.

To ensure a fast turnaround for business vehicles the company currently operates servicing and repairs from 7.00am to midnight Monday to Friday to keep customer's vehicle downtime to a minimum.

The recovery division operates a fleet of 14 vehicles, can handle anything from a small van up to 44T Tractor Unit with trailer and operates 24 hours a day 7 days a week.

Steve explained, "We are committed to the continued expansion and

development of our business and the creation of new jobs". He continued, "We are currently looking at plans to move to new purpose-built premises within the next 12 to 18 months".

The LDV brand, which returned to the UK market in 2016 and manufactures its range in China, aims to release a new model annually thanks to a £2.25 billion investment from SAIC in innovation & R&D.

It is expected that by 2020 the company will offer everything from an 800kg van up to 4.9 tonnes – with powertrain options of petrol, pure-EV, plug-in hybrid and conventional diesel.

LDV is gearing up for another EV launch this spring, which will excite van enthusiasts and which the Harris Group is putting in the spotlight at this year's Commercial Vehicle Show in Birmingham.

While details are still under wraps, LDV can reveal that this new van (EV80's little brother) will be the first model launched by LDV that will specifically designed and manufactured as a pure-electric van tailored for the UK market.

Mark Barrett, General Manager of LDV U.K. & Ireland, takes pride in LDV's green efforts and is looking forward to what the brand will offer eco-conscious businesses in the future: "Investing in a fleet of EVs will cut down long-term operational costs and there has never

been a better time to make the change to emission-free fleets.

"Electric powered vehicles will soon be the norm and this is reflected by the number of brands, both in the domestic and commercial market, who are moving their focus from fuel-dependent engines to hybrids and pure-electric models.

"LDV is ahead of many in terms of its offerings and its latest launch, the EV30, only strengthens its position as a leading brand in the electric commercial vehicle sector," he added.

Like the EV80, the new EV will be part of the Go Ultra Low grant scheme, a government initiative that aims to encourage drivers to switch to low emissions vehicles.

Business owners can take advantage of an £8,000 grant towards a brand-new EV80 van or Chassis cab variant and say goodbye to hefty congestion charges, road fund licence and carbon emissions.

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Vintage match ploughs ahead



Three generations together at the ploughing match. Donnie MacCormick, 16-year-old Isla with dad John MacCormick and Gregor MacCormick.



This Ransomes plough is more than 100 years old.

by Kathie Griffiths
kgriffiths@obantimes.co.uk

Entrants in this year's Lorn vintage ploughing match came from near and far to take part.

There were 16 competitors in all at Ledaig's Dalvaie Farm on Saturday, including enthusiasts from the Oban area as well as Fife, Forfar and the Isle of Bute.

Wet weather cancelled last year's match but the weekend sunshine put smiles on lots of faces, including some visitors who made the trip from Inverness to watch.

The event started in 2000 for the millennium celebrations as a one-off but it has been back almost every year since due to popular demand.

Judges were impressed with the skills on show. Ploughing on grassland lea instead of stubble is the more challenging of the two because it is generally stiffer and harder to turn.

Winner of this year's trailing plough class was Maurice Blacklaws from Fife. David Veitch from Scotlandwell came first in the 10 inches



Overall winner of Lorn Vintage Ploughing Match 2019 was John MacCormick.

class and John MacCormick from Oban won the eight inches class.

Mr MacCormick was also named the overall winner, with Alex Robertson from the Isle of Bute in second place and Mr Veitch in third.

'I wouldn't say I ploughed any better than anyone else, it just pleased the judges a bit more,' said Mr MacCormick, who is also one of the event's four organisers. 'There's a lot involved in vintage plough-

ing. There are an awful lot of variables to achieve the end result. It's a bit like a rally car and choosing different tyres to get the best performance. In this case, it's changing shares or socks, the pointy bits of the plough, as we call it in Argyll. There are different shares for different soils,' added Mr MacCormick.

The match also made it on to BBC Alba, said Mr MacCormick, who added: 'It's the first time we've been

televised. It was quite pleasing to be in the same news ranking as Brexit!'

Retired Oban dentist Bob MacCulloch was also at the match with his camera. Mr MacCulloch, who has been creating a photographic archive of the Lorn vintage ploughing matches, put on a slideshow at North Connel recently to help raise funds for this year's event.

Match organisers hope to set up a Facebook page soon so people can share their vintage ploughing pictures and stories.

'We'd like to thank all the competitors, spectators, businesses for their support and the Bonniwell family for loaning us the field.

'Fingers crossed, we'll be back again for another match next year if we can find a field,' added Mr MacCormick.

Once the show has settled its accounts, a donation will be made to Argyll Beats Cardiovascular Disease, a charity set up by a group of volunteers in 2000. Over the years the ploughing match has raised about £10,000 for the charity's work.

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Duncan Buchanan and Archie Macgillvary were among ploughing match competitors.



Charlie Campbell on the tractor with Iain Mitchell from Taynuilt guiding a Ransomes plough more than 100 years old.

Market reports

Stirling – United Auctions on Thursday March 28 sold 6,281 prime sheep comprising of 12 new season lambs and 4,735 old season lambs, selling to an average of 197.04p, also 1,534 ewes and rams.

New season lambs (12) – West Lecropt (Hamp) £102; Greystone (Zwa) £101; Wood (Dor) £100. New Season Lambs (12) – Wood (Dor) 218ppk; Whitehouse (Zwa) 207ppk; West Lecropt (Hamp) 204ppk.

Old season lambs (4735) – Luckenburn (BTex) £124; Grassmainston (Tex) £106; Harviesmailing (Cross) £105; Berrydyke (Suf) £100; Pityot (Chev) £98; Markethill (Mule) £93.50; Kilmundie (BF) £89.50.

Old season lambs (4735) – Luckenburn (BTex) 284ppk; Longfauld (Tex) 262ppk; Harviesmailing (Cross) 241ppk; Abbey (Chev) 240ppk; Wardhead (Suf) 220ppk; Glrindamp (BF) 204ppk; Craggan (Mule) 203ppk.

Ewes (1534) – Pitlochrie (Tex) £158; Isle Cottage (BTex) £112; Shannochar (Suf) £104; Broadleys (BFL) £96; West Lecropt (Hamp) £94; Greystone (Zwa) £91; Assloss (Chev/Mule) £86; Higham and South Falfield (Cross) £77; Newmill of Inshewan (Che) £74; Coulshill (BF) £71.

Rams – Luckenburn (Tex) £116; Glass (Suf) £96; South Baldutho (Cross) £94; Isle Cottage (BTex) £90; South Park (BFL) £87.

Stirling – Caledonian Marts Ltd had forward 609 store cattle at its April show and sale, which was kindly sponsored by Veolia UK, and ably judged by Ross Johnston, North Medrox, Cumbernauld, and the following were his awards:
Overall champion was a Limousin from D Reid,

Middlerigg, Falkirk which sold to £1,360 or 239ppkg. Reserve champion was a Limousin heifer from J and D Mitchell, Offers, Gargunnoch which sold to £1,110 or 242ppkg.

Bullocks averaged 211ppkg selling to 262ppkg for an Aberdeen Angus from J McKenzie, Ashfield, Balloch and to £1,360 for the overall champion.

Heifers averaged 207ppkg selling to 242ppkg for the reserve champion, and to £1,120 for a Limousin from J Geyer, Blairhall, Culross. Black and whites averaged 131ppkg selling to 160p from D T Marshall, West Kirkland, Newton Stewart and to £700 twice from W Baxter, Gryfside, Kilmacolm.

Other leading prices:

Bullocks per head:- £1,220 Loanrigg; £1,200 Loanrigg and Skeoch; £1,170 Loanrigg; £1,160 Middlerigg and Loanrigg; £1,150 Callendoune Heifers per head: £1,110 Offers; £1,100 Hatrick; £1,080 Skeoch (Twice); and Hatrick £1,040 Stenhouse.

Bullocks per kg:- 249p Middle Bankhead; 247p Rhoin and Alton; 246p Robertsonlane; 245p Ashfield and Offers.

Heifers per kg:- 239p Middlepart; 237p Alton; 235p and 233p (Twice) Offers; 233p Easter Dullatur and Half Mark.

Black and whites per head:- £690 West Kirkland; £670 Gryfside; £610 Westfield.

Black and whites per kg:- 143p Cuff; 135p Stenhouse.

Also forward were 400 Store Hoggets and Breeding Sheep.

Top price of the day went to G S Adam, Hill of Arnmor for a Texel X grit ewe at £105.

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Give your home a spring health check!

Spring is finally here! It's a great time for homeowners to give their home a 'health check' after the harsh winter weather, according to NHBC, the UK's leading insurance and warranty provider for new build homes.

Most homeowners only think about the health of their property when selling, however, regular checks inside and outside the home can avoid potential problems. People living in houses built in the last 10 years will typically have to deal with less maintenance, as the build quality and energy efficiency of new homes today is far more advanced to that of older properties. NHBC has worked consistently over the years to raise the construction standards of new homes whilst providing its leading Buildmark policy to new homebuyers.

In its latest guidance to homeowners, NHBC advises carrying out at least a yearly review of their property to help keep everything in order and protect their investment. Areas worth checking are:

INSIDE

Heating system: As the weather gets warmer, adjust central heating to a summer setting to save energy. This is a good time to bleed radiators too, to get rid of air pockets. It is recommended that boilers should be serviced each year, to ensure that it is working with maximum performance and safety. Contact a Gas Safe certified installer to carry out an annual check now when engineers are less busy.

Smoke detectors: If detectors run on batteries, these should be checked and replaced if necessary. All detectors should be replaced after 10 years.

Renew bathroom seals: It's important to keep the silicon around the bathtub in good condition to prevent mould and stop water getting below and causing damage. Restoring seals is an easy weekend job. All you need to do is remove all the old sealant using a Stanley knife, clean the area, then apply masking tape to the area above and below where you want the silicone to go.

Remember to apply the new sealant with the bath full of cold water — the weight will ensure that the sealant doesn't crack.

Home security: Check the locks on all doors and windows, to see if they are in working order.

Taps: Dripping taps waste vast amounts of water. They may need the old washer changing for a new one.

Locate and inspect your stopcock: In the event of a burst pipe, knowing where your stopcock is located could save you hundreds of pounds! They are usually located where your water supply pipe enters your house, commonly under the kitchen sink. Make sure it's working properly and you can turn it on and off easily. It's good to do this every six months.

OUTSIDE

Roofing: Your roof is the most exposed part of your house, and it takes a hammering from the winter weather. Look at your roof from the outside, to see if any tiles are cracked or have slipped; these will need replacing by a professional roofer.

Guttering: Check for

damage and clear away blockages that may have accumulated over the winter months. Blockages can be bad news and lead to water damage, so make sure guttering is cleared at least once a year. For safety reasons, this should be carried out by a professional.

Woodwork: This needs preserving against weather conditions. Timber windows and doors need repainting every three to five years; make a painting plan to action in the drier summer months.

Garden fencing: This provides homes with security, therefore it is important to check garden fencing for any damage and maintain its good condition.

A quick home health check will identify areas that need attention and catch problems at an early stage. Carrying out regular maintenance ensures a home is kept in good condition, making it more pleasant to live in, more energy efficient and cheaper to run, and increasing its residual value.



Further advice for homeowners on property maintenance and other issues can be found at www.nhbcnewhomes.co.uk.



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Home Report Available EPC: E54

1349

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Home Report Available EPC: D67

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Applications in writing by 11th April 2019, with your CV and reasons why you are suitable for the job, (successful applicants interviewed on the 18th April 2019), to Hugh G Murray, Migdale Transport Ltd, Dornoch Road, Bonar Bridge, Sutherland, IV24 3EB, or email on hugh@migdaletransport.co.uk



Scottish Episcopal Church Diocese of Argyll and The Isles Diocesan Administrator: Oban

We need an enthusiastic part-time (20hrs a week) administrator to assist the Diocesan Officers.

You will be able to work on your own initiative to a high standard, have good communication skills and a flexible approach to working as an individual and as part of a team.

You will have experience of general office work, including Office 365 and be confident in handling finance. Experience with accounting software an advantage.

Further particulars are available on our website <http://www.argyll.anglican.org>.

Salary £19k pro rata plus non-contributory pension Applications should be sent to the Diocesan Treasurer, Diocesan Centre, Croft Ave, Oban, PA34 5JJ or by email to secretary@argyll.anglican.org, to arrive by Friday 5th April 2019

The Diocese of Argyll and The Isles is a registered Scottish Charity no SC005375

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A full current driving licence is essential for this position.

Please apply by email with full CV and contact details to:
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Previous aquaculture experience is desirable but not essential as full training and support will be provided. A full driving licence is essential.

This is a full time position, working a 40 hour week, Monday to Friday including weekend cover on a rota basis. You would be expected to undertake additional hours as required in order to accommodate the needs of the business. We offer attractive salaries dependent on experience along with pension scheme.

If you are interested in applying for this position please send your CV, to:- HR Department, Dawnfresh Seafoods Ltd, Bothwellpark Industrial Estate, Uddingston, G71 6LS. Office - 01698 810008, E-mail: hr@dawnfresh.co.uk

Closing date for applications is 15 April 2019.

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1 Advertising copy shall be legal, decent, honest and truthful and comply with the British Code of Advertising Practice and all other codes.

2 The Publisher does not guarantee the insertion of any particular advertisement.

3 The Publisher reserves the right to cancel or alter the advertisement by giving reasonable notice.

4 An order for an advertisement shall be deemed to be made on acceptance of the advertisers' order by the Publisher whether placed by telephone, mail, fax or in

person.

5 Cancellation of display advertising must be received by the Publisher before the publishing deadline, failing which, the publisher reserves the right to invoice the customer in full for the whole cost of the advertisement.

6 The parties submit to the jurisdiction of the Scottish Courts and Scots Law. In the event of any dispute or action by the Publisher to recover payment from an advertiser, it is agreed that matters will be settled in the Oban, Argyll Sheriff Court or such other Court as the Publisher may choose.

7 The Publisher shall not be liable for any loss or damage occasioned by any total or partial failure (however caused) of publication or distribution of any newspaper or edition in which any advertisement is scheduled to appear. In the event of any error, misprint or omission in the printing of an advertisement or part of an advertisement, the Publisher will either re-insert the advertisement or relevant part of the advertisement, as the case may be, or make reasonable refund or adjustment to the cost. No re-insertion, refund or adjustment will

be made where the error, misprint or omission does not materially detract from the advertisement.

8 Errors must be notified to the Publisher in writing within fourteen days of publication. In no circumstances shall the total liability of the Publisher for any error, misprint or omission exceed the amount of a full refund of any price paid to the Publisher for the particular advertisement in connection with which liability arose or the cost of a further or corrective advertisement of a type and standard reasonably comparable to that in connection with which liability arose.

9 The Advertiser/Advertising Agency agrees to indemnify the Publisher in respect of all costs, damages or other charges falling upon the publication as the result of legal actions or threatened legal actions arising from the publication of the advertisement in any one or more of a series of advertisements published in accordance with copy instructions supplied to the publication in pursuance of the Advertiser/Advertising Agency order.

10 Adverts under the value of £75 must be paid

on acceptance of order by the Publisher. All advertising on a credit basis must be agreed with the Publisher in advance.

11 Payment of any invoice raised by the Publisher will be due 15 days from the date of invoice or as otherwise directed on the invoice. In the event of non-payment the Publisher may charge late payment interest at a rate of 2% and this is chargeable on a daily basis from the due date until the bill is paid. In addition the Publisher may charge a late payment levy of £10 as an administration fee. In the event of late payment the Publisher reserves the right to disallow any discounts given and to raise an additional invoice for the discount which will be treated as though it has been raised with the original invoice.

12 A request to insert an advertisement assumes acceptance of our conditions. Published by Wyvex Media Limited, P.O. Box 1, Oban, PA34 4HB, Tel: (01631) 568000 www.obantimes.co.uk and registered as a newspaper at the Post Office. <http://termsandconditions.wyvex-media.co.uk>

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT PROCEDURE) (SCOTLAND) REGULATIONS 2008

Notice of Pre-Application Consultation (PAC) to be published in a local newspaper under regulation 7(2)

Argyll Community Housing Association the prospective applicant, hereby gives notice of a Pre-Application Consultation (PAC) to be undertaken in advance of the submission of a planning application to Argyll and Bute Council for a prospective development comprising MASTER PLAN AND RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT, INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS AND LANDSCAPING ON A 2.32Ha AREA OF LAND NORTH WEST OF GLENCRUITTEN RISE, OBAN.

Further information in respect of the prospective development may be obtained by Argyll Community Housing Association, Dalriada House, Lochnell Street, Lochgilphead-Tel: 01546 605915 or 01546 605839.

A public event which will include a presentation of the prospective development and opportunity or public discussion with the prospective applicant is to be held at;

Kilmore & Oban Church of Scotland, Gallery Room, Oban on Monday 15th April 2019 between the hours of 16.00 to 20.00.

Any persons wishing to submit comments should submit these to the prospective applicant at Argyll Community Housing Association, Dalriada House, Lochnell Street, Lochgilphead before Friday 3rd May 2019.

Persons submitting comments in response to Pre-Application Consultation (PAC) are advised that comments submitted to the prospective applicant at this time are not representations to the planning authority; in the event that prospective applicant submits a formal application for planning permission then there would be an opportunity to submit representations to Argyll and Bute Council as the planning authority at that time.

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DECROFTING DIRECTIONS ISSUED

J Morris
H Morris
8 Ardnastang (South),
Ardnamurchan & Sunart
88222
0.171 ha
Reason - Site for dwelling house
Condition - With fencing conditions.

JM Thomas
83 Lochyside (Ben-View),
Kilmallie
94780
0.0085 ha
Reason - amenity ground
Condition - With fencing conditions

Full details at www.crofting.scotland.gov.uk

PUBLIC NOTICES

Oban Times PUBLIC NOTICES

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PROPOSED ASSIGNMENT OF A CROFT

Grace Rachel Johnston is applying to assign the tenancy of the croft at Baile lochdrach, Croft 1, Isle of Colonsay to Colm McNicholl of Meall a Charnan, Upper Kilchattan, Isle of Colonsay, PA61 7YR. Written comments from those with a relevant interest (which may be made public) to: Crofting Commission, Leachkin Road, Inverness, IV3 8NW, info@croftingscotland.gov.uk scot by May 2, 2019.

First Registration of a Croft

Ian Mann has registered their croft 23a Tomonie, Kilmallie 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 8th December 2019.

Details of the registration can be found at www.croft.ros.gov.uk/register/home. The croft registration number is C5719.

Oban Times PUBLIC NOTICES

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Oban Times PUBLIC NOTICES

GOODS VEHICLE OPERATORS LICENCE

Argyll and Bute Council, Development & Infrastructure, Fleet Management, 1a Manse Brae, Lochgilphead, Argyll, PA31 8RD, is applying to change an existing Licence as follows. To keep an extra 9 goods vehicles and 0 trailers at the Operating Centre at Jacksons Quarry, Millpark Road, Oban, PA34 4NH.

Owners or occupiers of land (including buildings) near the operating centre who believe that their use or enjoyment of that land would be affected, should make written representations to the Traffic Commissioner at the Scottish Traffic Area Office, Hillcrest House, 386 Harehills Lane, Leeds, LS9 6NF, stating their reasons, within 21 days of this notice. Representors must at the same time send a copy of their representations to the applicant at the address given at the top of this notice. A guide to making representations is available from the Traffic Commissioner's Office.

Oban Times PUBLIC NOTICES

Oban Times PUBLIC NOTICES

GOODS VEHICLE OPERATOR'S LICENCE

Corrigan Contractors trading as Corrigan Contractors Limited of Ardgour, By Fort William, PH33 7AB is applying to change an existing licence as follows.

To add an operating centre to keep 1 goods vehicle and 1 trailer at Shiel Buses, 1 Glen Nevis Business Park, Claggan, Fort William, PH33 6RX. Owners or occupiers of land (including buildings) near the operating centre who believe that their use or enjoyment of that land would be affected should make written representations to the Traffic Commissioner at Hillcrest House, 386 Harehills Lane, Leeds, LS9 6NF stating their reasons, within 21 days of this notice. Representors must at the same time send a copy of their representations to the applicant at the address given at the top of this notice. A Guide to making Representations is available from the Traffic Commissioner's Office.

