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Oban raises £11,000 for family hit by house fire

by David McPhee
dmcph@obantimes.co.uk



After a fire destroyed an Oban family's home just days before Christmas, the community has rallied together and raised more than £11,000 to help them.

On Thursday December 20, Iain and Julie Muir's house in Dunollie caught fire, ruining their clothes, furniture, appliances – and their little boy Rhys's Christmas presents.

In the days following the blaze, a crowdfunding campaign raised £11,156 and the family has been inundated with gifts and support.

Speaking to The Oban Times on Friday, Julie said she saw the fire 'starting to go' but was unable to stop it.

'I managed to get Rhys out of the house,' she said. 'And one of my neighbours saw me panicking and phoned the fire service.'

Speaking about the extent of the damage, Julie, said: 'My clothes are gone completely,



The Muirs – whose home in Dunollie was devastated in the fire, above – have been overwhelmed by the generosity of local people. Photograph: Kevin McGlynn.

I don't have anything left, neither does Iain.

'We have lost everything basically - everything in my kitchen is gone.'

'I can't believe it happened,' the Oban mum added. 'But everyone has been lovely.'

Iain wanted to thank

everyone who has donated. 'It has been amazing,' he said. 'I can't thank Peter [who started the fundraiser] enough for doing that. It has been overwhelming what everyone has done.'

'From myself, Julie and Rhys, thank you to everyone



who has donated and come up with stuff.'

Julie's mum Marina Ewart also wanted to express her gratitude.

She said: 'The family would like to thank the whole community - firefighters, police, neighbours, friends and absolutely everyone that has contributed in some way.'

'I can't believe what a community we have. There have been so many presents for Rhys - it's unbelievable.'

'It has been amazing, it

really has. We are absolutely inundated with everything here. We could not ask for more.'

The online fundraiser was started by family friend Peter MacMillan, who said: 'I saw the devastation the fire caused to Iain and Julie's home and with it being so close to Christmas I just thought, what can I do to help my friends through this.'

'I remembered seeing crowdfunding pages being set up for similar personal

tragedies and thought even if they get a little extra money to help get them through Christmas and New Year, to replace damaged presents and clothes, it would be worth it.

'Wow, did I get that wrong. The support throughout the community has been nothing short of amazing.'

'I had initially set a target of £5,000 and genuinely thought that was maybe ambitious but after just a few hours the total was more than £3,000.'

'After just a day and a half the total hit £11,000. I never imagined it would take off the way it did.'

'Thank you everyone who donated and supported Iain, Julie and Rhys.'

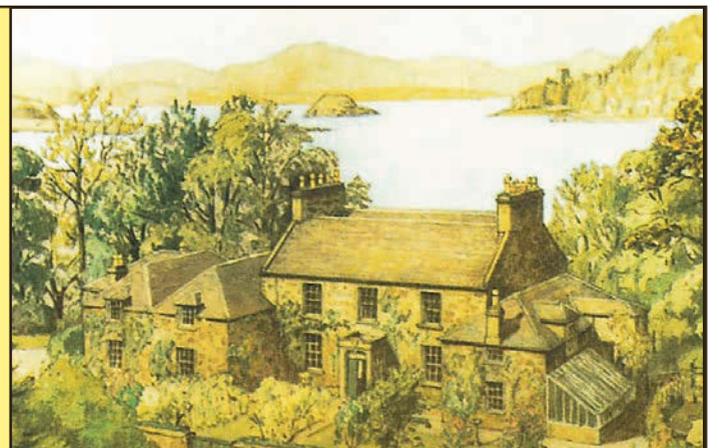
The family will be staying with Marina until the start of January and after that they will have to stay in a hotel until the house is habitable.

It was also revealed that Mr Muir's father's cousin, Iain McLean, lost 'everything' in a fire last Wednesday at Machrihanish Golf Club, where he is the club steward.

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OT

Top chef vows to cook festive meal

by David McPhee
dmcph@obantimes.co.uk



After experiencing homelessness, a top chef and forager is planning to give something back by cooking Christmas dinner at Hope Kitchen.

Gary Goldie, who now lives across the road from the Oban charity, which doubles up as a food bank, was due to make the festive feast on Tuesday December 25.

Gary is predominantly a forager and travels across Scotland, and sometimes to England, picking all sorts of wild food.

However, after going through a break-up and spending a period of time living out of his van, he wanted to give something back to Hope, which provides food and companionship for those in need.

'I should have been coming here when I was kipping in my



Forager and chef Gary Goldie vowed to cook Christmas dinner for charity this year. 17_T52_HopeKitchen01

van and going foraging,' he said, 'but I didn't know how it worked.'

Speaking about being homeless, he added: 'I know what it is like. It's so difficult. People are like, "just pull up your socks, just get a grip, go work here, go work there", but you can't even do your washing and you just become numb.'

While Gary distributes his foraged foods to eateries across the country, including Michelin-starred restaurants, there are aspects of cooking he still misses.

'It's the pleasing people part that I miss. I like taking people on journeys and making people forget about stuff and I can do that through cooking.

'They forget about their problems, their tax bill, their worries with their partners, or whatever. I can't do that with foraging but what I like about the foraging is the fact I can just go and I have such a free mind.

'Argyll is brilliant. Taynuilt is just the best. I love it so much. I can't find any other village like it. It must be the way the river comes in and the sea lochs there and the mountains and Loch Awe ... something magical happens there.'

This is the third year that Hope Kitchen has opened its doors on Christmas Day, though it is the first time the charity will be serving dinner. In the first two years, which attracted 15 and 21 people respectively, it served soup and turkey sandwiches.

Manager Lorraine MacCormick said she was 'made up' to be having Gary in cooking.

£10,000 funding for Oban addiction project

An addiction support service transforming the lives of young people in Oban with the help of rescue dogs is to get £10,000 funding.

Oban Addiction Support and Information Service (OASIS), based in Craigard Road, is one of 13 projects across Scotland tackling alcohol misuse and to get a grant from the Scotch Whisky Action Fund.

This is the fifth round of awards from the fund since it started in December 2013.

The fund is managed by independent charity Foundation Scotland, which has made grants this year totalling £175,000.

OASIS will use its funding as part of an animal-assisted intervention programme, working in partnership with Argyll Animal Aid.

Many of the 11- to 19-year-olds on the project have been excluded from mainstream education, have been in care and/or have spent time in prison or secure accommodation.

The young people, who either have a history of alcohol misuse or are at risk, will be involved

in rehabilitating, training and rearing rescue dogs for new homes.

This year's recipients of the Scotch Whisky Action Fund were all selected by an independent awards panel chaired by Dame Joan Stringer, who said she was proud of the positive impact the fund is having across Scotland.

'The 13 projects which will benefit from funding this year have the potential to change lives and steer vulnerable people away from the dangers of alcohol misuse,' she said.

Karen Betts, Scotch Whisky Association chief executive, said this year's awards reflect 'a greater emphasis on educating young people and other at risk groups about the risks of alcohol misuse'.

And Giles Ruck, Foundation Scotland chief executive, added: 'Now in its fifth year, the Scotch Whisky Action Fund continues to support innovative projects across Scotland. All of the projects funded will work within their community tackling and reducing alcohol-related harm.'

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Five bitten in dog attacks aboard CalMac ferries

by Kathie Griffiths
kgriffiths@obantimes.co.uk



Three crew and two passengers have been bitten in dog attacks on CalMac ferries, a Freedom of Information request has revealed.

Details made available to The Oban Times listed a total of 10 incidents involving dogs over the past six years, including the five attacks and five cases of passengers falling because dogs on leads could not be controlled.

The FOI also reported there had also been 64 dog-fouling incidents, nine occasions of aggressive dog behaviour and one aggressive owner, one event of dog smell and one dog observed to be in distress.

The information was obtained by CalMac passenger Peter White from Sunderland who said he made the recent request after a CalMac worker told him a stewardess had been bitten in the face

by a Jack Russell. Mr White also asked CalMac if any of the dog attacks or aggressive dog incidents had resulted in compensation claims and if the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 applied on board.

A reply from CalMac's group insurance manager Crawford Paterson said there had been no compensation claims and that the company was limited in any blame because legislation imposes strict liability on dog keepers.

In December last year, Mr White, who has a mobility issue, said he was involved in a 'near-miss' incident with a dog in a lift which led to a panic attack.

After he complained to CalMac, he received a letter from a customer care officer saying its vessels' operating manual had since been updated and, unless the dog was an assistance dog, it should not be permitted in the lift with mobility impaired pas-

Pensioner Peter White revealed five dog attacks.

sengers. All crew members were being made aware of the amendment.

Mr White also got a personal written apology from CalMac's then managing director, Martin Dorchester.

Pensioner Mr White, who was back touring the Hebrides on CalMac this month, is taking legal advice about making a claim.

He has also been in touch with the Maritime and Coastguard Agency who confirmed in writing that it had noted his concerns about public and staff safety involving dogs on CalMac ferries and said it is being investigated. 'We will revert in due course, once the outcome of these investigations have been concluded,' said an agency spokesman.

When The Oban Times contacted CalMac for a comment

on the FOI, a spokesperson said: 'Owners have a legal liability to ensure their dogs are under control at all times while on board. We strive to ensure all passengers have a comfortable journey with us and have separate dog-friendly areas to minimise contact for passengers who may not wish to travel in their company.'

Earlier this year, Mr White was featured in The Oban Times challenging CalMac over free ticket EU rules. He claimed huge numbers of companions travelling with disabled or elderly CalMac passengers could be missing out on free tickets.

In response, CalMac said an Assisted Travel Guide was being finalised, but the free tickets referred to by Mr White would only be offered in cases where CalMac was of the view its own team was unable to give the level of care needed during the journey.

Lucky dozen share council event funds

A total of £113,000 will be given to 12 events and festivals in Argyll and Bute to help boost tourism.

The council's policy and resources committee chose events that demonstrated the best return on public investment, promotional value to Argyll and Bute, and good effects for the local economy.

Oban Live will receive £15,000, the Highland and Island Music and Dance Festival will receive £5,000, while the Argyllshire Gathering and West Highland Yachting Week each will be given £3,600. Cowal Highland Gathering will receive the most money at £49,107.60.

The rest receiving funds are: Tarbert Scottish Series - £2,160; Isle of Jura Music Festival - £2,880; Helensburgh Winter Festival - £5,000; Bute Noir - £3,500; Mull of Kintyre Music and Arts Festival - £7,920; Tiree Music Festival - £12,500; Argyll Rally (Dunoon Presents) - £2,732.

No event received 100 per cent of its funding.

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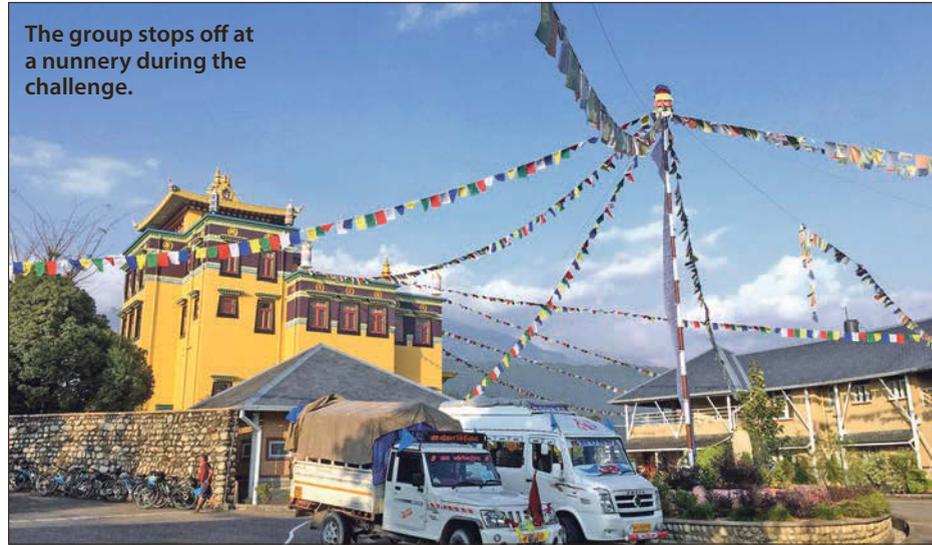
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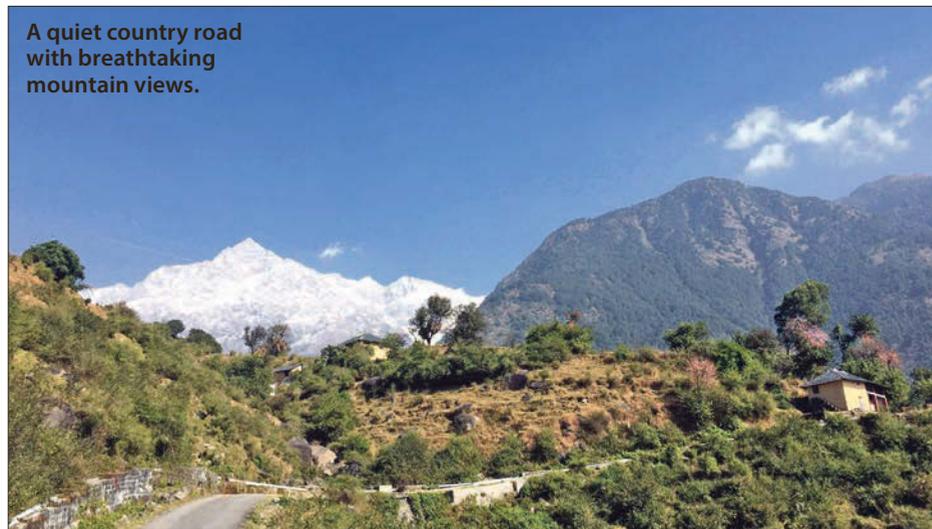
Travel to page 5 for our **SALE** check list

Tweedmill, Soroba Road, Oban. Tel: 01631 565195

OT



The group stops off at a nunnery during the challenge.



A quiet country road with breathtaking mountain views.

Friends peak m

by Kathie Griffiths
kgriffiths@obantimes.co.uk



Two Appin friends touring India on bicycles have reached the height of Mount Everest plus Ben Nevis in just 11 days.

Susie Hutchinson and Gitte Salvarli took on the 500km sponsored cycle ride in aid of a rural well-being and education centre helping disadvantaged women in a small village in the Himalayan foothills.

The friends were part of a 16-strong group of cyclists with minibus back-up and a jeep in case of emergencies who set off on the trip in November.

In all, they wheeled up a 10,300m ascent in the 11 days of the challenge, amounting to the equivalent of conquering Ben Nevis and a half every day.

Susie said: 'When we decided to do the challenge, our attitude was of calm assurance that general good health and fitness was sufficient as the trip was fully supported

with a minibus to take the 16 cyclists plus a jeep for the bikes.

'We blithely assumed that the steeper sections would be completed from the comfort of the minibus. Not so! Our excellent cultural guide Philippa Russell made it clear that such a wimpish attitude was inappropriate. A serious dose of stomach upset or injury might make the grade, otherwise it was "on your bike!"'

Inspiring

The friends said they went on to surprise themselves with what they achieved, but credited a wonderful programme of cultural activities as well as mutual support among their co-cyclists who were 'all great company and inspiring people', added Gitte.

As well as visiting McLeod Ganj, home of the Dalai Lama and the exiled Tibetan community, they took the opportunity to see at first-hand the work of Nishtha, a non-governmental organisation in Sidhbari, a

small Himalayan foothill village, that helps improve the welfare of families with particular focus on women and children.

In other villages they saw pottery, weaving, farming activities, temples and schools.

'The mountain vistas were stunning and we were blessed with good weather though freezing nights with no heating in most of the simple guesthouses. Hot water bottles were a lifesaver!

'There were, of course, downhill sections corresponding to our uphill slogs, providing white-knuckle excitement as hands clutched brakes. An intricate system of footbridges over river gorges and wires to transport goods connected the remoter villages to the main road.

'As we descended we experienced the change in vegetation from the pines and deodars at higher altitudes to fruit trees grown by villagers in layer upon layer of terraces.

'There were deep valleys carrying big rivers originating high in Tibet, and

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mighty cycle challenge in India



Susie Hutchinson and Gitte Salvarli at the start of the 11-day cycle challenge in India.

tumbling streams,' said Susie. And she added: 'Most Indians, Hindus, Sikhs and Buddhists alike, are deeply spiritual, and their faith is clearly a way of life, with many temples and small shrines by the roadside. Also along the road: cows, goats being herded, monkeys, dogs, road workers and folk carrying goods in baskets on their heads or backs.

'And in places heavy car

and truck traffic, all honking their way up and down the mountains.

'The vibrancy of colour, sound and smell in Indian towns was overwhelming and exciting as we weaved our way through streets transformed into bazaars. We did cause surprise but also dazzling smiles and greetings in response to our calls of Namaste.

'Final tally from 11 days'

cycling: 10,300m ascent. That's Mount Everest plus Ben Nevis. Or averaging a Munro a day.'

If anyone would like to know more about Nishtha, their website is at nishtha-hp.org. Susie and Gitte's donations page is still open at everyclick.com/nishthahpcycling until January 31, 2019.

So far the page has brought in £3,750 almost reaching the £4,000 target.



The group of cyclists who took on the challenge to raise thousands of pounds helping disadvantaged women in a remote part of India.

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OT

Mull's sea eagles take flight to film festival

by Kathie Griffiths
kgriffiths@obantimes.co.uk



A film about white-tailed sea eagle on Mull has been shortlisted for a new natural history film festival.

Thanks to a crowdfunding appeal featured in *The Oban Times*, film-making graduate Tom Campbell managed to raise £1,200 to fund the film which was part of his degree course.

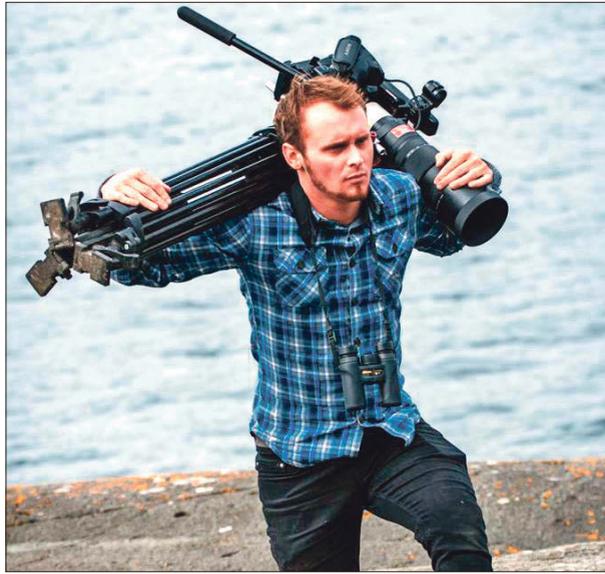
Tom, whose mum Margi is provost of St John's Cathedral in Oban, is now keeping his fingers crossed that his footage telling the eagle's story impresses judges at the first Wilderland Film Festival in Bristol.

Tom said his crowdfunding campaign went a huge way to allowing him to stay on Mull in the summer and get out to sea to film the eagles fishing, as well as fund other vital

costs. He had hoped the film - *Where Eagles Dare* - would be able to tell the life story of a sea eagle - but nature, true to character, stepped in to change that.

'With wildlife things aren't always easy to plan for, so some things did change. I'd hoped to show the life of the sea eagle from birth to fledging the nest but sadly the chick I was filming died before it was able to spread its wings. This then played its own part in the telling of the story of the white-tailed sea eagle,' said Tom.

He added: 'I was hugely grateful to my fantastic contributors, Martin Keivers from Mull Charters, Iain Mackay and Claire Simonetta at Torloisk Farm, and especially to Mull's RSPB Officer Dave Sexton, who really went the extra mile to get me where I needed to be for the shots,



and for sharing his incredible expertise.'

The film has an original musical score composed by Alex Hill and is narrated by Scottish actor Garry

Summers.

'Since finishing, I was able to screen my film to friends and family and industry professionals alongside my course mates at the Everyman

To watch Tom's film go to vimeo.com/303298621

cinema in Bristol - the reception was overwhelming and I was really touched by the kind comments.

'I am now at the stage of entering film festivals and have already made the shortlist for the new Wilderland Film Festival,' he told *The Oban Times*.

It was on family holidays exploring the Highlands that Tom's fascination with film, first with a stills camera, began.

White-tailed sea eagles were declared extinct in the UK in 1918 but were reintroduced to Rum in the 1970s and then spread across different areas of the Highlands, including Mull. The island became home of the first wild-bred chick in the UK for around 70 years.

New fire eng



Kilmelford, Craignure, Minard, Garelochhead and Port Charlotte fire stations will each receive a new £195,000 Rapid Response Unit fire engine, writes David McPhee.

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Highland cattle show seeks more sponsors

Organisers of the Highland Cattle Society's annual spring show and sale are on the lookout for more sponsors, writes Kathie Griffiths.

Next year will be its 128th year holding annual sales of the pedigree breed. The dates at Oban Livestock Centre are February 10 and February 11.

A registered charity, the society aims to preserve and safeguard the breed and make sure it continues as an 'important icon of rural Scotland's heritage, culture and art,' says Charlie Amor, the breed's promotion officer.

The society works hard to raise funds to keep promoting the breed as a commercially viable beef animal and also to keep up the historic herdbook that started in 1884.

In the British Isles folds are found from the farthest south to the extreme north on many different types of ground



varying from the slopes of the Sussex Downs and the fenlands of East Anglia, to the windswept machairs of the Outer Hebrides.

New folds, as herds of Highlanders are known, are founded every year both at home and abroad - in recent years Highland Cattle societies have started in Sweden, Denmark, Austria, Germany, Holland, Finland, France,

Switzerland and Norway, with others in Argentina, Australia, New Zealand, Estonia, USA, Luxembourg, Belgium, the Czech Republic, Poland, and Faroe Islands.

Nearer Oban, society members include Fulton Ronald from Saulmore Farm at Connel, Duncan Buchanan from Shenavallie Farm at Benderloch and Iain MacKay from Torloisk Farm on Mull.

Although the image of the Highland cow is internationally recognised and used for promotional purposes, few businesses contribute to the society, according to Charlie.

But she added: 'Thankfully there are some lovely national and local businesses that support the show each year, including Galbraith, Tithebarn, Davidsons animal feeds, MacPhee & Partners, Barclays, The Scottish Farmer and Finnie 4X4.

'Companies always enjoy attending the spring and autumn shows and find the Highland Cattle Society a very worthy cause to support.'

The society hopes more sponsors will want to get involved with the 128th spring show and sale. To become a partner e-mail promotions@highlandcattlesociety.com to find out more.



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In just a few days, as we celebrate the closing of this year and the beginning of the next, the centenary anniversary of the Iolaire disaster will be marked with many events of solemn commemoration.

