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Eilidh MacLeod trust ensures music will live on in Mull

by Kathie Griffiths
kgriffiths@obantimes.co.uk



Two Mull music projects are celebrating receiving funding from the first round of grants in memory of a young Barra piper killed in the Manchester Arena bombing.

Mull Music Makers, whose future was in jeopardy last year, and Mull Mod Club will receive a share of £12,000 awarded to 13 youth music initiatives by the new Eilidh MacLeod Memorial Trust.

Money will be used to develop young musicians' skills by paying for tuition and buying much-needed instruments. The hope is the cash will help young people follow in Eilidh's musical footsteps and continue her musical journey.

The two Mull schemes will each get £750 to keep up their work on the island.

Earlier this year Mull Music Makers raised £5,050 from crowdfunders in just 28 days to help it keep making music on the island after it unex-

pectedly lost its core funding from Creative Scotland's Youth Music Initiative (YMI) that supported it for the past six years to bring tutors to the island each month helping children learn music through song, movement, performance and violin/fiddle tuition, as well as getting them ready for performances and competitions. News will come in March whether this year's YMI funding application has been accepted.

'We are so honoured to receive an award from Eilidh's Trust'

Laura Mandleberg from Mull Music Makers said: 'We are so honoured to receive an award from Eilidh's Trust, the music education charity set up in memory of young Eilidh MacLeod from Barra.'

'This funding will help to support an entire generation of youngsters from across Mull to keep learning music.'

Eilidh MacLeod died along with 21 others in the Manchester Arena attack in May 2017 at an Ariana Grande concert. The 14-year-old was a member of Sgoil Lionacleit Pipe Band.

The trust, in her name, will also manage and maintain a permanent Memorial to her and a garden of remembrance and reflection on Barra.

Annag MacLean, trustee of Eilidh's Trust and former headteacher of Barra's Castlebay Community School said: 'We are delighted and thrilled to announce the first full funding round of grants for local community music groups across Scotland.'

'This support will contribute to the excellent work they are doing to encourage and nurture the local talent among young musicians and will allow them to continue developing their skills.'

'These grants are a demonstration of our commitment and intent to support young

Turn to page eight



Meet the real Elf on the Shelf – Finn from Tobermory

Making mischief comes naturally to little elves – particularly 10-month-old ones from Tobermory on Mull!

Find out what this one got up to throughout December when his mum and dad decided to spread some Christmas cheer by posting one photograph a day of their son Finn, dressed as an elf, getting up to all sorts of fun and games.

For full story and more photographs, turn to page three.

MOREPHOTOS
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OT

It's a dog's life for Alan...

by Fiona Scott
fscott@obantimes.co.uk



Off-road adventurer Alan Stewart is coming to the end of the latest chapter of his action-packed life story, but you can bet his very worn boots there will be something else on the horizon.

Raised in Ardrishaig, Alan, and his wife Fiona, are currently based in Aviemore, at the foot of the Cairngorm mountain range, where together they run the Cairngorm Sleddog Centre.

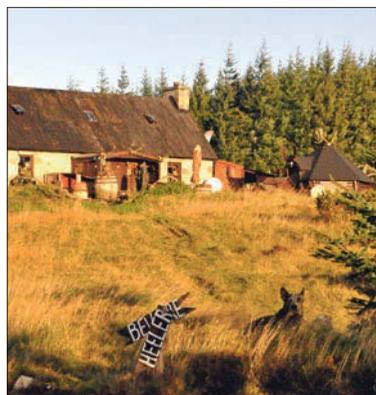
Climate change, however, has thrown up new challenges for the sport in this country and the 63-year-old, who now has to travel to Europe to train and run his dogs in competitions, has decided to call it a day.

'Sled dogging is unlike any other outdoor adventure you can experience in the UK but the dogs require cool conditions when they are out on a run,' he told The Oban Times.

'That's not so easy to do now and dog welfare is paramount, so I will keep the 19 working Alaskan huskies but once they come to their natural end I won't be replacing them.'

For the Stewarts dog sledding is not just a hobby, 'it's a way of life', said Alan, who never raises his voice to his canine friends. Instead he whispers instructions into a mini radio, the other end of which is attached to his lead dog's harness.

'I will miss the daily routine we have established over the 18 years



Clockwise from above left: Alan and Fiona Stewart with one of their 19 working Alaskan Huskies; Alan built all the trails on the Rothiemurchas estate; among his mushing memorabilia Alan has a corner dedicated to Alexander 'Scotty' Allan whose racing exploits inspired Jack London for the main character of Call of the Wild; Arnold, the Stewart's Australian Blue Heeler - 80 per cent Dingo - guards their home.

or so, not to mention the dogs, but maybe it's time to slow down a bit and treat Fiona to a bit of a break.

Fiona, however, is not holding her breath: 'We ended up here because I said I thought it would be nice to have a dog,' she said. 'I dread to think what is coming next. My request was for an extended holiday!'

For Alan, there are no limits. Having spent his youth shellfish diving with diver Sandy Munro, he trained as a commercial deep saturation diver while living in Sydney, Australia.

His offshore work took him to the Middle East, India, China, Norway and the North Sea.

In 1982, he returned to Scotland where he completed a saturation course at Fort William and became a member of the 'Broady Bunch', a deep dive team led by superintendent Chris Broady.

Alan continues to work as a dive rep during the summer season. When he's not working, Alan

enjoys off-road safari racing and remote motor bike trips in crazy places.

A keen motocross and safari buggy enthusiast, one of Alan's ambitions is to bring a safari racing championship to Kilmartin where he spent many happy years racing with Mid Argyll Motocross Club.

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The real Elf on the Shelf – Finn from Mull



Every year little elves wreak havoc in homes across the world in what is known as the Elf on a Shelf tradition, writes David McPhee.

It started in 2005 with an American picture book about how Santa sends an elf to watch over children between Thanksgiving and Christmas Eve to make sure they are well behaved.

The idea is Santa's little helper sits on a shelf and watches the children

by day and each night, he or she returns to the North Pole to report on whether the children were naughty or nice. However, when everyone is asleep, the little helper comes to life and leaves behind something, usually a mess, for the child to find the next morning.

Tobermory mum Naomi Marsh has taken the idea to another level.