Argyll and Bute Council

**CIVIC GOVERNMENT (SCOTLAND) ACT 1982
TAXI FARE REVIEW**

Notice is hereby given that there will be no changes to the maximum fares for taxis operating within the jurisdiction of Argyll and Bute Council following the recent taxi fare review in accordance with Section 17 and 18 of the Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982. These maximum fares will become effective from 22nd April 2019. The fares will be as follows:-

Argyll and Bute Council Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982 Taxi fares with Effect from 22nd April 2019		
Tariff 1	Hirings from ranks or "flag" Hiring between 7am and 10pm	£3.00 20p
	Initial charge (860 yards or part thereof) Subsequent charge (each 176 yards or part thereof)	
Tariff 2	Hirings from ranks or "flag" Hiring between 10pm and 7am	£3.60 20p
	Initial charge (860 yards or part thereof) Subsequent charge (each 150 yards or part thereof)	
Tariff 2 also applies to hirings from ranks or "flag" between 6pm and 10pm December 24th, 6pm and 10pm December 31st and between 7am 2nd January and 7am 3rd January		
Tariff 3	Hiring from ranks or "flag" between 10pm 24th December and 7am 27th December and between 10pm 31st December and 7am 2nd January	£4.20 20p
	Initial Charge (860 yards or part thereof) Subsequent Charge (each 120 yards or part thereof)	

Soiling Charge - £100 maximum (with permission to display warning signs indicating that there may be an additional charge for any potential loss of earnings suffered as a consequence)

Waiting Time - 35 pence per minute commencement of journey, charged on a pro rata basis per second

Taxi called by mean of telephone - 30 pence additional charge

Large Mini-bus type vehicle (carrying 5 or more passengers together at their own request):-

- Where Tariff 1 would apply - charge Tariff 2
- Where Tariff 2 would apply - charge Tariff 3
- Where Tariff 3 would apply - surcharge £1.00

Fee by negotiation - for all journeys commencing within but finishing outwith Argyll and Bute, in a place of the above charges, such fares may be charged as prior to the acceptance of the hire, were proposed to the hirer and accepted by him/her

Ferry Fares - The hirer shall be liable for the cost of a return ferry fare for any journey involving a ferry

Charles Reppke, Head of Governance and Law, Argyll and Bute Council, Kilmory, Lochgilphead, PA31 8RT

To find out more about living and working in Argyll & Bute visit us at:
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www.highland.gov.uk



**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
19/01365/LBC	Invergarry Primary School Invergarry, PH35 4HG	Internal alterations and construction of new 2 classroom extension to existing Primary School
19/01194/LBC	Edenmhor Garbhein Road, Kinlochleven	External and internal alterations to house
19/01150/S42	Greenwood Ardslignish, Acharacle	Application under section 42 to remove condition (1) of planning application 97/285/FULLO
19/01244/FUL	Site 80M NE Of Druimdhru Arisaig	Erection of house
19/00787/FUL	Salen Hotel Salen, Acharacle	Alteration and part conversion of garage/store to form hotel letting suite
19/01344/FUL	Land North West Of 27 Anahelt, Strontian	Erection of house (renewal of planning permission 16/01193/FUL)

Time period for comments is 14 days and 21 days for 19/01365/LBC & 19/1194/LBC
ePlanning Centre, The Highland Council, Glenurquhart Road, INVERNESS IV3 5NX
Email: eplanning@highland.gov.uk

**THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL
TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (SCOTLAND) ACT 1997
TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT)
(SCOTLAND) REGULATIONS 2017**

In accordance with the provisions of Regulation 21 (1)(b) of the above Regulations, The Highland Council hereby gives notice that the following Planning Applications have been determined.

18/04646/FUL - SIMEC GHR Ltd Proposal to construct and operate a run-of-river Hydro scheme on the Allt Daim (Scheme 2 - Allt Daim) at Land 2460M SE Of Aonach Mor House, 9 Forestry Houses, Torlundy, has been granted by the Council.

18/04647/FUL - SIMEC Green Highland Renewables Ltd Proposal to construct and operate a run-of-river Hydro scheme (Scheme 3 - Allt Coire an Eoin) at Land 685M SE Of Nevis Range, Torlundy, has been granted by the Council.

18/02739/FUL - Dickins Hydro Resources Ltd Installation of a 810kW run of river hydro power scheme and ancillary works (Allt Ceitlein) at Land 155M South Of Glen Ceitlein, Glenetive, has been granted by the Council.

18/05440/FUL - Dickins Hydro Resources Ltd Installation of a run of river hydro-electric scheme (885KW), including one intake structure, buried pipeline, powerhouse building, outfall, bridges, formation of borrow pits and access tracks (Allt Mheuran) (revised application - previous 18/02741/FUL) at Land 650M SW Of Coiletter, Glenetive, has been granted by the Council.

18/02742/FUL - Dickins Hydro Resources Ltd Construction of run-of-river hydropower scheme including intake structure, penstock pipe and associated buildings, plant and access (Allt Chaorainn) at Land 1000M SW Of Altachaorin, Glenetive, has been granted by the Council.

A copy of the planning permissions are available through the Council's web based ePlanning portal online at: <http://wam.highland.gov.uk/wam/> (search using one of the above application numbers) or during the hours of 9.30am-12.30pm & 1.30pm - 4.30pm Monday-Friday at the Service Point, The Charles Kennedy Building, Achintore Road, Fort William, PH33 6RQ.

Stuart Black.
Director Development and Infrastructure.

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
19/00483/PP	Installation of 8no. (8m high) pole mounted external CCTV cameras (retrospective)	Oban High School, Soroba Road, Oban, Argyll And Bute, PA34 4JB
19/00099/PP	Erection of telecommunications equipment compound with 15 metre high lattice tower and associated works	Land Approximately 674 Metres South West Of Upper Dorrán, Bridge Of Orchy, Argyll And Bute
19/00597/CONAC	Complete demolition of garage and part boundary wall	Allt Na Criche, Middle Brae, Tobermory, Isle Of Mull, Argyll And Bute, PA75 6PA
19/00436/PP	Erection of telecommunications equipment compound with 20 metre high lattice tower and associated works and formation of vehicular access	Land North East Of Bendoran Cottage, Bunessan, Isle Of Mull, Argyll And Bute
19/00486/PP	Alterations and change of use from storage facility to builders merchant facility	Unit 7A2, Glengallan Road, Oban, Argyll And Bute, PA34 4HG
19/00558/PP	Change of use of land from the siting of storage containers to form external secure building material storage yard and erection of 1.8 metre high fence and gates	Land South Of Unit 7A2, Glengallan Road, Oban, Argyll And Bute, PA34 4HG
19/00586/PP	Renewal of planning permission 15/00574/PP (Erection of dwellinghouse and formation of new vehicular access)	Land To West Of Portnacraoish, Portnacraoish, Appin, Argyll And Bute

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.

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Argyll and Bute Council

School Consultations

There will be public meetings held to discuss:

The Rezoning of St Columba's Primary School, Oban
At 7.00-8.30pm in St Columba's Primary School on Wednesday 17th April 2019.

The proposed closure of Ardchattan Primary School
At 7.00-8.30pm in Ardchattan Primary School on Thursday 2nd May 2019.

The proposed closure of Ashfield Primary School
At 7.00-8.30pm in Ashfield Primary School on Wednesday 8th May 2019.

Argyll and Bute Council

**Councillor Roddy McCuish
(E.W. 4 Oban South and the Isles)**

Councillor McCuish will be holding a surgery on **Friday 5th April 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 12th April 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 Sir Jamie McGrigor
(E.W. 4 Oban South and the Isles)**

Councillor Sir McGrigor will be holding a surgery on **Friday 26th April 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 19th April 2019** in the **Rockfield Centre, 19 Stevenson 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

Councillor Elaine Robertson (E.W. 5 Oban North and Lorn)

Councillor Robertson will be holding a surgery on **Friday 26th April 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

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EXTRACTOR HOOD Lamona kitchen extractor hood. Hardly used, £20 Telephone 01631 562272.

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LADIES BAND/ETERNITY RING Silver, size M, set with pale blue CZ stones halfway round, worn once (too small), Cost £80, £20 Telephone 07785 318520.

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PERSONAL



Stewart McIver

Stewart, Stella and Fiona would like to thank everyone for their calls, texts, enquiries, cards and prayers following Stewart's operation, also the flowers which Stella received. Thank you to Dr Peter Chong and his team and all staff in Wards 63 & 63A Royal Infirmary, Glasgow. Stewart is now home and hopefully on the road to mend.

THANK YOU!

Archie Young would like to say a BIG THANK YOU to all staff at Ballachulish Medical Practice, doctors, nurses and staff at Belford Hospital, district nurses and family and friends for all the care and support given to me during and since my stay in hospital.

Loanfern, Ballachulish.

Chrissie Fraser
Happy 80th
Birthday



Love from Ian
and all the family xx

MARRIAGES

JARMAN - LOMAX - On March 30, 2019 in Oxford the Reverend Christopher (Kit) Jarman to Mrs Catherine Lomax. With gratitude to our many friends in Oban and Appin whom we leave behind, with a special commendation to the phenomenal team at Care Plus.

DEATHS

BURBERRY - Peacefully, at home in Comrie, Perthshire (formerly of Appin), on Tuesday, March 26, 2019. Lillian Margaret, aged 86 years, much loved wife of the late Newman Burberry, devoted mother of Alyson, David and Murray, cherished grandmother and great-grandmother. Funeral service has taken place.

DOUGALL - John William MacDonald Dougall (Iain). March 31, 1946 - March 25, 2019. Beloved husband of Carol, much loved father of Shona, Andy, Ewan and the late Ally, dear grandpa of Molly and Rhuaridh. Iain died just before his 73rd birthday after a long illness that became acute only a few weeks ago. He was cared for at home until the last few hours when he was transferred to Craignure hospital. The family would like to express their thanks to the doctors, nurses and staff at Bunessan surgery, and to the team of carers who came over on their days off. Thanks to the ambulance staff and doctor and nurses at Craignure. His funeral was held in Iona Parish Church on Tuesday, April 2 followed by interment in the Iona graveyard. If you would like to make a donation to the British Heart Foundation in Iain's memory, that would be greatly appreciated.

MACDOUGALL - Douglas. After a long illness, aggressively fought, Douglas (Duggie, Dougie, MacDook) MacDougall (Lismore) died peacefully at home on Saturday, March 30, 2019, age 65. Thanks to all at Port Appin Surgery, and all nurses who cared for him throughout his illness. Funeral will be held at Lismore Parish Church at 1.00pm on Friday, April 5. Retiring collection in aid of Lismore Parish Church and Macmillan Cancer Support. Family flowers only.

MACLELLAN - Peter, (Melrose, formerly South Uist). Peacefully, at Borders General Hospital, on March 27, 2019, Peter, dearest husband of Mairi, beloved father of Andrina and proud and adoring grandfather of Ben and Sophie. Funeral service at St. Cuthbert's High Cross Catholic Church, Melrose on Monday, April 8 at 12.00noon. An interment will then be held at Hallan

Cemetery, South Uist on Thursday, April 11, 2019 at 11.30am, to which all friends are respectfully invited. Family flowers only please. There will be a collection after the service for the Margaret Kerr Unit in appreciation of the outstanding care and kindness Peter received there.

McINTYRE - James, of Bowman Court, Craignure, Isle of Mull and formerly of The Craig, Salen, died gently at home on Tuesday, March 26. There will be a farewell service at the Royal Northern and Clyde Yacht Club, Rhu, G84 8NG at 1pm on Monday April 8.

McMONAGLE - William (Bill). Peacefully in Forth Valley Royal Hospital on Thursday, March 28, 2019, Bill of Thornhill formerly of Oban. Beloved husband of the late Mary, much loved dad of Mandy, Mary, Hugh, Catherine and Agnes, grandpa and great-grandpa to the family. Funeral service will be held on Monday, April 8, 2019 in Perth Crematorium at 2pm. To which all family and friends are respectfully invited. Family flowers only. Donations if desired to Chest, Heart and Stroke Scotland.

McNIVEN - Suddenly and peacefully at home in Lagavulin, Peter, aged 76yrs, beloved husband of Isobel, née Rice, much loved father of Louise and Karen and devoted Grampa to Katie and Lucy and much loved uncle and good friend to many. Simply The Best. Funeral service was held in Round Church Bowmore, on Tuesday April 2, 2019 followed by interment in Bowmore Cemetery, Islay.

ROSS - Peacefully at home after a short illness, surrounded by her family on March 27, 2019, Mary (Maimie) Louise Ross (né Macdonald), aged 83 years. Formerly of Glencoe and Fort William. Funeral service at St Andrews Church, Fort William on Thursday April 4 at 1pm thereafter to St Johns Church Cemetery, Ballachulish. All friends and family respectfully invited. Family flowers only. Donations for the British Heart Foundation welcome at the service.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

FILES - Anne. Tia and Dale would like to thank family, friends and neighbours who have supported mum and us over the last 16 months. With cards, visits, phone calls and lifts up and down to Glasgow, you all made it a bit easier for mum. To the Beatson, Connel Surgery, Macmillan and District nurses, the carers and patient transport, a big thank you for looking after mum. Thanks to Rev. Dugald Cameron for a beautiful and comforting service, to Catriona and staff at Hoeys for their support and going that extra mile, to Moreen Gracie for the lovely flowers and the Royal Hotel for the catering. Finally a big thank you to the people of Oban for giving mum the send off she deserved both at the church and graveside. The magnificent sum of £1307.79 was donated for the Beatson Wellbeing Centre.

LIVETT - Lois and the family of the late Richard Livett Snr. would like to thank all our relatives, neighbours and many friends for their wonderful support, kind words, beautiful flowers and many cards following the sad loss of Richard aka Grandpa. We would like to make a special mention to the team of "Buddies" who helped Richard through his long illness. Our thanks also to all the staff of the Belford Hospital, to Kate Atchley for conducting a lovely service in Inverness, to all at McLellans Funeral Directors for their care and attention to detail and to everyone who came to the party to give a good send off, as per Richard's wishes. The generous sum of £100 was kindly donated to the RNLI.

MACKENZIE - Sammy, Ann, Margaret, William, Iain and Sam would like to thank most sincerely all family, friends and neighbours, past and present, for their support, kindness, cards, flowers and messages of sympathy following the sad passing of our lovely wife and mum Jean. Grateful appreciation is extended to all those who attended the service at St. Andrews Church and the generous donations received

for the benefit of Alzheimer's Scotland, to Reverend Alexander Guinness for his kind and comforting ministrations and to Jamie, Beth and Kevin for their compassion, and caring and dignified funeral arrangements. Thanks too to the carers who visited Jean regularly and brightened up her, and our day with their friendly nature and acts of kindness, and to Meg and the staff of the Railway Club for catering for us, and where over the years Jean and Sammy enjoyed many a social occasion with friends and family.

MACPHERSON - Alasdair and family would like to express their deep gratitude for the wonderful kindness and support of all friends and neighbours over the period of Margaret's illness and passing. Thanks to Rev. Dugald Cameron for his uplifting and comforting service and all who attended. Grateful thanks also to the staff of North Argyll House, who lovingly cared for Margaret in her declining years. Thanks also for the many flowers, cards and letters received. We would also like thank Ian at D&A Munn funeral directors for his help, guidance, care and efficiency. Donations to North Argyll House amounted £456.20.

MEMORIALS

BRADY - In everlasting memory of Jacky, a treasured partner, who passed away on April 8, 2018.

It was sad to walk the road alone
Instead of side by side
But to all there comes a moment
When the waves of life divide
Although you cannot be here with me
We are truly not apart
Until I take my final breath
You'll be living in my heart
Fondest love.
- Janette and family

CLARK - Remembering with love my fiancé George, who died April, 7, 2006. I will always love you.
- Jackie xx.

HEAP - In loving memory of my dear son and our brother Edward Alexander (Eddie) accidentally killed at work on

April 4, 1979, aged 18 years. Those special memories of you
Will always bring a smile
If only we could have you back
For just a little while
Then we could sit and talk again
Just like we used to do
You always meant so very much
And always will do too
The fact you're no longer here
Will always cause us pain
But you're forever in our hearts
Until we meet again
Always loved.
- Mum, Robert, Lorraine, Joe and Auntie Peggy xxxxx

MACARTHUR - With loving memories of our mum Morag, who died April 16, 1991.
- From Neil and Lorna.

MACDONALD - In loving memory of Alister, passed away April 1, 1982 and Martha, April 13, 2003. Time may pass and fade away
But love and memories forever stay.
- Alister and Angus, Cath and family.

McPHAIL - In loving memory of our dear mum, Mary, who passed away on April 3, 2004 and our dear dad, Charlie, who passed away on February 16, 2017. Sadly missed, forever in our thoughts.
John, Sheonaid and Drew, Dalmally
Love and miss you always
Granny and Grandpa.
- Elizabeth and Andrew. xxxx

McPHEE - In loving memory of my husband, father, father-in-law and granda Willie, who died April 8, 2005. Missed by all the family. RIP.
- From his wife and family at home and away.

MOYES - In loving memory of Flora dearly loved wife of the late Ted Moyes, and treasured mum, mother-in-law and granny, who passed away on March 30, 1990.

Always in our thoughts
Forever in our hearts.
- Anne, Caroline, Ted and families.

PROSSER-MAXWELL - In loving memory of my darling Yvonne, called to Jesus on April 6, 1989, age 3 years.

A rose bud, petals tightly furled was lifted from her mortal clay
And firmly planted in a world where full blooms grow in rich array.
- Love always Mummy.

SKINNER - In loving memory of my dear parents Alec who died April 7, 1977 and my mother Chrissie who died April 3, 2004.

Also my uncles Donnie and Dick and my aunts Ina and Peggy.
- From Richard, Westgrove, Crieff.

SPREADBURY - Precious memories of my beloved mum and nana, Moira, who was reunited with her beloved husband, Charles, on April 5, 2018.

There are simply no words...
Also remembering, dad, Donna, Jordan
Loved always.
- Deirdre, Donald, Craig, Christine, David, Sean and Linzi.

SMITH - In loving memory of a dear husband and dad, Bernard Devlin Smith, died April 3, 2017. Time slips by and life goes on, But from our hearts
You're never gone.
We think about you always,
We talk about you too,
We have so many memories,
But wish we still had you.
- Margory, Ian and Bernie.



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Oban Local Committee: Treasurer, c/o Glenside, Polwarther Road, Oban PA34 5TN, or Cancer Research UK Oban Shop

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Tel 0300 100 0200
In memory of Dawn Joyce

Obituary – Nancy Black

Nancy Black is the name that for decades has stood proudly above the Argyll Square, Oban, chandlery and outdoor clothing shop, yet few people know the amazing story behind that name.

Nancy was born in Portlea, Oban, on April 24, 1927. She attended Rockfield Primary and Oban High schools.

As a teenager she experienced Oban in war time. With airmen and sailors billeted in the family home, her older sisters thought the whole thing exciting, but to Nancy it 'stole' her teenage years, and she subsequently wrote a book on that period entitled 'Courage, a teenager's view of war'.

The Black family have tremendously deep roots in the Oban area. Nancy had a great love of research and compiled a family tree dating all the way back to the 15th century, all living in the Oban area, with strong links to the Clan MacDougall.

As part of that research, she found letters dating back to the Clearances, when many MacDougall families were leaving the area, and the island of Kerrera in particular, for new lives in the USA, Canada, Australia and New Zealand.

What made Nancy special, however, was that she did not just keep that research to a desk exercise, she traced many of those families and set off on a global pilgrimage to visit them. That gave her the material to write her fascinating history of the era, *From a Hollow on the Hill*, history and tales of Lorn and Fortingall families.

Those same journeys have for many years now resulted in her, and her niece Jane Terris, entertaining MacDougall visitors from all over the globe at their family homes, Torwood and



PortLea, in Oban, and sharing her valuable knowledge with them, particularly at MacDougall Clan Gatherings (of which there will be another one in July of this year).

Nancy had a great love of sailing, starting with a clinker-built dinghy, powered by sail and oars in which the family went fishing. She was to become a member of the Royal Highland Yacht Club in 1956, later becoming an honorary life member.

She also had respect for the sea, and when younger members of the family were later taught to row under her eagle eye, they were always told: 'Be very cautious.'

That same feeling led her to becoming a lifelong, strong supporter of the RNLI. While sister

Isobel was president of the Ladies' Lifeboat Guild, Nancy worked behind the scenes where Torwood would frequently be a scene of frantic activity, preparing for book sales, or cooking vast quantities of home-made marmalade for sale at open days.

Her community support interest also extended to the War and Peace Museum, which she helped to set up. She told an amazing story in that respect. During the war, her aunt, Jessie MacIntyre, along with brothers Donald and Hugh, farmed Gylen Park and Lower Gylen at the south end of Kerrera. One day while near Gylen Castle Jessie thought she could hear foreign voices from the shore. She hid herself (remembering that

her other brother Dougal was serving in the trenches) and then saw German sailors on the shore below the castle.

Soon after the museum opened Nancy was on duty when an elderly German couple came in. She told them the story. The man said: 'Yes, that was true, I was one of those sailors. Our U-boat was out of fresh water, and we came ashore at that very remote spot to collect water from the burn.' (Maybe that was what tempted him to come back and visit Oban, all those years later?)

Nancy's fondest memories were of Kerrera and the farm. She helped by bringing supplies from Oban to the island. She often recalled the delicious fresh cream, still warm from the cow, together with Charlie the Clydesdale, the last ploughing horse on the island.

Nancy was then pivotal in introducing a Fergusson tractor to the farm, first by persuading her uncles to make the purchase, then herself actually first mastering its function, before passing on the new skills to her uncles.

In that respect, her range of practical skills and interests ranged as widely as car and motorcycle mechanics, rallying, carpentry, stone polishing, painting, photography, accordion playing and much more.

Nancy was a great family person, maintaining wide family connections, and always enjoying the company of children, right down to her great-great-nephew Euan aged three. She contended that the name Euan could be traced back to one Euan MacDougall from the Viking era of the 13th century.

Surely that ability to mix the scholarly with the caring and the practical was what made Nancy Black a very special person, who will be sorely missed.

THOUGHT for the week

'Be very careful then, how you live – not as unwise, but as wise, making the most of every opportunity' – Ephesians 5, verse 15.

Has someone called out to you, 'Look out! Look where you are going'? Perhaps this was said as a warning to prevent a collision, or as good advice when walking or travelling.

We do need to have an awareness that reaches beyond ourselves, both in what we are doing and the things that we are facing. Our lives need a sense of watchfulness about them.

Never has there been a greater need for people to pray and think carefully – about how we are living, how we are affecting each other, how we are looking after the world and its resources.

We must look beyond 'fake news' and destructive hidden agendas. We must also look out for signs of the positive and the good and encourage them to grow, as we travel thankfully along life's journey. We can easily be overcome by the negatives presented to us, but each day has opportunities to enable us to live together in a better way. We can accept each day's 'diet' (our daily bread) as it comes, watching where we are going but also remembering that the Spirit of God is at work in the world too – waiting to show the way to abundant life.