This was one of the most cuttlingly cruel tragedies ever to occur during war or peacetime. The loss of more than 200 lives in any accident is tragic but there were many specific circumstances that make the extent of the cruel irony of the loss of the Iolaire difficult to comprehend.

The islands of Lewis and Harris had already lost more men per head of population than any other area of the UK. The war was over and, against the odds, these men had survived and were in sight of home.

Because most of the island men were seamen, with many having been fishermen before the war began, any number of those on board, had they been on the bridge, could have navigated the ship safely into Stornoway.

The fact that they were due home and to be reunited with their loved ones on New Year's Day added to the sense of relief and anticipation, and by virtue of that joy, made the

shock and pain of the loss all the more devastating.

The following lyrics were written as a tribute to the men who were lost and to the people of Lewis and Harris.

I wish you all a happy New Year when it comes but as we enter the early hours of January 1, I and many others across the world will be thinking of the men who 100 years ago had come through four years of the horrors of war to be so cruelly drowned on the shores of their native island.

Iolaire
Eilean Fraoich, I yearn to see you.
Sing to me the Island Ocean
Through the cries of war I hear you.
Far to the west and worlds away
From the futile fields of war.
Island men I hear them calling.
Sing to me the Island Ocean
Killed in vain, I see them falling.
Oh take me west and worlds away
From the futile fields of war.
Four brutal years were unforgiving.
Sing to me the Island Ocean
By grace of god I yet was living.
And sailing west and worlds away
From the futile fields of war

The harbour lights I see them gleaming.
Sing to me the Island Ocean
Nearly home and I am dreaming.
I'm in the west and worlds away
From the futile fields of war.
The Beasts of Holm were dark and savage,
Sing to me the Island Ocean
Their scythe of fate would blindly ravage
Far to the west and worlds away
From the futile fields of war.
New Year of peace would dawn tomorrow,
Sing to me the Island Ocean
From hope and joy to wrenching sorrow
Far to the west and worlds away
From the futile fields of war.
My lover's kiss, her arms around me
Sing to me the Island Ocean
So near, but on the shore she found me
Far to the west and worlds away
From the futile fields of war.
The morning tide brought home our boys.
They lay among the scattered toys.
Our tears of love and deep relief
Became the tears of tearing grief.

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OT



17_T52_JuniorJingles06



17_T52_JuniorJingles02



17_T52_JuniorJingles01

Junior Jingles is the

by David McPhee
dmcphoe@obantimes.co.uk

First and second year pupils at Oban High made good use of their new school last Tuesday night for their Junior Jingles.

Hundreds of pupils, as well as staff, danced to fan favourites such as the Macarena, YMCA and Baby Shark, as well as traditional Scottish songs.

The event, which ran from 7pm until 9pm, was organised by the Senior Pupils Leadership Team and was deemed the 'best attended' to date.

Gemma Playfair, deputy head teacher, said: 'It has been really good. This is all organised by the S6 pupils. They have done really, really well.'

'I think this is the best attended Junior Jingles they

have had and I think it was down to them drumming up enthusiasm.

'It's a really good venue. I don't think the kids will feel hard done by not having it in the Corran Halls.'

There were songs played to suit everyone, but when the Trad Group took the stage, almost everyone got to their feet. The group is made up of musicians ranging from S3

to S6. 'The Trad Group were fantastic. I think they were better than the dance songs,' Mrs Playfair added.

The Senior Pupils Leadership Team is now looking to organise another event for when the primary sevens have their induction day as a way to introduce them to the current first years.

For more photographs, turn to page 15



Most of the pupils gathered for a group photograph.

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17_T52_JuniorJingles12



17_T52_JuniorJingles10



17_T52_JuniorJingles11



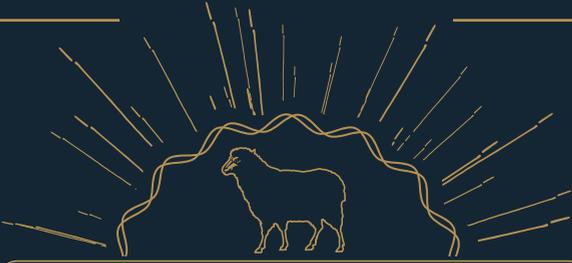
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OT

JANUARY



Two Oban volunteers tied the knot on January 5 after meeting on a beach clean last year. Fiona Campbell-Smith and Thomas Ferris were joined by friends and family in Hope Kitchen, where the couple married.

FEBRUARY



Torrents of muddy water escaping from a clogged-up stream left a disabled Oban woman at 'breaking point'. A woodland stream at the back of Lorna McCulloch's home in Hazeldean Crescent would burst its banks when it rained leaving her property so badly flooded she could not find anyone to insure her home contents.



Oban grandfather-of-five Donnie MacPhee, who collapsed and 'died' for seven minutes on a job for his employer MacQueen Bros, welcomed the arrival of the town's latest life-saving kit in February. The defibrillator was donated by Donnie's boss Graham MacQueen after he received a letter from Glencruitten Golf Club member Helen Pearson asking for funding for one.

JANUARY



Youngsters were jumping for joy after Iona Village Hall Community Trust received £903,888 from the Big Lottery Fund towards their new village hall project. Chairwoman Anja Jardine said: 'We have a vision of a hall which not only belongs to the community of Iona, but is somewhere where people can feel they belong, whether they are islanders, seasonal workers or visitors.'

MARCH



Oban's very own 'eco-boy' Felix Hughes, six, launched a superhero mission to save the world from plastic waste. The Rockfield Primary School pupil tackled giant milk supplier Müller Milk over the use of the plastic straws it attaches to its drinks cartons, and also sent copies of his letter to Prime Minister Theresa May, the boss of Argyll and Bute Council, local politicians, Greenpeace, his head teacher and *The Oban Times*. The youngster was inspired to launch his campaign after watching TV hit *Blue Planet*.

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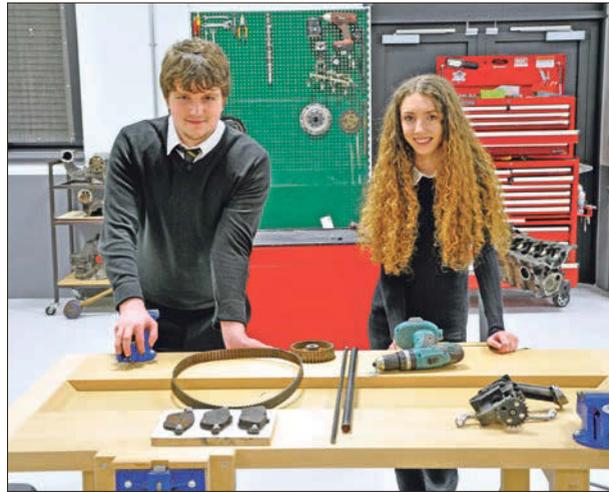
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APRIL

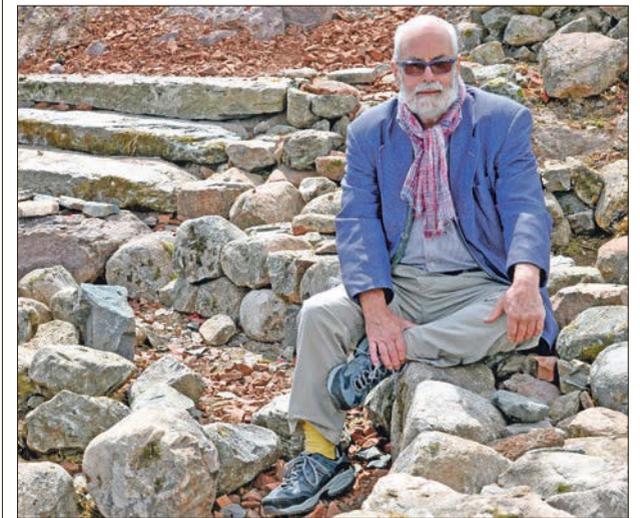


Residents fighting plans for more pylons in Dalmally campaigned to have a new power line go underground or under the loch instead. MSP Michael Russell said he was not in a position 'to wave a magic wand' for campaigners but believed more pylons would be 'an overload on the landscape' and said he would be opposing it. A consultation was due to end in April.



Oban High School pupils and staff moved into their new school building following the Easter holidays, with the new building given a resounding thumbs up from pupils.

JUNE



Taynuilt artist Sam MacDonald at The Shieling, a memorial to love inspired by his wife Evelyn. The memorial is the fulfilment of a promise made to Belfast-born Evelyn MacDonald by her husband Sam before she died from cancer last year.



A Tobermory dad used the skills he learned at a baby CPR training event in Oban when his infant son stopped breathing. Alec Brown learned to give CPR at the January event organised by Oban couple Fearghas and Natalie Lafferty, whose own son Murray stopped breathing last year.



The Rockfield Centre launched its community shares project on June 16 and it proved to be a success, with £25,000 shares being bought. The aim of the campaign was to raise enough funds to be able to refurbish the former primary school building.

MAY

Campaigners from Ardchattan and Achnamara, near Loch Sween got together for an initial meeting in a bid to stop their local schools 'sleepwalking' into decay and disuse. Campaigners in Ardchattan were considering setting up a community development trust to take ownership of the building and running it as an activity hub. A full consultation on its future ended on June 29.



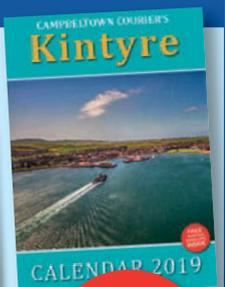
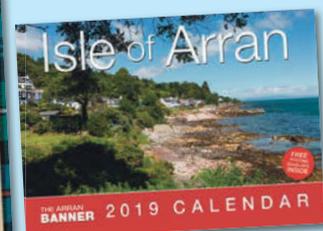
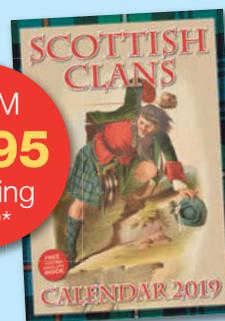
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IOLAIRE 100

Tràth air madainn Là na Bliadhn' Ùire 1919 chaidh an Iolaire air na creagan ann an sealladh caladh Steòrnabhaigh.

Air bòrd bha fir a bha a' tilleadh dhachaigh bhon a' Chogadh Mhòr. Chaill 201 duine aca am beatha, ann an uabhas a thug buaidh leantainneach air na h-eileanan.

On 1st January 1919, HMY Iolaire carrying returning veterans of WW1 back to their homes in the Western Isles, foundered on the rocks just outside of Stornoway, claiming 201 lives and impacting the islands profoundly.

Guthan na h-Iolaire

Iomadach turas air Oidhche Challain agus Là na Bliadhn' Ùire

Various times on Hogmanay and New Year's Day

Na thachair do cheathrar a bh' air bòrd agus ceathrar a bh' air tìr air innse anns na facail aca fhèin le cleasaichean.

A series of eight monologues with the survivors and witnesses of the tragedy's own words spoken by actors.

Tha Thu air Aigeann M' Inntinn

Diluain 31 Dùbhlachd, 8.20f
Monday 31 December, 8.20pm

Film-bheothaichte mu chall na h-Iolaire le Catriona NicilleDhuibh air a chuir ri dàn le Iain Mac a' Ghobhainn.

Using Iain Crichton Smith's poem of the same name, animator Catriona Black creates a moving picture of the Iolaire disaster.

An Iolaire

Dimàirt 1 Faoilleach, 5.30f
Tuesday 1 January, 5.30pm

Prògram bho 2009 a thug sùil às ùr air dè dìreach a dh'adhbhraich call na h-Iolaire.

Recorded in 2009, this programme explores how exactly the disaster came about.

Home at Last - The Iolaire

Dimàirt 1 Faoilleach, 6.30f
Tuesday 1 January, 6.30pm

Prògram sònraichte bho 1989, le dithis a chaidh an sàbhaladh às an sgrìobhadh.

A seminal programme about the Iolaire tragedy, first broadcast in 1989, including eye-witness accounts from two survivors.

Cuimhneachan - An Iolaire

Dimàirt 1 Faoilleach, 7.15f
Tuesday 1 January, 7.15pm

Ghluais call na h-Iolaire iomadach bàrd gu sgrìobhadh, is iad a' feuchainn ri greimeachadh air buaidh na thachair air teaghlaichean is coimhearsnachdan.

The loss of the Iolaire impacted on many islands and poets, who put pen to paper, affectionately describing the feelings and grief of those who a loved one in the tragedy.

Bidh Sinn A' Cuimhneachadh

Dimàirt 1 Faoilleach, 8f
Tuesday 1 January, 8pm

A' toirt sùil air mar a tha obair ealain a' cuideachadh ann a bhith a' cuimhneachadh 's a' comharrachadh.

We explore how art is helping the community of Lewis commemorate and remember those who were lost.

Iolaire: Sàl - Iain Moireasdan

Dimàirt 1 Faoilleach, 10f
Tuesday 1 January, 10pm

Criomagan bho 'Sàl', co-obrachadh ealain, dhrùidhteach shònraichte eadar an neach-ciùil à Leòdhas Iain Moireasdan agus an luchd-ealain, Dalziel & Scullion.

Highlights from 'Sàl' - 'Salt Water', a moving collaboration between Lewis musician and composer, Iain Morrison and artists Dalziel & Scullion.

Sàr Sgeòil - As the Women Lay Dreaming

Diciadain 2 Faoilleach, 9f
Wednesday 2 January, 9pm

Tha nobhail ùr bhon sgrìobhadair Dòmhnall S Moireach air a stèidheachadh air call na h-Iolaire. Tha Cathy Dhòmhnallach a' lorg firinn air cùl am ficsean.

Donald S Murray's novel is one of the first works of fiction to explore the Iolaire tragedy. Cathy MacDonald explores the fact behind the fiction.



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High school's Jingles thrills



17_T52_JuniorJingles08



17_T52_JuniorJingles05



17_T52_JuniorJingles03



A' Bhliadhn' Ùr air BBC ALBA

Bliadhna na h-Òigridh @ BLAS

Disathairne 29 Dùbhlachd, 9f
Saturday 29 December, 9pm

Ceòl bho Trail West, Brìghde Chaimbeul,
Breabach agus Skipinnish mar pàirt
de Bliadhna na h-Òigridh @ Blas.

Music from Trail West, Brìghde Chaimbeul,
Breabach and Skipinnish to celebrate
The Year of Young People @ Blas.



Cèilidh na Bliadhn' Ùire

Diluain 31 Dùbhlachd, 11.30f
Monday 31 December, 11.30pm

Beò bho Talla Bhaile Ghobhainn le
Cathy NicDhòmhnaill agus Niall Iain Dòmhnallach
agus le ceòl bho Kathleen NicAonghais,
Kim Carnie, Hò-rò is eile.

Live from Govan Old Town Hall with
Cathy Macdonald and Niall Iain Macdonald,
with music from Kathleen MacInnes, Kim Carnie,
Hò-rò and much more.

Piper Alpha: An Sgàil Piper Alpha: Under the Shadow

Diluain 31 Dùbhlachd, 9f
Monday 31 December, 9pm

30 bliadhna às dèidh Piper Alpha,
tha Iona Ballantyne airson a' bhuaidh
a thug e air na teaghlaichean, i fhèin
nam measg, a thoirt gu aire dhaoine.

30 years after Piper Alpha, Iona Ballantyne
wants to examine the impact on the families,
her own included, who suffered from the disaster.

Mànran aig Barrowland

Diluain 31 Dùbhlachd, 10.10f
Monday 31 December, 10.10pm

Cuirm shònraichte a chaidh a chlàradh
air Latha Naomh Anndrais, 2018.

A concert special from Mànran recorded
on St Andrew's Day, 2018.

Mach À Seo

Diciadain 2 Faoilleach, 10f
Wednesday 2 January, 10pm

Tha fios aig Ramsay MacMahon dè na
cuairtean deireadh-sheachdain as fheàrr
an Alba agus tha e a' tilleadh le sreath ùr.

Ramsay MacMahon returns with a new series
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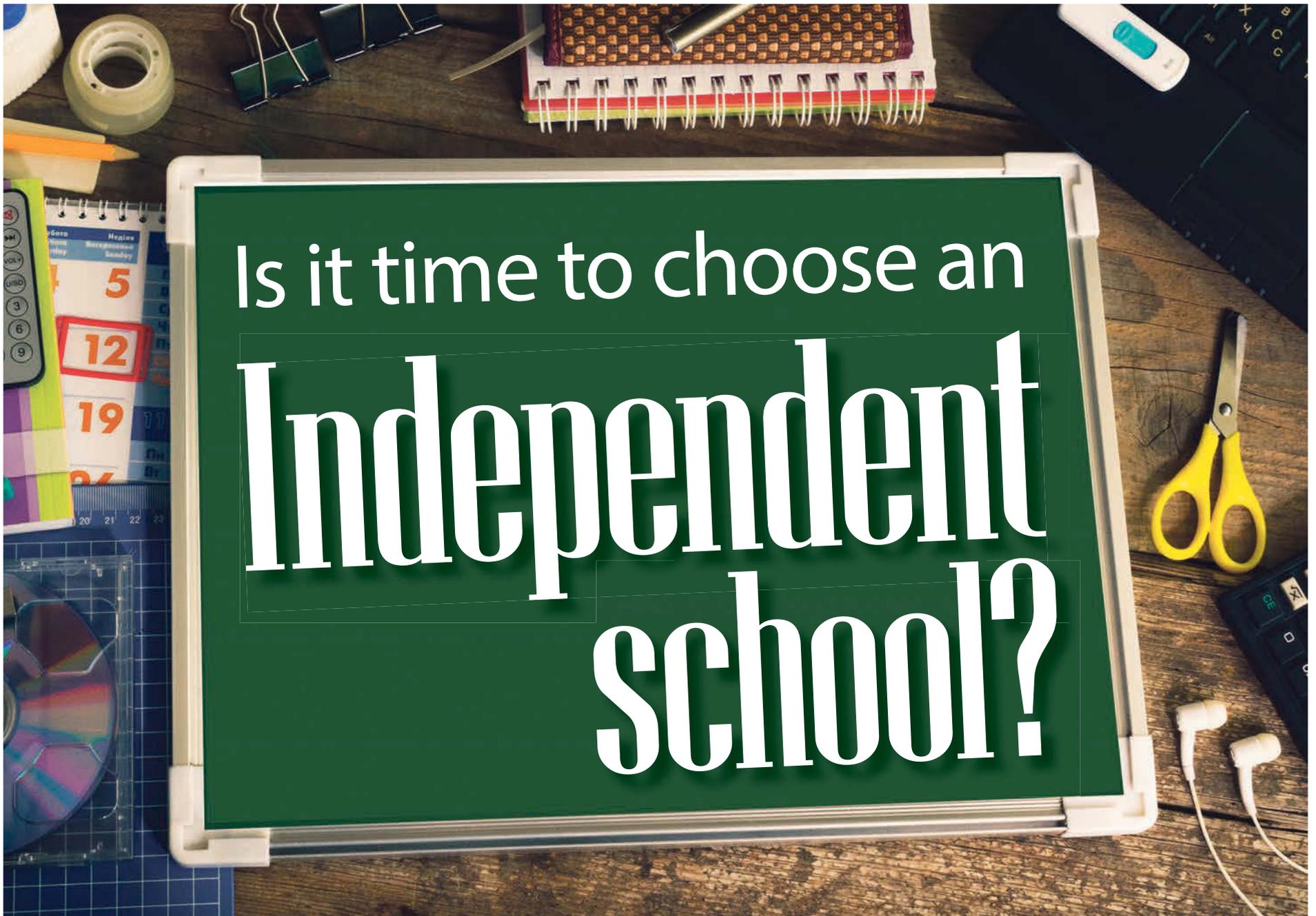
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No matter how excellent a state school might be, it will always have a 'one-size-fits-all' approach towards some aspects of school life. This is fine for most of the time but if, for some reason, your son or daughter

is the one who is finding it hard to make that fit you cannot help but wonder if they would be better off in the independent sector.

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that experience, not possessions, is what binds us and creates stronger, happier families. Would your children benefit from experiencing independent education?



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our scholarship provision; A scholarship is an award for excellence in academic study, the arts or sport.

Strathallan offer scholarships in Academic, Music and Sport for entry to the Riley Junior School with the addition of Art, Piping and Performing Arts for Year 9 entry. All are decided on the pupil's ability in their chosen area. The process of applying for a scholarship begins with a registration via the website, assessments take place

for entry to Riley Junior School in January 2019 and for Year 9 in February 2019. Scholarships are awarded in March for benefit in the Autumn term. Applications close on Wednesday 16th January for 9-12 year olds and Friday 15th February for Year 9 scholarship assessments.

Previous academic scholars at Strathallan have gone on to study at some of the top universities in the UK and around the world. Several of our scholars have

represented Scotland and GB in 15 sports including Rugby, Swimming, Hockey and Skiing. Strathallan Music scholars have taken up places at reputable music and performing arts colleges such as BMI.

More than a fee remission, scholarships at Strathallan provide pupils with a springboard to a future in their chosen area and a confidence to pursue their aspirations. For more details or to register your child visit www.strathallan.co.uk



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Interactive map features film and historic locations

An interactive map of Scotland featuring the film locations of *Outlaw King* and historic sites connected to Robert the Bruce has been produced by the national tourism organisation.

The launch of the online guide by VisitScotland is set to inspire visitors to explore the real history of the 14th-century king behind the Netflix film.

On the Trail of the Outlaw King highlights 20 filming locations and 24 sites linked to Robert the Bruce across the country, from Annandale in Dumfries and Galloway, where the King of Scots was raised, to Claigan Coral Beach on the Isle of Skye, which portrays the island of Islay in the film.

Outlaw King charts the story of Robert the Bruce (played by Chris Pine), from defeated nobleman in 1304 to victorious King of Scots at the Battle of Loudoun Hill in 1307.

David Mackenzie, director of *Outlaw King*, says he feels like he has been location scouting for the film his entire adult life – with the film being as much about the land itself as the King of Scots.

He said: 'We tried to get as much of Scotland into the film as possible and in a way, it is about the land. I don't think any film has really taken the image of this country to the level we have. It feels like I've been location scouting for this film all my adult life.'

Berwick-Upon-Tweed, which borders Scotland and England and was used as a filming location, also features in the VisitScotland guide as it notes that it 'changed hands between England and Scotland no fewer than 14 times between the 13th and 14th centuries during the Wars of Scottish Independence'.

Users of the map can select an icon representing castles, landscapes, churches, and towns for a brief description of the importance of the location (film or historical) and a link for further detail.