Speaking to The Oban Times, Naomi, who runs the Island Crafts

shop on Tobermory's Main Street, said: 'My son is 10 months old and doesn't really catch the concept of 'The elf on the shelf' so I decided to make him the elf of the shelf.'

From December 1 until Christmas Eve, Naomi and her partner, Nathan Mortimer, posted a photograph a day of their son Finn dressed as an elf, getting up to all sorts of mischief.

In one, he had sabotaged a family portrait. In another he is seen in

front of the toilet completely covered in Christmas wrapping paper – with a roll of paper in his lap. Others show Finn making 'snow' angels with flour and tying his mum and dad up with Christmas lights.

Naomi said it has been great fun and they plan on doing it again next year.

To view the rest of the photographs, visit www.obantimes.co.uk, or #FinnTheRealElf on Facebook.

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24/25 ARGYLL SQUARE, OBAN

OT

Festive fun for Oban and

by David McPhee
dmcphoe@obantimes.co.uk



Whether it was dancing at their Christmas party or performing in a nativity play, Oban and Lorn children embraced the Christmas spirit.

And while they were gearing up for their end-of-year activities, Santa Claus juggled his preparations to ensure he visited all the schools.

Children and staff revelled in the festive fun.

Lochnell Primary School was overrun by elves, children at St Columba's were excited to meet Santa and onesies took centre stage in the Taynuilt nativity play.

The feeling was summed up by Oban's St Columba's Primary School, which posted: 'We had the best afternoon at our Christmas party today.

'We danced our socks off and had loads of tasty food.

'Thank you to everyone who helped make our party such a success.'



Left: Strath of Appin Primary School pupils delighted their audience with a fantastic nativity play. Below left: Santa Claus visited Oban's Park Primary School. Below: Lochnell Primary School was overrun by elves.



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d Lorn primary schools



Above: Park Primary School pupils enjoyed their Christmas party. Top right: the cast of this year's Taynuilt school nativity play. Far right: Lochnell Primary School staff made Christmas-themed treats. Right: Park pupils all smiles at their Christmas party.

JANUARY SALES AT GORDONS CHEMISTS!

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Speaking of staying frown-free, our Nivea Q10 Power 60+ Day and Night creams (50ml) are reduced to HALF PRICE! At just £6.99 each, they're just two of our products included in our HALF PRICE Nivea promotion this month! Self-care is so important, so don't forget to make sure he looks after his skin this year too, with O'Keefe's Working Hands Cream 96g priced at just £5.99 saving you £2.00! Or keep the families breath smelling minty fresh with Oral B's Pro Expert Clean Mint Toothpaste 75ml, REDUCED to JUST £1.75 from £3.49!

And when better a time to get stuck into some deep cleaning than at the start of the New Year. Let us take the hassle out of washing the dishes with Sun's All-in-1 Dishwasher Tablets 45pk for ONLY £3.99! Saving you an INCREDIBLE £4.00! If it's not in store, check online at www.gordonschemist.com. Whatever your wishes and resolutions may be for this year, we at Gordons Chemists would like to wish you all a happy and healthy 2020!

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GORDONS
CHEMISTS



OT



Damian Heaney received the school captains' vote.



School staff battle it out for door decoration honours

What better way to get into the Christmas spirit than with some friendly rivalry.

Earlier this month, Oban High School teachers and staff went head-to-head in the hotly-contested Christmas Door Competition.

The contest received more than 70 entries and after hundreds of votes, four came out on top.

Winner of the public vote was Cara Potts and her class, while Damian Heaney and

Left: Benita Hensman-Martin received the guest vote from councillor Yvonne McNeilly.

his class had the school captains' backing.

Argyll and Bute Council's policy lead for education Yvonne McNeilly was this year's guest judge.

She chose Benita Hensman-Martin and her class, while head teacher Peter Bain gave his vote to Laura Currie and her class.

Posting on social media, the school said: 'The standard was superb and obviously it was a difficult decision for the judges. Thank you to all teachers and their pupils who put in so much time and effort across the school to create a wonderful atmosphere at this festive time.'



Laura Currie won the head teacher's vote.



Cara Potts won the public vote.



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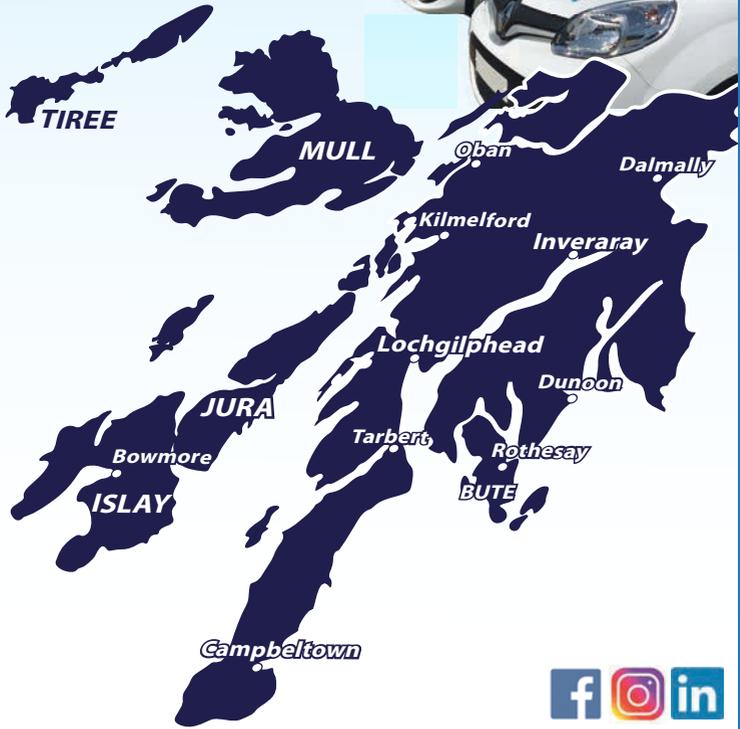
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Tour and fair a big success



Oban High School's Louise McKechnie and Debbie Gillies with some of the treats on offer. 17_T52_OHSChristmasFair08



Parents were given a tour of Oban High School. 17_T52_OHSChristmasFair01

Parents of Oban High School pupils got to experience a day in the life of their children, writes David McPhee.