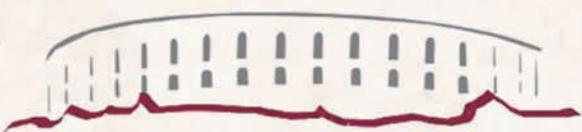
As we approach Easter, we remember especially that God sent Jesus not only to show us how to live but to die for us too, revealing His costly love and care for us.

God, our pain-bearer, longs to help us to live wisely and well, to journey with him each day, 'looking out' to see where we can bring His caring and healing love.

Rev Carol Leech

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OT

Cammanachd Cup draw

The first cup action of the shinty season took place on Saturday March 30.

cottages.com

MacTavish Cup – first round

Skye Camanachd 4 Fort William 1

Skye Camanachd beat Fort William 4-1 in their 3pm throw-up at Pairc nan Laoch, Portree.

Padraig McNeil's late goal earned Fort William a 3-2 win when the sides met in the league a week earlier.

Skye co-bosses Kenny MacLeod

and Allan MacLeod allowed Ross MacKinnon to travel with the second team so Allan MacLeod went onto the bench.

Fort William co-managers Victor Smith and Adam Robertson travelled without Lachie Shaw, Alexander MacMillan, Sean Cameron and Ruairaidh Shaw.

Skye started with the wind but the game's first sight at goal came at the other end when an early Jack Fraser shot forced a fine Ryan Morrison save with his caman, deflecting the ball away for a corner.

At the other end, Jordan Murchison lost his marker and spun round, but his flick went just wide of the post.

Ross Gordon and Will Cowie both twice went close, with James Pringle doing likewise, and there was a sense a Skye goal was coming.

It duly arrived on 27 minutes. Will Cowie won possession and found Ross Gordon. Gordon's effort was blocked and Jordan Murchison took the rebound to his side before threading the ball home from a tight angle on the left to make it 1-0.

Skye were immediately forced to make a change as Will Cowie was withdrawn with a tight calf and replaced by Ian MacLellan.

Skye extended their lead on 50 minutes. The goal came from a set-piece as Jordan Murchison found Iain MacLellan who pushed the ball goalwards, squeezing it between keeper Paul MacKay's right foot and the post.

MacKay came off his line to save well from James Pringle before diverting a Ross Gordon shot for a corner with his right foot.

It was MacKay again moments later, making a reflex stop to deny James Pringle following William MacKinnon's corner from the left.

Skye brought Will Cowie back on at full forward, with James Pringle withdrawn.

Fort William needed to score next and they pulled a goal back on 67 minutes when Arran MacPhee, now pushed into attack, swept home at the second attempt following substitute Greg Kelly's corner from the right.

Skye restored their two-goal cushion on 76 minutes. Paul MacKay saved from Jordan Murchison, but Iain MacLellan ran in from the left to bundle the ball over the line.

The goal knocked the stuffing out of Fort William and it was 4-1 a couple of minutes later. Will Cowie played the ball in from the left and Jordan Murchison, in a central position, had time to flick the ball in the air before hammering it past Paul MacKay to make it 4-1.

Frustrations grew and Fort William's Mark Grant was sent off by referee Calum Girvan shortly after following a tussle with Jordan Murchison who was booked.

There were also bookings for Skye's James Morrison and Fort William's Lewis Morrison. Skye had a number



Kinlochshiel's Donald Nixon goes down in a challenge with Lovat's Lorne MacKay. Photograph: Neil Paterson.

of good performers including wing backs James Morrison and Martin Pringle whilst the midfield of Ally 'Cleodi' MacLeod, John Gillies and William MacKinnon showed great power.

Sean Cruickshank played well for Fort William, first in midfield and then in defence, and wing centre Lewis Clark was a tireless worker throughout.

Skye travel to take on Glenurquhart in the next round.

After the match, Skye co-manager Allan MacLeod said: 'It was a tough game but, in the second half, we took our chances and that was the difference from last week.'

Opposite number Victor Smith added: 'I thoroughly enjoyed the game and although we got over-run a bit at the end, at 2-1 I thought we were back in the game. We were a few short so we had to play Arran MacPhee in defence which meant we lacked a bit up front. Hopefully we'll have a couple of players back next week for what will be a difficult game at Glasgow Mid Argyll.'

Caberfeidh 3 Lochaber 2

Caberfeidh had to work hard to eventually see off Lochaber 3-2 at Castle Leod.

Stuart Callison put Lochaber ahead on 22 minutes but Ryan MacKay on the half hour and Craig Morrison six minutes later had the hosts 2-1 ahead at the interval.

Pat Toal made it 2-2 on 69 minutes but, with 15 minutes remaining, Caberfeidh's Kevin Bartlett got the winner.

Lochaber were left wondering what might have been had it not been for two early penalty saves from Caberfeidh keeper Ewan Pilcher.

Caberfeidh now have a quarter-final tie away to Kilmallie or Newtonmore who meet this Saturday.

Lovat 4 Kinlochshiel 1

Lovat were 4-1 winners against 2018 cottages.com MacTavish Cup finalists Kinlochshiel at Balgiate.

Lovat's Lewis Tawse returned

but was named as a substitute with manager Fraser Gallacher selecting an unchanged starting 12.

Kinlochshiel boss Johnston Gill had David Falconer and Keith MacRae back from injury and both started on the bench. Finlay MacRae was up front again so Donald Nixon continued at full centre.

Kinlochshiel, who lost 5-0 at the same venue on the opening day of the shinty season, got off to the best possible start. Kinlochshiel were awarded a free-hit in the centre circle just after the throw-up. Conor Cormack sent the ball into the 'D' and John MacRae raced in from the left and got to the ball ahead of the advancing Stuart MacDonald in the home goal to flick the ball into the net to make it 1-0 with just 25 seconds played.

Lovat levelled on 34 minutes. Marc MacLachlan gathered Craig Mainland's free-hit and found Fraser Heath on the left. Heath picked out Graeme MacMillan whose strike was deflected to MacLachlan on the right and he cut the ball back to Greg Matheson whose first time shot beat Kinlochshiel keeper Stuart MacRae low to his right to make it 1-1.

With just a couple of first half minutes remaining, Greg Matheson got his second to put the hosts 2-1 up at the break. Graeme MacMillan's corner from the left was deflected to Marc MacLachlan on the far side. Paul MacRae blocked MacLachlan's shot, but his clearance went straight to Matheson who struck the ball first time, low across the keeper and into the net.

Lovat extended their lead on 73 minutes. Marc MacLachlan and Greg Matheson combined on the left and with Matheson's shot saved with his feet by Stuart MacRae; MacLachlan was in quickly to turn home the rebound.

Lovat rounded off the win with five minutes remaining. The goal came following a Kinlochshiel hit-in. Marc MacLachlan and Calum MacAulay exchanged passes before MacAulay whipped the ball into the net from a central position.

Lovat can now look forward to a quarter-final tie at Kingussie.

Strathglass P Inverness P

The tie between Strathglass and Inverness at Cannich was postponed as the funeral of Strathglass player Lawrence Jones had been held just 24 hours earlier.

Scottish Sea Farms Glasgow Celtic Society Cup – first round

Col Glen 2 Ballachulish 3

Ballachulish edged out Col Glen 3-2 in their all-South Division 1 tie at Glendaruel.

Willie MacVicar gave Col Glen the lead on 10 minutes but Dougie Rankin drew the visitors level on 21 minutes.

Lorne Brown gave Ballachulish the perfect start to the second half when he scored within 60 seconds of the re-start.

They were only in front for four minutes, however, before Jamie MacVicar made it 2-2.

On 78 minutes, Conor MacGregor got the goal that sent Ballachulish through to the quarter finals where they will face Glasgow Mid Argyll at Yoker.

Col Glen's Ian Wilson and Ballachulish's Ally Banks were red carded by referee Robert Baxter.

Mowi Premiership

Kilmallie 0 Kyles Athletic 2

Kilmallie suffered their first defeat of the season, losing 2-0 to Kyles Athletic at Canal Parks.

Kyles went in front on 12 minutes through Ross MacRae. The goal came following a corner with MacRae netting from the edge of the 'D'.

The match stayed in the balance until six minutes from time when Scott MacDonald cut the ball back and MacRae scored again from the edge of the box.

Inveraray 1 Kingussie 5

Kingussie now only trail league leaders Lovat on goal difference after they came from behind to beat Inveraray 5-1 at the Winterton.

The Inveraray supporters were given something to cheer when Garry MacPherson fired them into the lead on 16 minutes with a great shot.

However it was Kingussie, with stand-in keeper Rory MacGregor between the sticks, who knocked in three goals before the break.

Roddy Young levelled on 35 minutes and Ruairaidh Anderson put them in front a minute later.

Savio Genini made it 3-1 a couple of minutes before the break with a strike on his forehand from the edge of the box.

The in-form Genini, a player who really looks to have his 'mo-jo' back

Fixtures

Saturday April 6

Cottages.com MacTavish Cup first round

Kilmallie v Newtonmore
Andy MacLean
Strathglass v Inverness
Archie Ritchie

Sutherland Cup first round

SCOTS Camanachd v Boleskine
Neil MacDonald
Skye v Kilmallie
John Matheson - noon
Lovat v Fort William
Brian MacKay
Strathspey v Kilmory
Graham Cameron - 1.30pm
Kinlochshiel v Inverness
John Angus Gillies
Lochcarron v Glenurquhart
Ronnie Campbell
Newtonmore v Glenorchy
Calum Girvan

Mowi Premiership

Inveraray v Kinlochshiel
Ross Brown
Kingussie v Oban Camanachd
Deek Cameron
Lochaber v Lovat
Des McNulty

Mowi National Division

Glasgow MA v Fort William
Lachie Wood
Skye v Beaulay
Martin MacLean - 3pm

Mowi North Division 1

Glengarry v Caberfeidh
John Wood

Mowi South Division 1

Aberdour v Lochside Rovers
David Mitchell
Ballachulish v Taynuilt
Alex MacVicar
Col Glen v Inveraray
Ewan MacDonald
Tayforth v Glasgow Mid Argyll
Graham Fisher

Mowi North Division 2

Beaulay v Strathglass
Iain Kennedy

All throw-ups 2.30pm unless stated.



The first round draw for this year's Camanachd Cup took place at last weekend's Manran concert in Fort William.

Manran, a successful Scottish band, was co-founded by the new ambassador for the iconic trophy Gary Innes. Gary is a Scottish musician, a former Camanachd Cup winner and broadcaster for BBC's Take the Floor.

Earlier this year, Tulloch Homes announced a new four-year sponsorship of the Camanachd Cup – beginning with this year's 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.

The first-round draw was made by Gary and fellow musician Keir Gibson. The first round draw is as follows, with ties to be played on Saturday May 11.

- **Beaully v Inverness**
- **Strathglass v Oban Celtic**
- **Bute v Glasgow Mid Argyll**
- **Skye v Taynuilt**
- **Ballachulish v Fort William**
- **Bye – Glenurquhart**

Gary Innes, Ambassador for the Tulloch Homes Camanachd Cup said: 'The Camanachd Cup means everything to me. It is the absolute pinnacle of every shinty player's career.'

this season, complete his hat-trick with a volley on 64 minutes and another on 85 minutes when he won a 50-50 ball on the edge of the 'D'.

Mowi National Division

Oban Celtic 5 Bute 4

Oban Celtic recorded their first win of the season when they beat Bute 5-4 in a thrilling match at Mossfield.

The Oban side had Ally McKerracher, Andy MacDonald and Lee Askew back, but Michael

MacKinnon was missing and Neil Carmichael's return from injury is still several weeks away. Ross MacMillan was free of suspension and he started in defence in place of MacKinnon.

Bute also had absentees and they travelled with just 12 players.

A large crowd created a great atmosphere and they were treated to an entertaining 90 minutes.

The hosts made a bright start and took the lead after 10 minutes. As Celtic broke forward, they were awarded a free-hit after Jamie

Continued on page 68

Results

Saturday March 30 Cottages.com MacTavish Cup First round

Lovat 4 v 1 Kinlochshiel
Strathglass P v P Inverness
Due to bereavement
Caberfeidh 3 v 2 Lochaber
Skye 4 v 1 Fort William

Scottish Sea Farms Glasgow Celtic Society Cup first round

Col Glen 2 v 3 Ballachulish

Mowi PremierShip

Inveraray 1 v 5 Kingussie
Kilmallie 0 v 2 Kyles Athletic

Mowi North Division 1
Aberdeen Uni 2 v 4 Skye
Kingussie 3 v 0 Fort William
Glenarry 2 v 4 Glenurquhart
Kinlochshiel P v P Caberfeidh
Unplayable field
Newtonmore 4 v 1 Lovat

Mowi South Division 1
Aberdour 6 v 1 Glasgow MA
Kyles Athletic 3 v 0 Inveraray

Mowi North Division 2
Inverness 3 v 4 Lochcarron
Strathspey 5 v 0 Kilmallie
Beaully 3 v 1 Lewis
Boleskine P v P Strathglass
Due to bereavement

Mowi South Division 2
Bute 3 v 1 Ardnamurchan
Oban Celtic P v P Aberdour
To be re-scheduled

new SPOT THE SHINTY BALL

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We have removed the shinty ball from the photograph below. 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 2pm Tuesday. No refunds will be given for entries received after the deadline.

You may hand it into any of our offices - The Oban Times, Lochavullin, Oban; The Lochaber Times, High Street, Fort William; The Campbelltown Courier, Main Street, Campbelltown; The Argyllshire Advertiser, Argyll Street, Lochgilphead or the Arran Banner, Brodick, Isle of Arran by the same time. Otherwise all entries must be posted.

Competition rules

No responsibility will be accepted for entries which are delayed, mislaid or lost, and proof of posting cannot be accepted as proof of delivery.

The Company's decision is final on all matters relating to the

competition and no correspondence will be entered into. The final decision rests with the Company.

In the event of more than one correct entry, the jackpot will be shared equally between all winning entries. Any decision regarding the awarding of a prize is entirely at the discretion of the Company.

The Company reserves the right to declare the competition null and void at any time, subject to its discretion and to make full refund of the price of the coupon to any person who has entered the competition at that time. Winners agree to have their photograph taken for publicity purposes. 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.



Please remember to enclose £1 for 20 crosses. The maximum number of attempts on this coupon is 20, but you may enter on separate coupons as many times as you wish. No photocopies allowed. You agree to abide by the rules. How to enter: Mark your crosses using a ballpoint pen. Twenty crosses may be put on this coupon for £1. Send to 'Spot the Shinty Ball' Competition, The Oban Times, P.O. Box 1, Oban PA34 4HB or hand in to any of our offices as detailed above.

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S Campbell Sept '18 **£2550**
L Currie Nov '18 **£800**
L Nicolson Dec '18 **£3900**

LAST WEEK'S SHINTY BALL WAS HERE...



The two entries who got nearest the ball and each receive £25 are:

L MacMillan
Oban
I Clark
Oban

OT

Continued from page 67

Forgrieve was pushed as he made a great run to get onto a ball at the back post. Forgrieve jarred his knee and although he was able to continue, he had to come off shortly after and was replaced by Jamie Anderson. The free hit was played to Ally McKerracher who took a touch and beat his man before rifling the ball home from 20 yards.

And it was the impressive McKerracher again on 14 minutes, this time shooting home after Andy MacDonald had won a throw-up 40 yards from goal following an accidental clash.

Bute responded immediately with Craig Fisher pulling a goal back a minute later. Oban Celtic keeper Jack Hill made a save with his feet but was left helpless when the re-bounce was tapped in by Fisher.

Ally McKerracher completed his hat-trick to make it 3-1 on 24 minutes when he beat his man before scoring following a good run by Daniel MacMillan.

Bute fought back and Craig MacKay showed good movement on 27 minutes to get onto Iain MacDonald's free-hit which he blasted into the top corner of the net to make it 3-2 at the break.

Oban Celtic, with Andy MacDonald impressing at centre, had the better of the first half but the second period was a more even affair with the islanders switching John MacCallum to the middle of the park.

Bute drew level on 56 minutes with Iain MacDonald making it 3-3 following a hit-in from the left.

Bute took the lead for the first time with 20 minutes remaining.

Josh Cowan was credited with the goal but there was

an element of good fortune as the visitors capitalised on a defensive slip. Oban Celtic keeper Jack Hill made an initial save to his left with his feet but, as he turned to clear, the ball came off his foot into the net.

Oban Celtic's response was positive as they pushed Ross MacMillan forward to join Ally McKerracher in attack with Jamie Anderson and Scott Mossman on the wings.

The hosts, with John Hill solid at the back, were denied a leveller when Bute keeper Kevin Queen made a brilliant save with his caman to keep out Ally McKerracher's shot which was heading for the top corner of the net.

It was one of several fine Queen saves during the closing stages of the match.

Oban Celtic weren't to be denied though and Ally McKerracher got his fourth goal of the game on 81 minutes.

Rory Bruce played the ball out of defence to George MacMillan.

He found Ross MacMillan who picked out McKerracher who scored to make it 4-4.

There was still time for a winner and it came from Ross MacMillan with four minutes remaining.

MacMillan played a one-two with Ally McKerracher before driving the ball home on the angle to win the game.

Speaking after the 5-4 win, Oban Celtic assistant manager Les Kinvig said: "The way we started the game was so encouraging.

'Ally McKerracher was unplayable at times and it was unfortunate we weren't able to have Ross MacMillan up front with him for the whole game. Andy MacDonald at centre and John Hill at the back gave us a really solid base to build on.'

The ball came to Connor Golabek from a hit-in and although GMA keeper Robert Dunning got a hand to Golabek's shot, the ball spun high into the net.

The leveller came with 15 minutes remaining.

The ball came to Connor Golabek from a hit-in and although GMA keeper Robert Dunning got a hand to Golabek's shot, the ball spun high into the net.



Kilmallie's Craig MacIsaac tackles Andrew King of Kyles during last Saturday's Mowi Premiership match.

Photograph: Iain Ferguson, alba.photos

Glasgow Mid Argyll 1 Glenurquhart 1

Glenurquhart missed the chance to top the Mowi National Division when they drew 1-1 with Glasgow Mid Argyll at Yoker.

GMA manager Mark Bain was without John Don MacKenzie who was on holiday.

Glenurquhart co-managers Stuart MacKintosh and Eddie Tembo travelled without five players including Ewan Brady, James MacPherson and Neale Reid.

The hosts made a bright start, with John Sweeney impressive, and took the lead on 21 minutes. The ball broke to Calum McLay who tussled with his marker before firing a shot into the back of the net.

The leveller came with 15 minutes remaining.

The ball came to Connor Golabek from a hit-in and although GMA keeper Robert Dunning got a hand to Golabek's shot, the ball spun high into the net.

Mowi North

Division 1 Glengarry 2 Glenurquhart 4

Ewan Brady inspired the Glenurquhart second team to a 4-1 win over former club Glengarry at Craigard.

The hosts opted to play against the wind in the first half but it was Glenurquhart who almost went ahead after five minutes when Ewan Brady found himself free on the left and sent a screaming shot goalwards which home keeper Gordon MacDonald saved with his

stick and cleared to safety. Glengarry took the lead on 11 minutes. Nick Dalgety got away from his marker Cameron MacKintosh, which did not happen too often in the game, and ran into the 'D' where he was obstructed by Euan Lloyd. Referee John Angus Gillies pointed to the spot and Raymond Robertson stepped up to strike the spot-hit high into the net.

The next chance fell to Ewan Brady and, from 20 yards, his shot went narrowly by the post.

Glenurquhart should have levelled on 23 minutes. Home keeper Gordon MacDonald came off his line in an attempt to clear a ball into the 'D'. However the ball fell nicely for Bradley Dickson who only had to tap the ball into the net but missed the target.

With young Finlay Ralston having a good game at full centre and Cameron MacKintosh denying Glengarry danger man Nick Dalgety any space, Glenurquhart levelled on the stroke of half-time.

Ewan Brady was fouled as Glenurquhart attacked but referee Gillies played

advantage and Brady took a shot from 15 yards. Keeper MacDonald saved it but the re-bounce fell inside the 'D' and Bradley Dickson had the simple task of knocking the ball into the empty net, atoning for his earlier miss.

Glenurquhart took the lead a couple of minutes into the second half.

Finlay Ralston ran from the halfway line, riding a couple of tackles with advantage again played, before flicking the ball past Matthew Ross and young Lewis MacDonald found space outside the 'D' to slam the ball past the helpless keeper.

The visitors increased their lead on 75 minutes when the skilful Ewan Brady won the ball 25 yards out and hit a perfect shot into the top corner of the net.

Glenurquhart went 4-1 ahead from the throw-up. Lewis MacDonald won the ball on the right from the centre and played an inch-perfect ball towards Donnie MacLennan, who proved a handful for Matthew Ross since his introduction 10 minutes before the break. MacLennan turned Ross and hit a low shot past the keeper on his right side.

The game began to get feisty and Bradley Dickson and Stuart Sloss were both booked.

Glengarry scored their second goal on 87 minutes when the Glenurquhart defence failed to clear the ball and Ruthven Goudie-Hamilton sent an 18-yard shot past the keeper to make the final score 4-2.

Cameron MacKintosh was influential for Glenurquhart, shadowing Nick Dalgety, whilst full centre Finlay Ralston was man of the match.

Euan Brady was strong and skilful up front for Glenurquhart, whilst Euan Lloyd was solid at full back.

Glengarry's Rhuairaidh MacDonald was one of few Glengarry players who showed the required level of urgency over the 90 minutes.

Elsewhere in the league, Daniel Morrison's hat-trick helped the Skye Camanachd second team to a 4-2 win over Aberdeen University at

Balgownie.

The Kingussie colts beat the Fort William colts 3-0 in a match switched from An Aird to the Dell midweek.

Newtonmore reserves, the reigning champions, got their season under way with a 4-1 victory over an under-strength Lovat reserves at the Eilan.