With one in five visitors inspired to stay after seeing Scotland on the big or small screen, VisitScotland expects visitor numbers to grow further with the release of *Outlaw King*.

See VisitScotland's *Outlaw King* map at <https://outlawking.visitscotland.com/>

Our empty seas

Morvern lines

IAIN THORNER

ian.thorner@btinternet.com



You don't need to own a boat or even like fish to know that Scotland's sea fishing industry is in turmoil.

The question is when Great Britain leaves the EU where can fish be legally caught, by whom and how many? Fishermen have called for clarity on the implications of the 585-page agreement.

Prime Minister Theresa May insists that the UK government would not accept any deal that linked access to fishing waters with trade. The Scottish Fishermen's Federation (SFF) was formed in 1973, with the aim of protecting collective interests. As details of the Brexit deal emerged, it voiced concerns about a link between access for EU vessels to UK waters and tariff-free access for UK seafood suppliers to the EU market.

Chief executive Bertie Armstrong said: 'The industry's priority has always been taking back control of decision-making over who catches what, where and when in our waters, so that we can end once and for all the grossly unfair situation where 60 per cent of our stocks are taken, gratis, by boats from other EU nations.'

That would mean the UK becoming a fully independent coastal state with its own seat at all the relevant international fisheries negotiations from December 2020, and regaining its proud status as one of the world's major fishing nations.

With all the political posturing and foot-shuffling of the past two years it is impossible to know what is going on and exactly who is on the side of the fishermen and for what reason. By fishermen, I mean the men who pull on their boots, oilskins and life-jackets and head out into the stormy waters on a dark winter's morning not the suits lounging around the Holyrood and Westminster bars.

Whoever the bosses are I would be surprised if they have the same passion and drive as three figures who took up the fishermen's cause in the 1930s.

They were John Lorne Campbell of Canna (1906-1996) – one of the most significant scholars of Gaelic culture in the 20th century; Sir Compton Mackenzie (1883-1972), an English-born Scottish writer, cultural



John Lorne Campbell and Compton Mackenzie. Photograph: The National Trust for Scotland

commentator, and raconteur who lived on Barra and is best remembered for his books and films, *Whisky Galore*, *Rockets Galore* and *Monarch of the Glen*, and Francis Cameron-Head of Inverailort (1896-1957), barrister, resident landowner and tradition bearer – all passionate and uncompromising Gaels.

Compton Mackenzie and John Lorne Campbell, who were well ahead of the game and prepared to do something, realised that if the crofting way of life and Gaelic tradition were to be preserved, it had to be put on a sounder economic footing and that meant political action.

In a fascinating article published in the *Scots Magazine*, August and September, 1975, John Lorne wrote: 'The natural resources on which the economy of islands like Barra should have been founded was sea fishing. This was the case in countries like Norway, Iceland and the Faroes. But in Scotland the traditional long line and drift-net fishing of the Hebrides

have been nearly completely destroyed by the incursions of Fleetwood trawlers.'

'In the interests of the trawl-owners, British governments were trying to insist that the three-mile fishery limit, based on the range of a cannon ball at the time of Waterloo, and accepted by the six signatories of the North Sea Convention of 1882 – Britain, France, Germany, Holland, Belgium and Denmark, should be accepted by all nations.

'What this really amounted to was that the interests of British, and particularly of Scottish inshore fishermen, were to be sacrificed to justify the trawl-owners invading Norwegian and Icelandic waters. Norway was not a signatory of the North Sea Conventions, and her coast and islands resembled those of the North-West of Scotland and the Hebrides particularly.'

Prompted by these facts and by frequent reports of poaching trawlers in the neighbourhood of Barra, Compton Mackenzie founded



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founding a similar movement of their own. At every meeting those present were encouraged to speak or to ask questions in Gaelic. Every single person who caught, bought or sold fish signed the petition for a fishing district. A newsletter called The Sea Leaguer was produced and circulated to all its members. Letters and telegrams were sent to the prime minister and Inverness County Council.

Did the Sea League deliver? Not really. In 1934 the government agreed to increase the penalties for illegal trawling but they were never properly enforced and eventually fishing all but died out in the islands.

In any case a Bill was already before parliament in 1933 so the Sea League could hardly claim a total victory. In July 1966 John Lorne Campbell sent Compton Mackenzie a copy of the Fishery Limits Act of 1964, saying: 'Thirty years almost to the day after the first Sea League meeting at Castlebay our policy has been put into effect – at least one if not two generations too late.'

Looking back in 1975, Campbell wrote: 'Personally, I have never been more thoroughly convinced of the justice of any cause than I was of the Sea League. The situation was a revelation of the attitude of the Westminster government and the Scottish Office towards the Hebrides. The islands were despised because they were poor, and they were poor because their economic interest in the greatest source of wealth accessible to them, the sea, had been sacrificed to those of the English trawling monopolies.'

In their drive to save the fishing industry the Sea League may have been thwarted by petty and hostile bureaucracy but that did not stop Compton Mackenzie and John Lorne Campbell calling for other changes. They demanded limits to the amount of land any individual could own and binding contracts between landowners and the state in relation to cultivation, development, management and residence.

They insisted on a development board for the Highlands and Islands with substantial powers to acquire land and direct enterprise and transport – which eventually came as the Highlands and Islands Development Board. They wanted to nationalise the ferry services, control and exploitation of water power in the Highlands and a knowledge of Gaelic to be compulsory for school teachers and public servants in areas where the language was spoken.

Iain Thornber
iain.thornber@btinternet.com

the Sea League in the summer of 1933 with himself as chairman, John Lorne as one of the secretaries and Francis Cameron-Head giving legal advice. Taking its title from the 19th-century Land League and its philosophy and dynamism from the fishery policies of Norway, Iceland and the Faeroes, the Sea League's objectives were:

1 – That the Minch between a line from Barra Head to Tiree and a line from the Butt of Lewis to Cape Wrath, to be closed to trawlers and that the fishing in this area to be regulated to the benefit of the fishermen who live around it. 2 – Penalties for illegal trawling to be increased, and the policing of the inshore waters made more efficient. 3 – Fines for illegal trawling to be used for financing fishermen who had lost their gear through illegal trawling, or who wanted to commence inshore fishing for the first time.

Mackenzie and Campbell addressed meetings in every fishing village from Vatersay to Scalpay-Harris. They acquired 600 members, and invited the Lewismen to cooperate by

DOWN MEMORY LANE

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



Reader John Hay has sent in these two festive photographs. The one above is of Santa visiting the West Highland Hospital in Oban in the 1980s. The one below is Santa visiting the McKelvie Hospital, Oban, in the same decade. As always, if you recognise anyone in these photographs we'd love to hear from you. Email editor@obantimes.co.uk



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LETTERS

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Hoping for better times in year ahead

It would be no exaggeration to say that 2018 has been a significant 12 months, with the political discourse dominated by Brexit.

As we embrace 2019, the issue will continue to cast a shadow of uncertainty over all of us. As a result, one of our hopes for the coming year will be that our political leaders find the wisdom to deliver the right decisions on our behalf.

Locally, however, the next 12 months hold great promise economically, if the past year is an indicator.

The new Premier Inn is due to open in Oban, some of the empty premises in the town should become occupied, and the tourism and hospitality sector will boom.

We wish you all a very happy new year.

Councillors should fight for people who elected them

Isn't it about time all the councillors of Argyll and Bute Council should threaten to resign over the never-ending cuts to the most vulnerable and the very valuable staff who support them.

Can a campaign not be lodged by just one of the councillors to construct a letter of mass resignation if cuts to the most vulnerable don't stop forcing the administration into thinking again where they cut? Time for Argyll councillors to fight back: it is what you were elected to do on behalf of the people who voted for you.

Angus Files, The Glebe, Kilmelford.

Flawed arguments in letter on independence

Reading the letter by Andrew Green (December 13), I would deduce that he is no great supporter of the independence movement in Scotland.

However, his attempts to question the drive for independence are fundamentally flawed. He chooses to reconfigure the Scottish results of the EU referendum, but why?

If he doesn't apply the same process to the results for England, Wales and Northern Ireland, he can draw no meaningful conclusion – other than what is already known.

Scotland's electorate chose to remain, while England's chose to leave – nothing new there. He then makes a couple of negative comments regarding the SNP government, but fails to back them up with any evidence.

But it is in the last paragraph the mask slips. He proffers the concept that it is acceptable for one nation – in this case England – to decide the future destiny of another – Scotland.

It is noteworthy that in his discussion neither Wales nor Northern Ireland seems to register in Mr Green's world view. Nevertheless, it is heartening to know that, against the odds, a small stronghold of imperialist mindset still survives in Ardtoe.

Andy Thornton,
Laroch House, Ballachulish.

Bringing festive hope to homeless people

The Christmas season should be a time of joy, but for thousands of homeless people across the country it is anything but. While most of the country is celebrating and enjoying festive meals, those who are homeless will face a struggle just to stay safe and escape the cold.

That's why – outside of our year-round services – Crisis runs special festive centres that offer warmth, food, companionship, and access to vital services – doctor or dentist, have a haircut and get clothes or bags repaired.

But we don't stop there. At our centres, we introduce people to our year-round training, education and support with housing, employment and health. This long-term support helps people to rebuild their lives and leave homelessness behind for good.

Crisis at Christmas is a huge volunteer effort, and last year more than 4,000 people came through the doors of 15 our centres. For many, Crisis at Christmas offers a chance to relax, regain confidence and plan for the future in a supportive environment.

We're asking members of the public who want to help to support our work this festive season and year-round – so we can be there for everyone who needs us and give people in the most vulnerable circumstances support to leave homelessness behind for good.

To find out more visit: www.crisis.org.uk

Jon Sparkes, chief executive, Crisis.

Beachd Ailein

ALLAN CAMPBELL

editor@obantimes.co.uk



Tha mi 'n dòchas gun do chòrd an Nollaig ribh uile, agus gun robh cothrom agaibh ùine a chur seachad ann an cuideachd chàirdean agus charaidean!

An-diugh tha latha na Nollaige a' ciallachadh dinnear shònraichte dhan mhòr-chuid den t-sluagh agus tha mi cuideachd an dòchas gun robh cothrom agus càil agaibhse air leithid sin. Bu mhath mar an ceudna ma fhuair sibh tiodhlac air choreigin a tha a' còrdadh ribh agus a tha gu bhith feumail, agus ma 's e aodach a th' ann bhiodh e fìor mhath nam freagradh e gu cofhurtail fhathast an dèidh a' bhìdh mhòir.

A' cur dibhearsain an dàrna taobh tha sinn uile mothachail gun fàg gluasadan an t-saoghail gun tig duilgheadasan agus bròn air cuid mun àm seo mar a thachras aig àm sam bith, ach a dh'aindeoin sin nì a' mhòr-chuid oidhirp air beagan ùine de thoileachas, cianalas, agus spòrs.

Bheir sin togail dhaibh gun teagamh is iad ag amharc air ais 's dòcha air rudan nach deach mar a dh'iarradh iad

tron t-seann bhliadhna, agus romhpa gu mì-chinnt tè ùr. Aon trioblaid leis a h-uile cuirm is tachartas 's e gum feum iad crìochnachadh agus faodaidh a' chrìch sin air aighearachd an tachartais cuid fhàgail nas isle na bha iad a' dol thuige.

Thachair mi air prògram rèidio inntinneach an latha roimhe far an robh daoine eadar-dhealaichte a' beachdachadh air an seòrsa thiodhlac a dh'iarradh iad fhaotainn, agus a thoirt seachad. Chòrd feadhainn de na "tiodhlac" sin rium gu mòr.

Mar a bhiodh dùil dh'iarradh cuid sgilean ciùil agus ealain de gach seòrsa, agus bha iarrtas ann cuideachd air comasan labhairt agus sgrìobhadh a cheadaicheadh càirdeas, conaltradh, agus sith am measg dhaoine. Bu mhath le aon neach gun robh eòlas an latha 'n-diugh air a bhith aige na òige agus bha rùn aige sin a thoirt dhan òigridh. Dh'iarradh e gu sònraichte an tuigse agus an neart a leigeadh leis seasamh ri burraidheachd de gach seòrsa.

Ach theagamh gur e an

taghadh a b' fheàrr leam uile gu lèir an neach a thuir gun iarradh esan adhbhar agus comas a bhith a' gaireachdaich. Chan eil cus gealltanais neo toileachais ann an saoghal anns nach eil gaire, agus cha mhòtha na sin a tha cus dòchais aig cànan a chailleas geur-chainnt agus liut labhairt.

Cha chreid mi nach e sin a dh'iarrainn dhuinn uile aig an àm seo, agus anns a' bhliadhna romhainn. Bliadhna mhath ùr dhuibh nuair a thig i!

Hopefully, you all received useful gifts for Christmas.

I happened on a radio programme where contributors discussed what they might wish as gifts for themselves and others. Predictably, these included artistic talents, and the wish to have had today's knowledge and experience years before.

My favourite was a wish to have cause and ability for laughter for without such, life will lack inspiration as well as hope. That is why I wish you laughter, in a happy new year.

Ailean Caimbeul
(Allan Campbell)

ailean@obantimes.co.uk



The editor welcomes letters of approximately 300 words in length for publication on this page. However we reserve the right to shorten, to amend or to refuse to print them. Names and postal addresses must be supplied, including on emails, to indicate good faith. A daytime phone number is also required for verification. Anonymous letters or those supplied without a contact phone number will not be printed. Please email: editor@obantimes.co.uk or write to: Letters page, The Oban Times, PO Box 1, Oban, Argyll, PA34 4HB. Fax: 01631 568001.

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DISTRICT NEWS

KILMORE

The winners of the Kilmore 100 Club Christmas draw were L Battison, who won £500, E Adams received £300, while M Cruikshanks won £100. The New Year dance will take place on January 5 at Kilmore Hall and everyone is welcome.

LOCHALINE

Caledonian Maritime Assets Limited (CMAL) has appointed George Leslie Ltd to carry out work at Lochaline ferry terminal, commencing in May 2019.

The project will include the removal of the old aligning structure and the construction of a new one, as well as improving the overnight ferry berth at the terminal.

Extra marshalling space will be created, as part of works to formalise traffic flow through the port area. The project will also see the existing slipway widened and lengthened, and the berth area deepened, all of which will improve service resilience and remove the existing tidal constraint on the port.

In order to complete essential sections of the works, there will be a planned six-week closure period starting in October 2019, during which time CalMac will operate a passenger-only service from another location.

CMAL and CalMac will host a public drop-in meeting early in 2019 in Lochaline to allow the community to view proposals, and to discuss the alternative service arrangements during the closure period. Meeting details will be circulated and made available at a later date.

DUNOON

Pupils at Dunoon Grammar School have 'scooped' themselves a year's supply of ice-cream after winning an international competition. Pupils Claire Lauffer, Eleanor Hill, Kim Kerr and Matthew MacDuff beat off competition from across the UK to win the School of Marketing's Ice-

Housing association helps school trip's hardship fund

Chairman of West Highland Housing Association Dougie Mackie went back to school to hand over a cheque for £1,000.

Mr Mackie presented Rockfield Primary School in Oban with the cheque so all children have a fair chance of going on a residential course to Ardentiny in September.

The housing association hands out about £30,000 a year to special causes.

School captains Hannah McIvor, Billy Bratton, James Muir and Aleisha Armour, all aged 11, received the cheque on behalf of the school.



Cream Dream, sponsored by Walls.

MULL

A final call has gone out for volunteer community first responders on Mull. Training courses are being arranged for February. If interested, contact Moray Finch at mfinch@mict.co.uk

BUNESSAN

Bunessan Post Office is selling tickets for the New Year Ceilidh Dance at the village hall on Friday January 4 with the Robert Robertson Band featuring members of Tide Lines. Doors open at 8pm.

YOURSTORY

share with us: editor@obantimes.co.uk
telephone 01631 568000

A joyful sight on Oban roadside

A little festive miracle has rerooted itself on the outskirts of Oban, writes Kathie Griffiths.

Eagle-eyed reader Mike Robertson contacted The Oban Times to point out the reappearance of a little wild fir tree growing on the roadside just outside the 30mph limit, and before the entrance to the Scottish Water Depot, on the A816 Lochgilphead road.

'During the past year the tree was removed, whether by vandals, or as part of roadworks. 'The point is that somebody took the trouble to decorate it each year, something that was remarked on and appreciated by many of us here in Oban. I have just seen that presumably the same person has gone to the extra trouble of placing, and decorating, a new tree specially for the occasion,' he said.

And he added: 'It was a lovely surprise to see a new, beautifully adorned, tree there in the same place for all to enjoy.'

'A big "thank you" to the public-spirited person who did that for all of us at Christmas.'



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DEC 29TH - ALBERT HALLS, STIRLING

DEC 30TH - DUNOON BURGH HALL, DUNOON

DEC 31ST - HOGMANAY IN THE HAUGHS, TURRIFF

JAN 1ST - SKYE GATHERING HALLS, PORTREE

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LEISURE & ENTERTAINMENT

YOUR GUIDE TO WHAT'S ON IN ARGYLL AND LOCHABER

Author Kitty is adventure bound after life on Mull

by Kathie Griffiths
kgriffiths@obantimes.co.uk



Living on Mull surrounded by water in the 1990s inspired children's author Kitty Irvine to sail into the world of literature.

With a successful series of children's books behind her, entitled Mysterious Moorings with Mouse, who happens to be a boat, as well as a teenage girls' book called The Trials of Eddi Dutch, published on Amazon, Kitty is now embark-



Kitty Irvine.

ing on another new venture to inspire youngsters to read.

Despite Kitty having not returned to Mull since the day she left, she says it still feels like home.

'I still feel rooted there and will go back one day. There was nothing quite like getting on the ferry to Mull and feeling you were back home,' she said.

Kitty says it was quite a basic existence living on the island, collecting and drying out firewood, getting water from a stream and looking out to sea,

enjoying views over the water.

She said: 'I daren't go back to Mull yet because I'd never leave again. For the time being, we are enjoying life on our boat. We're never usually in one place longer than two weeks. It's a wonderful life, away from the rat race.'

Kitty's full name is MacPherson-Irvine and she still has family living in Kingussie. 'There's a lot of Scottish names in my books, such as Bruce McSpruce a talking tree, because Scotland

is still part of my life,' she said.

It was while living on Mull that Kitty started working in domestic service that led to her looking after royal households abroad and at home, and eventually leaving Mull.

Despite leaving the island behind, she still kept her love of water and went on to buy a canal boat that has been her home for the past seven years, continuously travelling up and down the British waterways with her husband – and her imagination which sparked

her writing. It was seeing a 12-foot long Pusher Tug, named Mouse, along the Grand Union canal in Braunston that started the first Mysterious Moorings with Mouse book in 2016.

Identical twin characters Tippy and Tilly from that series, who finish each other's sentences, are now in her new work, inspired by children she used to look after.

To find out more about Kitty's books go to kittyirvine.com

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Get your thinking hat on for our Christmas quiz

Music – Christmas number ones...

All you have to do is guess the festive song from these lyrics.

1. *Scoop, Muck and Dizzy and Roley too. Lofty and Wendy join the crew.*

2. *Here's to the God of the present, Here's to the God of the past, Here's to the hope in the future He brings, We will sing to Him, sing to Him.*

3. *But you don't really care for music, do you?*

4. *And the Christmas bells that ring there, Are the clanging chimes of doom.*

5. *Oh yeah, I tell you somethin', I think you'll understand, When I say that somethin'.*



6. *Baby if you've got to go away, I don't think, I can take the pain...*

7. *Longtime ago in Bethlehem, so the Holy Bible said.*

8. *I need some love like I never needed love before, I had a little love, now I'm back for more, Set your spirit free, it's the only way to be.*

9. *Far have I travelled and much have I seen, Dark distant mountains with valleys of green, Past painted deserts, the sun sets on fire.*

10. *A ray of hope flickers in the sky, A tiny star lights up way up high, All across the land, dawns a brand new morn.*

Christmas general knowledge

1. In the song The Twelve Days Of Christmas, what did my true love give to me on the 12th day?

2. Born on Christmas Day 1954, who was the lead singer with the Scottish band the Eurythmics?

3. Who popularised the Christmas tree in England in the 19th century?

4. In Charles Dickens' Christmas Carol, what was Scrooge's business partner called?

5. In which American state would you find the city of Bethlehem?

6. What is the name of Aladdin's mother?

7. In which celebrated Christmas film does James Stewart have an angel called Clarence looking after him?

8. Who composed the music for the festive season ballet The Nutcracker?

9. How many points does a snowflake traditionally have?

10. How does Good King Wenceslas like his pizzas?

4. Which golfing legend did Oban's Robert MacIntyre play with at this month's South African Open?

5. Which division do Oban Lorne RFC play in?

6. Where was this season's Camanachd Cup final played?

7. Who won the Camanachd Cup this year?

8. In which month is the Oban Rotary Am-Am golf competition played?

9. What is the name of the swimming club in Oban?

10. What is the name of the boxing club in Fort William?

Sports

1. Which round of the Scottish Amateur Cup did Oban Saints reach last season?

2. Who eventually knocked Saints out of the Scottish Amateur Cup?

3. Who did Oban Lorne Ladies defeat as they won the BT Women's Bowl at Murrayfield?

■ Christmas answers in next week's Oban Times. Thanks to Dave Ainscough for the music and general knowledge questions.

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

Crossword

1		2		3		4		5		6		7
8												
9				10				11				
12								13				
15											16	17
18						19						
20								21				

Across

1 Burial receptacle (7)
5 Fill again (3-2)
8 From every January until December (8,5)
9 Hairpiece (3)
10 Figuratively (2,2,5)
12 Former British colony (6)
13 Without panic (6)
15 Connected telephone policy? (5,4)
16 Obtain energy by this means (3)
18 Changing from state control (13)
20 Dusk to dawn (5)
21 Hairy plants (7)

Down

1 Arise (5)
2 Autonomous (4-9)
3 Targeted lady (4,5)
4 Frothy (6)
5 Have a go (3)
6 Group with bent heads? (6,7)
7 It will get you in anywhere! (7)
11 Theatrical helper (9)
12 Snooker hit (7)
14 Bathing attire (6)
17 Hammer's partner (5)
19 Formic acid producer (3)

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION

R	I	B	C	A	G	E	L	I	F	E	R	
E	O	V	M	E	O	E						
C	R	O	C	O	D	I	L	E	C	L	I	P
A	B	C	G	L	R							
P	L	A	E	R	O	D	R	O	M	E		
T	T	E	I	W	S							
F	E	R	R	I	C	C	A	C	T	U	S	
L	A	O	M	G	H							
A	L	P	E	N	H	O	R	N	R	I	D	
T	P	R	O	O	U							
B	L	I	N	D	M	A	N	S	B	U	F	F
E	N	U	S	E	G	F						
D	O	G	G	O	S	A	D	D	H	U	S	

Glasgow Letter

ROBERT ROBERTSON

robert.d.robertson@hotmail.co.uk



2018 has had lots of great memories to look back on in Glasgow – too many, indeed, to cover in this column.