They were invited to the school on Wednesday December 18 when they joined the Breakfast Club, attended a morning assembly, before taking a tour of the school.

The parents ended the day with a trip to Oban High School Christmas Fair, which showcased the artistic and creative skills of many of the students.

An Oban High School spokesperson

said: 'Our Christmas Fair this morning was so successful we ran out of stock by lunchtime.

'A great fundraising effort for the Laurinburg Exchange. Clearly there's great demand for the artistic and creative talents of our students.'

Treats

There was a Christmas tree-making table, artwork, lamps made out of glass bottles, as well as cakes and treats.

The most impressive festive display in the school, however, had to be head

teacher Peter Bain's office. Mr Bain came back from working in Tiree to find his office had been transformed into Santa's Grotto.

The support department and senior pupils, with help from some staff, put their design skills to good use and housed the head teacher's desk within a wood and cardboard grotto.

They further spruced up his office by covering his television in wrapping paper and supplying him with Christmas-themed toilet roll.



Pupils were able to create their own Christmas tree decorations. 17_T52_OHSChristmasFair03



Maria Clark tests out Peter Bain's new and improved desk. 17_T52_OHSChristmasFair02



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OT

Oban FM show brings mental health to fore

by Fiona Scott
fscott@obantimes.co.uk



A trained psychologist from Barcaldine hopes that by reaching out over the airwaves she can help destigmatise mental health issues in the Oban area.

Mental Health Musings with Mer is hosted by Marion Elkin-Greener, and the show is packed with guests, music and chat every Tuesday, from 3pm to 5pm.

Primarily aimed at raising awareness of mental health and addiction, the two-hour long programme opens up discussion on a wide range of issues, with the host herself drawing from personal experiences and years of study.

'I have not had an addiction to drugs or alcohol but I have a respect for addiction because of my own issues with food,' said Marion, who specialised



in addiction while living and working in Chicago.

'It all comes from the same area of the brain and most addictions are linked in some way to mental health.'

Marion approached the radio station on the suggestion of her husband Steve and was delighted with the response she received from station

manager Laura Johnston.

'I was co-facilitating with Martin's Monday Club and I also attend the ladies group there which I get a lot out of.'

'When Steve suggested I ask about volunteering with Oban FM, I didn't quite know how they would react to the suggestion of a mental health-themed programme

but Laura got on board straight away.

'Des MacMillan from Martyn's Monday Club was my first guest. I respect him and the group so much and really want to support them in what they are doing.'

As well as members of the Monday Club, Marion's guests list has also included Graham Morgan from the Mental Health Commission among others.

All of the music Marion plays on her show has connections with mental health and addiction whether it be in the lyrics or through the musicians themselves.

'I choose my music very carefully,' she added. 'And I like to try and link it to

the subject matter. It's a bit all over the place but I love putting it all together and picking my play lists.'

'The feedback has been tremendous. I have a page on Facebook called Mental Health Musings and I encourage my listeners to private message me there, it's all confidential, and then what I do is open their issues up on air using different names.'

'All my discussions come through my Facebook page and are all anonymous and strictly confidential.'

'I don't really care if there are two people listening or 200 people listening. As long as the message is getting out there I'm happy.'

For those of you who have not yet discovered this excellent community radio station, Oban FM can be found by tuning into 103.3 or by going to www.obanfm.com

Eilidh MacLeod trust makes music live on in Mull

Continued from page one

musicians in their ambitions in Eilidh's memory.

'This financial support could only be made possible through the huge generosity of the many people who have donated to our fundraising efforts and the organisations who have supported our work.'

Other groups who benefited included Castlebay Community School and Sgoil Lionacleit Pipe Band in the Western Isles, Lewis and Harris Youth Pipe Band, Skye Youth Pipe Band Highland and the Ceilidh Trail (Feisean nan Gaidheal) Across Scotland.

Manchester Community Pipe Band has also received a special award from the trust in recognition of the work it does in its area.

It is hoped a further round of funding will be made in the first half of 2020.

Any groups wanting to be considered for the next round of funding should contact Eilidh's Trust at hello@eilidhstrust.org.uk



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Scouts and Guides light way for peace

by Fiona Scott
fscott@obantimes.co.uk



Oban Scouts and Guides have joined their counterparts across the world in sending a message of peace around the globe.

Members of both groups, along with family and friends, welcomed the Peace Light from Bethlehem to St Columba's Cathedral on Friday December 20 where it will burn brightly until 12th Night, Sunday January 5.

Originating from the Eternal Flame in Bethlehem, the International Peace Light initiative was launched by the Austrian Broadcasting Corporation in 1984 when a child travelled to the birth-place of Christ and collected a flame to take back to Austria.

Sent from the Austrian Scouts and Guides, the flame is now used throughout



Members of the First Argyll Scout Group helped spread the peace message in Oban.

Europe and travelling on to North America, Canada and Mexico.

The 'eternal flame' was brought to St Columba's Cathedral from Glasgow by outgoing First Argyll Scouts regional leader Jeff Anderson and from there, members of the public lit candles and took them home to spread the

flame throughout the area.

'The chain of light symbolises the removal of barriers between nations and people by overcoming the darkness caused by hate,' said Mr Anderson.

'Argyll Scouts have really embraced this tradition which also promotes frankness, warmth and family.'

'Oblivious' driver fined over motorbike crash

A driver's lapse of concentration landed a biker in hospital with fractured ribs and a collapsed lung, Oban Sheriff Court has heard.

Last week Frank Lawson, 72, from 3 Brunton Gardens, Glenrothes, admitted careless driving and was fined £375 with five penalty points added to his licence.

The court heard how retired off-shore worker Lawson was on the A82 at Bridge of Orchy on October 14 this year when he slowed down in his Land Rover Freelander and was indicating to pull across the road into the bridge of Orchy Hotel forecourt when he failed to see an oncoming motorbike and drove into its path.

Procurator fiscal David Glancy said Lawson had appeared 'oblivious' to the biker. CCTV footage was shown.

The impact with the orange Harley-Davidson caused the 57-year-old motorcyclist to part company with the bike. It spun into planters outside the hotel then rebounded into

the road where its rider had skidded further on.