The match between the Kinlochshiel seconds and the Caberfeidh seconds was postponed on Friday as Kirkton was unplayable.

Mowi South

Division 1 Kyles Athletic 3 Inveraray 0

The Kyles Athletic second team got their season under way with a 3-0 triumph over the Inveraray second team at Tighnabruaich.

Jack Whyte got the opener, with Luke Thornton adding a double.

Elsewhere in the league, Aberdeen were too strong for the Glasgow Mid Argyll second team, winning 6-1 at Silversands with David McDougal and Alec Mitchell getting hat-tricks.

Mowi North

Division 2 Strathspey Camanachd 5 Kilmallie 0

Strathspey Camanachd beat the Kilmallie second team 5-0 at Grantown Grammar School.

Martin Ross scored on 27 minutes and again on 30 minutes to give Strathspey an early advantage and Arron McBain's goal on 42 minutes made it 3-0 at the break.

Dane MacPherson added a fourth on 77 minutes with Martin Ross completing his hat-trick three minutes later.

Elsewhere in the division, Gregor Cushnie scored twice as Lochcarron won 4-3 against the Inverness seconds at the Bught Park and Duncan Anderson sent the Beaulys reserves on their way to a 3-1 victory over Lewis at Braeview Park.

Boleskine's match against the Strathglass second team at Smith Park was postponed.



A delighted Ross MacMillan after scoring the winner for Oban Celtic against Bute. Photograph: Kevin McGlynn.



Former Kilmallie player Michael Bowman of E M Bowman, which has sponsored new team strips, presents them to Kilmallie Shinty Club captain Liam MacDonald.

Photograph: Iain Ferguson, alba.photos

Mowi South

Division 2

Bute 3 Ardnamurchan 1

Ben Clarke scored twice as the Bute colts defeated Ardnamurchan 3-1 at The Meadows.

Ian Crawford got the other with Ardnamurchan's Craig MacDonald countering.

Oban Celtic P Aberdour P

The match between the Oban Celtic seconds and the Aberdour seconds at Ganavan will be re-scheduled.

WCA round-up

Mowi National

Division

Glenurquhart 5 Ardnamurchan 0

The league's two newly-promoted sides, Glenurquhart and Ardnamurchan, met at Blairbeg.

Goals from Claire Hannon (2), Donna Mackenzie, Hazel Hunter and Abi Stoddart gave Glenurquhart a 5-0 win.

Mowi North

Division 2

Skye Camanachd 5 Lochaber 2

Skye Camanachd Ladies second team beat Lochaber's second team 5-2 at Pair nan Laoch, Portree. Abby MacLean scored all five goals, with Claire Delaney and Carla Berardelli replying. Lochaber had Ann Cameron and Jean Campbell playing their first game for the side.

Glengarry 5 Kinlochshiel 4

The match between Kinlochshiel and Glengarry was switched from Kirkton to Craigard with Glengarry running out 5-4 victors.

An Eilidh MacInnes hat-trick and a goal from Isabelle MacKenzie counted for Kinlochshiel but Leona Falconer's double and strikes from Isla Mackay, Elaine Cameron and Nikki Grant gave Glengarry the win.

Inverness 1 Fort William 5

Fort William were 5-1 victors

against Inverness at the Bught Park. Zoe Smith and Leah Maxtone hit doubles with Beth MacDonald getting the other. Amber Mackay got the Inverness goal.

Strathglass 1 Lovat 5

Lovat beat Strathglass 5-1 at Cannich. Freya Strachan netted for the hosts but Fiona Urquhart's hat-trick and Holli Sneddon's double gave Lovat the points.

Mowi South Division 2

Oban Lorn 0 Ardnamurchan 7

Hannah MacDonald capped a terrific performance by scoring all seven goals as the Ardnamurchan second team won 7-0 at Oban Lorn.

Dunadd 13 Tayforth 1

Dunadd beat Tayforth 13-1 at MacRae Park. Eilidh Cameron was the weekend's top scorer with ten goals. Grace Drummond grabbed a hat-trick and Rosie Holligan got the other.



Oban gymnasts prepare to spring into action.

New training boost has gymnasts jumping for joy

Oban Gymnastics School is coming on in leaps and bounds thanks to new state-of-the-art equipment and smart new training kit.

Based in Atlantis Leisure, the school, for primary one children upwards, is run by duty manager Kirsty Kennedy, the only level two gymnastics instructor in Oban.

Still in its early days, the club is not yet affiliated to Scottish Gymnastics, something Kirsty, an army cadet trained instructor, is hoping to remedy.

'We ran a competition for primary schools last year and compete in local floor and vault events,' she said.

'It's all about getting the basics correct and we are pretty much there now.'

Affiliation

'I am currently in talks with Scottish Gymnastics regarding affiliation.'

'We fill most of the criteria now so hopefully we will be competing at a national level in the near future.'

The club boasts almost 70 gymnasts from primary one to S3s with classes for

GYMNASTICS

beginner, intermediate 1 and intermediate 2 gymnasts.

Tumbling mats, height adjustable beams, a mini trampoline and crash mats have been donated by Atlantis Leisure, while the gymnasts themselves each saved up £12 in 20 pence pieces to buy t-shirts and hoodies.

For information on how to get involved with the club either as a gymnast or a coach contact Kirsty on kirsty.kennedy@atlantisleisure.co.uk



Rockfield Primary School shinty team were delighted to be presented with new strips by Allan MacIsaac and Alan Jamieson on behalf of Kames Fish Farm. The team thanks Kames for its sponsorship.

John MacKechnie Quaich at Dalmally

The spirit of the late John MacKechnie and the sun shone on Dalmally Golf Club on Sunday for the playing of the John MacKechnie Quaich.

The competition, now in its third year, is a mixed pairs greensome played in memory of the club's voluntary green-keeper and club stalwart and signals the opening of the new season at Dalmally. A full field, including juniors, beginners, country and full ladies and gents members enjoyed glorious conditions and the course in great shape.

Starting with the traditional breakfast and followed by lunch, the players enjoyed the fun format, with some managing to post impressive scores. The competition was tight with only three points separating the first four pairs.

First was Terry Macnair and Maud Marshall on 34

points, with runners up, last year's winner and this year's new club captain Graeme MacKechnie with Lily McKay on 33 points. Angus MacGillivray and Isobel Sutherland and James MacMillan and Ann MacLaren came joint third on 32 points.

A special prize went to



John MacKechnie Quaich prizewinners, left to right: Lewis MacMillan, Rena Ritchie, Terry Macnair, Maud Marshall, Lily McKay and Graeme MacKechnie.

GOLF

beginner Rena Ritchie and junior Lewis MacMillan for an outstanding 21 points on the outward nine.

The John MacKechnie Quaich is the first in a full programme of gents, ladies and joint club competitions at Dalmally.



Teams from Park, Rockfield and St Columba's primary schools took part in the indoor cricket finals.

Primary schools go batty for cricket

Rockfield Primary School knocked the opposition for six at the recent 2019 Indoor Cricket Finals.

Active Schools worked alongside Oban Cricket Club's Ronnie Kelly to deliver taster sessions to Park, Rockfield and St Columba's schools before taking part in a grand finals day at Atlantis Leisure.

The high octane competition featured fun and energy with the primary 7 teams taking part in a round robin competition before playing sudden death semi-finals and finals.

CRICKET

It became clear there would be a new holder of the trophy when Rockfield V disposed of Park, winners for the past two years, in the semi-finals. Smashing the highest score in a game category, St Columba's won over Rockfield III in the second half of the draw before falling to Rockfield V in an enthralling final. Such was the volume of support from the sidelines, players struggled to hear the change over whistle.

OT

RUGBY



The Oban ladies' team, who lifted the trophy at the recent tournament at Bridge of Allan.

Ladies secure title for second year on the bounce

Oban squash club has been adding to its silver collection over the past month with victories both at home and away.

A great day was had on Sunday March 17 when four mixed teams slogged it out at Atlantis for the annual Glensanda Team Trophy.

Kelly's Heroes came out on top with 27 points, only four in front of closest rivals Paul's-Nickers who were runners-up on 23 points.

The Magnificent 7 (20) took third with Willies Wonkas in fourth with 14 points.

The winning team consisted of Michael Kelly, Mark Lockart, Iona Campbell, Fiona Campbell, Martin Foley and Elyane Shanks, who will have to wait for their trophy to be presented at the club's dinner dance on Saturday November 14.

The following Sunday saw the Oban Ladies' Squash Team travel to Bridge of Allan for a ladies' competition.

Nine teams took part with the Oban ladies overcoming Dollar ladies in an excellent match to win the title for the second year running with Linlithgow ladies winning the Plate.

The winning team were Nicola Morgan, Kerry Delaney, Iona Campbell, Melissa Oatts and Claire Easton.

Mrs Kersley said: 'A huge congratulations to the Oban ladies who all played their hearts out. They did themselves and the club proud.'

The ladies wish to thank Colin MacNiven for all the hours he spends getting them match fit, his words of encouragement and for driving them to the competitions.

SCOTTISH AMATEUR FL RESULTS AND FIXTURES

Results and fixtures

Last Saturday's results: Premier Division – Oban Saints, no game; Premier Division One – Kings Park Rangers 4, Campbeltown Pupils 3; Lochgilphead Red Star 2, Easthall Star 3. Jimmy Marshall Cup – Motherwell Thistle v Tarbert, unfulfilled, Tarbert unable to raise a team.

This Saturday's fixtures: Jimmy Marshall Cup, second round - Oban Saints v Port Glasgow, Glencruitten, kick-off 2pm, referee Jimmy Litster; Premier Division One Lochgilphead Red Star v FC Argyle; Neilston v Campbeltown Pupils.

OBAN SAINTS' YOUTHS

Results and fixtures

Last weekend's results: Under 13s 0, St Patrick's SA 7. Helensburgh 1 v Under 14s 7. Scoring for Saints were Kyle Cooper (4), Craig Rankin, Ross Mackay and an own goal. Under 15s 1 v St Patrick's SA 7. Netting for Saints was John Douglas. Greenock United v Under 16s, unfulfilled - Greenock have folded.

This Sunday's fixtures: Under 13s no game; Under 14s no game; Under 15s v Busby; Under 16s v Dunoon.

Oban Lorne U16s bowl GHA over

West U16 Regional Bowl Final Oban Lorne 38 GHA 19

After a successful season in both school and club competitions, Oban Lorne U16s had their last shot at silverware for the season as they welcomed GHA in the West Regional Bowl Final.

Oban currently possess what is thought to be one of their strongest youth teams to come through the club with a number of talented boys currently playing at U16 age level.

With the early morning rain, the final was moved out to North Connel which was in fantastic condition for the game.

Oban performed very well against their Glasgow rivals and scored six tries in the game through Kenni Gray (2), Harry Johnston, Blair MacFarlane, Ellis Hunter and Man of the Match Calum MacDonald to seal a 38-19 win.

Oban were comfortable for most of the first half but were made to work hard for their triumph in the last 30 minutes as GHA stormed back into the game in some awful playing conditions.

Coach Lewis MacFarlane was left happy with his team's performance in the game with a number of key players having a good showing against a good GHA team.

Scottish Rugby President Dee Bradbury along with Oban Lorne President Sandy Rokitta were on hand to present the boys with their well-deserved trophy to round off a very successful season.

Oban Lorne player in Bulgarian national squad

Congratulations to Oban Lorne scrum half Vasil Borisov on being selected for the Bulgarian National team for their upcoming internationals against Slovakia on April 20 and Andorra on May 11.

Also in the Bulgarian squad is former Oban Lorne player Vladi Mihov, who is back playing rugby in Bulgaria.

Oban Lorne scrum half Vasil Borisov.



Oban Lorne under 16s defeated GHA to win the West Regional Bowl final.



Oban Lorne under 18s and GHA pictured before last Saturday's Plate final at Glencruitten won by GHA. Photo: Stephen Lawson

West U18 Regional Plate semi final Greenock U18s 19 Oban Lorne 31

Oban Lorne U18s recorded an impressive 31-19 win away to Greenock Wanderers in the semi final of the West Regional Plate. The win set up a final with GHA last Saturday. Unfortunately the Oban boys were defeated 26-54 by a well-drilled GHA side in the final.

U15 Girls progress in National Club Cup

Oban Lorne U15 Girls are through to the quarter final of the National Club Cup where they play away to Tayside and Fife this Sunday. The girls



Oban Lorne's Jack Hamilton dives over for a try during the under 18 Plate final. Photo: Stephen Lawson

have beaten East Kilbride 71-34 and a fantastic win away to Hillhead Jordanhill to setup the last eight clash. Another two wins could secure a place in the final which could be played on the main pitch at BT Murrayfield.

Oban Lorne Dalriada Festival

Oban Lorne hosted the second Argyll and Bute Dalriada Festival of 2019 at a sunny Glencruitten on Saturday.

Almost 200 young players took part with hosts Oban Lorne welcoming Mini and Youth players from Isle of Mull RFC, Etive Vikings RFC, Lochaber RFC, Mid Argyll RFC and Kintyre RFC.

In the mini rugby festivals it was Oban Lorne's A team that triumphed in the P4/5 age group finishing unbeaten on the day against some very formidable opposition. In the P6/7 age group Etive Vikings continued their unbeaten

YOUTH AND MINI RUGBY

season by winning their 26th consecutive fixture which is perhaps a Dalriada record.

With four pitches of rugby running at once huge thanks must go to the volunteer coaches and referees who helped to make the event run so smoothly for the enjoyment of the young players, who showed some fantastic running rugby in great playing conditions.

On Glen 3 Oban Lorne U14s, joined by three players from Mull, played out a friendly fixture against a Lochaber/Mid Argyll side.

This game finished seven tries to three in the Lochaber/Mid Argyll side with some great rugby on show from all of the players taking part.

This Saturday the Dalriada season continues with Kintyre RFC hosting in Campbeltown at the Meadows. Kick off noon.



Big cup games for Saints

Oban Saints
Port Glasgow

Marshall Cup, 2nd Round

This Saturday Oban Saints warm up for their West of Scotland Amateur Cup semi-final against Shortlees when they welcome first time visitors Port Glasgow to Glencruitten in the Scottish Amateur Football League Jimmy Marshall Trophy.

In just their sixth season in Scottish Amateur Football League, during which time they lifted the 2015-16 Division One Championship trophy, Port Glasgow now stand tantalisingly close to promotion to the Premier Division. Currently top of Premier Division One with 35 points, one ahead of nearest rivals Castlemilk, Port have four games remaining in which to gather enough points to guarantee promotion. With three of their four remaining fixtures at home to promotion rivals Castlemilk, Kings Park Rangers and Neilston Port Glasgow's fate remains firmly in their own hands.

The Premier Division One title is also still up for grabs however Castlemilk's superior goal difference plus their two games in hands may well give them the edge.

Port Glasgow are, of course, still involved in the Scottish Amateur Football League's premier cup competition, the Jimmy Marshall Trophy where a first round win over Premier Division One



Oban Saints look forward to two big cup ties in the space of two weeks.

rivals Castlemilk set up this Saturday's clash with Saints.

After a frantic 90 minutes at Parklea where the two sides shared six goals, penalty kicks were required to see who would progress to the second round. With referee Pat O'Donnell keeping careful note it was the home side edged the shoot-out by three successful kicks to two to bag a journey to Oban.

The tie must be decided on the day with a penalty shoot-out coming into play if the sides cannot be separated after 90 minutes.

Taking charge of proceedings is experienced Lochgilphead-based referee Jimmy Litster.

Oban Saints
Shortlees

West of Scotland Cup - semi final

Oban Saints make their way to Hamilton on Saturday April 13 as for the third time in four seasons they stand on the brink of a major cup final appearance. After falling twice at the semi-fi-

nal hurdle in the Scottish Amateur Cup, Saints will hope for a change of fortune at the Hope CBD Stadium, home of their good friends Hamilton Academical, as they go head-to-head in the West of Scotland Amateur Cup semi final with current Scottish Amateur Cup holders Shortlees.

The Kilmarnock men had already tasted major cup success lifting the West of Scotland in 2016 before adding the Scottish Amateur Cup last season and will be formidable opponents for a Saints side still searching for a first major trophy success.

Notable scalps for opponents Shortlees in this season's West of Scotland Cup run were Strathclyde Saturday

FOOTBALL

Morning Amateur Football League Premier Division title chasers East Dunbartonshire, whom they thrashed 5-1 in the fifth round at Petershill Park Springburn; and this season's Scottish Amateur Cup semi-finalists Eastfield of the Central Scottish Amateur Football League, who they edged out by the only goal of the evenly contested third round clash at Grange Academy last November.

Taking charge of proceedings at the Hope CBD Stadium is experienced Central Scottish AFL referee Joe Todd assisted by Scott Bunting and Stuart Broadfoot. The fourth official is Tony McCann.

West of Scotland Cup – semi final
OBAN SAINTS v SHORTLEES
New Douglas Park, Hamilton,
Saturday April 13 – kick-off 2pm

The club is running a bus to the game.
For seat details, contact
Willie Gemmell or David Buchanan.

Oban Men dump the league leaders

Oban 4
Anchor 2

West District Division 3

The Oban Men's team travelled down to Helensburgh last weekend to take on the Anchor Team from Paisley. A win for Oban would put them in a strong position for the second promotion spot in West Division 3, whilst Anchor were determined to keep their unbeaten record for the season.

In the first half both sides attacked without much penetration into either goal area, but Grant Matheson managed to pick the ball up and square it for an easy tap in to break the deadlock. A similar attack down the other side led to the second goal a few minutes later. The first half scoring was rounded off from a shot from Theo Andrews which looked

to be going wide but took a deflection off a defender and went in. 3-0 half time and Anchor looked down and out.

However they rallied and came out fighting for the second half – scoring twice inside the first 10 minutes.

Anchor created more chances in the second half and could have been all square after another short corner. With Anchor pushing for the equaliser they were caught on the break and outnumbored with a quick counter attack and Grant Matheson

grabbed a fourth goal for Oban. The Oban Men's Team certainly achieved something special this weekend with a win against the unbeaten league leaders – against a team, which last season were playing much higher up in the West Division Hockey Leagues.

'This is certainly a victory which will be cherished, but is also a sign of how much the Oban Men's team has progressed this season,' commented Oban captain George Gauley. 'It is impossible to

HOCKEY

pick out a stand-out player, as all 13 of the lads gave 100 per cent effort, however, Grant Matheson has been voted MOTM, for some great work and recovery of aerial balls in the midfield, not to mention a significant contribution to the goal tally.'

A big thankyou to Julie McGlynn for umpiring.

Next weekend the team make the familiar journey to Lomond School in Helensburgh, to take on Ayr.



Grant Matheson leads an attack on the Anchor goal.



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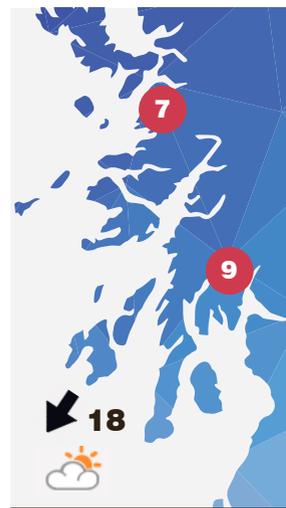


WEATHER

Thursday
Sunny intervals and a moderate breeze
Temperatures
4°C to 9°C.

Friday
Sunny intervals and a gentle breeze
Temperatures
4°C to 11°C.

Weekend Outlook
Saturday
Sunny intervals and a gentle breeze
Sunday
Sunny intervals and a gentle breeze
Temperatures
5°C to 13°C.



FRIDAY

TIDAL INFORMATION

Tide tables for Oban during the week from **Thursday April 4, 2019** are listed below with differences for major ports listed on the right. All times are GMT (add one hour BST)

	05.24	3.8	11.45	1.0
Thur	17.38	3.7	23.58	0.8
Fri	05.57	3.9	12.14	0.8
	18.07	3.8	** ** *	**
Sat	00.26	0.8	06.27	4.0
	12.43	0.8	18.32	3.8
Sun	00.53	0.8	06.55	3.9
	13.11	0.8	18.56	3.8
Mon	01.19	0.8	07.21	3.8
	13.38	0.9	19.24	3.7
Tues	01.46	0.9	07.52	3.7
	14.09	1.0	19.57	3.6
Wed	02.20	1.1	08.27	3.5
	14.48	1.1	20.35	3.5

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.

RuU16s bowl GHA
over in West
Regional Bowl Final

Big cup
games for
Saints

Sevens heaven for Abi and Helen



by Fiona Scott
fscott@obantimes.co.uk



Two of the area's brightest rugby stars are set to shine in Hong Kong next week after being called up to the Scotland Women's sevens squad.

Helen Nelson, originally from Glencoe, will lead the team in the HSBC World Sevens Qualifiers while Oban's Abi Evans also gained selection.

The duo flew out on Saturday, ahead of the tournament which takes place over today (Thursday April 4) and tomorrow at the Hong Kong Stadium.

Evans, 22, will be making

her seventh international sevens appearance having played in both legs of last year's European Grand Prix series in Marcoussis and Kazan after winning promotion in 2017 from the Trophy competition.

Speaking to The Oban Times before jetting out to Hong Kong she said: 'Although this is not my first sevens cap it's still a huge honour to be selected.'

'We're going with possibly our strongest squad and we're looking to go out there and put in some good performances. It will be challenging but we're all excited and just want to get going.'

If Scotland are successful in the Hong Kong qualifiers,



Abi Evans during a Scotland training session at BT Murrayfield before heading off to Hong Kong. Photo: Scottish Rugby/SNS

they will be invited to take part in the HSBC World Sevens Series 2019/2020 season which kicks off in October.

Both Evans and Nelson competed in this year's Women's Six Nations Championships and the former is looking forward to turning her hand to the abbreviated game.