A lot of wonderful evenings have been had, from annual gatherings, to festival events, concerts great and small, sporting world championships, smaller scale cèilidhs, and some great nights in the famous 'teuchter triangle' made up (of course) of the Park Bar, the Islay Inn and the Snaffle Bit.

2019 will bring another hugely exciting year for Gaels in the city – not least because the Royal National Mòd is coming to Glasgow in October. I know the committee are already working extremely hard on preparations for the event and I am certain it will be a wonderful showcase of the talents that Gaeldom has to offer.

Having been on tour with Tide Lines for most of the tail end of 2018, I was unable to attend most of the events in Glasgow that I would usually write about. I am, however, looking forward to getting back out and about in the city at the beginning of next year and I will be sure to try my best to document everything that is going on.

As usual, at the beginning of



The opening of Celtic Connections is one of many things to look forward to in the new year in Glasgow.

the year, that will predominantly mean Celtic Connections. There are a whole host of wonderful (and, this year, some very different and unique) concert ideas in the programme, so I look forward to previewing and reviewing as many as possible in the new year. For just now, here is a little bit about

the opening concert (entitled Syné of the Times) which will take place on January 17 in the Glasgow Royal Concert Hall.

Celtic Connections' first 25 years has witnessed the emergence of myriad young Scottish musicians, many going on to attain headline status – and plenty nowadays who

were not even born when the festival began. The opening concert inaugurates 2019's theme of passing traditions between generations, and also marks 15 years since Harvest, 2004's landmark opening show which teamed a battalion of then youngsters – including such now-familiar names as Anna

Massie, Rua MacMillan, Rachel Newton, Megan Henderson and Mairead Green – with top Celtic soloists.

Here, alongside a number of revered performers from the folk scene, some 60-70 budding talents will assemble onstage, selected from the 45 Fèisean now held annually around Scotland, Orcadian youth music project Hadhirgaan and the extraordinary Galician folk orchestra SonDeSeu.

Working with the original composers, they'll perform newly-arranged excerpts of the Fèis Rois commissions, Kin and the Community, by Duncan Chisholm, Lauren MacColl's The Seer, and Donald Shaw's Harvest itself, along with appearances by Dàimh, Aidan O'Rourke and Brìghde Chaimbeul and some additional very special guests.

It sounds like a superb night – designed to highlight the growth of talent throughout the traditional music industry in Scotland. Something which is never more on display than at Celtic Connections.

Until then, I hope all readers of this column have a wonderful Hogmanay and may 2019 bring you whatever you might wish for yourself.

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DIGITAL SUBSCRIBERS

Digital subscribers who have an active subscription covering the period from December 13, 2018, to January 3, 2019, can enter the competition by sending their name, address and email address that they subscribe with to Oban Times Trolley Dash Competition, Crannog Lane, Lochavullin Industrial Estate, Oban PA34 4HB by 10am Thursday January 10. Only one entry per subscription permitted. Entrant must be able to attend the trolley dash in Oban on the January 21, 2019.

We all spend far too much money over Christmas and New Year, so how great would it be able to fill your shopping trolley COMPLETELY FREE OF CHARGE in January?

Courtesy of our friends at Tesco in Oban, one lucky reader will win the chance to fill their trolley with up to £200 worth of goods (see T&Cs for exclusions). All you have to do is collect four tokens over four weeks, token three is printed opposite and the fourth and final token will be in next week's Oban Times. Get your tokens to us by 10am Thursday January 10 and you will be entered into a prize draw to win this fantastic trolley dash.

All four tokens must be sent in a single envelope to Oban Times Trolley Dash Competition, Crannog Lane, Lochavullin Industrial Estate, Oban PA34 4HB.

One token from each week is required, multiple entries are allowed, but must be submitted in separate envelopes. Photocopied tokens will not be accepted. Winners must agree to take part in publicity. Employees of Wyvex Media Ltd and their immediate families are not eligible to enter. The editor's decision is final.

M'ALBA

MY ALBA

DIARDAOIN 27 AN DÙBHLACHD THURSDAY 27 DECEMBER

17.00 Prògraman Chloinne – Children's programming
19.00 An Là – News
19.05 The Quay Sessions – Sam Outlaw (rpt)
19.30 Mod na Cloinne 2018 (rpt)

20.30 **UR | NEW:** Na Trads - An Dara Teud
22.00 Bho Chaorain Gu Consoles
23.00 **UR | NEW:** Opry Dhoire

DIHAOINE 28 AN DÙBHLACHD FRIDAY 28 DECEMBER

17.00 Prògraman Chloinne – Children's programming
19.00 An Là – News
19.05 The Quay Sessions – The Little Kicks (rpt)
19.25 Bothan air a' Phreiridh (rpt)
20.25 **UR | NEW:** Mòd nan Coisirean 2018
21.55 **UR | NEW:** An Béal Bocht
22.30 Na Trads: An Dara Teud (rpt)

DISATHAIRNE 29 AN DÙBHLACHD

16.00 Prògraman Chloinne – Children's programming
17.55 An Là – News
18.00 **UR | NEW:** Scottish Premiership – Hamilton v Motherwell
20.00 Spòrs na Bliadhna 2018 (rpt)
21.00 **UR | NEW:** Bliadhna na H-Oigridh@Blas
22.00 FUNC (rpt)
22.30 An Klondike (rpt)
23.20 Fraochy Bay (rpt)
23.25 Opry Dhoire (rpt)
24.25 **UR | NEW:** Belladrum Highlights

DIDÒMHNAICH 30 AN DÙBHLACHD

16.00 Prògraman Chloinne – Children's programming
18.25 An Là – News

18.30 **UR | NEW:** A' Bhliadhna 2018
19.30 Mòd nan Coisirean 2018 (rpt)
20.55 **UR | NEW:** Folk Prom
22.00 Colin Macleod – When it Kicks In (rpt)
23.00 A' Sreadh Sascha (rpt)

DILUAIN 31 AN DÙBHLACHD MONDAY 31 DECEMBER

17.00 Prògraman Chloinne – Children's programming
18.55 An Là aig Deich (rpt)
19.55 **UR | NEW:** Guthan na h-Iolaire – Ceitidh NicLeòid
20.00 An Là – News
20.15 **UR | NEW:** Guthan na h-Iolaire – Raibeart MacFhionghain
20.20 **UR | NEW:** Tha Thu air Aigeann M'Intinn
20.25 Dealbhan Fraoich (rpt)
20.55 **UR | NEW:** Guthan na h-Iolaire – Iain MacLeòid
21.00 **UR | NEW:** Piper Alpha: An Sgàil
22.00 **UR | NEW:** Guthan na h-Iolaire – Iain MacIllEathain
22.05 Tha Thu air Aigeann M'Intinn (rpt)
22.10 **UR | NEW:** Mánran aig Barrowland
23.00 Slainte Mhath! (rpt)
23.30 **UR | NEW:** Cèilidh na Bliadhna' Ùire 2018

DIMÀIRT 01 AM FAOILLEACH TUESDAY 01 JANUARY

17.00 **UR | NEW:** Guthan na h-Iolaire – Dòmhnall Moireasdan
17.05 An Là – News
17.25 Tha Thu air Aigeann M'Intinn (rpt)
17.30 An Iolaire (rpt)
18.30 **UR | NEW:** Guthan na h-Iolaire – Dòmhnall MacPhàil
18.35 Home at Last – The Iolaire
19.00 An Là – News
19.05 **UR | NEW:** Guthan na h-Iolaire – Mairi NicLeòid
19.10 Tha Thu air Aigeann M'Intinn (rpt)
19.15 **UR | NEW:** Cuimhneachan – An Iolaire
20.00 **UR | NEW:** An Iolaire – Bidh sinn a' cuimhneachadh

21.00 Murchadh MacPhàrlain: Bard Mhealboist (rpt)
22.00 **UR | NEW:** An Iolaire: Sàl – Iain Morrison
23.00 **UR | NEW:** Guthan na h-Iolaire – Ceitidh Bell Nic Dhòmhnail
23.05 **UR | NEW:** Folk Prom (Part 2)

DICIADAIN 02 AM FAOILLEACH WEDNESDAY 02 JANUARY

17.00 Prògraman Chloinne – Children's programming
19.00 An Là – News
19.05 Guthan na h-Iolaire – Ceitidh NicLeòid (rpt)
19.10 The Quay Sessions – Lucy Spraggan (rpt)
19.30 Oir a' Chuain Shìair (rpt)
20.25 Tha Thu air Aigeann M'Intinn
20.30 **UR | NEW:** Leugh Mi
21.00 **UR | NEW:** Sàr Sgeòil – As the Women Lay Dreaming
22.00 **UR | NEW:** Mach à Seo
22.30 An Iolaire – Bidh sinn a' cuimhneachadh (rpt)
23.30 Ceathrar air Chuairt (rpt)

DIARDAOIN 03 AM FAOILLEACH THURSDAY 03 JANUARY

16.15 **UR | NEW:** Live Curling – Perth Masters
18.15 Prògraman Chloinne – Children's programming
19.00 An Là – News
19.05 **UR | NEW:** Guthan na h-Iolaire – Raibeart MacFhionghain (rpt)
19.10 The Quay Sessions – Iain Morrison (rpt)
19.35 Oir a' Chuain Shìair (rpt)
20.30 **UR | NEW:** Live Curling – Perth Masters
22.30 Nochd (rpt)
23.00 Mach à Seo (rpt)
23.30 Ceathrar air Chuairt (rpt)



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Hogmanay at The Nevis Centre

Bring in 2019 with music from Fergie MacDonald and a piper to bring in the bells

31st December 2018

Doors 8:30pm

Show 9:30pm - 1:00am

Over 18s only*

Smart Dress Code

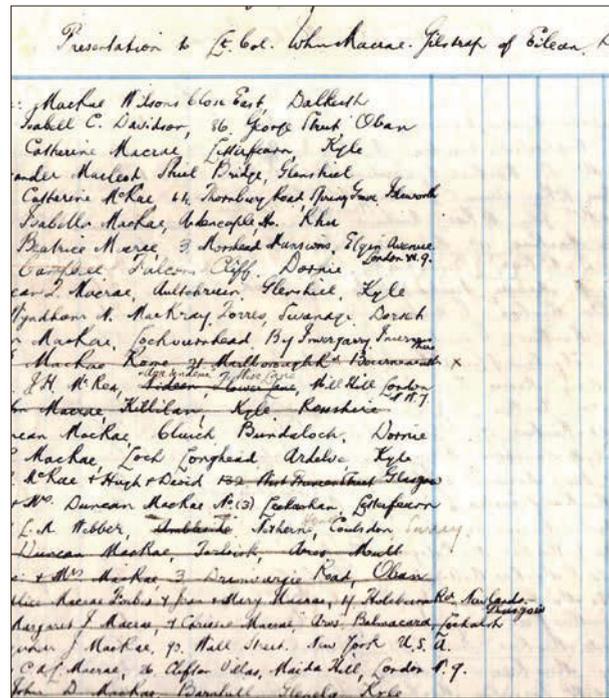
Tickets £25

Tables of 8 Available

Phone 01397 700707 to book



*16-18s may be permitted if accompanied by parent/grandparent, please ask reception for more info



John MacRae, 71338.
Manitoba Regiment.



Kenneth MacRae, 166254.
Royal Garrison Artillery.



An English heiress MacRae Highland

Book Review
by Sandy Neil

The stories of the men and women of the Clan MacRae in the Great War, including a forgotten 'great Scot', are told in a new book called Ella's War, by Fiona Christina MacRae.

Sixty years after his death, Fiona rediscovered an archive collected by her grandfather John MacRae, treasurer of the Clan MacRae Society in the first half of the 20th century, through the First and Second World Wars.

It revealed the evolving clan history from 1908 onwards, including the purchase of Eilean Donan Castle, plus events before, during and after the Great War of 1914-18, and a remarkable work of 'an extraordinary woman', Ella MacRae-Gilstrap.

It inspired her book, Ella's War, described as an 'inspirational story of an English heiress who married into



The author of Ella's War, Fiona Christina MacRae, at Clachan Duich, above, and right, Ella and John MacRae-Gilstrap.

the Clan MacRae and fell in love with the Highlands of Scotland and all the clan stood for'.

Ella was the wife of Lt Col MacRae-Gilstrap of Eilean Donan Castle, Wester Ross. She worked for the good of the clan servicemen and women of the British Empire and America throughout the Great War and all her married life.

The book states: 'All her

life she was absolutely aware of her duty, and that all her power and position in society would enable her to bring to fruition many of the things that needed doing to aid the war effort, and long afterwards. She had great wealth which she used in enormous measure for the good of others.

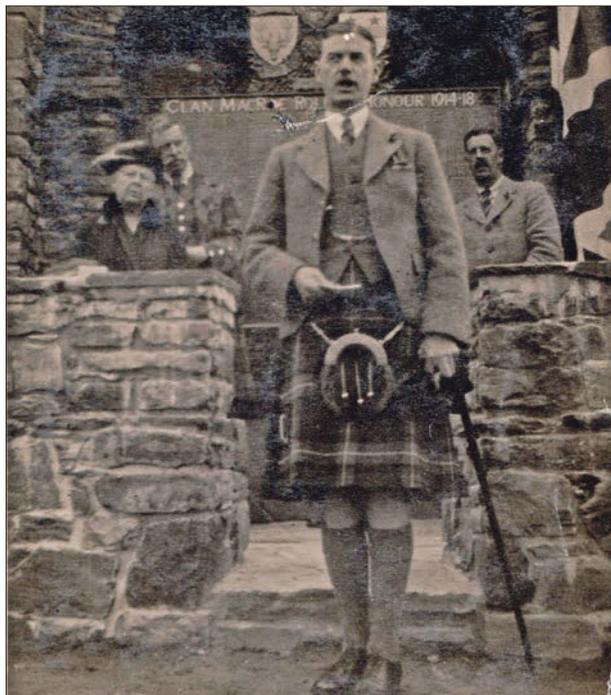
'The woman who steps out of history is inspiring to every generation. She was one



Roderick MacRae, 17231.
Scots Guards.



Alexander Duncan MacRae, 42323
British Columbia Regiment.



Clockwise from top left: Donations to the memorial fund; the four sons of a shepherd killed in the Great War; Fiona MacRae's grandfather John MacRae at the war memorial; Lord Lovat at the war memorial waiting for the unveiling; and the march to the castle for the unveiling of the war memorial.



ress stars in and love story

of great kindness, generosity, and an acute awareness of other people's needs, great and small.

'She had the imagination, the intelligence, the determination, the drive, and - perhaps most of all - the courage to do what she felt was right.'

The book also details the clan's plans to build a war memorial at the castle, and Ella's stories of the fallen clansmen, including all four sons of a shepherd from Inverness-shire.

'The MacRae war memorials are only four of 10s of thousands of memorials in Britain to those who fell in the Great War,' Fiona said. 'This story is only one little corner of the history of that period.'

'Reading this archive was a journey of discovery. It made those years, the traumatic events and the people in them, come alive,' she said. 'Much of the humanity and courage of the age is revealed.'



WHAT'S ON

In partnership with Oban Town Diary bid4oban.co.uk



THURSDAY 27TH DECEMBER

Slimming World
Glencruitten Church Hall, Oban
9.15am - 11.15am or 5pm - 7pm
Tel; Gillian 07796 040803

Slimming World
Union Street/Argyll Street,
Lochgilthead. 5.30pm - 8pm
Tel; Rhona 07880 878906

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

Live Music & Entertainment @ The Lorne Bar Oban
DJ Fergo. Open till 3am

FRIDAY 28TH DECEMBER
Oban Dance Academy - Cheerleading

Glencruitten Church Hall. All Day
Live Music & Entertainment @ Markie Dans

Tartan Paint. Open till 3am
Live Music & Entertainment @

The Lorne Bar Oban

DJ Fergo. Open till 3am

SATURDAY 29TH DECEMBER
Oban Dance Academy - Cheerleading

Glencruitten Church Hall. All Day
parkrun

Ganavan Sands, Oban. 9.30am

Hill Walk

Kinlochleven. All Day

Live Music & Entertainment @ Markie Dans

Disco. Open till 3am

Live Music & Entertainment @ The Lorne Bar Oban

Live Music with Chunks

Open till 3am

SUNDAY 30TH DECEMBER

End of Year Quiz @ Markie Dans

£100 Cash Prize and Disco

Open till 2am

Live Music & Entertainment @

The Lorne Bar Oban

DJ K9 Kev. Open till 3am

MONDAY 31ST DECEMBER

Live Music & Entertainment @ Markie Dans

Crooked Reel. Open till 3am

Live Music & Entertainment @ The Lorne Bar Oban

DJ Fergo. Open till 3am

TUESDAY 1ST JANUARY

Live Music & Entertainment @ Markie Dans

Crooked Reel & Sandra Macbeth

Open till 3am

Live Music & Entertainment @ The Lorne Bar Oban

DJ K9 Kev. Open till 3am

WEDNESDAY 2ND JANUARY

Live Music & Entertainment @ Markie Dans

Dice Ceilidh Band. Open till 2am

Live Music & Entertainment @ The Lorne Bar Oban

DJ K9 Kev. Open till 3am

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 28

11:30 THE GRINCH U
12:00/17:45 MARY POPPINS RETURNS U
13:30/15:00 SPIDER-MAN: INTO THE SPIDER-VERSE PG
14:00 THE NUTCRACKER AND THE FOUR REALMS PG
18:15 BOHEMIAN RHAPSODY 12A
20:30 TULIP FEVER 15
21:00 THE OLD MAN AND THE GUN 12A

MONDAY 31

12:00/14:30 MARY POPPINS RETURNS U
12:30 THE GRINCH U
15:00 SPIDER-MAN: INTO THE SPIDER-VERSE PG
17:15 THE OLD MAN AND THE GUN 12A
17:45 TULIP FEVER 15

WEDNESDAY 2

12:15/17:45 MARY POPPINS RETURNS U
12:30 THE GRINCH U
14:45 THE NUTCRACKER AND THE FOUR REALMS PG
15:15/17:00 SPIDER-MAN: INTO THE SPIDER-VERSE PG
19:30 BOHEMIAN RHAPSODY 12A
20:30 TULIP FEVER 15

THURSDAY 3

11:30 THE GRINCH U
12:00/17:45 MARY POPPINS RETURNS
13:30/15:00 SPIDER-MAN: INTO THE SPIDER-VERSE PG
16:00 THE NUTCRACKER AND THE FOUR REALMS PG
18:15 BOHEMIAN RHAPSODY 12A
20:30 TULIP FEVER 15
21:00 THE OLD MAN AND THE GUN 12A

SATURDAY 29

11:30 RALPH BREAKS THE INTERNET PG
12:00/17:45 MARY POPPINS RETURNS U
14:00 THE GRINCH U
15:00 SPIDER-MAN: INTO THE SPIDER-VERSE PG
16:00 THE NUTCRACKER AND THE FOUR REALMS PG
18:15 BOHEMIAN RHAPSODY 12A
20:30 TULIP FEVER 15
21:00 THE OLD MAN AND THE GUN 12A

SUNDAY 30
11:30 SPIDER-MAN: INTO THE SPIDER-VERSE PG
12:15 THE GRINCH U
14:00/17:00 MARY POPPINS RETURNS U
14:30 ROBIN HOOD 12A
17:00 MONTHLY MUSICAL: CALAMITY JANE
19:30 TULIP FEVER 15
19:45 THE OLD MAN AND THE GUN 12A

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Victory Hall on song for 2019

Benderloch Palladium has revealed just some of next year's music line-up after a great 2018, writes Kathie Griffiths.

The gigs featuring bands from near and far have filled the Victory Hall with enthusiastic audiences throughout the year.

Highlights included Old Blind Dogs, Hollow Mountain String Band, The Antics and Rab Noakes' collaboration with Jill Jackson.

'It's been a delight to host such talent and promote roughly a band a month in the hall over the year, which gets the bar open, which swells the coffers to help to keep our near 100-year-old hall going,' said Benderloch Live promoter Campbell Cameron.

Next year events begin on Friday February 1 with the return of Mairi Campbell, pictured above, and her new show Auld Lang Syne, her follow-up

to the much-acclaimed Pulse. Later in the month Glasgow-based Americana maestros James Edwyn and the Borrowed Band will get the feet tapping on Friday February 15, a post Valentine's Day treat.

Gigs after that include Claude Bourbon on Friday March 15, Red Dirt Skinners on Saturday March 30, Eilidh Shaw and Ross Martin Friday April 19, Mudslide on Saturday May 11.

Your local radio listings
Community Radio - your local radio station
Tune in to 103.3 or listen
live at www.obanfm.com



For requests, competitions or questions please email: studio@obanfm.org.uk or call us on 01631 570057

MONDAY: 08.00 AM on FM, 08.10 Breakfast Show, 9.00 Monday Morning with Stephen, 11.00 Ian Simmonds on Monday, 17.00 Drivetime, 19.00 Rosie's Highland Fling with Rosie Macoll, 20.00 John McLuckie's Show, 21.00 David Cullen show, 23.00 Station close down

TUESDAY: 08.00 AM on FM, 08.10 Breakfast Show, 10.00 Ken Hunter's Tuesday Morning, 13.00 Macky on FM, 17.00 Drivetime Jim Lynch, 19.00 Highest Praise - Stuart Chalmers, 20.00 Archie Darlings's Mix, 22.00 Clyde 2

WEDNESDAY: 08.00 AM on FM, 08.10 Breakfast Show, 09.00 Sound Scottish Repeat, 10.00 Comfort Zone, Doug Carmichael, 11.00 Comfort Zone, 12.00 Comfort Zone, 17.00 Drivetime with Campbell, 19.00 Country Meets Rock & Roll - Len + Ken, 20.00 Country Meets Rock & Roll, 21.00 Gordon's Grooves with Gordon Macintyre

THURSDAY: 08.00 - 11.00 Breakfast with Andy and Sarah, 11.00 Molly's Mix with Molly Black, 13.00 Molly's Mix, 15.00 Drivetime with Stephen, 17.00 Drivetime with Stephen McPhee, 18.00 Drivetime with Stephen

McPhee, 19.00 Christines Collection, 20.00 Christine's CD Collection, 21.00 Ann's Ceilidh, 22.00 Margo Till Midnight, 11.00 Margo Till Midnight

FRIDAY: 08.00 Breakfast Show with Laura, 10.00 Teeny and Tiny, 17.00 Drive Show with Jim Lynch, 17.30 Drive Show, 18.45 Sports View, 19.00 Country Meets Country with Jackie Craig, 20.00 Lewis Bingham, 21.00 Peter Rinnie

SATURDAY: 08.00 Breakfast Show with Stephen, 10.00 Sat Morning Live, 11.00 Saturday Morning Live, 12.00 Saturday Morning Live with Linda Crowsher, 12.03 Sat Morning Live, 12.05 Saturday Morning Live, 13.30 Clyde, 18.00 Sports View - Dream Team, 19.00 Sounds Scottish with Archie Darling, 20.00 Dave Lewis, 22.00 Margo Till Midnight

SUNDAY: 09.00 Sunday Morning With Breege, 10.00 Sunday Morning, 11.00 Sunday Brunch With Archie, 12.00 Sunday Brunch, 16.30 Archie Darling, 18.00 Ken's Friends - Ken Hunter, 19.00 New Country Show - David Entwistle, 21.00 Drum & Bass - Graham Scott, 23.00 Station Close Down

CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR REFUSE AND RECYCLING ARRANGEMENTS

OBAN AND LORN

Refuse and recycling collections due over the festive period will be collected as follows :

- Collections due on **25th, 26th, 27th and 28th December** will be collected a day later than published calendar i.e. due on 25th will be collected on 26th, due on 26th will be collected on 27th, due on 27th will be collected on 28th, due on 28th will be collected on 29th December.
- Collections due on **1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th January** will be collected a day later than published calendar i.e. due on 1st will be collected on 2nd, due on 2nd will be collected on 3rd, due on 3rd will be collected on 4th, due on 4th will be collected on 5th January.
- Collections due on **Monday 24th December** and **31st December** will be carried out as normal.
- **Moleigh recycling and civic amenity site** will be closed on **25/26th December** and **1st/2nd January**.