The court heard the motorcyclist lost consciousness at the scene and was airlifted to hospital in Glasgow where he was treated for fractured ribs, a collapsed lung and other injuries. Although he is recovering, his rehabilitation is slower than he and medical staff hoped.

The only explanation Lawson could give was that the low sunlight may have 'blended' with the colour of the bike, the court was told.

Sentencing him, Sheriff Simon Fraser said: 'This was a momentary lapse of concentration, as far as I'm aware you have had a completely blameless driving record for more than half a century. I'm quite sure you have replayed that moment many times in your head. All of us who drive make mistakes at some point that only we recognise but that no one else sees. You were very unfortunate, as was the motorcyclist. I'm sure if you could rewind the clock 30 seconds you would.'

MOREPHOTOS
www.obantimes.co.uk

Father James MacNeil gave readings at the ceremony, while Scout leader Jack Anderson provided music to accompany the hymns.

At the end of the service members of the congregation received a Jelly Baby or 'Peace Baby' as they were known at the end of the First World War.

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OT

Junior pupils have ball at Jingles

It was the turn of Oban High School's first and second-year pupils to dance the night away on Tuesday December 17, and boy did they make the most of it, writes Fiona Scott.

The Senior Pupil Leadership Team worked alongside staff to decorate the hall and put together an excellent programme of music and entertainment, which included the high school's Traditional School of Music and a set from DJ extraordinaire Sam Coates. **Photographs: Kevin McGlynn**



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Photographed with all the goodies for Hope Kitchen are, from left: Richard Dale, Andy Crabb, Euan Paterson, Arlene Ditchfield (front), Jordan Grigor and Claire Purdie.



SAMS raffle sees Hope Kitchen's customers as overall winners

Hope Kitchen in Oban has received hundreds of food donations and household items after staff at the Scottish Association for Marine Science (SAMS) held a Christmas raffle with a difference.

Every year SAMS raises money for a local charity through its Christmas party raffle and this year chose Hope Kitchen as the beneficiary. The charity helps to

provide food, shelter and companionship to vulnerable and marginalised people living within the area of Oban and Lorn.

Instead of buying raffle tickets with cash, SAMS staff handed over items such as tinned food, pasta and Christmas treats as payment.

Claire Purdie of the SAMS Social Club said: 'Each year we raise money for a nominated charity but when

we chose Hope Kitchen we realised they would probably benefit most from donations of food and household items.

'We were overwhelmed by the number of donations; the response from staff was fantastic.

'The work of Hope Kitchen is a lifeline for many people and particularly important at this time of year. We were delighted to hand over such a sizeable donation.'

Oban man jailed for smearing faeces on walls of police cell

COURT

A man who smeared his police cell with faeces was about to get off with a warning for possessing a chemical high, a court has heard.

James McMillan, 26, was arrested in Sutherland Drive, Oban, on July 17 last year after police found a small amount of the drug on him for personal use. He was taken to the police station but it had been of-

ficers' intentions to let him go with a warning until they noticed an overpowering odour coming from his cell.

Faeces had been smeared on the wall and near an intercom in the cell. An attempt had been made to make graffiti from it. McMillan was the sole occupant.

McMillan, who is currently in prison, admitted possessing the chemical high and the faeces-related charge. He was fined £75 and jailed for three

months respectively. The court was told how McMillan had not been himself at the time. These two offences came at the end of a course of conduct that landed him in jail earlier this year with a 28-month sentence.

A few years ago McMillan was hit by a car in England and became addicted to his prescribed drugs. When they were stopped, he took them illegally before turning to heroin and other drugs, the court heard.

Drink driver banned from the road

A social worker three times over the drink-drive limit will lose her job and home as well as her licence.

Monika Sloninska of Albany Apartments, Oban, appeared at Oban Sheriff Court on December 18 where she admitted being more than three times over the drink drive limit on December 10 in Taynuilt - having 68

micrograms of alcohol in 100 millilitres of breath, exceeding the prescribed limit of 22 micrograms.

The 45-year-old, whose job relies on being able to drive and whose home is tied accommodation had decided she was fine to drive after drinking alcohol the day before.

Police received a call from

someone who had seen her in a shop in Taynuilt and 40 minutes later, around midday, they stopped her on the main road. She smelled strongly of alcohol.

Sloninska was fined £325 and banned from driving for one year, reduced to nine months if she passes a drink-driving rehabilitation course.



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OT

Behind the Scenes at Atlantis

Well, it has been another whirlwind of an Atlantis year, filled with activities, clubs, whacky new sports, fantastic personal achievements and bold new plans for the future.

Here are some highlights of how December brought us round into the home straight and set us up for a new year.

Centre life

Our Games Hall roof is, fittingly, a 'crowning' final project for the end of the year. The works to fix the leaking sections have been commissioned and were due to be completed in time for Christmas. Our fleet of spin bikes had a comprehensive service this month too.

Maintenance might seem a bit hum-drum to anyone else, but at Atlantis we celebrate it! We see normal wear and tear as a measure of how well equipment is getting used, which in turn tells us how well Atlantis is getting used. So, the bikes have a fresh new lease of life, ready for another year of enthusiastic pedalling! We really



can't over-emphasise how big a difference the understanding and patience of the Atlantis community makes when it comes to things needing fixed.

This year has brought us some significant maintenance projects and we really appreciate your tolerance during works and your enthusiasm for the end product – thank you.

Atlantis in the community

This month saw another fantastic Atlantis Dance Show with a full programme of brilliant performance. We were delighted to welcome Oban Dance Academy as part of the event, bringing with them a piece which was included

in the show. Thank you again to them for joining us and to everyone who put in all the hard work in preparing for the night.

The Otters have been busy too! – the swimmers had a Gala on December 1 which was another resounding success.

We love witnessing the work that is done by the Otters family, not least the positive impact this close-knit group of parents, families and friends have on each other and the wider community.

We're privileged to have so many community enterprises and projects in our wee town, not least our very own radio station. Atlantis have long worked closely with Oban FM and are so grateful for how they help us let you all know what's going on at the centre. This month, we made the decision to move to daily 'what's on' radio updates to give you as accurate and regular information as possible. So tune in!

Staff news

This month, the Atlantis manage-

ment team attended LivingWorks: safeTALK – this was a mental health awareness course run by the Job Centre.