'The thing I love about sevens is the pace of the game and the opportunities to get lots of touches on ball,' she said. 'It's a smaller group of players travelling which makes it more social in a way.'

'It's also played in the summer and usually in a

hot country which is obviously a bonus if you're from Scotland.'

Head Coach Scott Forrest said: 'This is the strongest sevens squad that I have ever been able to select. Despite our preparation for Hong Kong being relatively short, the players have trained well and there was a real competition for places in the final squad.'

'We are well aware of the challenge in front of us and this starts with our first game against Belgium, who finished only one place behind us in Europe last season.'

Nelson, who plays at Montpellier, has also been

INTERNATIONAL RUGBY

selected to play for the world famous Barbarians in America on April 26.

The 24-year-old stand-off, who began her rugby career at the age of six when playing for Lochaber Primary School, is the only Scot in the squad who will play USA in Colorado.

'It's a massive honour to be asked to play for them and something I'm so excited about,' said Nelson.

The game will be the Baa-Baas first women's international fixture following a game against Munster in 2017.

John McPhee's race scuppered after contact from another rider

MOTO 3

Oban's John McPhee faced a frustrating end to the Argentinian GP weekend, having once again been the fastest rider in the warm up.

John, who took off from 11th, kept up the same strong pace that he had shown all weekend, and was up at the front within the opening laps. He would briefly lead the race, but would drop back into the pack and with 10 laps remaining, crashed on the penultimate corner. John remounted his bike to take 21st at the chequered flag.

The next round of the Moto3 World Championship season is the GP of the Americas, which will be held in Austin, Texas on April 12-14.

After the race John said: 'I felt good until the moment I crashed. I got into the lead and I tried to push the pace in order to establish a gap, but I didn't manage to do it and I dropped back into the group.'

'I was trying to find my way to the front of the race again, when another rider touched me; he must have damaged the back of my bike. I didn't notice the problem until the next corner, when I couldn't use my rear brake. It's a shame, but these things happen in racing.'

'I'm hoping that, as this weekend, we have found great pace and we can carry it over to the next race in Austin.'



Helen Nelson will captain the Scotland Women's sevens squad in Hong Kong. Helen has also been selected to play for the world famous Barbarians against the USA in Colorado later this month. Photo: Scottish Rugby/SNS

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'Shocking' rise in numbers using Lochaber Foodbank



Lochaber High School drinks to Liberty

When they return from their Easter holidays, pupils and staff at Lochaber High School will be given free aluminium water drinking bottles thanks to the generosity of Liberty British Aluminium. Tom Uppington, left, and Rosie Flannigan of Liberty British Aluminium and head teacher Scott Steele with some of the new aluminium drinking bottles. Full story on page seven. Photograph: Iain Ferguson, The Write Image.

by Neill Bo Finlayson
nfinlayson@obantimes.co.uk

Lochaber Foodbank has had its busiest year after providing food to more than 1,300 people in the last 12 months – an increase of 18 per cent on the previous year.

According to its annual figures, the foodbank fed 1,383 people between April 2018 and the end of March 2019, of which 543 were children. That is the equivalent of 16,404 meals.

Since opening in 2014, the foodbank has more than doubled its output, a situation described by foodbank manager Alex McConachie as 'unreal'.

Mr McConachie believes the increase is down to low wages and continued problems with the much-maligned Universal Credit benefit scheme.

He told the Lochaber Times: 'For some it's just a top-up to help them get by, others just come in once. But there are other people who come in regularly. It keeps getting

worse.' Mr McConachie said part of the issue was a reliance on low paid, seasonal work.

'If they are on low wages they cannot save money. A lot of them are homeless, but if they get put up in a room and if they do get a job, they lose their benefits and can only afford to pay rent and bills.'

Open for two hours, three days a week, Lochaber Foodbank is part of a nationwide network of foodbanks supported by the Trussell Trust. It operates on a referral basis, with vouchers exchanged for meals for a set number of days. As problems and delays with Universal Credit persist, Mr McConachie expects numbers to rise again next year.

However, he thanked the people of Lochaber for their generous support over the years.

Carrie Starkie, project worker at Lochaber Hope charity, said the foodbank was an 'invaluable resource' however, the surge in numbers was 'not an encouraging sign of economic well-being

in our community'. Lochaber MP Ian Blackford described the figures as 'shocking' and highlighted the 'appalling impact' of continued austerity measures.

He said: 'We know there's a direct link between harmful policies such as Universal Credit and food bank use.'

Constituency MSP Kate Forbes also felt recent changes to the welfare system had hit the poorest the hardest.

'Those figures beg the question why families with children in this day and age are dependent on foodbanks. The fact that more than 500 recipients are children is startling. Unfortunately many families are in work and are still reliant on foodbanks because of the uncertain and poorly paid nature of their work. That, too, has to change.'

Mr McConachie said the foodbank was always looking for volunteers to help at its premises at Airds Crossing, on Fort William High Street, opposite the parade.

'There's a demand. We need to stay open,' he continued.

★
BRAND NEW
CÈILIDH FESTIVAL
ON THE
ISLE OF SKYE

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THE VATERSAY BOYS
TRAIL WEST
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GUNNA SOUND
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ISLE OF SKYE



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Lochaber pupils take top engineering title

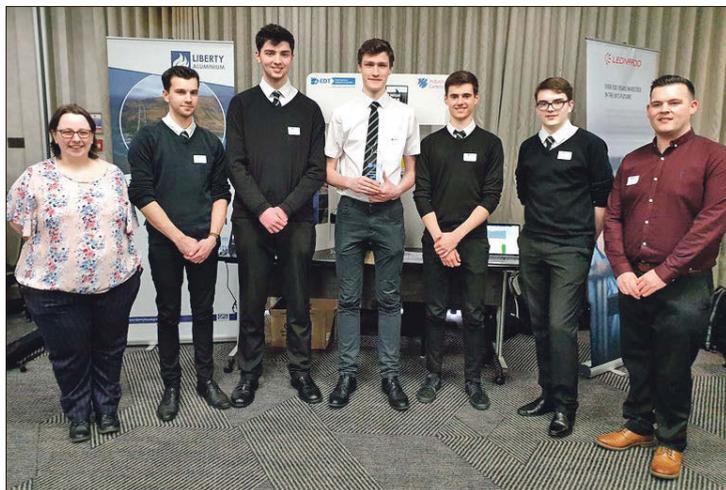
by Neill Bo Finlayson
nfinlayson@obantimes.co.uk

Lochaber High School pupils have been crowned Scottish national champions at the end of a five-month scheme designed to launch them into careers in science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM).

A team of S5 and S6 pupils took top spot in the final of the Engineering Education Scheme (EES) competition at Edinburgh Airport on Thursday March 28.

The five-strong team, facing competition from 10 other schools from across Scotland, presented its project on the Automisation of the Spey Dam Fish Pass to a panel of expert judges from Scottish industry.

The pupils worked with industry mentors on engi-



The winning Lochaber High School pupils with teacher Elizabeth Platt, far left, and Liberty/SIMEC's James Rosie, right.

neering problems faced by their sponsor companies, with many of their solutions adapted and taken on in the workplace at the end of their projects.

'EES was an amazing opportunity that we all thor-

oughly enjoyed,' said Alan Hamilton from the Lochaber High School team.

The highly-contested overall prize was, for the first year, awarded to two schools after the judges were unable to distinguish between the

excellent quality of work produced by both teams.

This meant Lochaber High School, mentored by Liberty Aluminium, shared the title with Duncanrig Secondary School, East Kilbride.

'EES has renewed my

enthusiasm for teaching and learning,' said Lochaber High School teacher Elizabeth Platt.

'Pupil experiences like this are why I'm a teacher.'

This annual competition gives talented young school-leavers the chance to experience the realities of industry employment first-hand before making choices about their future careers.

James Rosie, of Liberty Aluminium / SIMEC Lochaber Power and mentor for the Lochaber High School team, said: 'EES gives young aspiring engineers an insight into a real-life industry and helps guide them towards what they want to do in the future. I am preparing to apply for incorporated/chartered engineer status with the IET and EES has helped me to develop my skills by mentoring the team.'

Fort William man pleads guilty to assaulting police officers

A Fort William man pleaded guilty, when he appeared at Fort William Sheriff Court last week, to assaulting two police officers and obstructing them in their duties.

Malcolm Robert Watson, 32, of Lochaber Road, admitted two assault charges and one charge of resisting, obstructing or hindering the police, on the town's High Street on December 2 2018.

The charges included punching PC Ryan Boyle twice in the face and assaulting PC Brandon Campbell by sitting on him and placing both hands around his neck.

He also admitted obstructing PC John MacKerlich and PC Ben Cruikshank in their duties by violently resisting, pulling away from them and kicking out.

Sheriff Eilidh MacDonald deferred sentencing for a Criminal Justice Social Work Report to be carried out.

Watson also denied another charge of shouting and swearing and making threats towards police officers, which was continued for a trial later.

Sheriff MacDonald described the offences as 'serious' and reminded Watson of his previous criminal convictions.

'If you carry on acting in this way there will come a point where I run out of options,' she told him.

CONTACTUS
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Advertorial

Eye to eye with John Wallace



Knife crime and vision

Vision is often taken for granted and, mistakenly, many parents think because they can see clearly their children won't have a vision problem. The reality is somewhat different. A recent study found that 19.7 per cent of all children seen in a high street optometric practice in Essex had an undiagnosed vision problem. Much is being made of the current epidemic of knife crime among youngsters. It would appear, according to the various news channels, some 80 per cent of the assailants had been excluded from school typically because of poor behaviour. Other studies have found over 60 per cent of the prison population have undiagnosed reading problems. I suspect there is a significant



link between these children underachieving in school, getting frustrated and then being excluded. Clear vision is only part of the requirement for maximising performance at school, at work or with sports. We are born with two eyes. Because each eye sees an object from a slightly different angle, when the images are combined we get stereopsis (3D depth perception). Each eye also has a focusing mechanism called accommodation which

enables the eye to change focus from far away to up close and back again. Our two eyes must move in tandem across the page when we read. If any of these aspects of vision are not working properly we can struggle to read or to use smartphones etc.

The basic NHS eye examination is designed to pick up when you are not seeing clearly and also find basic issues about how our two eyes work together. There are many more sophisticated tests which explore reading problems in great depth. At the very least parents should have their children checked every two years. Your optometrist will advise if a more frequent examination is required or a more in-depth vision assessment is appropriate.

John Wallace BSc (Hons), FCOptom, DipCLP

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Tel: 0845 230 3937 (EYES) www.wallaceoptometrists.co.uk

Door steward fined £100

A security steward in Fort William has been fined £100 for carrying out door duties at a High Street pub without being registered.

Irene Anne McConachie, 48, of Kennedy Road, appeared at Fort William Sheriff Court last Tuesday where she admitted working as an approved provider of security without registration.

On the night of December 23 2018, police saw McConachie carrying out door duties at a town pub and noticed she was not wearing a security

industry authority badge. When asked about it, she told officers she had left it at home.

The police then contacted the relevant authority which confirmed McConachie was not registered. McConachie, who was representing herself, told the court she had applied for her licence renewal earlier in the year but it had not been processed.

Sheriff Eilidh MacDonald fined McConachie £100 for the offence, saying: 'You can't work if you don't have the necessary paperwork.'

Jail for man who threw pint glass

A man has been jailed for two months for assaulting another man in a Fort William High Street pub.

Luke Nassaris Mobsby, 25, pleaded guilty to assaulting another man on May 11 2018 by throwing a glass at him and repeatedly punching him on the head.

Mobsby, who is currently on remand and appeared at Fort William Sheriff Court from custody last Wednesday, also pleaded guilty to possessing cannabis while in the police vehicle en route to the Fort William station on the night of the assault.

The court heard that Mobsby had arrived at the High Street pub and began shouting and acting in a disorderly manner. When asked to leave by the barman, he refused and the police were contacted by a member of staff watching events on CCTV.

Mobsby threw a pint glass but it smashed on the ground. A member of the public then assisted the bar man with the removal of Mobsby from the premises at which point he punched the man in the face twice.

After leaving the pub, Mobsby was found near the High Street by police, arrested on suspicion of assault and taken to the police station.

Defence solicitor Hamish Melrose said Mobsby was 'apologetic for his behaviour' during this incident. 'The incident took place some time ago and Mobsby pleaded guilty to the matter at the outset.'

Mr Melrose added: 'He is not in a great place at the moment.'

Sheriff Eilidh MacDonald sentenced Mobsby to two months in jail, back dated to February 26.



Lochaber Showstoppers celebrates 25 years

Lochaber Showstoppers used its 25th birthday party last week to reveal its performance plans for the future.

The special birthday event, to which all current and for-

mer Showstoppers members had been invited, was held in Fort William Shinty Club on Friday.

The event saw those attending enjoy food, music, karaoke and the announcement of a pantomime for December this year in Ballachulish Hall plus a production of The Sound of Music in the Nevis Centre in May 2020.

Members of Lochaber Showstoppers at the group's 25th birthday celebration.

Photograph: Abrightside Photography.

Support group looking for volunteers

Friends of Invernevis (FoI) has reformed as a support group for Invernevis residents and staff and it is looking for volunteers.

The aim of the group is to fundraise and organise events for the benefit of residents and manage funds from events and bequests gifted to Lochaber's NHS care home.

Invernevis House and Friends of Invernevis will welcome volunteers able to offer an hour or more a week with weeding, planting and tidying the garden and grounds, volunteering in the shop and proposed café area and supporting residents.

A management committee spokesperson said: 'We really need you and your skills and talents to support the valued members of our community who can no longer support themselves.'

Anyone can help by supporting events, fundraising or joining FoI's 100 Club.

For more details please contact care home manager Claire Cameron on 01397 702939.

Coastal defence work under way in Fort

Work is under way to re-construct the sea-wall next to the A82 at Achintore Road in Fort William.

The £465,000 coastal defence project, which began this week, involves demolishing the existing coastal defence system which is showing signs of deterioration, and rebuilding a new, upgraded defence system.

Around 550 concrete blocks,

each weighing 1.5 tonnes, as well as approximately 1,200 tonnes of rock armour will be installed along the shore to strengthen and protect the embankment from future coastal erosion, ensuring the A82 carriageway and footway remains fully supported. A new wider footway and safety barrier will also be installed to help improve road safety.

The project is expected

to take up to six weeks to complete. Temporary traffic lights will be in place continuously throughout the project. The lights will be manually operated during peak periods to help ensure disruption is minimised and traffic lights will be removed over the public holidays at the Easter weekend (April 19 to 22) and the Six Days Trial in Fort William (May

6 to 11). Consultation with the community, businesses, the local authority and other stakeholders was completed last month.

Eddie Ross, BEAR Scotland's North West Representative said: 'The current system is showing signs of significant deterioration and, by acting now, we can ensure the integrity of the A82 can be maintained and

avoid a larger, more costly and disruptive embankment repair in the future.

'Our teams will do everything possible to ensure disruption is minimised during the project including manually operating the traffic signals and working to ensure traffic management can be removed over Easter weekend and ahead of the Fort William Six Days Trial in mid-May.'

Cat owners urged to be vigilant after pets suffer 'trauma'

by Mark Entwistle
mentwistle@obantimes.co.uk

Cat owners in Morvern, Acharacle, Sunart and West Ardnamurchan are being warned to be vigilant after claims two domestic pets had been found 'shaved and traumatised'.

Reports of the incidents were relayed to Sunart Community Council earlier this year and it says it has since been contacted by police and informed that an organisation had been trapping and neutering cats in Acharacle.

Scottish Wildcat Action (SWA), the country's official wildcat conservation project, has confirmed to the council it is not undertaking any neutering programme in the area.

In a statement on its Facebook page, the community council added: 'We have also contacted the Ardnamurchan and Mull Cat Protection Group which also confirms none of its team is working in this area on farm

cats, nor have done for a long time.

'We would therefore urge domestic cat owners to be cautious in Morvern, Acharacle, Sunart and West Ardnamurchan, and if asked to sign consent forms, be sure to understand what you are signing.'

A spokesperson for SWA said the organisation does not conduct any trap, neuter, vaccinate and return (TNVR) schemes involving feral (unowned) domestic cats in Ardnamurchan.

Conservation

'We work with land owners and the community to carry out our conservation action, including TNVR on the west coast within the Morvern wildcat priority area, which does not include Strontian and Acharacle,' said a spokesperson.

'SWA has a strict protocol for conducting TNVR to protect Scottish wildcats, which includes extensive consultation with local land managers and

the community, including pet cat owners. We take all practicable steps to ensure pet cats are not accidentally trapped during our TNVR work in Morvern and the other four priority areas - Strathbogie, Angus Glens, Northern Strathspey and Strathpeffer.

'SWA operates under licence from Scottish Natural Heritage to release feral domestic cats, which are classified as an invasive, non-native species. It is an offence to release a feral cat without a licence.'

The Lochaber Times asked another wildcat conservation organisation, Scottish Wildcat Haven, if it could shed any light on the community council's concerns and a spokesperson said: 'Yes, saw the post last week about shaved and traumatised cats.'

'We are very concerned about it. We are trying to get to the bottom of it.'

'If you hear anything, please let us know and we will do likewise. It's all a little bit bizarre.'

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Caol man fined £200 for cocaine possession

A Caol man has been fined £200 for possession of cocaine found by police during a routine traffic stop.

Wayne Watson, 41, of MacKenzie Court, pleaded guilty to being in possession of the illegal drug when stopped by officers on Belford Road, Fort William, last year.

Watson, who appeared at Fort William Sheriff Court last Tuesday, pleaded not guilty to another charge of possession of amphetamine.

The court heard that at 1.30pm on July 19, police pulled Watson over in a routine traffic stop and smelt cannabis. They found 0.7gm of cocaine in the car.

Sheriff Eilidh MacDonald fined Watson £200.

Watson pleaded not guilty to a separate charge of assault, acting in a disorderly manner and attempting to fight police officers at a pub in Fort William High Street on September 22 last year. A trial date was set for April 25.

Pensioner guilty of dangerous driving

Skye woman, 73, banned for two years and fined

Court reporter
fort@obantimes.co.uk

A retired woman from Skye, who was told by Sheriff Eilidh MacDonald that she was lucky to be alive, has been disqualified from driving for two years.

Leonora Morgan, 73, pleaded guilty to dangerous driving when she appeared at Fort William Sheriff Court last Tuesday after her attempt to overtake two cars on the A82 just south of Fort William resulted in a collision.

The court heard that at around 10.25am on August 21, Morgan was driving her car southbound two or three miles south of Fort William when she attempted to overtake two cars.

After getting past the first vehicle, she overtook the

second just before what was described by Procurator Fiscal Martina Eastwood as a 'tight right hand bend'.

The driver of the second car, a Skoda Fabia, reportedly slowed down to allow Morgan to get back into lane. At the same time, however, another vehicle was coming in the opposite direction. Faced with Morgan's car, the driver of the oncoming vehicle took evasive action and crossed onto the opposite carriageway in the direction of the Skoda, narrowly missing it.

Morgan, of Strathaird, Broadford, was still travelling on the wrong side of the road when another car came face to face with her, still driving around the bend. The driver swerved to avoid Morgan but a head on collision could not be avoided. There was

'This was truly dangerous driving. If you travel that road regularly you will know what a difficult and dangerous stretch that is. You and the others involved are lucky to be alive.'

significant damage to both vehicles and Morgan's airbags went off.

An ambulance crew and the fire service were called to the scene and the road was closed for four hours.

A fire crew had to free Morgan from the vehicle and she was later found to have

suffered a fracture to the top of her spine.

Morgan's defence agent Stephen Kennedy said that 'a number of accidents' occurred at this location on the A82, which has sharp bends at either end of the straight stretch of road.

'She braked and so did the Skoda so she had nowhere to go,' Mr Kennedy said. 'Morgan then swerved towards the verge to avoid a collision but was unable to do so.'

Morgan was also fined £600. Sheriff Eilidh MacDonald said: 'This was truly dangerous driving.'

'If you travel that road regularly you will know what a difficult and dangerous stretch that is. You and the others involved are lucky to be alive.'

Mallaig seaman admits drink driving

A Mallaig seaman has been banned from driving for a year and fined £400 after pleading guilty to drink driving.

At Fort William Sheriff Court last week, Damian Hunter, 51, admitted driving while almost three times over the legal drink driving limit at his home on Lovat Terrace on October 10 2018.

Police were called to his home after a witness reported they could smell alcohol from Hunter when she exchanged insurance details with him after he reversed into her car. Officers recorded a breath alcohol reading of 61mgs of alcohol in 100mls of breath. The legal limit is 22mg.

Defence solicitor Hamish Melrose said Hunter accepted he had been drinking that day after he left his former place of employment, a local boatyard.

'He foolishly went to his car and drove the relatively short distance back home,' Mr Melrose said.

Man admits pushing woman on body during argument

An Inverlochy man has been ordered to be of good behaviour for six months after he admitted pushing a woman.

Self-employed MOT garage worker Steven Carmichael, 42, pleaded guilty to assaulting his ex-partner by pushing her on the body at her home on March 5 this year.

The court heard Carmichael, of Dubh MacDonald Road, visited the home of his ex-partner to pick up his chil-

dren and an argument started. Defence lawyer Stephen Kennedy said that before the incident Carmichael had been shopping for his children and visited the house to pick them up.

He was accused by his ex-partner of being in a relationship with another woman. Carmichael denied this and during the argument pushed his ex-partner on the body. Mr Kennedy said

the couple's relationship was over with no prospect of a reconciliation.

Sheriff Eilidh MacDonald deferred sentence for six months and ordered Carmichael to be of good behaviour in that time.

Carmichael pleaded not guilty to a second charge of adopting an aggressive manner and repeatedly shouting and swearing at his ex-partner.