MULL AND IONA

Refuse and recycling collections due over the festive period will be collected as follows:

- Collections due on **Tuesday 25th December** will instead be collected on Friday 28th December.
- Collections due on **Tuesday 1st January** will instead be collected on Friday 4th January.
- All other days will be carried out as normal.
- **Glengorm recycling and civic amenity site** will be closed on **25/26th December** and **1st/2nd January**

TIREE

Refuse collections due on **Tuesday 25th December** will instead be collected on **Friday 21st December**. Recycling collections due **Wednesday 26th December** will instead be collected on **Friday 28th December**. **Gott Bay recycling and civic amenity site** will be closed on **25th/26th December** and **1st/2nd January**

Information is also available on the Council website and from your local office.



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'Friendly, cosy on a cold night, good service and excellent food. Highly recommended' *Tripadvisor, 4th November*
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www.tayvallichinn.com

COMMUNITY NOTICEBOARD

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Oban Accordion & Fiddle Club
Hot Supper Dance
Charlie Kirkpatrick's Scottish Dance Band
Friday 11th January 2019
The Royal Hotel
Tickets: £15
Includes 2 course supper
For tickets contact 01631 562077 or 07979520792
Special overnight stay rate available from The Royal Hotel

Wishing all my family and friends the joys of the festive season and a happy and peaceful new year
From
Maude MacColl, Mull

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WANTED

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01292 880440

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S & S Services
Old Bridge Road,
Heathfield, Ayr
01292 880080
01292 880440

SUBARU
S & S Services
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Heathfield, Ayr
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AWARD WINNING DEALER COMES TO ARGYLL



SATURDAY 12TH & SUNDAY 13TH JANUARY AT TESCO OBAN

ISUZU
THE PICK-UP
PROFESSIONALS

One of the longest serving Subaru & Isuzu dealers in the UK, S & S Services are a family run business aiming to meet each customer's individual needs. S & S Services was first started by Brian and Dulcie Spicer in November 1979 from a small building at Sandyford Toll, Ayr. An escalating client base was soon formed and the business relocated to Mossblown.



Whilst at Mossblown, Brian and Dulcie's son John joined the family business. For almost two decades cars were sold and serviced and many friendships formed.

The family business was further enhanced when John's wife Lesley joined the business in 1997. It was in the latter nineties that the business had outgrown the location and plans were put in place to build an impressive state of the art showroom and workshop at Ayr.

The plans soon became a reality and S & S moved to Old Bridge Road, Ayr in September 2000. Now on to the 3rd generation with Matthew Spicer, business has flourished to unbelievable standards meaning that S & S are now the top UK Subaru dealer. Achieving Subaru UK's dealer of the year status continuously from 2007, S & S Services are your number one for Subaru, Isuzu and Great Wall franchise, with a large stock of new and used cars at competitive prices.

S & S Services have been supporting the people of Argyll for over 30 years and this weekend, they are coming to you!

SATURDAY 12TH
JANUARY

SUNDAY 13TH
JANUARY,

TESCO, OBAN.

John Spicer will be showcasing some amazing car offers. If you have a particular car you wish to view, please call John on 07831 808702.

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If successful in your application, you will enjoy a competitive salary and stakeholders pension package with employer's contribution. You will also enjoy one of the attractive rotas with 33 days holiday per annum. A high standard of accommodation is available free of charge should you meet the criteria. Other benefits include an extensive employees UK wide discount scheme and childcare voucher scheme.

To apply for this position please email a copy of your CV and a covering letter to: Alastair Anderson, Electrical Manager – quoting REF: 2019 email: alastair.anderson@aggregate.com

Closing date 28/01/19



Trading and Operations Manager

Salary: £25,000 per annum.

Full time, temporary post until February 2021, subject to funding. A Visitor Experience and Operations Post will be created in January 2021 for which the Trading and Operations Manager will be eligible to apply.

Closing date: 23rd January 2019

Kilmar Tin Museum is looking for a motivated and enthusiastic individual to manage and promote all aspects of the Museum's visitor experience and operations including Museum reception, the café and retail offering. A major redevelopment project is underway and the post holder will also be responsible for moving to offsite operations at the end of 2019 and into the new building in 2021.

Full details of the post and an application pack can be downloaded from our website www.kilmartin.org/home/get-involved/vacancies/. Provisional interview date will be 1st February 2019.



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Hours: Saturday/Sunday/Monday
(9.00 am – 5.30 pm)

Duties: Welcoming guests, taking bookings for holidays using database, answering the telephone, organising rota for cleaning staff, general reception enquiries, laundry for the holiday park

Criteria: It's essential for all applicants to be efficient, friendly, enjoy working with members of the public and have a good telephone manner.

Salary : On application

Enquiries: Please contact Rachel on 01631 720255

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Email – info@careplusbute.com

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Full details at www.crofting.scotland.gov.uk

FIRST REGISTRATION OF A CROFT

Mr Andrew Iain Cameron has registered his croft, Cnoc Bhan, Acharacle, Ardnamurchan & Sunart on the Crofting Register held by the Registers of Scotland.

Any person who wishes to challenge the registration may apply to the Scottish Land Court by the 17th September 2019. Details of the registration can be found at www.crofts.ros.gov.uk/register/home. The croft registration number is C5550.

FIRST REGISTRATION OF A CROFT

Katherine McKinlay has registered their croft, Balure Croft, Killean and Kilkenzie Parish 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 19 January 2019.

Details of the registration can be found at www.crofts.ros.gov.uk/register/home. The croft registration number is C5019.

Argyll and Bute Council

PLANNING

These applications listed below may be inspected between 09:00-12:30 -13:30-16:00 hrs Monday to Friday at Municipal Buildings Albany Street Oban PA34 4AW, 1A Manse Brae Lochgilphead PA31 8RD, your Local Customer Service Point and by logging on to the Council's website at www.argyll-bute.gov.uk.

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT PROCEDURE (SCOTLAND) REGULATIONS 2013 REGULATION 20(1) ADVERT STATEMENT TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (SCOTLAND) ACT 1997 (AS AMENDED), RELATED PLANNING (LISTED BUILDINGS AND CONSERVATION AREAS) (SCOTLAND) ACT 1997

Ref. No.	Proposal	Site Address
18/02585/PP	Installation of Scottish Water top up tap	Land At Station Square Station Road Oban Argyll And Bute
18/02597/PP	Erection of dwellinghouse, installation of sewage treatment plant and formation of new access	Land West Of Crannich Farm (Plot 2) Aros Isle Of Mull Argyll And Bute
18/02530/MFF	Re-equipment and enlargement of Spelve B fishfarm to comprise 12 No. 90m circumference cages and feed barge (increase of biomass from 700T to 1577T) with relinquishment of Spelve A fishfarm	Spelve B fishfarm Loch Spelve Isle Of Mull Argyll And Bute
18/02393/PP	Change of use of garage to form self catering unit and installation of septic tank (retrospective)	Dachaigh Mo Chridhe Vaul Isle Of Tiree Argyll And Bute PA77 6TP
18/02601/PPP	Site for the erection of dwellinghouse	Land North East Of Crannich Farm (Plot 1) Aros Isle Of Mull 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 Council's website.

To find out more about living and working in Argyll & Bute visit us at:

www.argyll-bute.gov.uk
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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>; 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
18/05217/FUL	Marina's Bridal, Shopping Centre, Glenloy Street, Caol, Fort William	Change of use of Bridal shop into a home baking shop/cafe with takeaway
18/05669/FUL	Ryvoan, Achdaluie Road, Banavie, Fort William	Alterations to existing garage to form self contained letting unit
18/05747/FUL	Glenancross Guesthouse, Morar, Mallaig	Part change of use from house to cafe
18/05750/FUL	Land 1100M SW of Glencoe Caravan and Camping Site, Glencoe	Construction of a run of river hydro scheme, including intake, buried pipeline, turbine house, outfall, grid connection & access tracks
18/05763/FUL	Land 40M SE of Corner Cottage, Acharacle	Erection of a house
18/05772/FUL	Land 35M SW of Raasay, Seaview Grazings, Strontian	Erection of 2 No. Houses (amended proposal - Ref: 18/03319/FUL)
18/05784/PIP	Land 75M NW of Schoolhouse Tomacharrich, Torlundy, Fort William	Erection of house
18/05816/FUL	Land 730M SE of Rowan Bank, South Laggan, Spean Bridge	Construction of a run of river hydro scheme, including intake, buried pipeline, turbine house, outfall, grid connection & access tracks

Time period for comments is 14 days

ePlanning Centre, The Highland Council, Glenurquhart Road, INVERNESS IV3 5NX
Email: eplanning@highland.gov.uk

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TOE-TEC BOOTS New Size 8, £10 Telephone 01397 772326.

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Computers and Games

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Personal Notices

Freena MacDougall
would like to thank family, relatives and friends for flowers, cards, gifts and hospital visits during her recent illness. Grateful thanks to Dr Quayle; the crews of the Isle of Mull and the Isle of Arran and the medical and nursing staff on Wards A & B of the Lorn and Islands Hospital, for their care and kindness.

DEATHS

FISHER - Suddenly but peacefully, at the Queen Elizabeth University Hospital, Glasgow, on December 15, 2018, in her 81st year, Margaret (née Campbell), beloved wife of Matthew, dear mother of John and Andrew and proud grandmother of Allegra and Carlotta. Only daughter of the late Ex Provost John Campbell of Inveraray and Mrs Margaret Campbell. Funeral will take place at Inveraray Parish Church, on Friday, January 4, 2019 at 12.00 noon, thereafter to Glen Shira Cemetery.

MACINNES - Peacefully at the Lorn and Islands Hospital, Oban on December 20, 2018, in her 94th year, Annie, beloved wife of the late Alister MacInnes, much loved mum of Iain and Kenneth and mother-in-law of Caroline and Edna, grandmother to David, Nicola, Tracy and Ashley and great-grandmother to Aiobha, Mia and Ruairidh. Sadly missed.

MACNEIL - Suddenly at home, Ach-na-mara, Oban on December 18, 2018, Effie, dearly loved aunt of Anne. R.I.P. Funeral will take place at St Columba's Cathedral, Oban on Friday, December 28 at 10.00 a.m., thereafter to Pennyfuir.

McCOLL - Peacefully at Eadar Glinn Care Home, Oban on December 19, 2018, aged 89, Ken McColl, husband of Agnes, father of Jonathan, Anne, David and Stephen and grandad to Caroline, Emily, Adam, Amy, Jamie, Ben, Lauren, Jack, Natasha and Mark. Funeral will take place at Cardross Crematorium, Main Road, Cardross G82 5HD on Wednesday, January 9 at 12.15 pm. Family flowers only, please. Retiring collection/donations if desired for Alzheimer Scotland Action on Dementia.

WALTON - On December 20, 2018, at Uist and Barra Hospital, in her 86th year, Edna Margaret Walton, darling mother of Alasdair and Veronica loving grandmother to Donald and Patrick. Funeral will take place at Cardross Crematorium, Main Road, Cardross G82 5HD on Thursday, January 3, 2019 at 12.15 pm. (Please wear a bright colour!) No flowers, please. Retiring collection/donations if desired for Uist and Barra Hospital.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

FAIRLIE - Christine, Karen, Marion and family would like to thank all relatives and friends for their kind support and thoughts following the recent passing of John. A special thanks to the attending paramedics, fire service, Lorn and Islands hospital A and E department and the cardiac unit. Many thanks to the Rev Dugald Cameron, staff at Oban Parish Church and Ian MacInnes of D & A Munn for all the funeral arrangements and the Royal Hotel. Donations to ABCD Oban raised £642.60.

PARK - Iain and family would like to sincerely thank all family, friends and neighbours for the many kind expressions of sympathy extended to them following their sad loss of Iona. Sincere thanks to Rev Richard Baxter for his comforting service. Grateful thanks to Scott, Linnie and John for their caring and respectful funeral arrangements. Special thanks to the Moorings Hotel for the catering. Finally, thanks to all those who paid their last respects at the Church and graveside and to those who generously donated £721.76 to Lochaber Macmillan Nurses and Cancer Research UK.

MEMORIAMS

BIRRELL - Remembering Al who passed away December 26, 2010. Dad, those we love don't go away, they walk beside us every day. Forever in our hearts. Lisa, DI & girls x

CAMERON - Affectionate memories of my dear sister and our loving aunt Morag who passed away December 25, 2013. Remembered always as time unfolds another year. - Inserted by Chrissie and family, Caalmojo, Kilmory.

CAMPBELL - In loving memory of my dear wife Liz, who passed away so suddenly on December 26, 1998 aged 43 years. Quietly loved and remembered always. - Cammie, Fort William.

CLARK - In loving memory of Alexander (Tom) a dear husband, father, granddad and great-granddad, who passed away December 26, 2012. Always remembered.

JAMIESON - In memory of my friend Helen, who passed away on December 28, 1999. Always remembered. - Marleen.

LAMONT - In loving memory of my dear husband Willie, who passed away so suddenly on New Year's Eve 2005. Always in my thoughts. - Mary.

MACPHAIL - Treasured memories of a dear husband, dad "Shesh", John, Ardmay, Tiree, who passed away December 26, 2004 and loved ones gone before and after. No longer in my life to share But in my heart you are always there Jean x

His memory is as dear today As in the hour he passed away. - May, Irene and families, Tiree and Oban.

MACQUARIE - In loving memory of my dear wife Jessie, who passed away on December 28, 2013. So dearly missed. - Adie.

THORNE - Mary. December 27, 2017. At home with the LORD No better place to be But we miss you mum and nana. - Wendy, Marie, Rachael and Rebecca.

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Obituary: Angus M

Angus Lawrie was a member of the Mid-Argyll team in 1961.

Angus Lawrie died December 7. He was 88 years old, having been born in Oban on June 25, 1930.

Angus proudly came from Oban. He was educated at Rockfield Primary, and then at the Oban High School. His father, Kenny, was an accomplished piper, and his uncle, Angus, founded Oban Pipe Band.

Angus was devoted to his parents (Kenny and Cathy), and was part of a close family (sisters Ina and Mary, and brothers Ewan and Kenny).

On leaving school, Angus did a variety of jobs: his first job at 13 was as a slaughterman in the Oban abattoir. Angus subsequently worked as a porter in the Regent and Columba Hotels. Angus was drafted to National Service, where he served in the Black Watch. He joined the Black Watch Pipe Band, while his shinty skills saw him play in the British Army hockey team.

After National Service, Angus returned to Oban and spent several years working in the hotels and as a woodsman. He joined the 8th Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders Territorial Regiment - playing in both the Oban Pipe Band and 8th Argyll Pipe Bands with his cousin 'Big Ronnie'.

Angus was a gifted athlete and was a great shinty and football player. Shinty was his passion, and he became a star player in the famous Oban Celtic team of the 1950s and Mid Argyll in the late 1950s and 1960s..

He co-founded the Glasgow Police shinty and football teams. He only gave up playing shinty when he was 52. He was honoured by the shinty world in 2011, on the 50th anniversary of the famous Mid-Argyll victory in the Celtic Cup.

Angus will be best remembered for his time in the police. It was in 1954 that Angus joined the police in Glasgow - serving for 30 years. Angus was commended for his courageous conduct on nine occasions. By all accounts he was 'very good at catching a thief'.

Working in the Glasgow police would change his life - not least of course because that was how he met his wife to be Doreen. Doreen also worked for the police - as a telephonist. Love found its way and the two were married in the congregation church in Cathcart on November 22, 1958. They would go on to enjoy some 60 years of happy marriage, be blessed with two boys (Kenny and Ian), three grandchildren (Martin, Ann-Marie and Christine), and three great-grandchildren (Isla, Fergus and Evelina).

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Angus Lawrie



Angus Lawrie was a member of the Mid-Argyll team in 1961.

Family was very much Angus's life. He was very proud of all of them, and indeed lived for them. Home for the Lawries would be Cathcart for the boys' schooling, and then Houston, Largs and finally Doonfoot for the past 10 years.

As a golfer, he won the Scottish police golf championship at Dalmahoy.

Angus will perhaps best be remembered as a piper, pipe major, instructor, composer and pipe-bag maker. Angus became an accomplished solo player, and was particularly proud of winning the local gold medal at the Argyllshire Gathering, 30 years after his father.

Angus was also an accomplished Highland dancer, performing the Argyll broadsword on stage and television for kings and queens, and international audiences from Europe to North America. And how many pipers have appeared in a James Bond movie?

After retiring as a police officer, Angus became pipe-major of the Grade 1 Britoil in the 1980s. Angus then became pipe-major of Johnstone, which at the time was a Grade 3 band. He was particularly proud that his grandson Martin also played in the band.

Angus also established a very successful business making pipe bags. His sheepskin pipe bags for a time were among the most widely played – particularly by the top pipers of the day. He was also the largest supplier of bags to the trade, and the British Army.

Angus was a prolific composer and penned more than 350 tunes, perhaps the most well-known of which are the 4/4 march, The 1976 Police Tattoo, the hornpipe Old Toasty (Ronald Lawrie's father's nickname), and the march, Dugald Gillespie.

Angus published a collection of some of his music, The Oban Connection, in the 1980s.

Many of Angus's tunes have been extensively played and recorded throughout the world by pipers, pipe bands and folk music groups. An omnibus collection of Angus's music – Highland Memorial – will be published next year.

Angus liked people and enjoyed life. He was a very kind and generous man.

Many of his friends and family have been bestowed the special gift of a tune composed for them by Angus. His music will outlive us all.

THOUGHT for the week

I've never been a great fan of New Year resolutions.

The worst thing is that they can stir up stuff from the past which we know we need to deal with.

They can induce a sense of failure again (!) when by January 4 we've already broken them.

Now I realise I maybe putting too much weight on our tendency to self-examine. In more than 40 years of ministry, I have spent time with people who have a low value of themselves and anticipate other people reinforcing that viewpoint.

Without being triumphalistic, let me remind you of the recently celebrated events of Christmas.

First, Christians believe that Jesus was/is God's gift to all

humanity – a gift of love from a loving Father. Secondly, throughout his ministry, Jesus shows us a model of loving acceptance where guilt and shame have been dealt with. Through his death and resurrection Jesus has made it possible for us to find acceptance just as we are. We are worth dying for - such is God's love for us. We don't need to jump through hoops or try to get God's attention by making resolutions we find it difficult to keep.

Perhaps there is one resolution we can make and that is to try to walk the way of faith and forgiveness that Jesus offers.

Happy New Year!
Ian McFarlane,
Oban Baptist Church.

To allow for the festive break spot the ball will run for two weeks

SPOT THE SHINTY BALL

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We have removed the shinty ball from the photograph opposite. Now look carefully at the position of the players and use your skill and judgement to place a cross at the exact point where you think the centre of the ball was. You may have a maximum of 20 attempts on this coupon at a cost of £1.

If you wish to have more attempts, you must enter on separate coupons.

Easy to enter

Cut out your completed coupon and put your entry plus £1 per 20 attempts into a sealed envelope and post it to "Spot the Shinty Ball" Competition, The Oban Times, PO Box 1, Oban, Argyll PA34 4HB by noon Friday 28th December. No refunds will be given for entries received after the deadline.

You may hand it into The Oban Times Head Office, Lochavullin, Oban by the same time. Otherwise all entries must be posted.

Competition rules

No responsibility will be accepted for entries which are delayed, mislaid or lost, and proof of posting cannot be accepted as proof of delivery.

The Company's decision is final on all matters relating to the competition and no correspondence will be entered into. The final decision rests with the Company.

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.

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.

WEEK TWO OF TWO Entries must be in by Friday 28th December



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

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OT

2018 shinty review of the s

As the year draws to a close, it's time to look back on the shinty stories making the news during 2018.

January 2018

Oban Camanachd mark the New Year

The Red & Blacks and the Whites drew 1-1 as players from Oban Camanachd, Lochside Rovers and Oban Camanachd's U17s took the field in mixed teams to contest The John Collie Cup at Mossfield.

Lovat retain Lovat Cup

Lovat retained the Lovat Cup as four-goal Greg Matheson gave them a convincing 4-0 victory over Beaully at Braeview Park.

The match was originally scheduled for Lovat's Balgate home, but a frozen pitch led to a venue switch down the road to Beaully's ground.

Crossal & Co win John MacKinnon Sixes

Crossal & Co won the John MacKinnon Memorial Sixes, played at Portree High School's astro pitch.

The event remembers Skye Camanachd vice president John MacKinnon who died following a tragic accident at work in December 2011.

Changing times

Kingussie announced John Gibson would be their first team manager for the 2018 season.

Col Glen confirmed Ronnie MacVicar had taken over as their boss.

Neil MacDonald was confirmed as the new Lochaber first team manager.

On the field, Neil MacVicar left Skye Camanachd to join Kyles Athletic, with the islanders now managed by John Macleod.

Aberdour and Glenorchy went on player recruitment drives.

Oban Celtic seconds

Oban Celtic made the ambitious decision to field two teams during the 2018 shinty season.