This is excellent training on how everyone can increase their mental health awareness and suicide alertness. We think it's important to keep ourselves informed about the many different and changing ways mental health affects our community.

It was really helpful for the team to take the time to learn how Atlantis can help, often just by doing the simplest of things well. Thank you to the Job Centre, Des from Martyn's Monday Club and everyone involved in making the training happen.

We were so impressed with the candidates who made it through to interview for our latest full-time position this month. The standard of applications made the decision making process very hard indeed.

Craig MacCorquodale really impressed the panel at his interview which led to him being offered the full-time position.

The staff team will really benefit

from Craig's new role as he brings considerable skills in badminton, archery and swimming. And he's not hanging about either, with his Level 2 swimming teacher trainer booked for January already. Congratulations Craig!

Craig's appointment is a lovely note with which to wrap up the staff team year.

Like every year, it's brought its challenges but the management team have been consistently made to feel very proud and very thankful of the whole Atlantis staff.

Having a team that can be relied on to get the job done is one thing, having a group of individuals committed to realising Atlantis' values by going the extra mile and who look out for one another along the way is another precious thing altogether. Bring on next year!

GETINTOUCH

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Festive songs brought lots of cheers and applause for these young performers.

Lismore children spread Christmas cheer

Christmas came early for Lismore Primary School, which started its celebrations in November by making the school's traditional Christmas Cake.

Each family donated a different ingredient and after a lot of weighing and measuring, each child took it in turns to stir the mixture and make a wish.

In early December the pupils were invited to perform songs and carols at the island's Holly Lunch.

Guests were given a sneak preview of the school play and joined the children in singing

some traditional Christmas songs and carols.

On December 13, the children performed their musical play, A Place for a Baby, which tells the story of an angel who is sent around the world by God to find the perfect place for baby Jesus to be born.

Through songs, costumes and actions, the cast led the audience around the globe from North America and Hawaii to Spain, Switzerland, China and of course, Lismore.

There was a hardly a dry eye in the house when the younger children formed a tableau of

the Nativity as the finale. The audience were then treated to mulled wine and mince pies while the children sang some more carols and Christmas songs.

The final event of the term was the Family Christmas Lunch, when parents joined their children in school for a traditional turkey lunch with all the trimmings. There were fun quizzes and games and the children performed songs and carols for their parents.

The lunch was a fitting end to another successful term at Lismore Primary School.

MacPhail

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A look back on 2019 articles

31/01/19

"None of us know how long we are going to have in this life, so when we are here we may as well approach it with positivity. The futility of worrying that time is running out is borne out by the fact that whether we are eighteen, forty, sixty or eighty one, what is gone is gone, what is done is done and the important thing is that we have our whole lives ahead. That life ahead may be one day or it may be many decades but never will we know. Right up to that unknown time, we have the chance to try new things and to follow the winds of fulfilment and happiness."

14/02/19

"Love is undoubtedly one of the most powerful forces running through mankind and it is no coincidence that it has been the favoured subject of poem, song and other vehicles of literature since these art-forms were

conceived. As well as being powerful, love is one of the most complex areas of life and under its wide umbrella are many variants."

23/03/19

"I haven't discussed Brexit in detail with Beastie, but I think most politicians and a fair percentage of the population could take a leaf out of his book by not allowing legitimate and essential debate to escalate into abuse and long-term conflict. #belikebeastie"

04/04/19

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

08/08/18

"Never before in the history of the Highlands has the music of a people exploded forward with such a power. The glowing embers of our music that survived over three hundred and fifty years of cultural suppression have "taken light" and the flame is spreading like a forest blaze of hope for the future."

12/09/19

"There are of course many steps I've missed and plenty made in the wrong direction but there are some journeys that internally we know are right for us. When we identify these destinations – even if they are a thousand miles away – we must seize the day and take the step."

31/10/19

"Twenty years have passed in the blink of an eye, and so too will the next. I hope then, I will be writing a similar article and feeling exactly as I am right now. Life has a habit of dealing both good and bad, happiness and pain, and often, the two, simultaneously, so when we experience the good, we must relish it and embrace the feeling."

We may not see tomorrow but today the earth is ours

Unknown the new horizons in the hands of higher powers

But now we bear the blessings when the golden stars align

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Happy New Year to you all!

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SAT FEB

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SAT SEP
05

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If you live in Lochaber and feel like a spot of treasure hunting, there is no need to rush down the A82 to Tyndrum hoping to pick up the odd nugget or two from the spoil heaps of Scotland's latest gold mine or buying a metal detector and going up to Loch Arkaig to look for the fabled French Louis d'or sent across from France to prop up the ailing Jacobite army.

Just pull into the new Alexander Ross House car park next to the Charles Kennedy Building, formerly Fort William's Secondary school on Achintore Road, and look for the sign which says 'Archives'. Enter and be prepared to find treasures that will take your breath away.

This is no rusting back-shed containing a few dry, dusty files on Bonnie Prince Charlie and what he wore and had to eat when he was on the run after Culloden. It is much more. The Lochaber Archive Centre is a modern building. It conforms to the highest international standards in terms of preservation, storage and cataloguing. This place holds a truly amazing variety of records relating to Lochaber, old and new, in minute books, correspondence, maps, plans and photographs.

The collections include: education records from the 1860s, including logbooks and ad-



Loch Arkaig looking south to the pine woods destroyed by the commandos in 1942 during a training exercise.

Photograph Iain Thorne

mission registers for more than 60 Lochaber schools; poor relief records, 1845-1930; property valuation rolls, 1874-1990; Fort William Burgh records, 1874-1975; police archives, 1875-1946; Abridgements of Sasines - property transactions - from 1781 to 1971, Invernesshire and Argyllshire; church records including kirk session and presbytery records for parishes in the Lochaber Presbytery, 1724-1991; estate and family papers of the Camerons of Lochiel from 1624, which consists of a large collection of material relating to the 1715, 1719 and 1745 Jacobite risings; the Cameron-Head of Inverailort papers from 1799 including letters, reports and accounts of the Commando occu-

pation during the Second World War; boxes of papers relating to different MacColl families; Knoydart estate papers, 1810-1945; the West Highland Museum collections which include: Jacobite material, Arisaig estate papers, Ben Nevis Observatory visitors' books and smaller private collections.