Kitchen worker ordered to be of good behaviour for a year

A Kinlochleven kitchen worker has been ordered to be of good behaviour for a year after admitting assaulting a child.

Paul Alexander Anderson, 53, of Lovat Road, appeared at Fort William Sheriff Court last Tuesday for sentencing after pleading guilty, when he appeared in court in February, to assaulting a child in Kinlochleven.

On Saturday August 5 and Tuesday August 15 2017, Anderson struck a child on the bottom with a wooden spoon and threw a towel at their head and their eye, causing injury on both occasions.

Anderson's defence agent told the court his

client felt it was just 'horse play' and put it down to 'banter'.

Sheriff Eilidh MacDonald deferred sentencing for a year and ordered Anderson to be of good behaviour in that time.

She told Anderson: 'This was extremely immature behaviour which overstepped the mark and resulted in injury. I hope you have learnt your lesson.'

'You can't behave in this way to and around children.'

Anderson continued his plea of not guilty to another charge in relation to the child and will appear in court again for trial at a later date.

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Driver banned for doing 86mph in 30mph zone

A Fort William motorist caught speeding at almost three times the 30mph limit has been banned from driving for four months and fined £600.

Jay Douglas, 25, of Camanachd Crescent, pleaded guilty to careless driving when he appeared at Fort William Sheriff Court last Tuesday.

The court heard police officers recorded Douglas driving at 86mph in a 30mph zone at Carrs Corner just outside the town at 11.35pm on May 26 last year.

In mitigation, road traffic lawyer Steven Farmer said conditions that night were dry and there were no other cars in the area at the time.

Mr Farmer said: 'When the speed was recorded, Douglas was approximately 80 metres from the beginning of the national speed limit. He's well outwith the built up area and approaching the countryside.'

Mr Farmer also highlighted Douglas, a ship hand, had no previous convictions.

Sheriff Eilidh MacDonald said: 'This is a ridiculous speed on a very difficult stretch of road. There is a 30mph speed limit for a reason. You are local to Fort William and will know that was in place.'

Shellfish firm fine highlights food safety rules

A court case which saw an Acharacle shellfish company fined for food safety offences emphasises the importance of legislation surrounding the harvesting, handling and distribution of shellfish, according to Highland Council. Sheriff Eilidh MacDonald fined GC Shellfish Limited £2,400 at Fort William Sheriff Court last week, following an investigation involving

Highland Council environmental health officers.

The company pleaded guilty to two charges of accepting cockles and winkles without necessary documentation, both contrary to the Food Hygiene (Scotland) Regulations 2006.

Since bi-valve mollusc species such as mussels, cockles and oysters are filter feeders, they are susceptible to picking

up and accumulating toxins from their environment.

To reduce the risk of contamination, these species can only be harvested from classified production areas and waters that are routinely monitored for marine bio-toxins.

The consumption of shellfish contaminated with these bio-toxins can lead to illness, ranging from sickness and

diarrhoea to more serious conditions which could require hospital treatment.

Therefore, before placing shellfish on the market, food business operators are required to ensure pickers and harvesters have only gathered shellfish from classified waters and that shellfish comply with the relevant health standards outlined within legislation.

Graeme Corner, Highland Council's senior environmental health officer, who led his team's investigation, said the case emphasised the importance of businesses fulfilling their legal obligations when harvesting, handling and distributing shellfish.

'These legal obligations exist to ensure food safety and protect consumers from serious ill-health,' he added.



Mallaig High School head of music Lauren Moir and the pupils heading for China this month.

Musicians strike right note for China trip

Four aspiring young traditional musicians from Mallaig High School will fly out to China this month after a special request from the Chinese government.

The invitation to attend the ninth China Young Cultural Ambassadors Performing Festival will see Ellie Tevendale, 17, Scots fiddle; Georgia Dennis, 17, guitar; Struan Robertson, 14, Highland bagpipes, and Anna Robertson, 16, Scots fiddle, travel to Chengdu City.

The four-day event is

organised by The China Society of Education which will this year welcome 50 youth music groups of more than 2,000 students.

At Mallaig High School, the pupils come under the tutelage of its head of music Lauren Moir, a musician in her own right with band Riska, who will be accompanying the students to China.

The young musicians are regular performers in Lochaber and further afield, who between them have tallied up competitive playing and public performances in-

cluding Celtic Connections, Blas Festival, Feisean and a host of trad music events.

'What an amazing opportunity for them to showcase their talents and represent their heritage on an international platform,' said Ms Moir.

Jackie Robertson, mum of Struan and Anna, says everyone is excited about the trip, which came about after a mutual acquaintance recommended them to someone scouting for young traditional Scottish musicians to take part in the festival.

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Assault charge against deckhand not proven

A sheriff found a charge of assault against Fort William deckhand Jay Douglas not proven after a trial on Friday.

Douglas, 25, of Camanachd Crescent, had denied assaulting his then partner by grabbing her by the arm and pulling her.

The incident was alleged to have happened at the woman's home in Lochaber on November 11 2017.

Giving evidence, the woman told the court the couple's relationship had 'become a bit toxic' with plenty of arguments by the time of the alleged assault.

The woman told the court a row had flared up and she had wanted Douglas to leave the house.

Douglas's version of events was that the woman had been trying to stop him from leaving and, worried she might physically attack him, he pushed her onto the bed.

'He could have gone round me to get out of the room. He

didn't have to lay his hands on me,' she said, adding that she had not fallen on the bed.

She had provided the police with photographs of bruising to her right arm, which she claimed were caused by Douglas grabbing her.

The court heard that, despite the incident, the relationship only came to an end nearly a year later, in August/September 2018.

Under questioning from defence solicitor Stephen Kennedy, the 24-year-old woman denied the only reason she had made a complaint to the police 14 months later was because she had found out Douglas had spoken to police about her in connection with a separate matter.

There was only one other witness, who told the court the woman had come to see her after the alleged incident and had confided she had, in fact, tried to stop Douglas leaving and that he had pushed her onto the bed.

Procurator Fiscal Martina Eastwood told Sheriff Eilidh MacDonald there was other action Douglas could have taken other than physical contact. 'This was not self defence,' she said.

In his summing up, Mr Kennedy said: 'It took 14 months for this to be reported to the police and the relationship had continued for some considerable time afterwards. Plus we have no idea when the photographs were taken.'

Finding the charge not proven, Sheriff MacDonald told Douglas: 'This was some considerable time ago. But there are reasons why people do not immediately report an incident of assault, so that does not raise a doubt for me.'

'However, there must be proof of some physical contact with evil intent.'

'There is no doubt there was some physical contact but the intention and nature of that contact is where there is a doubt.'

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New learning centre helps young people pursue science and engineering careers

A new learning centre opened in Fort William on Tuesday to encourage more young people to pursue careers in science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM).

A new STEM centre is to be built at Blar Mhor but, in the meantime, an interim Newton Room has been created at Caol Youth Centre, a council-owned building managed by High Life Highland.

It is the second in a network

of Newton Rooms being created in the Highland region and follows the opening on March 25 of the UK's first at North Highland College UHI in Thurso.

The Lochaber centre was opened by public finance and digital economy minister Lochaber MSP Kate Forbes, who said it was 'a great development' for the Highlands.

'It will help engage and involve people from all backgrounds to develop a strong

base of STEM skills and knowledge at a young age,' she added. The Highland Newton Rooms are being created by the Science Skills Academy, a partnership led by Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE), with £3m from the Inverness and Highland City-Region Deal. Other organisations behind the initiative include Skills Development Scotland, the University of the Highlands and Islands, The Highland Council and NHS

Highland. Caol councillor Allan Henderson, chairman of Highland Council's Environment, Development and Infrastructure Committee, said: 'The Lochaber Newton Room is another example of how the City-Region Deal is benefiting the wider Highlands. Young people studying STEM subjects in Lochaber will find their learning opportunities improved greatly now that we have this centre.'



Caol Co-op staff helped out at the spring fete.



There were crafts for sale at the fete. Photograph: Abridgeside Photography.

Caol Primary School fete fun and games

There was fun and games and plenty of smiles at Caol Primary School's spring fete on Saturday.

Running for two hours, visitors enjoyed soup, hotdogs, fun, crafts, great raffle prizes, a silent

auction, balloons and a bouncy castle.

A school spokesperson commented: 'Many thanks to all of our wonderful sponsors, contributors, parents, staff and pupil helpers.'



A group of friends enjoyed having their faces painted at the school fete.

WHAT'S ON in Lochaber

The 1746 Siege of Fort William will be the subject of Lochaber Local History Society's meeting tonight, Thursday April 4, in the Ben Nevis Hotel at 8pm.

Iain Rose, local historian and teacher, has collected from the Stuart Papers at Windsor and other sources the original letters which exchanged news and orders between the government

forces and independently some Jacobite sources which follow the siege as it evolved. The ideas and the angst in these letters will be spoken by a cast of seven, led by Mr Rose, who will narrate the event.

Staff and volunteers from Caol-based charitable organisation Lochaber Sensory Care for Sight and

Hearing Support will visit Ardnamurchan on Monday April 8. The team will be based in Acharacle Medical Centre from 10.30am until 11.45am and at Dail Mhor Care Home in Strontian from 1pm to 2.30pm. They will offer advice to those with hearing or sight impairment and re-tube and maintain NHS hearing aids. Batteries will also be supplied. No

appointment necessary for this free service.

A fundraising ceilidh and raffle will be held in Ballachulish Village Hall on Saturday April 6 in aid of the Barking Mad Dog Rescue charity which saves dogs from the streets and 'kill' shelters in Romania and finds them homes in the UK.

A craft fair will be held in Duncansburgh MacIntosh Church Hall, Fort William, on Monday April 8 and Tuesday April 9 from 11am to 3pm. There will be a raffle to raise funds for the ShelterBox Team responding to the Cyclone Idai disaster in Africa. Tables can be booked by emailing Chris at 1955@cheardman.plus.com

The annual general meeting of Fort William Photographic Society will be held on Tuesday April 9 at 7pm in the Salvation Army hall. Everyone is welcome.

Lochaber Pipe Band is holding a fundraising ceilidh and dance with Eriskay Lilt and performances from the band on Friday April 12 at the Railway Club, Fort William. Doors open at 7.30pm. Tickets available from the railway club on 01397 702218 or the pipe band on 01397704846.

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Hope for new support groups

Lochaber Hope is setting up two suicide prevention peer support groups in Fort William, based on the blueprint and success of Martyn's Monday Club in Oban.

The organisation is holding an open meeting on Tuesday April 30, from 7pm to 9pm, in the Nevis Centre, Fort William.

The aim for the meeting is to gather the community, share plans and collate ideas and sug-

gestions as well as providing an opportunity for those interested in organising the groups to come forward. This will be done through an application and interview process.

Anyone wishing to attend the event should contact Lochaber Hope on 01397 704836 or reception@lochaberhope.org.

Regular updates can be found on Lochaber Hope's Facebook page, Twitter or website.

Lochaber High teams up with Liberty for water bottle idea

Concern for the health and mental wellbeing of pupils together with a desire to reduce the use of plastic are the twin drivers of a new initiative that will see 1,000 aluminium water bottles distributed at Lochaber High School after the Easter holidays.

The scheme ties in with this week's installation of three new 'quick fill' water fountains around the school's canteen area, where the new bottles can be easily topped up by pupils and staff.

Already nicknamed 'Liberty bottles' by head teacher Scott Steele, they have been donated by Liberty British Aluminium, which operates the smelter at Fort William.

The company stepped in with an offer of support within an hour of learning of the plans just before Christmas and is keen to continue providing fresh supplies of the bottles for each new S1 intake.

Mr Steele this week explained to the Lochaber Times that it was a decision earlier this year to ban the consumption of energy drinks by pupils within the school that was the catalyst.

'It was back in March that the decision was taken to ban energy drinks containing

high levels of caffeine. It was a decision initially driven by our health and wellbeing agenda – simple as that,' he said.

'We had several student doctors here before Christmas as part of our engagement with Aberdeen University.

'I got speaking with them about energy drinks, as I've always had a concern about them, and they were telling us about the latest medical research.

'But we needed to replace those drinks with something and we have been able to provide a much healthier alternative thanks to the kind sponsorship of Liberty.'

Liberty British Aluminium's operations director at Fort William Tom Uppington said the initiative was an obvious fit for the company. 'Aluminium has been part of the town for a long time and in terms of the reduce, reuse and recycle initiative, it is perfect. The bottles can be used as long as you want if looked after and aluminium can be easily recycled.

'I think it's something we'd like to continue so that each new S1 intake gets a bottle - maybe as something they get when they do their transition week.'

Mr Steele added: 'Another main factor was our wish and the wish of our eco committees to markedly reduce our use of plastics in the school.

'My estimate is that we can reduce our plastic use by as much 80 per cent.'



It is hoped the new free aluminium drinking bottles combined with special water fountains will encourage pupils to drink more water.

Picture: Iain Ferguson, The Write Image.



HM Government

UK LEAVES THE EU

Prepare for changes to receiving EU funding after the UK leaves the EU

To find out whether any current funding you receive from the EU will be affected, visit gov.uk/euexit

View from the Chamber

March saw the second annual Scottish Tourism Month, led by the Scottish Tourism Alliance (STA) that brought together a packed schedule of events and talks engaging more than 12,500 people all over Scotland.

Scottish Tourism Month celebrates the enormous contribution that Scotland's tourism industry makes to our economy, as well as finding new and better ways of doing things; stimulating creativity and innovation, relationships and connectivity, information and inspiration.

This is an exciting time for tourism – for the first time VisitScotland is promoting Scotland as a visitor destination as part of a larger overarching 'Brand Scotland', which aims to sell us to attract new high-spending visitors, international students, major investors and 'migrant talent'.

Brand Scotland is the result of the first joint initiative between the Scottish Government, VisitScotland, Scottish Development International and Universities Scotland.

The 'Scotland is Now'



campaign has been created as part of the bid to set the country apart from its major competitors and help us to develop our global appeal and success, promoting Scotland as 'one of the most open countries in the world'.

Launching the campaign during a visit to China last year, First Minister Nicola Sturgeon said: 'The message at the heart of Scotland is Now is of a bold and positive country offering the warmest of welcomes, rich in history and heritage, and with a progressive, pioneering and inclusive approach to our future.'

Join Lochaber Chamber of Commerce today. To find out more about how the chamber can benefit your business, call 01397 705 765 or have a look at www.lochaberchamber.co.uk.



LT

Pipers hit the right notes



All the trophy winners from Saturday's competitions.



Allan MacColl won the 10 and under chanter competition.



Left: Ronnie MacIntosh and Laura Robertson between them picked up all of the Lochaber specific trophies, among other awards, at Saturday's junior piping.

Photographs:
Iain Ferguson,
alba.photos.

Talent was to the fore at Lochaber Piping Society's annual Amateur Piping and Drumming Competition for pipers aged 18 and under.

There were strong entries in all events and the organisers reported a very high standard of playing at Lochaber High School on Saturday March 30.

Results: Chanter, 10 and under: 1 Allan MacColl; 2 Jamie Smith; 3 Lily Jane Robertson.

Chanter March, 14 and under: 1 Archie Johnston; 2 Grace Kelman; 3 Lily Jane Robertson; 4 Jamie Smith.

Local overall: Jamie Smith and Lily Jane Robertson.

Piobaireachd Ground, 18 and under: 1 Ewan Allen; 2 Alexander MacDonald; 3 Calum Angus MacKenzie; 4 Max Rae; 5 Charles MacLennan.

Novice Drumming, 18 and under: 1 Bobby Allen; 2 Shonagh MacKenzie; 3 Izzy MacDonald; 4 Thomas Duncan; 5 Laura Sears.

Piobaireachd, 14 and under: 1 Archie Clark; 2 Gregor Grierson; 3 Calum Dunbar; 4 Hector Finlayson; 5 Laura Robertson; 6 Declan Malloy.

Piobaireachd, 15-18: 1 Gregor MacDonald; 2 Hazel Whyte; 3 Archie MacLean; 4 Bobby Allen; 5 Eosaph Cambeul; 6 Ronnie McIntosh.

March, 15-18: 1 Bobby Allen; 2 Gregor MacDonald; 3 Hazel Whyte; 4 Eosaph Cambeul; 5 Thomas Young; 6 Archie MacLean.

Strathspey and reel, 15 - 18: 1 Bobby Allen; 2 Gregor

MacDonald; 3 Hazel Whyte; 4 Thomas Young; 5 Eosaph Cambeul; 6 Archie MacLean.

March, 14 and Under Drumming: 1 Seumas Matheson; 2 Jack Davenport; 3 Aidan McSorley.

March, 15 -18 - Drumming: 1 Anna Rebecca Sears; 2 Holly Callus; 3 Megan Gough; 4 Alastair MacLennan; 5 Morven Aird.

March, 14 and under - Piping: 1 Hector Finlayson; 2 Gregor Grierson; 3 Laura Robertson; 4 Ewan Allan; 5 Calum Dunbar; 6 Archie Clark. Best local in March: Laura Robertson.

Strathspey and reel, 14 & Under - Piping: 1 Gregor Grierson; 2 Hector Finlayson; 3 Ewan Allan; 4 Calum Dunbar; 5 Laura Robertson; 6 Archie Clark.

Jig, 15 -18: 1 Bobby Allen; 2 Archie MacLean; 3 Emma Hall; 4 Thomas Young; 5 Hazel Whyte; 6 Gilleasbuig MacVicar.

Jig, 14 and Under: 1 Calum Dunbar; 2 Max Rae; 3 Laura Robertson; 4 Gregor Grierson; 5 Declan Malloy; 6 Ewan Allen.

Slow air, 16 and Under: 1 Hazel Whyte; 2 Gregor MacDonald; 3 Thomas Young; 4 Hector Finlayson; 5 Bobby Allen; 6 Alexander MacDonald.

P/M Donald MacLeod Piobaireachd Composition, 18 and Under: 1 Gregor MacDonald; 2 Thomas Young; 3 Archie MacLean; 4 Emma Hill; 5 Ciaran Kellet; 6 Calum Dunbar.



Seumas Matheson from Kyle won the march under 14 drumming competition.



Jamie Smith was joint winner of the overall local winner in the junior chanter competitions.



Lily Jane Robertson performed well in the junior chanter competitions and was joint winner of the overall local winner.

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SCOTTISH FIELD'S MAY ISSUE OUT NOW

Northern Isles under the spotlight...
Game hunting on Mull... Beautiful Argyll interiors... Secrets of the Shetland Bus... Olympic treasure Liz McColgan... Rhubarb recipes...

Young actors praised for show

Lochaber Youth Theatre has been wowing audiences with its latest production of Katherine Soper's *The Small Hours* for the National Theatre Connections Festival.

Part of the National Theatre's Connections Festival, the group, which consists of young people aged 14 to 18 years from across Lochaber, chose the selection provided by the National and have been rehearsing with director Alan Gray throughout the winter.

The group performed two shows at the Salvation Army Hall in Fort William last Sunday and Monday, with both well-attended. Sunday's performance was watched by Alasdair Hunter from the National Theatre, who provided the group with feedback.

Next up for the Youth Theatre is the partner theatre



Lochaber Youth Theatre is wowing audiences with its latest production. Photograph: Iain Ferguson, alba.photos

show in Inverness at Easter where they will stay for four days and take part in theatre workshops and watch other youth theatres perform before performing their own piece.

Mr Gray said: 'I couldn't be

any prouder of the group. 'They have worked hard and I know they will continue to put the effort in and have the show in great shape for the partner theatre performance in Inverness.'

Rotary cafe in aid of cyclone appeal

Lochaber Rotary Club is running a pop-up cafe on Monday and Tuesday April 8 and 9 in response to the Cyclone Iдай appeal.

The event, at Duncansburgh MacIntosh Church Hall in Fort William, will run from 11am until 3pm each day with all money raised going towards buying one or more ShelterBox emergency units for Mozambique, Malawi and Zimbabwe – where 750 are confirmed dead and nearly 500,000 made homeless following the natural disaster.

The event is being run in conjunction with a craft fair, which will hold a raffle in aid of the ShelterBox fund.

Rotary Club president Iain Johnston explained that ShelterBox was a disaster relief charity that provided temporary shelter and lifesaving supplies to people who have lost everything in natural disasters and wars.

'When a humanitarian disaster such as Cyclone Iдай strikes, ShelterBox response teams are dispatched to distribute boxes on the ground, working closely with international aid agencies and Rotary clubs worldwide,' said Mr Johnston.

Each unit contains a tent specially designed to withstand extreme weather conditions, water purification kit, blankets, tools, cooking utensils and other necessities.

Mr Johnston added: 'We will be displaying a ShelterBox at the cafe.'

Mr Johnston continued: 'The Rotary Club has long supported ShelterBox. We usually fund one or two boxes every year from money raised at events including Lochaber Agricultural Show. I urge the generous Lochaber public to support this important event. If you are unable to attend the cafe, you can still donate to ShelterBox through the Rotary Club by emailing secretary@lochaberrotary.org.uk.'

Glenfinnan Estate manager addresses Rotary members

Glenfinnan Estate manager Alistair Gibson was guest speaker at Lochaber Rotary Club's weekly business lunch meeting at the Alexandra Hotel, in Fort William.

In a lively 15-minute talk, Mr Gibson told members he attended Rannoch School in Perthshire and left keen to pursue a career in outdoor pursuits.

Working with the Economic Forestry Group and based in Inverness, one of his first postings was to Glenfinnan Estate where, in 1976, he planted trees. Much later in life, he oversaw their growth, thinning, felling and harvesting.

Mr Gibson gained a post

at the estate as stalking ghillie in 1978, then moved to Cowdray Estate in West Sussex. Following that he moved to Dunecht Estate in Aberdeenshire, before expanding his training at the Scottish School of Forestry and returning to Glenfinnan, initially as a stalker and now as estate manager.