Former Oban Celtic player Alan Duffy and Les Kinvig will manage the newly formed Oban Celtic colts in a hugely positive move by the club.

Skye lift Johnstone Rose Bowl

Skye Camanachd Ladies regained the Johnstone Rose Bowl at the Glengarry Indoor Tournament at the Nevis Centre, Fort William.

Skye A defeated Glengarry A in the semi-finals with Badenoch & Strathspey edging out Skye B.

This set up a repeat of the 2017 final and a Rhianna Kirk double and goals from Jenna Beaton and Lorna MacRae helped Skye to a 4-2 win.

Skye captain Lorna MacRae was presented with the Johnstone Rose Bowl, whilst Skye's Caitlin MacLean was named player of the tournament.

February 2018

Travis Perkins national first shinty festivals

Inverloch's winning streak continued as they were double winners at the Travis Perkins National P5 and under and P7 and under first shinty festivals in Fort William.

Strathspey Ladies are champs

The final championship of the 2017 shinty season was eventually decided when Lochaber Ladies and Strathspey Ladies met to decide the Marine Harvest North Division 2 title. The play-off match came about after the sides finished

the 2017 season level at the top of the table. A close first half finished goal-less but Strathspey's Jessica Hart and Jade Longworth got the goals that made the difference, cancelling out Anna Berardelli's effort for Lochaber, to clinch a 2-1 win. The win meant Strathspey were promoted to the Marine Harvest National Division 1 as champions.

March 2018

Portree High School A won the Donella Crawford Sixes at Ardnamurchan, going through the tournament without conceding a goal.

The islanders topped their league section before beating Ardnamurchan in the semi-final and tournament first-timers Culloden 2-0 in the final.

On the field action

The new shinty season got underway on March 3.

Marine Harvest Premiership

Kinlochshiel were the early pace-setters after beating Glenurquhart, Caberfeidh and Lovat. Kyles Athletic were second, but a mixed month saw them beat Kingussie and Glenurquhart either side of a draw with Caberfeidh and a loss to Lovat. Oban Camanachd opened with draws against Glenurquhart and Lovat, either side of a 1-0 defeat to Newtonmore at Mossfield.

Marine Harvest National Division

Oban Celtic made a good start to the season, beating Inverness and Strathglass either side of a draw with Inveraray to top the table a point ahead of Kilmallie and Glasgow Mid Argyll.

Marine Harvest North Division 1

The Newtonmore second team showed their early intent as four straight wins left them top, two points in front of Glengarry who also had a 100 per cent record from their three games.

Marine Harvest South Division 1

The Kyles Athletic seconds, Col Glen and Bute were all level on points at the top of the table at the end of the month.

A much-changed Lochside Rovers side started with a defeat to Bute, a draw with Ballachulish but ended the month with a win against Aberdour.

Marine Harvest North Division 2

The Caberfeidh colts finished March a point ahead of Lochcarron at the top.

Marine Harvest South Division 2

Strachur won both their opening fixtures against the Aberdour seconds and Glenorchy to top South 2.

cottages.com MacTavish Cup

Caberfeidh, Kinlochshiel, Lochaber, Lovat and Newtonmore all progressed in the MacTavish Cup.

Scottish Sea Foods Glasgow Celtic Cup

There was an opening round win for Bute at Oban Celtic's expense.

April 2018

Ballachulish confirmed their new management team would be Lorne Brown and Morgan Smith, who took over from Donald Wilson.



Oban Camanachd won the Scottish Seafarms Celtic Society Cup after an enthralling 2-0 win over Kyles Athletic at Taynuilt.

On the field action

Marine Harvest Premiership

Despite dropping their first point of the season in a draw with Oban Camanachd, wins over Lochaber and Skye kept Kinlochshiel top of the pile. Kyles Athletic were just a couple of points behind with fourth placed Newtonmore suffering two defeats in the opening five matches. Oban Camanachd lost to Caberfeidh but beat Kingussie before earning a creditable 2-2 draw with 2017 champions Kinlochshiel in a match switched to the Bught Park.

Marine Harvest National Division

League wins over Strathglass and Oban Celtic took Kilmallie out in front in shinty's second tier, with Fort William just a point behind following victories over Strathglass and Inverness.

Marine Harvest North Division 1

Six wins out of six had the Newtonmore seconds top of the table, with second placed Glengarry only losing one of their first five matches.

Marine Harvest South Division 1

The Kyles Athletic second team were now serious title contenders after maintaining a 100 per cent record after five games.

Marine Harvest North Division 2

It was tight at the top of North 2 as only a point separated Lovat reserves, Caberfeidh reserves, Lochcarron and Boleskine.

Marine Harvest South Division 2

Strachur held a single point advantage over Glenorchy at the top of the division.

Liberty British Aluminium Balliemore Cup

The opening round of the Balliemore Cup went pretty much to form with Ballachulish the biggest winners, defeating Col Glen 7-0.

Sutherland Cup

Teams from Kingussie, Fort William, Lochaber, Lovat and Skye all had good second round wins.

May 2018

On the field action

Marine Harvest Premiership

Kinlochshiel stayed ahead of Lovat at the top of the table, but only on goal difference, after beating Kyles Athletic but losing to Newtonmore. Oban Camanachd put nine goals past Lochaber and drew with title hopefuls Kyles Athletic. Skye recorded their first league win, defeating Glenurquhart 3-2.

Marine Harvest National Division

A home win over Strathglass was enough to keep Kilmallie in top spot. Fort William sat just a point behind after overcoming Oban Celtic in their only league match in the month.

Marine Harvest North Division 1

The Newtonmore reserves stayed ahead of Glengarry by a couple of points, despite losing against the Fort William reserves. Glengarry had a game in hand.



Newtonmore with the cottages.com MacTavish Cup after their 2-1 win over Kinlochshiel.

Season – part one



On the field action Marine Harvest Premiership

There were only three points between leaders Kinlochshiel and fourth-placed Kyles Athletic as the title race passed the half-way stage. Second-placed Newtonmore won all of the matches during the month.

Marine Harvest National Division

Kilmallie remained a point ahead of Fort William, winning their only league match during the month, and they now had a game in hand.

Marine Harvest North Division 1

The Newtonmore reserves remained two points ahead of Glengarry who still had a game in hand.

Marine Harvest South Division 1

The Kyles seconds dropped their first points of the season with draws against Aberdour and the Inveraray seconds but they finished the month a point ahead of Aberdour with a game in hand.

Marine Harvest Division 2

The Lovat seconds held a one point advantage over Lochcarron at the top. The Caberfeidh colts were three points off the lead but had two games in hand.

Marine Harvest South Division 2

Glasgow Mid Argyll seconds took over from Strachur at the top. Oban Celtic's second team won their first match of the season, beating their Aberdour counter-parts 3-1.

Tulloch Homes Camanachd Cup

Kinlochshiel extinguished Oban Camanachd's hopes of a Scottish Cup run with a 4-1 win at Kirkton. Newtonmore edged past Lochaber 1-0 whilst Fort William defeated Oban Celtic 3-2 with Lachie Shaw getting the winner with his second goal of the game. It took a replay before Kilmallie got by Inveraray.

Artemis Macaulay Cup

Kinlochshiel, Kyles Athletic, Lovat and Oban Camanachd reached the last four of the Artemis Macaulay Cup.

cottages.com MacTavish Cup

Newtonmore won the cottages.com MacTavish Cup for a record 42nd time after beating Kinlochshiel 2-1 in

the final. Keith MacRae gave Kinlochshiel the lead. A shot from Evan Menzies then deflected into the net off Kinlochshiel defender Finlay MacRae's caman. The winning goal came nine minutes after the restart when Iain Robinson slotted home.

Scottish Sea Farms Glasgow Celtic Society Cup

Oban Camanachd beat Kyles Athletic 2-0 to win the Scottish Sea Foods Glasgow Celtic Society Cup for the first time since 2005. Andrew MacCuish scored on 12 and 33 minutes to leave the Oban side in cont rol. Oban Camanachd started well, won more of the 50-50 balls, defended as if their lives depended on it and had a match winner in Andrew MacCuish. The Donald J MacNiven medal for man of the match went to young Oban Camanachd defender Daniel Sloss who was again excellent. Captain Daniel Cameron stepped forward to receive the Glasgow Celtic Society Cup from sponsors Scottish Sea Farms.

Liberty British Aluminium Balliemore Cup

Kilmallie and Glasgow Mid Argyll will contest the Balliemore Cup Final after they both won their last-four ties. Kilmallie beat Beauly 9-0 in their semi, with Liam MacDonald scoring seven times. GMA defeated Fort William on penalties after a 1-1 draw.

Marine Harvest National Division 1

Skye led the division on goal difference and had a game in hand over second placed Badenoch & Strathspey.

Marine Harvest Valerie Fraser Camanachd Cup

Badenoch & Strathspey and Skye Camanachd won through to women's shinty's main event, the Marine Harvest Valerie Fraser Camanachd Cup Final. Badenoch notched a 2-0 win over Lochaber, whilst Skye had a walk-over after Glasgow Mid Argyll were unable to fulfil their semi-final tie.

Don't miss next week's Oban Times for the 2018 Shinty Review of the Season – Part 2

Marine Harvest South Division 1

The Kyles Athletic seconds made it seven wins out of seven to lead second-placed Aberdour by four points. Bute were six points adrift in third, although they had a game in hand.

Marine Harvest North Division 2

The title race now seemed to be between Lovat reserves, Caberfeidh reserves and Lochcarron after Boleskine lost to Caberfeidh during the month.

Marine Harvest South Division 2

Strachur stayed just ahead of the Glasgow Mid Argyll colts and Glenorchy.

Tulloch Homes Camanachd Cup

Beauly, Fort William, Inveraray, Kilmallie and Oban Celtic all made it through to the Scottish second round.

Artemis Macaulay Cup

Kinlochshiel beat Newtonmore 2-1 in their first round tie, with both Oban teams also progressing.

cottages.com MacTavish Cup

Kinlochshiel and Newtonmore won through to the MacTavish Cup Final. Kinlochshiel defeated Caberfeidh 7-2 but the other tie was closer as Newtonmore edged out Lovat 1-0.

Scottish Sea Foods Glasgow Celtic Society Cup

Oban Camanachd and Kyles Athletic reached the final. Goals from young-

sters Daniel MacVicar and Daniel MacCuish gave Oban Camanachd a 2-0 semi-final win over Inveraray, whilst Colin MacDonald scored twice as Kyles Athletic beat Glasgow Mid Argyll 4-2 in the other last four tie.

Liberty British Aluminium Balliemore Cup

Beauly, Fort William, Glasgow Mid Argyll and Kilmallie enjoyed quarter final victories in shinty's intermediate competition.

Marine Harvest National Division 1

Skye recorded a crucial 3-1 win at Badenoch & Strathspey as the title favourites clashed for the first time this season.

June 2018

Fort William's U17s win MacTavish

Fort William's U17s won the MacTavish Juvenile Cup, beating Kingussie's U17s 2-1 in the final at the Bught Park. Michael Slimon gave Kingussie the lead on 20 minutes, but Lewis Clark levelled a couple of minutes later. Victor Smith scored the goal that made the difference on 43 minutes and Fort William captain Lewis Clark lifted the trophy.

Fort William's Lachie Shaw won the Sandy MacKay medal for man of the match.

Skye's U17s win Strathdearn Sixes

Skye Camanachd's U17s were the winners at the Strathdearn Sixes at the Bught Park, Inverness. Skye beat Glenurquhart U17 3-0 in the final of this round-robin tournament.



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WEATHER

Thursday
Light rain showers with a moderate breeze
Temperatures
7°C to 10°C.

Friday
Light rain showers and a fresh breeze
Temperatures
6°C to 8°C.

**Weekend
Outlook**
Saturday
Light rain showers and a moderate breeze
Sunday
Sunny intervals and a gentle breeze
Temperatures
3°C to 8°C.



TIDAL INFORMATION

Tide tables for Oban during the week from **Thursday December 27, 2018** are listed below with differences for major ports listed on the right. All times are GMT (add one hour BST)

Thur	04.49	3.8	11.04	1.0
	17.00	3.9	23.31	1.1
Fri	05.24	4.0	11.45	1.0
	17.34	3.9	**	**
Sat	00.06	1.1	05.58	4.1
	12.25	1.1	18.07	3.9
Sun	00.42	1.1	06.33	4.1
	13.02	1.2	18.42	3.9
Mon	01.19	1.2	07.09	4.0
	13.40	1.4	19.17	3.8
Tues	01.57	1.3	07.45	3.9
	14.18	1.6	19.53	3.6
Wed	02.36	1.5	08.24	3.7
	15.00	1.8	20.30	3.4

Tidal Constants: (Add or deduct from High Water at Oban)

Ardrishaig	-5.35	Mallaig	+0.25
Campbeltown	-5.30	Portree	+0.55
Crinan	-0.47	Tobermory	+0.16
Islay Port Ellen	2.00	Dover	+5.30
Lochboisdale	+0.30		

Ferry Crossings/Sea States

Oban to Barra/South Uist	Moderate
Oban to Coll/Tiree	Moderate
Kennacraig to Islay	Moderate

**Stop Press: New pontoons at Ulva Ferry
and visitor moorings installed at Lochaline
by North West Marine Ltd**



INSIDE THIS WEEK:
Shinty review
of the season

NORTH WEST MARINE
DIVING & MARINE SPECIALISTS
SPONSORS OF THE OBAN TIMES WEATHER AND TIDES - SEE PAGE 39



Some of the badminton prize-winners and finalists pictured with Liz Clunie.

Feathers fly at Oban high school championships

Results of Oban High School U19 badminton championships held recently.

U-19 girls' singles: winner - Kirsty MacArthur; runner-up - Zoe Cook.

U-19 boys' singles: winner

- Angus Neil; runner-up - Kenni Gray.

U-19 girls' doubles: winners - Kirsty MacArthur and Claire Reid; runners-up - Zoe Cook and Katie MacCorquodale.

U-19 boys' doubles: winners - Angus Neil and Ally Trafford; runners-up - Rory Dowd and Aaron McKay.

U-19 mixed: winners - Angus Neil and Kirsty MacArthur; runners-up -

Zoe Cook and Aaron McKay. Former PE teacher Liz Clunie presented the prizes and umpired some of the finals. Liz was instrumental in securing funding for the new trophies, donating cups

BADMINTON

herself and working with Argyll Beats Cardiovascular Disease, who donated several shields.

Oban Saints prepare for Scottish Cup

Rothie Rovers
Oban Saints

Scottish Cup - 5th round

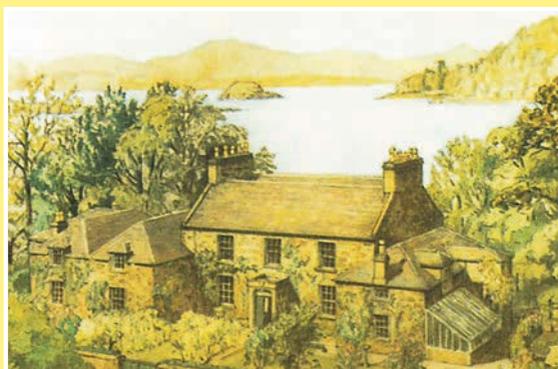
The Scottish amateur football scene is in the middle of a two-week break for Christmas and New Year with Saints still going strong in all competitions.

However, with three important cup ties to look forward to in January, the Saints management duo of Donald Campbell and Willie Gemmell won't be resting on their laurels and will be looking at ways of keeping their charges ticking over for a flying start on January 5.

The club are preparing to make the long journey to Rothienorman in Aberdeenshire to take on Rothie Rovers in the fifth round of the Scottish Amateur Cup with the winners securing a place in the last 16 of the national cup competition.

In preparation for this game, the Oban side have organised a full-scale practice match on Saturday December 29, kicking off at 9.15am which will allow the players to watch the Old Firm game later in the day.

On January 12, Saints make the slightly shorter journey to take on Lochgilphead Red Star in the first round of the Jimmy Marshall Cup and on January 19 they are scheduled to play old rivals Thorn Athletic in the fourth round of the West of Scotland Cup. This game will be played at Glencruitten with a 1.30pm kick-off.



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Highland 'tiger' may now be extinct in wild

by Mark Entwistle
mentwistle@obantimes.co.uk

Genetically pure Scottish wildcats are now either extinct in the wild or on the verge of extinction, with nearly all surviving animals believed to be the result of interbreeding with domestic and feral cats.

A major new scientific study released last week highlights genetic research that the famous 'Highland tiger', which was once widespread across Lochaber and the rest of the Highlands but has since dwindled to a few stronghold areas including Morvern, is now believed to be part of the same gene pool as domestic cats.

A paper on the research published in the Journal of Evolutionary Applications concludes that very few Scottish wildcats living in the wild meet the genetic or physical standards used to tell the difference between a wildcat and a hybrid.

The researchers, from the Wildgenes Lab at Edinburgh



Zoo, examined the DNA of nearly 300 cats, the majority of which had been identified as wildcats.

They also established what a wildcat genome should look like by extracting DNA from stuffed museum exhibits.

Lead researcher Dr Helen Senn said from a 'functional perspective' Scottish wildcats were on the brink of extinction in the wild.

She added that crossbreeding with domestic feral cats had long been known to be a

major threat to the Scottish wildcat.

'Having tested almost 300 wild-living and captive wildcats, we now have genetic data which confirms our belief that the vast majority of Scottish wildcats living in the wild are hybrids to one extent or another,' she said.

'While it is disappointing to see such high levels of hybridisation in the wild, it is encouraging that the genetic pool within the captive population is much stronger.'

Pure wildcats could now be extinct in Scotland, according to the latest scientific research.
Photograph: Royal Zoological Society of Scotland.

The key to future conservation efforts appears to lie in those genetically purer wildcats in captivity across the UK, numbering almost 100, which have a stronger genetic inheritance.

Lewis Pate is the Loch Arkaig wildlife conservation adviser for the Woodland Trust and has been operating camera traps along Loch Arkaig, Glen Loy, since the summer in the hope of locating wildcats.

'Sadly, we've had no success

and the chance of genetically pure wildcats still surviving in this area is probably negligible, I would say,' he told us.

'What you have here now are fully dilute hybrids, but with animals in key target conservation areas like Morvern showing stronger genetics.'

'But the wildcat is a truly iconic Scottish species, an indigenous animal in that it has been here since the Ice Age. Hopefully, captive breeding and release will be the way to secure its future.'

The partners in the study included Scottish Natural Heritage, Oxford University and National Museums Scotland.

Edinburgh Zoo (Royal Zoological Society of Scotland) is among more than 20 members of Scottish Wildcat Action (SWA) which is trying to halt the spread of genes from domestic cats in wildcat areas with a programme of trapping, neutering, vaccinating and releasing animals.

No sale of Fort dive centre as going concern

Efforts to sell The Underwater Centre in Fort William as a going concern have failed, according to the administrators.

It had been hoped that administrators Johnston Carmichael would find a buyer who could help to maintain the facility as a centre of subsea excellence for Scotland and the UK.

But Johnston Carmichael has now confirmed that this has not proved possible, although they have completed the sale of the business's assets.

It was in May that the centre underwent a financial restructuring to become a not-for-profit company, but in October the decision was taken to cease trading, with nearly 50 jobs being lost.

The centre had long been hailed as a centre of excellence for diver training, subsea trials and testing.



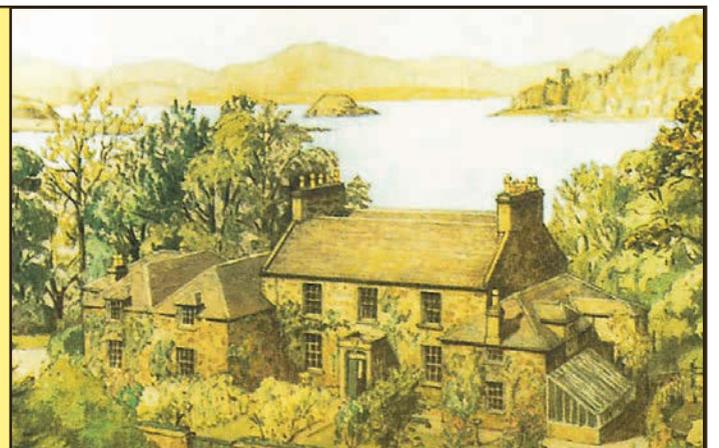
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LT

Memories of 'men of the wee cinema'

by Mark Entwistle
mentwistle@obantimes.co.uk

For many of those who lived in Lochaber and other remote regions of the Highlands and islands, their first experience of the cinema was thanks to a special film guild set up after the Second World War to bring the magic of the big screen to them.

The publicly-funded Highlands and Islands Film Guild was brought into being to tour movies round the smaller communities.

Between 1946 and 1971, the 'men of the wee cinema' travelled around in vans, each of which was equipped with two Bell and Howell 16mm projectors plus a screen measuring around eight or six feet across.

New films would arrive at the guild's office in Inverness and thereafter mailed out to a particular projectionist who would show it, then pass it on



The van which was a familiar sight in Fort William driven by projectionist Vic Gall, with, from left, a visitor from Ghana, Jack Orviss, Hugh Ross and Vic. Photograph: University of Glasgow

to another guild member and on it would go until everyone had been able to show it.

However, it was eventually wound up and the vans taken off the road in 1971 due to the arrival of television and dwindling audiences.

This autumn in Inverness,

a special reunion was held of many of those who had been involved and their families.

The reunion signalled the end of a three-year project on the work of the guild entitled Major Minor Cinema: Highlands and Islands Film Guild 1946-71.

And Fort William played a

central role, with those attending the event in the city's Eden Court Theatre given the chance to see the original Film Guild Trojan van used by Vic Gall to cover the Fort William area.

The innovative study was put together by a team of academics at the University of Glasgow to

examine the impact of cinema on the Highlands and islands.

One woman recounted to the research team her memories of seeing a film put on by a guild projectionist in her local community in the Highlands: 'It must be remembered that for almost everyone, certainly the local children, this was, indeed, our first and only experience of moving pictures - the motion and the sound were magical, hypnotic, totally engrossing.'

Team leader Dr Ian Goode, a lecturer in film and television studies, said the 'wee cinema' was still fondly remembered in rural areas such as Lochaber but until the university's project had remained a mostly unwritten part of cinema history.

'These men delivered a valuable service to local communities in spaces such as school or village halls in all weathers to offer a unique cinema experience at that time,' he said.

Finnie urges end to ScotRail 'chaos'

Highlands and Islands Green MSP John Finnie has called on the Scottish Government to end the current ScotRail franchise as what he calls 'chaos' continues across the rail network.

Mr Finnie, Greens' Transport spokesperson, made the call in parliament last week.