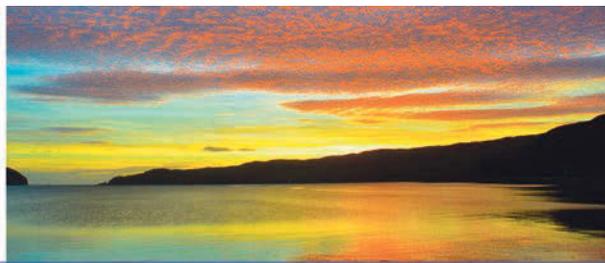
There are small archives of individuals, estate and solicitors' offices - societies and other organisations; maps and plans and Ordnance Survey plans scale 25:1 miles dating from 1870. Genealogical resources on microfilm for the Lochaber area, census returns, 1841-1901, Old Parish Registers, the International Genealogical Index and a substantial run of

Oban Times from 1861 on microfilm also feature. All open to the public and available for copying other than in a few isolated cases to conform with the Data Protection Act.

My favourites are the fabulous Lochiel and Inverailort papers which are a mine of information on estate management, forestry, deer stalking, crofting and just about every other aspect of how large estates used to function.

Of interest is the correspondence between Sir Donald Cameron of Lochiel's agents and Scottish Command in 1942 about a fire started by the Commandos during a training exercise near Achnacarry Castle where they were billeted.

On 29 April that year, Lochiel's secretary sent the following letter to the Command Land Agent in Edinburgh: 'Dear Sir, I regret very much to inform you that a very serious fire occurred on the Lochiel Estates, starting about 12.30pm on Monday 27th April. The fire started on ground covered under sections 51 and 52 of the Defence of the Realm Regulations and the inference is that the fire was caused by the operations of the War Department. The matter is being investigated by the police. Meanwhile I have to inform you that the whole of Lochiel's Old Forest [on the south side of Loch Arkaig] consisting of very valuable pine trees, has been completely destroyed from Achnacarry to the head of Glenmallie - a distance of nine miles. There have also, I fear, been a number of sheep burned in the fire. The fire is still burning, in spite of all efforts that have been made and the



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of Lochaber

number of people that have been collected. The extent of the damage is not possible to ascertain at this juncture. I, therefore, must intimate that a claim will follow...The gravity of this matter, which involves the destruction of a large part of the Lochiel estate, is one which I hope you will appreciate and give your immediate attention to.

The claim, including 12-and-a-half miles of fencing, the loss of timber, sport and grazing over a five-year period of rehabilitation, plus legal fees, amounted to £123,694. After a long delay the army offered £20,000 but Lochiel stuck out for £50,000 and eventually a figure somewhere between was agreed. Subsequent investigations and at least two special courts of inquiry put the cause down to a soldier, or soldiers, throwing lit cigarettes away when they were rock-climbing in the area.

When the War Office requisitioned Inverailort castle and estate in 1940 for a top secret Special Training Centre where groups of selected volunteer soldiers were to be taught new methods of irregular warfare, Mrs Cameron-Head, the owner, was furious.

The Cameron-Head papers reveal not only was she turned out of her home that year but she had lost lucrative stalking and fishing lets and incurred expenses hiring extra gillies and stalkers for the forthcoming season. Her patience was sorely tested when army trucks taking most of her furniture from the castle to a storage depot in Fort William, went off the road destroying the contents. From then, until

her death the following year due to her anxiety, she waged war on the unfortunate officer in charge. In one letter she complained bitterly about Commandos climbing the kitchen garden wall and stealing her gooseberries, accusing him of putting them up to it to get fresh food for the mess. It did not seem to occur to her these men were about to leave the UK and dropped in enemy territory to try and halt an invasion and all she could do was complain about a few bits of fruit!

There were other similar incidents. Early in 1904, there had been a dispute over the boundary between Inverailort and Glenaladale estate. The matter raged on for months until July 9 when Colonel John MacDonald, the owner of Glenaladale, sent a letter from the Cadogan Hotel, Sloane Street, London, to MacDonald & Graham, the Head's Inverness solicitors, saying: 'Dear Sirs, I have your letter of 2nd inst with copy letter from Mr Head to you of the 1st. I have never in my experience known of anyone, laying claim to the position of a gentleman, behaving in the manner in which Mr Head has thought fit to do in this matter. Without reference to me he has sent a copy of a private letter of mine to him to Mr Bainbridge [the stalking tenant]. By his own actions he has superseded the necessity of any one on my part. I decline to take further notice of his letter. Yours faithfully (Signed) John A Macdonald'.

The Lochaber Archive is a valuable asset for the West Highlands and needs to be supported. Visit it, contribute to it, use it - or lose it.

DOWN MEMORY LANE

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



Muckairn Church Nativity play

Oban Times reader John Hay from Taynuilt sent us this photograph. He said: 'Over the festive season, I wondered if you would be interested in printing this photograph in the 'Down Memory Lane' section. It's Taynuilt's Muckairn Church nativity play. I'm not 100 per cent, but fairly sure it's 1988 or 1989. They might have at least asked them to smile!' If you recognise yourself or anyone in the photograph, let us know as we'd love to hear all about the show. Email us at editor@obantimes.co.uk

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OT

LETTERS

Write to us: send your letters to editor@obantimes.co.uk
or The Editor, PO Box 1, Oban, Argyll PA34 4HBWishing all our readers
a very happy New Year!

Well, another Christmas has been and gone and hopefully it's been a happy one for all our readers, with minimum stress.

Now another new year is upon us. No doubt there will be plenty of opinion and debate on Brexit in the media over the next few weeks and months, but for now, let's look closer to home – this week's paper is chock full of heart-warming stories and photographs, including all the schools' festive parties, jingles and nativity plays, plus Oban High School's concert for our pensioners; and one story we were delighted to read about was the two Mull projects that will be among the first to benefit from grants set up in memory of young Barra piper Eilidh MacLeod. But the article that really put a smile on our faces was the Elf on the Shelf on page three. Happy New Year, everyone!