In his current post, Mr Gibson was responsible for the estate's nine-year liaison with Warner Brothers over its use of estate land as a set for its Harry Potter films.

He told Rotarians he had seen the number of visitors grow 10-fold from 25,000 visitors pre-Harry Potter and has assisted the local commu-

nity council in its car park project to address the soaring demand from visitors to stop, view and photograph the Category A-listed Glenfinnan viaduct.

The job of the estate manager also involves tackling poachers seeking the deer that range over the estate and Mr Gibson relayed entertaining tales about the lengths to which poachers will go to steal the estate's high-value venison.

Mr Gibson also touched on the controversial subject of private drones being used for photography and filming over the estate. Alistair advised there was a need for legal clarity on this issue.



Guest speaker Alistair Gibson, centre, with past president Sheena Fraser and president-elect Clive Talbot.

Photograph: Iain Ferguson, alba.photos

On behalf of the club, past president Sheena Fraser thanked Mr Gibson for his interesting talk and club members responded with warm applause.

Funding cuts prompt geopark cash appeal

by Neill Bo Finlayson
nfinlayson@obantimes.co.uk

An environmental charity is campaigning for public support as it prepares for funding cuts.

Lochaber Geopark, which promotes awareness and appreciation of Lochaber's geological heritage, is launching a crowdfunding campaign this month after the Scottish Government confirmed it will no longer help to fund geoparks.

The full details of the campaign will be revealed on Tuesday April 16, when the fund is launched, and a campaign video is scheduled to go live at 9am on the morning of the launch via YouTube.

The fundraising effort is to be fronted by broadcaster Paul Murton, who grew up in Argyll and is the well-known presenter of Grand Tours of Scotland on BBC TV.

Anyone interested is invited to pop in to the geopark's visitor centre between 10am and 4pm on Tuesday April

16 to find out how they can support the campaign, as well as see some of the exhibits.

The public is invited to the official launch on the evening of April 16 from 4pm to 6pm, also at Lochaber Geopark Visitor Centre, where snacks and drinks will be available.

Over the years, Lochaber Geopark has received funding from the Scottish Government, as well as from European Union sources and other grant giving bodies.

Although most of its activities are carried out by volunteers, there is a core team of office staff needed to maintain the organisation, look after retail sales, search and manage sources of funding and organise outdoor activities.

More details can be found on www.lochabergeopark.org.uk

Newsdesk
01397 703003

MSP backs support for rural post offices

Kate Forbes MSP has backed calls for the UK Government to ensure the future of the Post Office network is secure.

New figures reveal Scotland is being hit hardest by post office closures: out of 1,016 temporarily closed branches in the UK, 134 are in Scotland (13 per cent).

Kate Forbes, MSP for Skye, Lochaber and

Badenoch, stated the importance of post offices to rural towns and villages. She said: 'Post offices are so important to Highland villages, particularly so with mass bank branch closures.'

'This is particularly true for the elderly and those with additional support needs because of the face-to-face services they provide.'

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LT



Sun shines as sheepdog trial celebrates 25 years

A good entry of 52 dogs from across Scotland helped make the weekend's staging of the 25th anniversary Invergarry Sheep Dog Trial a success.

With sheep dogs and their handlers from as far afield as Wick and Ayrshire making their way to Invergarry Home Farm for the event, the standard of competition was high with several runs of 93 points out of 100.

Lochcarron's Ewen MacKinnon and his dog Buddy took the day's top trophy after being awarded first place for best outbye work.

MacKinnon and Buddy had tied on 93 points with Stuart Davidson, from Dunoon, and his dog Queen.

Normal practice is for a tie to be settled with a run-off, but Davidson had already left for home by the end of the event and in such cases the best score for the first three elements of the trial are used as a decider.

Top Lochaber competitor



Left: One of the dogs in action on Saturday.

Handlers, dogs and sheep at the 25th anniversary Invergarry Sheepdog Trial enjoyed some welcome sunshine. Photographs: Iain Ferguson, alba.photos



Trial organisers Michael and Lea MacNally.

was event organiser Mike MacNally, from Invergarry Home Farm, and his dog Ash on 69 points.

Since its inception in 1994, the trial has raised thousands of pounds for charity and this year was no exception with £1,420 being collected for Highland Hospice.

'We were very pleased with the number of entries and the standard,' Mr MacNally

told the Lochaber Times this week. 'The number of dogs was slightly down. Some years we have had more than 70 competing and ended up finishing in the dark. But 52 dogs is a good number.'

Results: 1 E MacKinnon, Buddy, 93/100; 2 S Davidson, Queen, 93; 3 M Magnusson, Sally, 92; 4 S Davidson, Lee, 89; 5 K Donald, Jen, 83; S MacCulloch, Sam, 82; 7 E

MacKinnon, Midge, 81; 8 S Davidson, Maid, 80; 9 T MacPhee, Scott, 79; 10 H Munro, Lil, 78.

Local: 1 J MacKillop, Jed, 77; 2 M MacNally, Ash, 69; 3 M MacNally, Tarff, 68.

Lochaber handler - M MacNally, Ash, 69.

Specials: outrun and lift - S Campbell, Bell; drive - I MacDonald, Zoe; good effort/hard luck - B Tulloch, Will.

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MacPhail

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Rona Lightfoot from South Uist is among the most dangerous people to meet when one is trying to observe Lenten abstinence.

Just five minutes in her company - even first thing in the morning - is enough to put anyone in the mood for a good party.

This soon-to-be 83-year-old legend of piping, Gaelic song and tradition is a woman who has a positive effect on anyone lucky enough to be in her company.

Last Saturday morning she was recording a small bit of backing vocals for the new Skipinnish album and it was a great pleasure to see her again after nearly 10 years.

We played at Rona's 70th birthday party and, a few years after that, at her and her husband Tony's golden wedding. I was delighted that in the decade since seeing her, she's lost none of her vigour and electric charisma.

Long before the current emphasis of gender equality, Rona was breaking down boundaries of sexism in the very much male-dominated world of piping. She had a highly successful solo piping career and is credited as being the first woman to



Rona Lightfoot.

gain a prize in a major piping competition.

She was also the first woman to compete in the prestigious 'Bratach Gorm', the premier pibroch competition run by the Scottish Piping Society of London. She had to campaign to be allowed to enter this competition because, as with many similar events, women were customarily excluded.

The piping world is not too similar to the Hollywood movie industry but if Harvey Weinstein had ever tried his behaviour with Rona, he would have been very firmly put in his place.

While Rona is full of fun and good humour, she is certainly not someone to be tangled with and her track record of fighting the corner of female piping competitors is a clear indicator of this.

Apart from competition success, Rona is a well-respected piping judge and in fact this weekend is heading to Stornoway to judge at the Donald MacLeod Memorial Piping Competition.

In 2009, she was inducted into the Scottish Traditional Music Hall of Fame in recognition of her achievements as a piper, singer and tradition bearer. The following year, she received the Balvenie Medal for Services to Piping.

She was also the first and yet to be only woman to hold the position of president of the Inverness Piping Society.

Her achievements, her competition success and these other accolades that have been deservedly bestowed upon her are a clear mark of her talents and attributes as a performer, musician and character. However, none of them reflects the incredible experience it is to meet this great woman in person.

To quote someone I know well while talking about Rona, I will finish with this. 'She is so deeply rooted and down to earth but with such a wondrous star quality at the same time.'

I will make sure it isn't 10 years until I see her next.

A Cry For The Wild

HOLLY GILLIBRAND

fort@obantimes.co.uk



Insectageddon

My friends and I used to pretend there was an apocalypse and the world was going to be invaded by zombies.

We asked each other what we had put in our survival kits and whether mankind would survive the onslaught of revived corpses.

Now, in the year 2019, the apocalypse is here...but it has nothing to do with zombies. The insectageddon, or insect Armageddon, is probably the first apocalypse in the history of fiction and real life, where the majority of people have no clue that it is happening. We are living in a time when a real emergency is met with blank faces and glazed eyes.

In Germany, a survey in 2017 showed that insect abundance had dropped by 76 per cent over the last 27 years and in Britain a new report reveals wild

bees and hoverflies have disappeared from a quarter of the locations in which they were found less than 40 years ago.

The latter report included the analysis of 353 wild bee and hoverfly species. With the disastrous decline of Britain's insects, it is hardly surprising insectivorous birds such as our beloved swifts and swallows are suffering, with the population of swifts decreasing 51 per cent between 1995 and 2015. With the loss of pollinating insects will come the loss of the life support systems that everything, and everyone, relies on. Our ecosystems are collapsing around our heads and it won't just affect animals that live in the wild.

Foods that rely on pollination from insects won't grow, meaning we won't be able to farm many of the crops we need and the life support systems we rely on to survive will collapse.

Nature in the UK is being pushed to the edge. Farms have become miles and miles of sterile, lifeless land, wildflower meadows that may have thousands of species of insects thriving there are destroyed in the blink of an eye and hedgerows are relentlessly torn up. Our smatterings of nature reserves are surrounded by a hostile environment, sprayed with pesticides, with no shelter or food. We need to change our attitude towards nature and only then can this ecological apocalypse be reversed.

People can help by planting wildflowers in their gardens, by letting their grass grow long to provide habitat for insects, by not using chemicals in their gardens and by writing letters to the Highland Council to put pressure on it to let wildflowers grow on road verges instead of strimming them away.

Every little thing helps.

Pupils pitch in with big win for rescue team

Glencoe Mountain Rescue team funds have been boosted by £3,000 thanks to Kinlochleven High School's Youth and Philanthropy Initiative.

S3 students were charged with putting together a presentation to win £3,000 for charity, with the final taking place last Thursday in front of an excited group of students and four judges.

Several charities were represented, including Marie Curie Cancer Research, Lochaber Sports Association (LSA), Friends of Autism, Glencoe Mountain Rescue, Glencoe Outdoor Centre, Kinlochlovin' and New Start Highland.

The judging panel included Margaret Boyd, from Voluntary Action Lochaber representing the Wood Foundation, Pauline Byres, chairwoman of Kinlochleven Primary Parent Council, Susan Kemp, former head teacher of St Bride's and the popular former depute head Gordon Milne.



The winning team, left to right, Danny Cockerill, Ellis Nicolson, Sam Daynes and Logan Thomson.

After tremendous pitches from all the participating groups, and some tough questions from the judging panel, the head judge announced the Glencoe Mountain Rescue pitch team as the winner.

The decision was greeted with cheers, yet there were no losers on the day as the profiles of all of the charities

and their inspirational work were recognised.

The event was a demonstration of the exceptional work carried out by charities and the sense of community that is celebrated at Kinlochleven High School daily.

This was the fourth year Kinlochleven High School has run the event.

Green group hosts seed sowing workshop

Green-fingered families enjoyed seed sowing lessons on Saturday.

Lochaber Environmental Group hosted a day of workshops in the polytunnel at the Greenfingers Community Garden at Claggan, teaching budding gardeners young and old how to sow seeds to kick start 2019's growing season.

The group learned how to dig traditional lazy bed ridges and sow seeds as the sun shone down on the gardens, next to Fort William Football Club's Claggan Park.

Participants also learned how to grow potatoes and increase yield using traditional methods with seaweed gathered from the beach.



The group learned how to dig traditional lazy bed ridges.



Gardeners of all ages learned new tricks.

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LT



MSP Kate Forbes announced the latest crofting grants in her role as Scottish public finance minister.

Grants totalling £270k awarded to eight crofters

Funding to support crofters in some of Scotland's most remote communities has been announced by public finance minister and Skye and Lochaber MSP Kate Forbes.

Following the December round of Croft House Grant awards, more than £270,000 has been allocated to eight crofters to build or improve their homes.

Since 2007, more than £19 million has been awarded to more than 930 crofters to upgrade housing or build new homes, helping to retain and attract people to rural and remote communities.

Announcing the latest funding during a croft visit on Lewis, Ms Forbes said: 'Crofting makes a very important contribution to remote and rural communities. To make it sustainable, we need to ensure there is local,

good quality housing to help attract and retain people in rural areas.

'This latest round of funding will make a real difference to those eight successful applicants and their families.

'The award of a further £270,000 means we have now provided crofters with more than £1.3 million in the last 12 months, which will help crofters to achieve the full potential of their crofts and generate economic activity.

'With Brexit just around the corner, it is more important than ever that we value the work crofters do and encourage them to keep on doing what they do best - low intensity, high value agriculture, which improves habitats and creates the stunning landscapes that bring people from across the globe to visit Scotland.'

Warning over dangerous doorstep goods

Comhairle nan Eilean Siar's Trading Standards department has destroyed dangerous goods worth more than £1,000 which were seized from doorstep sellers visiting the islands over the last year.

The haul, including generators, power washers and chainsaws, was seized by police and Trading Standards officers.

The items have now been crushed at the comhairle's waste disposal site at Bennadrove and the metals will be sent on to a mainland recycling plant.

Inspector Jane Nicolson from Police Scotland said: 'The seizure of these dangerous items demonstrates the value of partnership working by Police Scotland and Trading Standards in the Western Isles.

'I would take the opportunity to remind people not to deal with people who arrive on their doorsteps, unannounced, offering goods or services.

'Always be sure of who you are dealing with and if you have concerns please report them to us by calling 101.

'I would also encourage



Inspector Jane Nicolson from Police Scotland and councillor Kenny John Macleod, chairman of the comhairle's communities and housing committee, at the Bennadrove disposal site.

people to watch out for neighbours and family members.

'The people who carry out crimes such as this are unscrupulous and will target vulnerable people.

'Put simply, if a deal seems too good to be true, there is a very good chance it is not what it seems.'

Councillor Kenny John Macleod, chairman of the comhairle's communities and housing committee, added: 'The seized goods could have posed a serious safety risk

to residents. Goods which do not comply with safety regulations may result in overheating, catching fire, electrical shocks and could cause serious injury or death.

'I would encourage everyone to display 'Doorstoppers' signs to discourage unscrupulous sellers.

'Signs are available from comhairle offices.

'If someone knocks on your door offering what appears to be too good a bargain, it usually is.'

Little CalMac vessel proves a big success

Ferry operator CalMac's latest model, this time of MV Loch Seaforth, is proving a hit with more than 400 sold in the 10 days since its launch.

The 37cm-long model is built using 310 plastic construction bricks with realistic features including lifeboats wrapped up in the iconic CalMac branding.

'We hatched the idea when a child tried to design a model for another well-known toy company but couldn't get enough support to have the toy made,' said CalMac's head of customer sales Kurt Hart.

'We wanted to provide something people want to buy when they travel with us. We chose the Loch Seaforth as it is one of the newest vessels in our fleet, with an interesting shape and design.'

The 7,800-tonne Seaforth was launched in 2014 and carries more than 700 passengers and 140 cars between Ullapool and Stornoway.

The model is available in the vessel's on-board shop and from CalMac's new online store.



The new model of the MV Seaforth is proving a big hit.

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On right path

Major restoration work on a historic and popular route in north Skye, part of a community heritage project, has now been completed.

A major upgrade of the badly eroded Flodigarry to Quiraing footpath, by Loch Langaig, in Staffin, was carried out by a team of path contractors from the Isle of Arran.

It was originally an old cart track used by crofters to collect their peats and is still used to gather sheep from the hill grazings.

However, the path surface had badly deteriorated in recent years through blocked ditches, water damage and heavy footfall and was damaging to the protected

landscape. A hardy team from Arran Footpaths and Forestry Ltd has now completed the contract, which started in January despite facing tough work conditions including snow, sub-zero temperatures, heavy rain and high winds.

The work involved extensive resurfacing, ditching and pitching to keep water off the route, which is key to every path's durability, and a significant amount of landscaping.

Scottish Natural Heritage gave its consent for the works to be carried out as the area lies within a Special Site of Scientific Interest.

Staffin Community Trust (SCT) chairman Sandy Ogilvie said: 'The poor sur-

face and damage to the landscape has been highlighted to the trust for several years and we're very pleased at the completion of the works.

'A lot of time and effort went into submitting the project funding application, the tender process and managing the works.

'We are thankful to the Flodigarry township and Kilmuir Estate for their support from the outset and are sure the route will be well used by crofters, residents and walkers for years to come.'

The work is part of Skye Ecomuseum.

It is an outdoor museum with 'no walls and a roofless sky' and includes a footpath network across the district.



Work on the new path has now been completed but it was almost unusable previously (inset).

Hopes high for 24/7 nursing cover on Raasay

Raasay residents have been given assurances the island will have 24/7 nursing cover restored after a long fight by islanders and Kate Forbes MSP.

Ms Forbes says she secured the commitment from NHS Highland's new chief executive Iain Stewart a few weeks ago and islanders were given sight of the job description last week. Raasay, which has a population of about 200, has been without out-of-hours medical care since 2015 – and it has been a cause Ms Forbes has been fighting for since she was elected in May 2016.

The finer details around implementation and recruitment have still to be agreed by the health board, but Ms Forbes has welcomed the news for the community.

'The lack of out-of-hours cover in Raasay has long been one of the most frustrating issues because it could have been so easily resolvable if NHS Highland had the will to resolve it. I won't be celebrating until there are nurses in post, but for now this is welcome news for Raasay,' said Ms Forbes.

Work starts on community wind farm after fundraising success

A community wind farm on North Uist is entering the construction phase after a campaign raised £452,850 – more than £100,000 than the community needed for its stake in the project.

North Uist Development Company (Trading) is delighted with the final

figure for UistWind, the project which will build two 900kW turbines at Criongrabhal, near Clachan-na-Luib, and raise more than £2million over the project's lifetime for the community to invest in good causes.

Commercial loans are covering most of the cost of the £3.5million project

but the community still needed to raise a minimum of £350,000 as its stake in the project.

Mustapha Hocine, chairperson of North Uist Development Company (Trading) Ltd, commented: 'We can now enter the construction phase of this important community project

with a high level of confidence. I echo the many thanks that have been stated elsewhere, but in particular want to pay tribute to the unwavering support of my fellow directors of NUDC, the North Uist community and the 240 investors who have made this project possible.'

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LETTERS

Write to us: send your letters to editor@obantimes.co.uk or The Editor, PO Box 1, Oban, Argyll PA34 4HB

Putting young people firmly in the spotlight

It is often said that our young people these days are on the wrong end of bad press and are too often demonised.

So it is gratifying this week to report hugely positive accounts of the activities of a number of the youthful members of our communities.

Lochaber High School students have been crowned Scottish national champions at the end of a highly competitive five-month scheme designed to launch them into stellar careers in the so-called STEM subject – science, technology, engineering and maths.

Four talented traditional musicians from Mallaig High School will fly out to China this month after a special request from the Chinese government.

The invitation to attend the ninth China Young Cultural Ambassadors Performing Festival will see Ellie Tevendale, 17, Scots fiddle; Georgia Dennis, 17, guitar; Struan Robertson, 14, Highland bagpipes, and Anna Robertson, 16, Scots fiddle, travel to Chengdu City.

And young Holly Gillibrand continues to campaign vigorously and vociferously on environmental issues.

It is wonderful to see how engaging and engaged these youngsters are.

School is to be praised for water bottle idea

There are numerous reasons for us all to aim to reduce our use of plastics, not least the damage they do to the environment.

Lochaber High School is to be commended, therefore, for its introduction of 1,000 aluminium water bottles and the installation of three ‘quick fill’ taps in the canteen area.

Liberty British Aluminium is to be

Students should not be protesting in school time

I am astounded that anyone (Letters, March 28) should find it praiseworthy that school pupils are protesting – in school time – no matter how worthy the cause.

Scottish educational standards are at their worst ever: of 34 developed countries, Scotland only ranks 24th in maths and 26th in reading. This is, or should be, a source of national shame.

Furthermore, some Scots universities provide remedial courses for domestic students to bring them up to the equivalent standard of overseas students.

Protest all you like but, please, not in valuable school time.

Catriona Kearney, Fort William.

Highland Council is making climate change worse

There is no shortage of evidence on the rapid rate of climate change and its likely harmful impacts on all of us.

We all have to play our parts in reducing our individual carbon emissions, especially for the sake of young people who have not made the mess but will be ones who will have to live with it and attempt to deal with damage. Young people themselves have paid attention to the evidence, as demonstrated by their global Friday school strikes, including in Fort William.

However, the major reductions in carbon emissions which will effect significant change need to come at a governmental and regulatory level. But Highland Council, far from acting in a responsible and forward-looking manner, seems to be going out of its way to sabotage the efforts of those trying to limit climate change.

The council is already enacting plans to dig up the peat bog on the Blar in Fort William, seemingly without having carried out any calculations of how much carbon this will release, in contravention of its national and international obligations. Peat bogs are especially important for storing carbon and extracting carbon dioxide from the atmosphere, and destroying them is particularly irresponsible.

Building houses and facilities for people is an important aim, but not if it bequeaths to young people and future generations an environment wrecked by climate change. It is simply not fair on them to be so short-termist about planning decisions.

Anyone who wants to get Highland Council

YOUR PICTURES



We know our readers love to take photographs so we are happy to create this space to showcase these each week. If you have a photograph you would like to see published here, send it to editor@obantimes.co.uk

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 photograph

Lateral thinking is needed to address Mull ferry

Reg Pedersen's suggestion (Letters, March 21) for an all-weather Mull ferry service makes a lot of sense: maybe it is almost a no-brainer.

Regrettably, without some lateral strategic thinking on the part of those in charge, it stands little chance.

The history of state-owned monopolies is one of great reluctance to embrace radical change. When the islands' ferry operation was recently put out to tender, it produced no perceptible changes and the status quo has continued, though this year, to be fair, the

to do anything around here knows that the answer will invariably be that it doesn't have enough staff and it doesn't have enough money. However, when it comes to environmental damage, resources don't seem to be a problem. Highland Council has already awarded a £2 million contract to dig up yet more of the Blar, on an area that has not even yet been confirmed in the new Local Plan as being allocated for development, and for which it has not received detailed planning permission.