Greens support the devolution of Network Rail and believe both track and train operations should be run by a public sector operator.

Mr Finnie told the Lochaber Times: 'ScotRail's performance has gone from bad to worse in recent months and the Scottish Government's response has been wholly inadequate.'

'Simply ordering review after review, while ScotRail's performance continues to get worse, is not good enough.'

'The Transport Secretary must bring to an end Abelio's disastrous reign and put in place a public sector operator to run Scotland's railways exclusively in the public interest, at the earliest opportunity.'

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Major boost for Fort economy

It is estimated that for every £1 spent on the ski slopes of Nevis Range and Glencoe, a further £4 is spent in the local area.

The same holds true for the slopes at Glenshee, Cairngorm and the Lecht, according to the latest estimates just released, with Scottish snow sports boosting the national economy by almost £31 million.

Additionally, negative projections made in 2011 on likely Scottish skiing and snowboard trends have failed to materialise – with additional

investment in Scotland's five ski centres considered a key factor in maintaining visitor numbers.

These new figures from VisitScotland apply figures of 'skier days' for the 2017/18 season to existing methodology showing a £30,892,375 benefit to Scotland's economy.

The Scottish Government, through Highland and Islands Enterprise (HIE) and Scottish Enterprise, has provided more than £5.5 million to Scottish ski centres in the past three

years to upgrade infrastructure and improve the visitor experience.

Lochaber MSP Kate Forbes said the importance of winter sports to the region's economy could not be overstated.

'Scotland's great outdoors is a huge draw for visitors and sporting enthusiasts, especially over the winter months,' the MSP for Skye, Lochaber and Badenoch said this week.

'Our five ski centres offer varied and exciting terrain and there's been fantastic invest-

ment in better facilities over recent years – thanks in part to the efforts of the Scottish Government and its agencies.

'Just a few years ago, there was a doom and gloom outlook for Scottish skiing, but through a determined effort, we've managed to reverse that trend and boost the numbers enjoying the slopes.

'The economic impact of that has been significant – with a £31m boost to our economy last year, which is about £6m more than was projected.

'While Cairngorm mountain in my constituency is facing challenges, everyone is working to keep it open for business – it's so important for the Highland economy to see snow sports continue there for many more winters to come.

'Alongside many other skiers and boarders, I'll be keeping my fingers crossed for great conditions this winter, giving a huge boost to the rural economy.'

Figures provided by SPICE, obtained from VisitScotland.

STEM Centre planning application submitted

A planning application for a new science and technology centre on Blar Mhor has been submitted to Highland Council.

The £14 million University of Highlands and Islands (UHI) development will see a new science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM) education centre built on the 2.5-acre former Tesco supermarket site, adjacent to the planned new Belford NHS hospital. The centre will accommodate 350 students, with up to 20 or 30 coming from outwith the area, and will also be used to teach Lochaber primary and secondary school pupils STEM subjects.

Project developers Kearney Donald Partnership and Colin Armstrong Architects submitted the full planning application this week which will be considered by Highland councillors in the coming months.

It is hoped the site will be open by September 2020.

Dog club looks forward to another busy year

Lochaber and District Canine Society has had another busy year and is looking forward to celebrating the 25th anniversary of its annual breed show in September 2019.

Society chairwoman Lorna Ungoed-Thomas said: 'In September 2019, we will be holding our 25th annual breed show for pedigree dogs in the Nevis Centre and expect an entry of 300 to 400 dogs from all over Scotland.

'We also hold open obedience competitions and currently run a rally obedience competition once a year and fundraising events for local or dog-related charities.

'Throughout the past 40-plus years we have run pet dog training classes on Tuesday evenings in the Nevis Centre in Fort William. Countless numbers of local dogs and their owners have benefited from these classes and have

made both doggy and human friends. We also run and promote other doggy activities in the summer. The outdoor agility and flyball – as seen at Crufts each year – are great fun, as is the fast and furious lure coursing. There are also more sedate summer walks and the ever popular doggy Christmas party.'

To find out more, contact secretary Sarah Holroyd on LDCS@btconnect.com



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LT

Christmases remembered in the Western Isles

View from the Edge

CATH MACDONALD

fort@obantimes.co.uk



*Chill December brings the sleet,
Blazing fires and Christmas treat* – Sara Coleridge

Reading the above lines from the poem about the months revived memories of early childhood days of Christmas on a croft in the Western Isles, and a reflection on the differences between it and Christmas nowadays.

When very, very young we had learned that on Christmas Eve Santa Claus would be arriving overnight with presents for us. The idea was to hang some socks up so that he could put the presents in the socks. Well, there was no shortage of socks as women in those days did a lot of knitting – socks, jumpers etc.

There was great excitement in the morning as children rushed to find out what the socks contained. They were never disappointed as there would always be some small gifts.

Christmas was really exciting in childhood days because of the expectation of surprise presents. There was no glittering Christmas tree in the house with parcels piled around it. There was no electricity in the area at the time. Light was provided with Tilley lamps and oil lamps. Homes were warmed by peat or coal fires.

However, there would be many parcels with presents from relatives on the mainland, or from aunts, uncles or cousins on the islands. These were locked away by my mother in the cupboards of a large oak sideboard, and no amount of wheedling would get her to open them until Christmas

morning! One late autumn, a cousin of my father's, Marion Campbell, arrived on holiday from Vancouver.

I cannot remember if I had even started school, but I went everywhere with her, pointing out such places as where the 'each uisge' (kelpie or water horse) came ashore at Loch Plockropool. When Granny had told us this to warn us young ones from going to the edge of the loch, I had not for a minute doubted her!

At the end of her visit, Marion, to show her appreciation, asked what we would like her to send us for Christmas. As usual, I asked for books, my sisters for dolls, and my brother for a toy aeroplane.

In due course, a large parcel arrived and was locked away. When Christmas day arrived and the contents of the parcel laid to view, there were three beautiful big dolls for my sisters with different hair

colours – a blonde, a brunette and a redhead – so that there would be no confusion later on as to which sister owned what doll should serious injury befall any of the three.

I passed the colouring books to my younger sisters and put the story books where they could not reach them. They were for me!

My brother took the toy aeroplane to the schoolhouse to share his treasure with his classmate, the schoolmaster's son.

When my sisters got a bit older the dolls were passed on to a friend's house, where there was a family of girls younger than ours.

Another highlight at Christmas time was the Sunday School treat in the Missionary's house in Grosebay, a village some miles away from us, where children from ours and the neighbouring villages met for

this much-looked forward to event.

Mr William Duncan, our then missionary, and Mrs Duncan, were warm and wonderful hosts who, despite their hard work of preparation beforehand, appeared to enjoy the afternoon of fun and games as much as we did.

Trays of delicious goodies were done justice to and there was fruit juice and tea.

On one occasion, shortly after the tea party, we set off on the two-and-a-half-mile walk home, each with a wrapped gift. It was midwinter, a short day and we aimed to be home before dark.

On the road from Grosebay we passed the old Scadabay fank which was close by and sheltered on one side by a high overhang.

It is called Creag na h'ioilair - the Eagle's Rock. Impatient to see what was in the parcels, we all trooped into the walled

fank to open them and to see and admire what everyone else had got.

Then, after a good attempt at re-wrapping the gifts we set off to walk the rest of the way home.

Historically, when it came to sending gifts, people here have never been dependent on big shops. Although plenty of household goods and clothing were received by mail order, gifts sent were usually produced locally.

In recent times there is a wider range of quality gifts with a local flavour.

Over the years ferries, planes, improved transport, improved inter-island connections and technology have made Western Isles communities feel less remote. But perhaps being on the edge somehow made Christmas time even more exciting.

Seasonal good wishes to all readers.

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The archive image taken during a stag hunt in Lochaber in the 1930s.

1930s Lochaber stag hunt captured on camera

Reader Charlie MacDonald sent in this fascinating old photograph which he found in his mother's collection of images.

It shows his father, brother and three other men on a stag shoot 'somewhere on the Lochiel estate in the 1930s'.

Charlie does not know the identity of the man holding the pony, but second left, with rifle, is Charlie's father John MacDonald, also known as Johnnie Wuachan, from

Kinlocheil, and, centre, his father's brother Hugh MacDonald, also known as Hugh Muirshearlich.

Charlie added: 'The man second right is Davie Cameron, Invermallie, otherwise known as DLI. He retired to Kinlocheil. The man extreme right is unknown.'

'My father later joined the Lovat Scouts and won the Military Medal for action in Italy. No doubt his stalking experience came in useful.'

TA veteran finally receives medal

South Uist resident Captain Eoghann Maclachlainn was presented with the General Service Medal 62 with Clasp South Arabia at Edinburgh Castle last weekend – more than 50 years after he was seriously injured in a battle overseas while on a Territorial Army mission.

Medals will also be issued to the families of Sergeant Major John Lonergan who was killed in the battle in 1965 and Sergeant George Gibson Earl.

They were all members of 300 Parachute Field Squadron Royal Engineers, 131 Parachute Engineer Regiment TA – the first squadron to see action after the Second World War. They were attacked by enemy fire during a training exercise and the ensuing battle led to the loss of two lives, with five others wounded, including Captain Maclachlainn and Sergeant



The medal was presented to Captain Maclachlainn, left, by governor of Edinburgh Castle Major General Mike Riddell-Webster CBE DSO.

Earl. The Ministry of Defence (MoD) previously said members of the squadron were not eligible for General Service Medals because they were in South Arabia on training and not operational duties.

Na h-Eileanan an Iar MP

Angus MacNeil attended the ceremony to see Captain Maclachlainn finally receive recognition from the MoD.

Mr MacNeil received confirmation from Earl Howe, Minister of State in the House of Lords, last month that

medals would now be issued. This follows more than two years of Mr MacNeil writing to the MoD pressing for action to remedy the injustice.

Mr MacNeil, who has known Captain Maclachlainn for many years, said: 'It was a great occasion to see Eoghann finally receive recognition of his service.'

'I have been writing to the MoD about this injustice for more than two years and am delighted they have finally taken action.'

'All the brave men who served in 300 Parachute Field Squadron deserve recognition for their service.'

'The battle which took place at 0015 hours on April 12 1965 was not part of a training exercise but active service.'

'The award for Captain Maclachlainn and others is a welcome step forward in what has been a long-running campaign for the veterans.'

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LT

Success for Ben Bronze Model T

by Neill Bo Finlayson
nfinlayson@obantimes.co.uk

It may seem an unlikely visitor attraction in the Highlands but the bronze replica of a Model T Ford in Fort William's Cameron Square could soon be rivaling Ben Nevis and the 'Harry Potter Viaduct' as one of the most photographed tourism features in Lochaber.

And it is all because, more than a century ago, an early Model T achieved the amazing feat of conquering Britain's highest mountain.

It was in May 1911, three years after Henry Ford launched the Model T in Detroit, that another Henry - Henry Alexander, an Edinburgh car dealer, in Model Ts, of course - drove one up and down 4,406ft



The team responsible for the sculpture, left to right, Neil MacLeod, Chris Robinson, May Macintyre, Margaret Boyd, Robbie Robertson, Iain Blyth, George Bruce and Bill Cameron. Picture Iain Ferguson, Alba.photos

Ben Nevis. Now, more than a century on, a full-scale Model T, cast in bronze, and forged - in Edinburgh, of course - has pride of place in Fort William's Cameron Square.

This location, right in the centre of the Highland town,

was the starting and finishing point for the almost incredible but highly successful adventure.

The idea of re-establishing the Model T's historic connection with Fort William and Ben Nevis has come from

a dedicated group of eight Lochaber locals who formed a 'Ben Bronze Team', and successfully raised £85,000 for the replica of a Model T - and Henry Alexander - to be cast.

The result is already iconic, with both car and driver fast becoming the town's main outdoor focal point.

Six months on from its unveiling, the Ben Bronze Model T committee is now very pleased to see that the replica Model T has become one of the most photographed landmarks in the Lochaber area.

Every day, hundreds of delighted tourists from all over the world can be seen taking shots of family and friends who sit in the passenger seat of the bronze Ford, alongside the lifelike sculpture of Henry Alexander at the wheel.



Elves Aine MacPhie and David Rodgers took a seat on the Model T at the recent Christmas festival.



The bronze Model T was unveiled by Henry Alexander's great-great-grandson Dan Munro and great-grandaughter Michele Munro. Picture Iain Ferguson

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College welcomes MP and minister

by Neill Bo Finlayson
nfinlayson@obantimes.co.uk

Staff at West Highland College UHI in Fort William hosted two leading Scottish politicians recently.

Richard Lochhead, minister for further and higher education, visited in November and SNP Westminster leader and Lochaber MP Ian Blackford stopped by for a visit this week. For both, it was their first visit to the college and, over separate lunch events, they met Lydia Rohmer, principal and chief executive, and John Hutchison, chairman of the board of management.

Both learned more about how the college has developed and implemented a unique and flexible operating model to deliver relevant curriculum and access to education through its 10 college centres, which are rooted in their



From left, Alex Williams, Kara Scott, Euan Fundingsland, Steve Taylor, Carl Haberl and John Hutchison. Front: Ian Blackford and Lydia Rohmer.

communities throughout the West Highlands.

Ms Rohmer said: 'We are grateful to both the minister and our local MP for taking so much time out of their busy schedules to visit us and learn first-hand what this very unique college is all about.'

Mr Lochhead's visit con-

cluded with a tour of the Fort William college campus, meeting many staff and students, and observing learning and teaching across a wide range of courses.

This included Dr Steve Taylor from the college's Centre for Recreation and Tourism Research, lecturers

Tom Smale and Chris Mackie, and students from the School of Adventure Studies as well as students from HNC Fashion, HNC Computing, and HNC Construction courses.

Mr Blackford enjoyed talking to students from the BA (Hons) Marine and Coastal Tourism degree and their lecturers about the hugely positive impact that graduates from the School of Adventure Studies are having on the rapidly growing outdoor adventure and marine tourism sector in the Highlands and beyond.

He also had the opportunity to hear more about the college's tourism research department's internationally acclaimed lead on 'Slow Adventure' and the opportunities it provides for the enhancement of tourism in the local economy.

Uig remembers its 10 sons lost on the Iolaire

The Uig community in Lewis has planned a series of events to mark the centenary of the Iolaire disaster which claimed 10 local lives – six of them from the village of Cradhlastadh alone.

On Hogmanay, Uig children will light lanterns in the houses which now stand on the crofts to which the 10 men never returned. They will remain lit until sunset on January 2. The war memorial will be illuminated with appropriate maritime colours, allowing it to be viewed from all directions as a ship.

There will be a special Iolaire commemorative service in the Church of Scotland, Langabhat, at 3pm on New Year's Day at which a pulpit fall, beautifully created by Cathy MacDonald, originally from Enacleit and now of Inverness, will be dedicated.

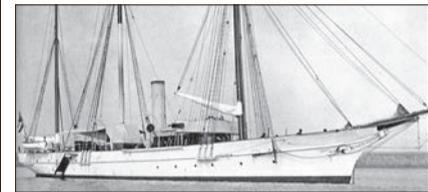
On Wednesday January 2, descendants of each of the 10 lost men will take part in a 'naming of names and lighting of candles' ceremony.

This will be the centrepiece of a commemorative event in Uig Community Centre commencing at 2pm.

Six of Uig's Iolaire victims were from Cradhlastadh along with one each from Uigean and Breanais.

Two Uig men were among the survivors. Malcolm MacRitchie (Calum Dhomhnaill Phadraig) from An Ard died in 1962 and John MacLennan in 1987.

Everyone is welcome to attend these events and to join in Uig's recognition of the great losses this small community suffered, particularly within the families most directly affected, on that terrible New Year's morning of 1919.



Ten Uig men died and two survived when the Iolaire sank on New Year's Day in 1919.



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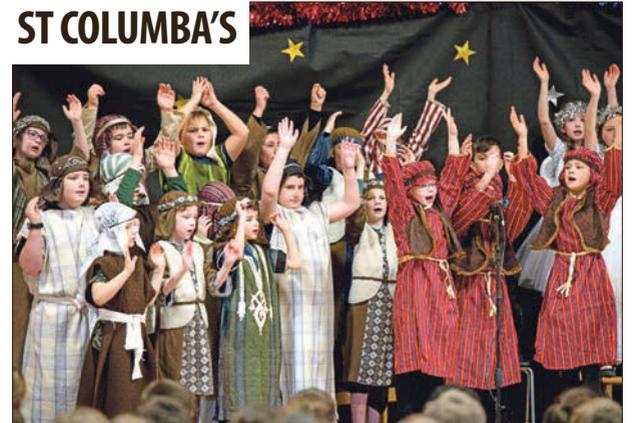


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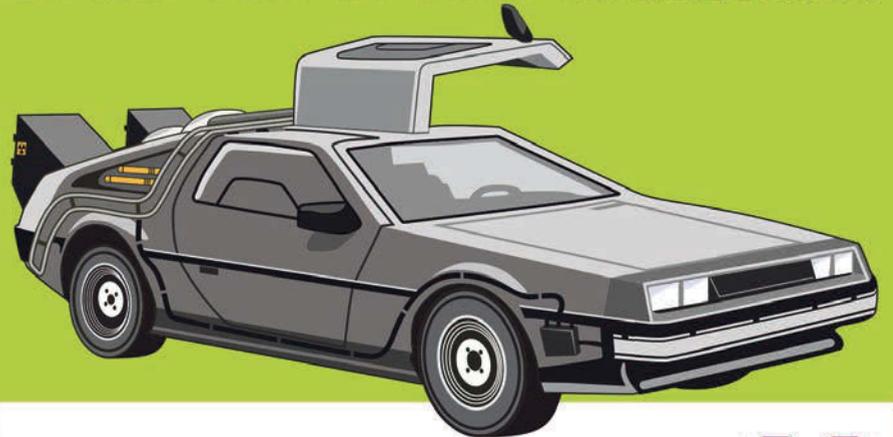
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MSP's concern over dialysis treatment travel from Skye to Raigmore

Highlands and Islands Regional MSP Rhoda Grant was concerned to learn that five patients travel from Skye to Raigmore Hospital three times a week for kidney dialysis treatment.

When a patient's kidneys fail, dialysis treatment keeps the body in balance by removing waste, salt and extra water to stop them building up in the body.

The MSP spoke to Elaine Mead, chief executive of NHS Highland, to ask if they had considered installing a dialysis machine into Broadford Hospital.

In the response, Rhoda Grant was advised that up until two years ago nobody required haemodialysis in the area, but added they were trying to find a local solution to current needs.

Ms Grant said: 'Patients travelling from Skye three times a week to Raigmore Hospital for treatment is not acceptable in this day and age. This is a particularly long journey to make and also expensive for those having to travel and NHS Highland with regard to expenses.'

'I understand this is a challenging situation for NHS Highland to address given the fluctuations in demand for such services in the Isle of Skye, but I would have thought having a dialysis machine located in Broadford Hospital would be the answer.'

Raasay's Tabitha wins Nevis Range prize

by Neill Bo Finlayson
nfinlayson@obantimes.co.uk

A primary school pupil from the Isle of Raasay has won Kate Forbes MSP's constituency Christmas card competition – and had her winning design printed on a mountain gondola.

Tabitha Carslaw, who is in primary seven, beat off competition from hundreds of other children from across the Highlands and her entry proudly also features on the front cover of Ms Forbes' annual Christmas card.

This year's prize was kindly donated by Nevis Range, and thousands of tourists will see Tabitha's design of a Highland cow on a snowboard on one of the mountain gondolas at Aonach Mor near Ben Nevis.

Kate Forbes MSP said: 'Tabby's card looked brilliant on the side of a gondola, and I was really excited to visit Nevis Range with her to see the finished product.'

'While the Christmas card com-



Tabitha Carslaw gets the first look at the gondola wrapped in her own design, with Kate Forbes and Chris O'Brien.

petition is a bit of fun, there is a serious element to it as well. I think the design looks fabulous on both the gondola and the card. The whole school and island are really proud of her.'

It is the third year that Kate Forbes MSP has invited every primary school in her Skye, Lochaber and Badenoch constituency to participate in the competition.

Chris O'Brien, CEO of the Nevis Range, said: 'We're looking forward to a huge season here at Nevis Range and Tabitha's eye for design is certain to bring a smile to the face of thousands of skiers and tourists this winter.'

'Thanks to both Tabitha and Kate Forbes for coming along to Nevis Range for the unveiling.'

The runner-up entries are on display in her constituency office window on Dingwall's High Street.

petition is a bit of fun, there is a serious element to it as well.

'I want children to grow up knowing their local elected representatives and understanding that they have a role to play in local democracy.'

Tabitha commented: 'I was so pleased to win the competition and I loved seeing my design on

the gondola. It looked amazing.'

Raasay Primary School head teacher Wilma Duncan added: 'I am delighted that our primary 7 pupil Tabitha was picked as the winner.'

'This is a huge achievement for her to be picked from more than 300 entries and is a great achievement for our wee school

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Forbes to deliver first John Macleod Memorial lecture

In his opening address at the 2018 Royal National Mòd in October, president of An Comunn Gàidhealach Allan Campbell revealed the organisation would establish an annual lecture in memory of the late John Macleod, writes Neill Bo Finlayson.

Mr Macleod was president of An Comunn Gàidhealach for 10 years and the memorial lecture is a tribute to everything that John did as president and for Gaelic in general.

The department of Celtic and Scottish Studies of the University of Edinburgh is supporting the lecture, with the first annual John Macleod Memorial Lecture taking place in January 2019.

In recognition of John's enthusiasm and encouragement of young people in the Gaelic community, the lectures will always be delivered by young speakers and it is appropriate that the inaugural address will be delivered by Kate Forbes MSP.

The Lochaber MSP said: 'It



John Macleod was an active campaigner for Gaelic.

Photograph: Graham Hood

is a great honour to be asked to give the inaugural John Macleod Memorial Lecture, as a young Gael. I had the enormous privilege of working with John Macleod as convenor of the cross party group on Gaelic.

'He was a determined campaigner, well-known across the political spectrum. I was delighted to pay tribute to his efforts to secure UNESCO status for Gaelic earlier this year. It seems fitting to start 2019 recalling John's

character, contributions and concern for Gaelic's future.'

The focus of the address will be on young people and how to address the opportunity to attract them to their cultural heritage. The topic is particularly relevant in the wake of the highly-successful 2018 celebration of Scotland's Year of Young People.

Mr Campbell added: 'We are delighted that Kate Forbes has agreed to deliver the inaugural John Macleod Memorial Lecture. It would be difficult to find a better example of the benefits of bilingual Gaelic education.'

'Kate exudes confidence in Gaelic and is precisely the type of exponent of our language and culture that John wished to see in all our Gaelic communities.'