Scottish Sea Farms only uses
licensed medicines

In response to the letter, 'Fish farm research and new boats are not enough' (The Oban Times, December 12), we're keen to reassure Mr Archer that Scottish Sea Farms does not use chemicals to treat salmon. We use only licensed medicines prescribed by qualified veterinarians and administered in the authorised dosage.

One of these licensed medicines, Paramove®, does indeed include hydrogen peroxide. However contrary to the commonly held misconception, hydrogen peroxide is not bleach (sodium hypochlorite); it is a mild antiseptic most commonly used in the veterinary care of cats, dogs, horses and farmed fish, as well as several everyday personal care products such as mouthwashes, eye drops and contact lens solutions.

In the case of farmed salmon specifically, hydrogen peroxide is used in diluted form to help remove marine parasites from fish. Post-treatment, it breaks down into water and oxygen, neither of which is harmful to the environment.

Also reassuring to know, Scotland's salmon farmers are leading the way with regards

to keeping veterinary medicines off dinner plates, with no medicinal residue detected in our end product. (Source: Veterinary Medicines Directorate, Defra.)

Lesley Rice, Scottish Sea Farms.

Trip down memory lane
with Inveraray ceilidh

It is not very often I enjoy ceilidhs these days, but listening on RNG, [December 22,] a recorded ceilidh, held at Inveraray Castle back in 1974, was exceptional and soul inspiring.

At the head of proceedings was the great Lewis man Donald 'Beag' Thomson, a stalwart of the Gaelic language, and teacher at Oban High School for many years.

The quality of this particular ceilidh was outstanding from start to finish and I'm not saying that because he was my clan chief, and that at that time I was working on the roof of the castle itself.

Ethel MacCallum gave a great account of the culture behind those ceilidhs and to hear the Argyllshire accents again was a reminder of the quality available in that area at the time.

As Donald himself said one or more times, when the National Mod was held in Oban, it's a great day for Oban and an even greater day for Argyllshire, indeed this ceilidh was the very best I've ever heard.

Aonghas Eoghainn Mhoir, By email.

Pre-referendum referendum

I see that the SNP are still banging on about independence, claiming the recent election result gives them a mandate so to do. Correct me if I'm wrong, but I seem to recall that they had roughly the same number of seats (and maybe more?) in the run-up to IndyRef '14.

I don't think every SNP voter wants independence, nor do I think that every non-SNP voter doesn't, so as I see it the only sensible answer to the oft-stated claim of the SNP to "speak for Scotland" is to have a pre-referendum referendum requiring a 55 per cent majority for either side to win, and the simple question on the ballot paper should be something like "Should there be another referendum on Scottish independence?"

If the YES side wins, the First Minister can take that result to Westminster and say to Boris, 'Here's proof positive that the majority of Scots want IndyRef 2: how's about it?'

If the NO side wins, that's it, go home, end of story; move on.

Davie Kerr, Onich, Lochaber.

Beachd Ailein

ALLAN CAMPBELL

editor@obantimes.co.uk

Bliadhna mhath ùr dhuibh agus mòran dhiubh! Nach bu mhath gum b' e bliadhna bhiodh an seo a bheireadh sòlas agus soirbheachadh dhuinn air fad ach ged a tha e nàdarra a bhith dòchasach a thaobh leithid sin, aig an aon àm tha eòlas beatha gar rabhadh nach seachain sinn dùbhlain a bhios aig amannan do-dhèanta. Ach tha fios againn cuideachd nach eil cron ann a bhith ag amas air cinn-uidhe àraid agus gu dearbh mur eil sinn a' cuimseachadh air an leithid sin nach eil uimhir a dhòchas air adhartas a choileanadh. Mar bu dual bidh daoine a' cur iartasan pearsanta de gach seòrsa romhpa fhèin leithid call cuideam agus leasachaidhean caitheamh-beatha, agus bidh sin feumail dhan fheadhainn againn aig am bheil de smachd orra fhèin 's gun tèid aca air cumail rin amasan. Ach tha eachdraidh iomadh dachaigh ag innse gum bheil an dùbhlain a bhith a' cumail ri amasan den t-seòrsa seo ro dhoirbh dha mòran againn, ach 's math gum bheil a' mhisneachd againn a bhith a' tilleadh thuca bliadhna an dèidh bliadhna! Fhad 's

a mhaireas an cothrom tha fhios gum mair dòchas gun ruig sinn ceann-uidhe a mhiannaicheamaid uaireigin. Ach tha rudan co-cheangailte ri cor na dùthcha is an t-saoghail a dh'iarramaid 's dòcha fhaicinn a' tachairt cuideachd, agus dè chuireadh sibhse air an liosta sin?

Theagamh gur e fear de na ciad iartasan a bhios aig mòran 's e gun tig sioladh ann an ùpraid phoilitigs na dùthcha agus gun libhrig an Riaghaltas ùr na chaidh a ghealltainn anns an t-suirghe a ghabh àite ron taghadh choitcheann. Mar eisimpleir bidh beòshlaint chroitearan is thuathanaich an crochadh gu mòr air na geallaidhean taice a tha dol a ghabhail àite ionmhas Eòrpach an dèidh dealachadh Bhreatainn bhon Aonadh Eòrpach, rud nach eil a-nise ach seachdainean air falbh. Agus am faigh gnìomhachas an iasgaich againn na buannachdan ris an robh e an dùil mar thoradh air an dealachadh? Chan eil brìgh cùmhnan an dealachaidh sin fhathast cinnteach agus ri linn sin chan iongnadh iomagain a bhith air mòran a thaobh na buaidhe a dh'fhaodadh

a bhith air tèarainteachd an cuid chosnaidhean. Leis an sgaradh bheachd phoilitigeach eadar cinn a deas is tuath Bhreatainn a thaobh na Rioghachd Aonaichte fhèin, dè tha an dàn a thaobh reifreann eile air neo-eisimeileachd dha Alba? Am faodadh sin tachairt, agus am faodadh Alba fhathast tilleadh dhan Aonadh Eòrpach mar bhall ùr? Ceistean toinnte! Ach aon rud air an cuireamaid uile meas saoilidh mi, 's e bhith a' faicinn luchd-phoilitigs a' co-obrachadh gus math sluaigh, sheirbheisean, agus eaconamaidh na dùthcha seach a bhith a' cur seachad am beatha a' glamhadh a chèile gun sgur 's gun èifeachd do dhuine sam bith!