Highland Council should be a force for good rather than deliberately making matters worse.

Susannah Calderan,
Banavie, Fort William.

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LT

DISTRICT NEWS

LOCHABER

Lily and Nia take top festival prizes

Lochaber primary pupils Lily Robertson and Nia Reid won top prizes at the area's premier music festival.

The long list of trophy winners meant The Lochaber Times was unable to print photographs of all the winners from the Lochaber Music Festival 2019 in last week's edition.

Lily took the premier junior vocal award for under 18s, despite only being nine years old. Nia won the Rosemary Galer Trophy for primary solo violin.



Lily Jane Robertson with the premier junior vocal award and the Maureen McSherry Memorial Cup.



Nia Reid with the Rosemary Galer Trophy for solo violin or viola, primary.

STEM fair inspires Lochaber youngsters

Children from the eight primary schools in Lochaber High School's catchment area recently attended a Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM) fair at Bun-sgoil Ghàidhlig Loch Abar.

More than 160 children took part in a STEM workshop, shared displays of their own class learning and spoke to employers about STEM careers.

The event, for primary five pupils, was organised by the Raising Aspirations in Science Education (RAiSE) programme which is funded and delivered by The Wood Foundation, Education Scotland, the Scottish Government and participating local authorities.

RAiSE, which aims to increase the confidence, skills and networks of teachers in STEM education to motivate and inspire learners, was supported in the delivery of the event by Lochaber Geopark and Developing the Young Workforce West Highland.

Emily Brown, Primary Science Development Officer in the Highland region for RAiSE, said the highlight of the day was hearing the young people talk enthusiastically about their displays during the showcase.

'Motivating learners at a young age and providing the platforms to engage them in STEM is vitally important for creating the workforce the region needs for



Lochaber STEM Fair 2019 trophy winners Caol Primary School with teacher Katie MacKay, left, and Emily Brown, Primary Science Development Officer for RAiSE, right. Photograph: A Brightside Photography.

the future,' she said. Caol Primary School's project showcasing computer games using digital technology platform MakeyMakey was named the winner of the showcase and the children were presented with a trophy. The judges said they

were impressed by the pupils' problem-solving and creativity skills. The attending primary schools were Caol, Lundavra, St Columba's, Bun-sgoil Ghàidhlig Loch Abar, Banavie, Inverlochty, Spean Bridge and Invergarry.

Sites turn blue for Parkinson's Day

Lights at Mallaig harbour, Neptune's Staircase and Cameron Square in Fort William will shine blue for World Parkinson's Day on Thursday April 11.

The annual event aims to raise

global awareness of the condition and change attitudes.

The Lochaber branch of the Parkinson's support group is held on the last Tuesday of the month between 2-4pm at the Alexandra Hotel, Fort William. It provides people with Parkinson's, their families and carers an opportunity to meet up, chat and share experiences and advice.

Everyone is welcome to drop in for tea, coffee and cake. An exercise class for those with Parkinson's is held at Lochaber Leisure Centre every Wednesday from 2pm to 3pm.

READMORE
www.lochabertimes.co.uk

Fort set for digital transformation

Fast, reliable digital connectivity is coming to Fort William.

As part of Capita's Scotland-wide SWAN programme, the project will bring gigabit-speed services to schools, libraries, offices, hospitals, health centres and university campuses. More than 150 public sector sites across Fort William, Inverness, Thurso and Wick will be connected to a new, full fibre network, constructed by CityFibre, by March 2021.

The project is the result of a collaboration between the Highland Council, Highlands and Islands Enterprise, Scottish Natural Heritage, NHS Highland, the University of the Highlands and Islands and the Department of Digital Culture Media and Sport.

Highland Council leader Councillor Margaret Davidson said: 'This is the first step in what will make the Highlands one of the best connected regions in the UK.'

'This will ultimately draw millions of pounds of investment to local communities and benefit businesses and the wider population.'

Tuesday Club la



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An auction to raise funds for the redevelopment of Knoydart hall was well supported.

Auction raises thousands for hall funds

Knoydart Community Hall team has launched an online Super Silent Auction to raise funds.

Thirty-two lots, from arts and music-related items to holiday packages, special tours and one-off keepsakes, were on offer.

The auction, which ran for two weeks, closed on Friday March 22 by which time there were 172 bids with the winning amounts totalling £11,582. An auction night was held

KNOYDART

in the hall on Saturday March 23. This raised £710, taking the total to £12,292.

Since fundraising efforts started just more than a year ago, approximately £312,000 of the hall team's £412,000 target has been raised and work to re-develop the hall will begin in May.

Ladies bid Liz a fond farewell



Members of Fort William's Tuesday Club have said farewell to their organiser and club treasurer.

Liz Basil, who has been a club stalwart for the past nine years, is leaving to spend more time with her family, including grandchildren, and on business. Chairwoman Mary Bruce paid tribute to Liz for the immense work and time Liz had put into the organisation.

Gifts and cards were presented to Liz by club member Mary MacLean and volunteer Gemma MacLeod.

Tuesday Club ladies say thank you and good luck to Liz Basil.

Photograph: Iain Ferguson, alba.photos

Retro Roamer

fort@obantimes.co.uk

More Roamerisms from the early 1990s

The 'Fort William Memories' book is all the rage. And not just in Fort William. Brian Kearney sent a copy to his second cousin, Charlie Turner, long in exile in Canada.

One evening, a couple of weeks later, Brian had a phone call from Charlie. 'Have you got your "Fort William Memories" handy?' asked Charlie. Brian brought his copy to the phone. 'Right,' Charlie began. 'I've got a few queries I want to sort out. Like, who's the bloke in the top hat in the photograph of the Hallowe'en party in the Town Hall in 1945? And is that one of our cousins in the pipe band photograph on page 41?' Ninety minutes later - aye the amount of time taken in a football match - Brian and Charlie closed their books on either side of the Atlantic, having compared the 'Fort William Memories' content to Charlie's satisfaction.

The grapes at McTavish's Kitchens weren't sour - but they did become the 'Grapes of Wrath'. Head chef Martin decided to add Sole Veronique to the menu. And as all 'sole food' lovers will know, the veronique variety comes garnished with grapes. So a call was put out to Breckenridges for a lunch bunch or two. Later in the day, the Brecky van pulls up outside McT's, where Emma is seated at an open air desk on the High Street side. The grapes are handed over to her. Emma goes back inside. 'Here's some grapes,' says she to John, the KP. 'Thanks very much,' says John, who proceeded to share them around. In the early evening, Martin goes grape hunting. 'I'm doing Sole Veronique,' he announces, 'and there's supposed to have been a delivery of grapes,' Martin griped. 'Anyone seen them?' Strange to relate, no-one had.

Hector, postman of this parish, was a welcome guest in the 'Men

and Women of Letters' team at last week's quiz in the Pulp Mill Club.

Hector's wry, dry, pawky wit is well-known to most of us and he was in fine form at the quiz. His inter-round summaries were superb. Take the question, for instance, about 'Merv Hughes, Australian cricketer'. Hector dismissed that one by saying: 'Never heard of him. But, then, I daresay he's never heard of me.' Another example was about 'Stamps commemorating the English Civil War'. Said Hector: 'I don't think they've reached Fort William yet.'

Neither light blue or maroon is the new decor of Costcutter at Corpach. Despite the solid Stafford support for Rangers and Hearts, the shop has been completely fitted out in emerald green!

Spot the odd one out in this line up - Pacitti, Bonini, Bechelli, Brandi, Cameron, Palombo, Macari, Chelino, Fugaccia. They sound like names from the Inter Milan team-sheet. So, what's it all about, you may well ask? These are just a few of the entrants shortlisted in the Seafish Industry Authority's Fish and Chip Shop of the Year competition. But included in the list is Sammy Cameron from Caol. If he wins, he may have to change his name to Samuelo Cameroni to defend his title in Italy next year. Which reminds me that, years ago, I was in the San Siro Stadium in Milan watching a match between AC and Inter. A fan tried to engage me in conversation. 'Scozese,' was all I could manage in reply. 'Ah, Scozese,' the Italian beamed. 'Denis Law! Denis Law!' Throughout the game he kept calling out to me 'Denis Law', 'Denis Law'. I was quite chuffed about that.

A climber was frantically waving his arms on the slopes alongside Loch Eilde Mor on Sunday. And

who spotted him? None other than the pilot of an F16 jet which just happened to be passing overhead at the time at 600mph. The vigilant pilot radioed to control to report that 'someone may be in distress on the mountainside at grid reference such and such'. Now, that's service for you. The alert was speedily investigated - by which time the jet was somewhere over Cornwall.

Mo in the cleaners looked out the window on Saturday morning and spied half a dozen naval officers, resplendent in life jackets, making their way along the High Street. 'I know it rains plenty in the Fort, but surely it's not as bad as that,' Mo mused.

It certainly has been gey dreich as the Wet, Wet, Wet school holidays draw to a close. At this rate we'll beat the eight feet four inches of last year's rainfall. Still, we should be used to it by now. Even the Royals are aware of our precipitation. Witness Queen Victoria 150 years ago, on visiting Fort William, when she wrote in her journal: 'There is mist in the hills and continuous rain. Most disheartening.' Queen Victoria was not amused. And when Queen Elizabeth came to town in 1958 it was 'a bit damp some of the time'. So much so that later, when Britannia anchored at Fort William - now Thunder Bay - Ontario, a year later, the Queen remarked to Yeoman MacLeod, from Kinlochleven: 'I see it rains in this Fort William, too.'

Have you seen the new Royal Mail identity badges which Alan Livingstone and Neil MacBride are sporting? In the Gaelic, they are. Which renders Alan's name as 'Ailean Mac an Leighe' and Neil as 'Niall MacGille Bhrìde'. All Alan's concerned about is that folk on his Corpach rounds don't call him 'Aileen'.

Chunky lamb kebabs

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3 unwaxed lemons



2tsp sweet smoked paprika



3 peppers, deseeded and cut into chunks



400g lean lamb leg steaks, visible fat removed



2 medium courgettes, sliced



Method: Finely grate the zest and squeeze the juice from 1 lemon into a bowl and stir in the paprika and a little seasoning. Cut lamb, add to bowl and mix well. Cover and leave to marinate.

Cut the remaining lemon into chunks and thread on to metal skewers with courgettes and peppers and meat. Grill for 15-20 mins.

FORT WILLIAM

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LT

SHINTY



Sunday saw sailors take part in the first dinghy race of the season.

Lochaber Yacht Club season starts with dinghy race

Lochaber Yacht Club held its first dinghy race of the season on Sunday.

It took place after the fitting out supper held on Saturday night, which was well attended by more than 40 members and included a guest speaker who sailed the south Atlantic with the Jubilee Sailing Trust.

Hamish Loudon took the victory in the race.

LOTTERY NUMBERS

Lochaber club lotteries

Fort William Golf Club's lotto numbers last week were 2, 4 and 13. There was no winner so the jackpot for the draw today, Thursday April 4, will be £400.

Ballachulish Shinty Club's lottery numbers last week were 2, 3 and 11. Two lucky winners shared the £1,000 on offer – Lisa MacKinnon and Donald MacInnes, both in Ballachulish. This week's jackpot will revert to £200.

Caol Community Centre bingo club's lotto numbers were 5, 7 and 20. There were no winners this week, so next week's jackpot will be £200.

The numbers in Lochaber Camanachd Club's lottery on Tuesday March 26 were 5, 17 and 18. There was one winner so the jackpot for Tuesday April 2 was £200.

Numbers drawn in the Caol Regeneration lotto were 4, 5 and 10. Angus Horne won the £100 jackpot. Next week's jackpot will be £100.

AMATEUR FOOTBALL

Results and fixtures

Last Saturday's results: Greater Glasgow Premier League: Premier Division 2 - South Lochaber Thistle 6, Glasgow University 'B' 3. Scottish Amateur League: Premier Division – Oban Saints, no game; Premier Division One – Kings Park Rangers 4, Campbeltown Pupils 3; Lochgilphead Red Star 2, Easthall Star 3.

This Saturday's fixtures: Greater Glasgow Premier League: Division Two - Bellaire v South Lochaber Thistle; Scottish Amateur League: Jimmy Marshall Cup, 2nd round - Oban Saints v Port Glasgow; Premier Division One - Lochgilphead Red Star v FC Argyll; Neilston v Campbeltown Pupils.

Nelson to lead Scotland 7s and called up to play for the Baa-Baas

One of Lochaber's brightest rugby stars is to shine in Hong Kong next week after being called up to the Scotland Women's 7s squad.

Helen Nelson, originally from Glencoe, will lead the team in the HSBC World Sevens Qualifiers and flew out on Saturday, ahead of the tournament which takes place over today (Thursday April 4) and tomorrow at the Hong Kong Stadium.

She will be joined in the squad by Oban's Abi Evans.

The pair competed in this year's Women's Six Nations Championships and the former is looking forward to turning her hand to the abbreviated game.

Nelson, who plays at Montpellier, has also been selected to play for the world-famous Barbarians in America on April 26.

The 24-year-old stand-off, who began her rugby career at the age of six when



playing for Glencoe Primary School, is the only Scot in the squad who will play USA in Colorado.

'It's a massive honour to be

asked to play for them and something I'm so excited about,' said Nelson.

The game will be the Baa-Baas first women's interna-

INTERNATIONAL RUGBY

tional fixture following on from a game against Munster in 2017.

Lochaber finish season with defeat

Birkmyre	20
Lochaber	6

Tennent's West Division 3

The final match of the rugby season proved unfruitful for Lochaber as they fell to a 14-point defeat away to Birkmyre.

Lochaber had been out of action for six weeks ahead of this fixture, while their opponents had found some excellent form in this time, winning all three of their matches.

The visitors' lack of game time was evident in an intense opening few passages of play as it was Birkmyre who broke the deadlock after eventually managing to break down Lochaber's defence to score a try. Lochaber only started to come into the game towards the end of the first half with their forwards getting the

better of Birkmyre at scrum time and the backs were starting to find holes in their opponents' defence.

That pressure was converted into three points, courtesy of the boot of Jonathan McCook, who soon added another three points to make it 7-6. As they continued to push for that elusive try, Lochaber had the opportunity to take the lead with a penalty but the kick drifted just wide.

In the second half, Birkmyre extended their lead with a penalty kick from the half way line, then added another three points to take the score to 13-6 with another well kicked penalty.

Lochaber had several opportunities to score in the second half but that last critical pass never managed to stick. Birkmyre were able to gain a lot of territory

through the boot of their inside centre and with that they were able to put Lochaber under real pressure.

From a line-out Birkmyre did cross the line but with several players making the tackle, William Stewart managed to get his hands on the ball to make sure it could not be properly grounded.

Eventually Lochaber's

RUGBY

defence succumbed to the pressure and Birkmyre were able to score their second try to seal the win with the final score 20-6.

The result means that Lochaber finish the season in fifth place in the table, matching their league finish last year.



Lochaber RFC.



All of the South Lochaber dodgeballers.

Ballachulish take the win at first ever South Lochaber dodgeball tournament

On Monday March 25 the South Lochaber primary schools came together to compete in an Inter-School Dodgeball Tournament at Duror Village Hall, organised by High Life Highland Active Schools.

Teams from Duror Primary School, St Bride's Primary School, Ballachulish Primary School, Glencoe Primary School and Kinlochleven Primary all took part throughout the day and were made up of

six children from P4 to P7. Praise was given to all the primary teams which tried their very best and there were some tough and close matches.

Final scores: 1 Ballachulish 1; 2 Kinlochleven Primary; 3 Ballachulish 3; 4 Glencoe Primary, Duror Primary and St Bride's Primary; 5 Ballachulish 2.

Organisers gave thanks to Kinlochleven High School Dodgeball leaders, teachers and parents who

DODGEBALL

delivered practise dodgeball sessions in the primary schools in the lead up to the tournament. This tournament was part of the wider Lochaber Active Schools PE programme of festivals, with the aim of encouraging children to try and take part in a range of different sports and activities.

Caol dominate Primary Stars tournament

The newly-established Highland League Primary Stars football league kicked off on Saturday with a 'hugely successful' one-off tournament at Claggan Park.

Caol Primary School stole the show with both P3/4 and P5-7 teams winning their

respective competitions.

In the P3/4 tournament, Inverlochry were unfortunate to lose out in the final to Caol, while Banavie put in a good performance to finish in third place.

For the P5-7s, Caol A and B both made it to the semi

-finals, guaranteeing one of them to appear in the final.

St Columba's were beaten by Lundavra in the semis to set up a final with Caol A.

It turned out to be one of the games of the day as Caol A narrowly secured a 2-1 win to lift the trophy.

Organiser Linda Laverty praised the fantastic effort of the youngsters, saying: 'What a superb turn out today at our first tournament, thanks everyone who helped to make it all happen and also all the kids who played fantastically and coaches for giving up their time to teach the kids.'

Fort William FC hailed

PRIMARY FOOTBALL

the tournament as a 'huge success' and thanked Linda Laverty, Willie Edwards and Mikey Mackinnon for organising the day.

Following the success of this inaugural tournament, the first round of league fixtures will start on Saturday April 27.

Supported by Fort William Football Club and sponsored by several other businesses, the league will comprise matches each Saturday morning at Claggan Park from the end of April until the summer holidays.



Caol Primary School P5-7 winning team.

Photos: Abrishtside Photography.



A big crowd turned out to watch the action.



Caol Primary School P3/4 winning team.



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WEATHER

Thursday
Sunny intervals and a moderate breeze
Temperatures 4°C to 9°C.

Friday
Sunny intervals and a gentle breeze
Temperatures 4°C to 11°C.

Weekend Outlook
Saturday
Sunny intervals and a gentle breeze
Sunday
Sunny intervals and a gentle breeze
Temperatures 5°C to 13°C.



FRIDAY

TIDAL INFORMATION

Tide tables for Oban during the week from **Thursday April 4, 2019** are listed below with differences for major ports listed on the right. All times are GMT (add one hour BST)

	05.24	3.8	11.45	1.0
Thur	17.38	3.7	23.58	0.8
Fri	05.57	3.9	12.14	0.8
	18.07	3.8	***	**
Sat	00.26	0.8	06.27	4.0
	12.43	0.8	18.32	3.8
Sun	00.53	0.8	06.55	3.9
	13.11	0.8	18.56	3.8
Mon	01.19	0.8	07.21	3.8
	13.38	0.9	19.24	3.7
Tues	01.46	0.9	07.52	3.7
	14.09	1.0	19.57	3.6
Wed	02.20	1.1	08.27	3.5
	14.48	1.1	20.35	3.5

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.

Nelson to lead Scotland 7s and called up to play for the Baa-Baas

Ballachulish take the win at first ever South Lochaber dodgeball tournament

Tough week for the Fort as search for first win goes on

Clachnacuddin	5
Fort William	0
Highland League	

The Simon Shields Memorial Trophy stayed in Inverness on Saturday after Clachnacuddin eased to a five-goal victory over their nearest rivals Fort William.

The trophy, which is played for annually in honour of the late Simon Shields, who played for both Clachnacuddin and Fort William before he died in 2011 at the age of 23.

Fort William went into the game confident they could cause an upset, considering the last time the two teams met in November it finished 3-3 at Claggan Park, which secured one point out of just two earned this season.

The visitors started promisingly and created two good chances early on but failed to

take the lead. They managed to contain the Clach forward for the majority of the first half but unfortunately for the Fort, Aiden Wilson opened the scoring with a driven shot after 25 minutes.

Ten minutes later, it should have been 2-0 to Clach but for the heroics of Fort goalkeeper Callum Ligertwood, who pulled off the first of many important saves in this match.

Clach did eventually double their lead, however, on the stroke of the half-time courtesy of a 20-yard free-kick from Blair Lawrie.

After the break, Scott Dunn headed in the home side's third goal before 16-year-old Ally Gillies made it 4-0 with a great effort.

After a Clach penalty was awarded deep into the second half, the Fort heads looked to have dropped but a great

save from Ligertwood denied young James Anderson from the spot and gave the visitors another lift.

Despite pulling off another two important saves, Ligertwood was unable to hold back the waves of attack and with just minutes left on the clock Michael Finnis rounded off the scoring for Clach with a low drive.

The scoreline was 'really disappointing' for the Fort management team, considering the Fort failed to convert a few chances in this match.

The defeat means they are still without a win this season and a goal difference of -204.

Fort William keeper Callum Ligertwood blocks this effort from Clach's James Anderson.

Photo: Donald Cameron



Fort compete well against Cove

Fort William	0
Cove Rangers	6
Highland League	

Fort William looked a much-improved side in their midweek fixture against Cove Rangers last Wednesday, despite being on the wrong end of another heavy scoreline.

Cove came into the game having gone 12 matches unbeaten in the Highland League, a run that catapulted them above Brora in the

league to top spot, and they are now favourites to retain the league title.

In the context of this season, some may be forgiven for thinking that this result could be taken as a positive for Fort William, who at times competed well with their table-topping opponents.

Jimmy Scott was quick off the mark to claim his first goal for Cove Rangers, taking just 36 seconds to open the scoring.

This could have been the

FOOTBALL

start of a goal-fest for Cove but goalkeeper Mateusz Kulbacki proved a worthy match for the visitors' forwards. At points he seemed like a one-man defence, pulling off a string of amazing saves.

Paul McManus and Jordon Brown also netted two each, with Jordan MacRae getting the other goal for Cove in what was a fairly straightforward victory for the Aberdeen-based team.



Fort William manager Russell Macmorran.



The Fort's Callum Browett makes a hefty clearance under pressure from Cove's Jordon Brown.

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