The lecture will take place on January 24 in the University of Edinburgh.

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In just a few days, as we celebrate the closing of this year and the beginning of the next, the centenary anniversary of the Iolaire disaster will be marked with many events of solemn commemoration.

This was one of the most cuttngly cruel tragedies ever to occur during war or peacetime. The islands of Lewis and Harris had already lost more men per head of population than any other area of the UK. The war was over and, against the odds, these men had survived and were in sight of home.

The fact that they were due home and to be reunited with their loved ones on New Year's Day added to the sense of relief and anticipation, and by virtue of that joy, made the shock and pain of the loss all the more devastating.

The following lyrics were written as a tribute to the men who were lost and to the people of Lewis and Harris.

I wish you all a happy New Year when it comes but as we enter the early hours of January 1, I and many others across the

world will be thinking of the men who 100 years ago had come through four years of the horrors of war to be so cruelly drowned on the shores of their native island.

Iolaire

Eilean Fraoich, I yearn to see you.

Sing to me the Island Ocean

Through the cries of war I hear you.

Far to the west and worlds away

From the futile fields of war.

Island men I hear them calling.

Sing to me the Island Ocean

Killed in vain, I see them

falling.

Oh take me west and worlds away

From the futile fields of war.

Four brutal years were

unforgiving.

Sing to me the Island Ocean

By grace of god I yet was living.

And sailing west and worlds away

From the futile fields of war

The harbour lights I see them

gleaming.

Sing to me the Island Ocean

Nearly home and I am

dreaming.

I'm in the west and worlds away

From the futile fields of war.

The Beasts of Holm were dark

and savage,

Sing to me the Island Ocean

Their scythe of fate would

blindly ravage

Far to the west and worlds away

From the futile fields of war.

New Year of peace would dawn

tomorrow,

Sing to me the Island Ocean

From hope and joy to

wrenching sorrow

Far to the west and worlds away

From the futile fields of war.

My lover's kiss, her arms

around me

Sing to me the Island Ocean

So near, but on the shore she

found me

Far to the west and worlds away

From the futile fields of war.

The morning tide brought

home our boys.

They lay among the scattered

toys.

Our tears of love and deep relief

Became the tears of tearing

grief.

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LT
JANUARY



Nevis Bakery was on top of the world after winning a top prize at the annual World Championship Scotch Pie Awards in January.

FEBRUARY



MSP Kate Forbes was in Nepal in February to meet survivors of the country's devastating earthquakes and floods – and to find out more about the impact of global climate change.



There was sadness across Lochaber in February following the death of Colin 'Coco' Neilson, one of the region's favourite sons.

MARCH



An extra 49 billion midges were not enough to deter a team of model railway enthusiasts who attempted to build a 71-mile miniature railway from Fort William to Inverness. The 12-day project was filmed as part of the Channel 4 series *The Biggest Little Railway in the World*, presented by Dick Strawbridge.



Father Vincent Toal, whose family hails from Roy Bridge, returned to his original spiritual calling as a member of the priesthood. The ceremony was attended by a large number of his family, including his 90-year-old mother, Mary.

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APRIL



Ospreys Louis and Aila returned to their nest at Loch Arkaig after spending the winter in Africa. In 2017 they had laid three eggs and successfully raised one chick, Lachlan.



A Lochaber school leaver with autism achieved his dream of writing, drawing and designing his own comic book with the help of the Shirie Project and Fort William author Barry Hutchison.

JUNE

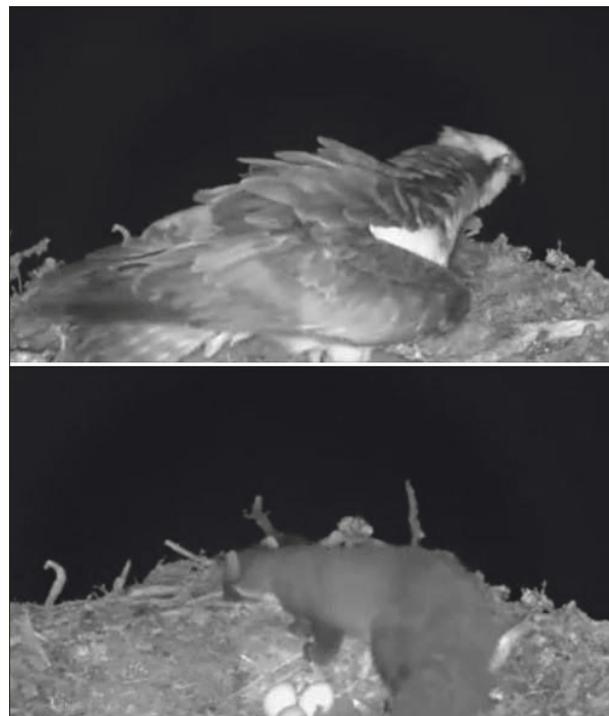


Kilchoan firefighter Rosie Curtis was recognised in the Queen's Birthday Honours for her outstanding service to the community. The watch manager has served the 150 residents on the Ardnamurchan peninsula for two decades. She was one of just three Scottish recipients this year.

MAY



A bronze statue of Henry Alexander is unveiled in Fort William. Alexander was the first man to drive a Model T Ford to the summit of Ben Nevis in 1911. Alexander's grandson Mike Munro was there for the big event.



There was sad news from Loch Arkaig after the nest of ospreys Louis and Aila was raided by a pine marten, pictured right. George Anderson of The Woodland Trust said that while upsetting to see, what happened was natural and what the project team set out to show with the live video footage.



Scotland's First Minister Nicola Sturgeon met with youngsters from Caol Primary School to present them with one of her national reading awards as winners in the First Minister's Reading Challenge 2018.

new start HIGHLAND

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Young festive stars shine...



Glencoe Primary School



Duror Primary School Nativity.

Youngsters in villages around Lochaber have been entering into the spirit of Christmas, entertaining parents and friends with their festive shows and nativity plays.

Glencoe Primary School put on two performances of Jesus' Christmas Party.

Two performances of Duror Primary School's nativity play, Prickly Hay, were well attended by parents and

the community of Duror and Kentallen. Children of Strontian Primary School performed their first Christmas concert in their newly-built community school.

This year because of moving to the new school, they could not put on a pantomime but took part in Ardnamurchan High School's Little Mermaid panto.



Ardnamurachan High School.



Strontian Primary. Photograph: Anthony MacMillan Photography



A' Bhliadhn' Ùr air BBC ALBA

Bliadhna na h-Òigridh @ BLAS

Disathairne 29 Dùbhlachd, 9f
Saturday 29 December, 9pm

Ceòl bho Trail West, Brìghde Chaimbeul, Breabach agus Skipinnish mar pàirt de Bliadhna na h-Òigridh @ Blas.

Music from Trail West, Brìghde Chaimbeul, Breabach and Skipinnish to celebrate The Year of Young People @ Blas.



Cèilidh na Bliadhn' Ùire

Diluain 31 Dùbhlachd, 11.30f
Monday 31 December, 11.30pm

Beò bho Talla Bhaile Ghobhainn le Cathy NicDhòmhnaill agus Niall Iain Dòmhnallach agus le ceòl bho Kathleen NicAonghais, Kim Carnie, Hò-rò is eile.

Live from Govan Old Town Hall with Cathy Macdonald and Niall Iain Macdonald, with music from Kathleen MacInnes, Kim Carnie, Hò-rò and much more.

Piper Alpha: An Sgàil Piper Alpha: Under the Shadow

Diluain 31 Dùbhlachd, 9f
Monday 31 December, 9pm

30 bliadhna às dèidh Piper Alpha, tha Iona Ballantyne airson a' bhuaidh a thug e air na teaghlachan, i fhèin nam measg, a thoirt gu aire dhaoine.

30 years after Piper Alpha, Iona Ballantyne wants to examine the impact on the families, her own included, who suffered from the disaster.

Mànrán aig Barrowland

Diluain 31 Dùbhlachd, 10.10f
Monday 31 December, 10.10pm

Cuirm shònraichte a chaidh a chlàradh air Latha Naomh Anndrais, 2018.

A concert special from Mànrán recorded on St Andrew's Day, 2018.

Mach À Seo

Diciadain 2 Faoilleach, 10f
Wednesday 2 January, 10pm

Tha fios aig Ramsay MacMahon dè na cuairtean deireadh-sheachdain a fheàrr an Alba agus tha e a' tilleadh le sreath ùr.

Ramsay MacMahon returns with a new series of his guides to the ultimate weekend away in Scotland.

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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

Hoping for better times in year ahead

It would be no exaggeration to say that 2018 has been a significant 12 months, with the political discourse dominated by Brexit.

As we embrace 2019, the issue will continue to cast a shadow of uncertainty over all of us. As a result, one of our hopes for the coming year will be that our political leaders find the wisdom to deliver the right decisions on our behalf.

Locally, however, the next 12 months hold great promise economically, if the past year is an indicator.

There will be a new influx of cruise ships to Loch Linnhe, and the tourism and hospitality sector should continue to boom as it has in 2018.

We wish you all a very happy new year.

Councillors should fight for people who elected them

Isn't it about time all the councillors of Argyll and Bute Council should threaten to resign over the never-ending cuts to the most vulnerable and the very valuable staff who support them.

Can a campaign not be lodged by just one of the councillors to construct a letter of mass resignation if cuts to the most vulnerable don't stop forcing the administration into thinking again where they cut? Time for Argyll councillors to fight back: it is what you were elected to do on behalf of the people who voted for you.

Angus Files, The Glebe, Kilmelford.

Flawed arguments in letter on independence

Reading the letter by Andrew Green (December 13), I would deduce that he is no great supporter of the independence movement in Scotland.

However, his attempts to question the drive for independence are fundamentally flawed. He chooses to reconfigure the Scottish results of the EU referendum, but why?

If he doesn't apply the same process to the results for England, Wales and Northern Ireland, he can draw no meaningful conclusion – other than what is already known.

Scotland's electorate chose to remain, while England's chose to leave – nothing new there. He then makes a couple of negative comments regarding the SNP government, but fails to back them up with any evidence.

But it is in the last paragraph the mask slips. He proffers the concept that it is acceptable for one nation – in this case England – to decide the future destiny of another – Scotland.

It is noteworthy that in his discussion neither Wales nor Northern Ireland seems to register in Mr Green's world view. Nevertheless, it is heartening to know that, against the odds, a small stronghold of imperialist mindset still survives in Ardtoe.

Andy Thornton,
Laroch House, Ballachulish.

Bringing festive hope to homeless people

The Christmas season should be a time of joy, but for thousands of homeless people across the country it is anything but. While most of the country is celebrating and enjoying festive meals, those who are homeless will face a struggle just to stay safe and escape the cold.

That's why – outside of our year-round services – Crisis runs special festive centres that offer warmth, food, companionship, and access to vital services – doctor or dentist, have a haircut and get clothes or bags repaired.

But we don't stop there. At our centres, we introduce people to our year-round training, education and support with housing, employment and health. This long-term support helps people to rebuild their lives and leave homelessness behind for good.

Crisis at Christmas is a huge volunteer effort, and last year more than 4,000 people came through the doors of 15 our centres. For many, Crisis at Christmas offers a chance to relax, regain confidence and plan for the future in a supportive environment.

We're asking members of the public who want to help to support our work this festive season and year-round – so we can be there for everyone who needs us and give people in the most vulnerable circumstances support to leave homelessness behind for good.

To find out more visit: www.crisis.org.uk

Jon Sparkes, chief executive, Crisis.

Beachd Ailein

ALLAN CAMPBELL

editor@obantimes.co.uk

Tha mi 'n dòchas gun do chòrd an Nollaig ribh uile, agus gun robh cothrom agai-bh ùine a chur seachad ann an cuideachd chàirdean agus charaidean!

An-diugh tha latha na Nollaige a' ciallachadh dinnear shònraichte dhan mhòr-chuid den t-sluagh agus tha mi cuideachd an dòchas gun robh cothrom agus càil agaibhse air leithid sin. Bu mhath mar an ceudna ma fhuair sibh tiodhlac air choreigin a tha a' còrdadh ribh agus a tha gu bhith feumail, agus ma 's e aodach a th' ann bhiodh e fìor mhath nam freagradh e gu cofhurtail fhathast an dèidh a' bhìdh mhòir.

A' cur dibhearsain an dàrna taobh tha sinn uile moth-achail gum fàg gluasad an t-saoghail gun tig duilgheadasan agus bròn air cuid mun àm seo mar a thachras aig àm sam bith, ach a dh'aindeoin sin nì a' mhòr-chuid oidhirp air beagan ùine de thoileachas, cianalas, agus spòrs.

Bheir sin togail dhaibh gun teagamh is iad ag amharc air ais 's dòcha air rudan nach deach mar a dh'iarradh iad

tron t-seann bhliadhna, agus romhpa gu mì-chinnt tè ùr. Aon trioblaid leis a h-uile cuirm is tachartas 's e gum feum iad crìochnachadh agus faodaidh a' chrìch sin air aighearachd an tachartais cuid fhàgail nas isle na bha iad a' dol thuige.

Thachair mi air prògram rèidio inntinneach an latha roimhe far an robh daoine eadar-dhealaichte a' beachdachadh air an seòrsa thiodhlac a dh'iarradh iad fhaotainn, agus a thoirt seachad. Chòrd feadhainn de na "tiodhlac" sin rium gu mòr.

Mar a bhiodh dùil dh'iarradh cuid sgilean ciùil agus ealain de gach seòrsa, agus bha iarrtas ann cuideachd air comasan labhairt agus sgrìobhadh a cheadaicheadh càirdeas, conaltradh, agus sith am measg dhaoine. Bu mhath le aon neach gun robh eòlas an latha 'n-diugh air a bhith aige na òige agus bha rùn aige sin a thoirt dhan òigridh. Dh'iarradh e gu sònraichte an tuigse agus an neart a leigeadh leis seasamh ri burraidheachd de gach seòrsa.

Ach theagamh gur e an

taghadh a b' fheàrr leam uile gu lèir an neach a thuit gun iarradh esan adhbhar agus comas a bhith a' gaireachdaich. Chan eil cus gealltanais neo toileachais ann an saoghal anns nach eil gaire, agus cha mhotha na sin a tha cus dòchais aig cànan a chailleas geur-chainnt agus liut labhairt.

Cha chreid mi nach e sin a dh'iarrainn dhuinn uile aig an àm seo, agus anns a' bhliadhna romhainn. Bliadhna mhath ùr dhuibh nuair a thig i!

Hopefully, you all received useful gifts for Christmas.

I happened on a radio programme where contributors discussed what they might wish as gifts for themselves and others. Predictably, these included artistic talents, and the wish to have had today's knowledge and experience years before.

My favourite was a wish to have cause and ability for laughter for without such, life will lack inspiration as well as hope. That is why I wish you laughter, in a happy new year.

Ailean Caimbeul
(Allan Campbell)

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DISTRICT NEWS

Lochaber Hope panto delight



Tina MacLugash as Lost Voice Girl had audiences in fits of laughter during the Lochaber Hope panto in Kilmallie Community Centre at the weekend. Fort William's Fairytale: A Little Hope used drama and music to highlight some of the serious issues people deal with every day in Lochaber. The show was produced and directed by Stephanie MacKenna and Esme Leitch. Photograph: Abrightside Photography.

SPEAN BRIDGE, ROY BRIDGE and ACHNACARRY

Spean Bridge, Roy Bridge and Achnacarry Community Council held its December meeting recently at Kilmonivaig Church Hall.

■ BEAR and Transport Scotland – The chairman John Fotheringham has been in correspondence with Tommy Deans about the outstanding issues and in particular the repair to the Telford Bridge Parapet agreed with SSE but not so far advanced; the potholes on the A82 south of the Great Glen Cattle Ranch Building; and safety notices on the A82 approaching the Aonachan Crossroads.

■ BEAR has undertaken exploratory work at the A82 with its junction with the A86. It has confirmed there is an old statutory undertaker service running on the line of the defects. It has repaired this site and the one outside Spean Lodge, and resurfaced both sites. BEAR is carrying out a road survey to identify faults for repair if budgets permit.

■ Community Benefit – The Stronelaing Wind Farm Fund will launch on December

14, and applications for both large and micro grants should be available shortly thereafter. Micro grants will be determined by the community council and the larger ones by the panel. SSE will conduct a roadshow in the area in January to assist local groups.

■ Resilience – Ian Langley reported that he hoped to set up a community asset register and liaise with the fire and rescue service to ensure that in an emergency the community council would be able to call on safe places and equipment. Mr Langley intended to use the Facebook page in the first place to alert residents, but was exploring setting up a website for community use.

■ Mr and Mrs Eppens of Killiechonate Woodlands have offered to lease a minibus for community use for a period of two years or until sufficient community benefit came on stream to allow the community council to buy one of its own. It was agreed that John Fotheringham and Ian Langley would form a small sub committee to investigate this generous offer.

■ The next meeting will be on January 8 in Kilmonivaig Church Hall at 7pm.

Retro Roamer

fort@obantimes.co.uk

More Roamerisms from the early 1990s

■ I was highly amused to hear the Radio Highland newsreader say, by way of introduction on Monday morning: 'Here are the Highlands on Radio Headline.'

■ Eileen and Suzanne from 'The Jack' certainly had some fun in an 'oary boat' at the weekend. The Jacobite duo had hired it with the intention of rowing to Corran Narrows, having a look at Seal Island, and getting some sun. But their great nautical plan was scuppered when they got out into the middle of Loch Linnhe. After taking the salute from, and giving grand salaams to their pub colleagues, who were lining the Jacobite windows overlooking the loch, Eileen and Suzanne 'caught a crab'. They caught several, in fact, because as they explained later they 'couldn't get the oars to work properly!' The inevitable result was that they and the oary boat went round and round in circles.

So, instead of sculling about in the farthest waters of Loch Linnhe, our sailoresses had to wait until 'a mere man' rowed out to them and towed them back to the Pierhead.

■ In the late 1950s, Hughie MacNeil, in the MacRae & Dick taxi, is waiting at the station for the 8.20pm Glasgow train to arrive on time – which it sometimes did. Eventually it steamed in. Then, into Station Square came an American husband and wife. They bore down on Hughie and his taxi. 'Take us to the Grand Hotel, Mac,' bade the American male. Patiently, and patriotically, Hughie explained the Grand Hotel was just a few yards up the hill from the station and that it wouldn't be fair to take even half a dollar for the fare.

But the US visitors wouldn't listen. They insisted on being driven to the Grand by taxi. Long-suffering Hughie ushered the couple into the back seats, put their light luggage in the boot, and drove up Station Brae. Along the High Street, they went, up via Victoria Road and back down past the MacIntosh Memorial Church, into Gordon Square, stopping outside the Grand where Hughie quite rightly charged them for the privilege of their circular tour. The comments of the duo when they came

out of the hotel in the morning daylight and saw how close they were to the station go unrecorded.

■ Local driver was jarred in the High Street by the polis for not displaying his tax disc. 'Oh, but I am,' he exclaimed – and explained. 'It's under the mirror in the centre of the windscreen.' Driver was advised that the disc should be sited in the left hand corner of the windscreen. 'Ah, but this is a replacement one I have here,' our hero replied. 'The dog scratched off the last disc and ate it. So I put the new one up here – out of the road.' Officialdom left him to it, with the words: 'Well, at least your dog's taxed at any rate.'

■ The cement mixer strikes back. That's what happened down Achintore at the weekend. Apparently there was a 'late night garden party' at one of the Gold Coast villas, and it didn't break up until 3am. Some near neighbours didn't get a wink of sleep until after that hour. Which probably explains why, three hours later, the grating and grinding sounds of a cement mixer, owned by one of them, and filled only with large stones, rent the Achintore air – and put an end to any thoughts the revellers might have 'entertained' of having a long lie.

■ The lights were out. In, of all places, the Mill's powerhouse. 'Sister Gracie' was doing her rounds, in preparation for the evening clean-up. 'Fit wy's, the licht's oot?' queried Gracie. 'Och, we've run out of money for the meter', came the airy reply from Willie. 'I think I might have a 50 pence piece downstairs', ventured the ever-helpful Gracie. As she was beginning to make tracks to get it, WD then let the cat out of the bag, rather than have 50p out of Gracie. 'I'm only kidding, Gracie', said he. 'We just turned the lights out for a wee while'. Owning up was the least he could do. Especially as the Mill generates its own electricity.

■ Geologist, Billy Shaw, from Fort William, settled down to watch TV at home. In Botswana, where he lives. And he jumped out of his chair in amazement when BBC's World Service treated him to the highlights of the Camanachd Cup final. Phoning home later in the day, Billy said how delighted he was to see the tele-recording. Especially as, up until then, he didn't know Fort had won.

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Boxers benefit from generous donation

by Mark Entwistle
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A donation from the family of a late boxing fan in Oban has helped buy new equipment for the youngest members of Lochaber Phoenix Boxing Club.

The late Jim Bradford was a great fan of the sport, attending bouts as often as he could. He also watched every televised match and was an avid reader of boxing magazines. In his teens he took to the ring himself, becoming West Country Champion.

He also followed the fortunes of Lochaber Phoenix Club through the local paper and knew a couple of the boxers who travelled from Oban to training sessions in Fort William.

Because of these connections and being the closest club to Oban, his family decided to donate money from a collection made at his funeral to help it buy much-needed new equipment.

Lochaber Phoenix Boxing Club coach Phil Bradley said the money had been very welcome and was already making a difference for the young boxers at the club. 'This donation was very useful to us and enabled us to buy

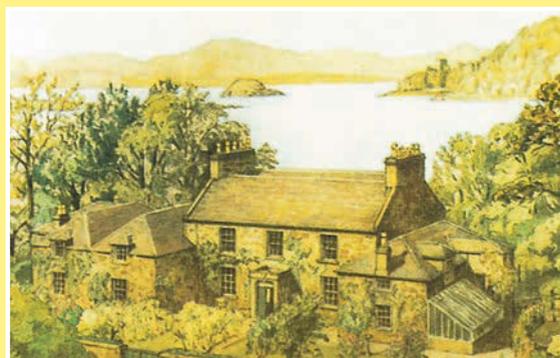
new head guards for our younger members which will help them in their training and in future bouts,' he said.

'Two of our young boxers, Josh Dieguno and Josh Hunter, did very well at the recent Forgewood Boxing Club show in Motherwell and we hope they and a few other members of our young squad will compete in the forthcoming Scottish Championships in the Central Belt, where the club has always acquitted itself very well in the past with victories at all levels and age groups.'

'We really appreciate this donation and thank Mr Bradford and his relatives for thinking of us.'

Some of Lochaber Phoenix Boxing Club's youngest fighters sporting their new headgear.

Photograph: Iain Ferguson alba.photos



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