I wish you all a happy and prosperous New Year! Unquestionably 2020 brings many challenges but we must hope that our post-Brexit economy and employment remains buoyant, and that our new government's policies will recognise and respect diversity of political opinion!

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

Festive buskers prove a real tonic around Oban

by Fiona Scott
fscott@obantimes.co.uk



Oban was alive with the sound of Christmas music in the run up to the big day, with various groups getting out and about to spread some festive cheer.

Seil Sound Community Choir did the rounds at Lorn and Islands hospital, providing some medicinal music for patients and staff alike.

Led by Maggie Thorpe, who works as a consultant in the X-ray department, the 20 or so choir members entertained the public in the waiting/cafeteria area before embarking on a tuneful tour of the wards.

The group have been visiting the hospital annually for 'as long as they can remember', delighting everyone present with both traditional and modern Christmas favourites.

On Saturday December 21 it was the shoppers who were entertained, with Oban High School Pipe Band performing outside Tesco and RNLI Volunteers in good voice outside McCaig's Warehouse.

An impromptu visit from the Oban Lifeboat Crew on board the Mora Edith MacDonald gave the carol singers some extra backing as their session came to an end – much to the delight of everyone who had stopped what they were doing to listen.



Top left: Seil Sound Community Choir were a big hit during their recent visit to Lorn and Islands Hospital; top right, Oban High School Pipe Band entertained shoppers at Tesco; bottom left, RNLI volunteers were in good voice on the quayside and they were joined by members of Oban Lifeboat crew, bottom right, on board the Mora Edith Macdonald.

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LEISURE & ENTERTAINMENT

YOUR GUIDE TO WHAT'S ON IN ARGYLL AND LOCHABER

Highland festival-goers have a Blas for 15th year

Organisers of this year's Blas Festival have reported another successful event, with Highland audiences being entertained by some of the country's top musicians, for the 15th year.

And they are now looking forward to what 2020 has in store for the Gaelic festival.

Blas, which means 'taste' or 'sample', is organised by Fèisean nan Gàidheal in partnership with The Highland Council and took place in venues across the Highlands and Islands from Aviemore to Barra, Stornoway to Strathay in November.

This year's festival featured Niteworks, Project Smok, Gary Innes Band, Gaelic singer Kathleen MacInnes, Sian, Cape Breton sisters Dawn and Margie Beaton,



Tide Line's Robert Robertson and Ross Wilson and many more. Two special partnerships, with SEALL Festival of Small Halls and 432 brought Niteworks to The Ironworks

and a world-class line up of musicians including Capercaillie's Donald Shaw, fiddler Duncan Chisholm and Granton-on-Spey multi-instrumentalist and

Sian, was just one of the groups to take the stage at the 2019 Blas Festival.

composer Hamish Napier to village halls in Edinbane and Kyleakin. Education was also an important aspect of Blas Festival with schools across the Highlands benefiting from workshops and visits from some of the participating artists as well as a Gaelic seminar, Gaelic: Crisis and Resilience, in partnership with UHI.

Arthur Cormack of Fèisean nan Gàidheal, which organises the Blas Festival on behalf of The Highland Council, said: 'We were very happy to have gone ahead with Blas Festival this year, albeit at a later time of year. We had

some notable successes with the events we ran, which included 29 concerts, one seminar with UHI, 28 school workshops, nine workshops featuring collaboration between Scottish and Irish musicians as well as music and dance workshops in another four communities.

'We also staged four performances of a new Gaelic medium commission – Gaol no Gonadh? – based around Gaelic songs of love and loss, Dawn and Margie Beaton visited from Cape Breton and delighted Highland audiences and we collaborated with a wide range of promoters with the addition of Eden Court, The Ironworks, Aros, Urras an Eilein and the SEALL Festival of Small Halls.

'Audience numbers are

still being collated. The attendance by fewer tourists in the Highlands at this time of year seems to have been offset by local people coming out to events. Gaelic language was promoted and used, Highland culture was celebrated and quality events were brought to venues large and small which is what we aim to do every year with Blas Festival. We are happy with how things went this year and we hope our audiences, young and old, enjoyed the events they attended and are looking forward to next year's Blas Festival already.'

If you attended any event during Blas Festival, the organisers would appreciate your thoughts and feedback. You can fill out a short survey at www.blas-festival.com

Bad news for Snowmen

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Source: YouGov 2018

Glasgow Letter

ROBERT ROBERTSON

robert.d.robertson@hotmail.co.uk



Strictly Come Cèilidh Dancing

Happy New Year, Glasgow Letter readers! There are lots of exciting events coming up in January and February throughout the city.

One that is worth mentioning immediately is Strictly Come Cèilidh Dancing on Friday January 10 in the Glasgow University Union.

This event has been organised by Donald "Maroot" MacLeod in aid of the Eilidh MacLeod Memorial Trust.

There will be 10 "celebrity" dancers who will swap partners between each dance and three "celebrity" judges who will mark each competitor after each dance.

I use the word celebrity loosely, as you can probably imagine! I am one of the judges but I am beginning to question my qualifications for the role after finding out that one of my fellow judges is Rachel MacLaggan – a professional Highland Dancer and founder member of Flings and Things who regularly dance with the Red Hot Chili Pipers!

Our third judge is my good pal, Darren MacLean, who (thankfully) I feel is more at my own level of dancing professionalism. The old joke about being a champ dancer or a damn chancer springs to



Donnie Maroot and Darren MacLean having a laugh ahead of the Strictly Come Ceilidh Dancing event that is Donnie organising and at which Darren will be judging. Hopefully the judges will not come to blows!

mind!

Competitors on the evening will be Mánran's Ewen Henderson, Skerryvore's Martin Gillespie, Sian's Ceitlin LR Smith, Trail West's Seonaidh MacIntyre, Alba Choir's Joy Dunlop, Iain Beggs and Mairi MacLennan from BBC Alba series Bannan, Shona Masson (presenter on BBC Alba), Alana MacInnes (who found fame years ago with "the dress"), and Lorne MacDougall – possibly the biggest celebrity of all of us having featured in Doctor Who, Brave, Still Game, Whisky Galore, and Strictly Come Dancing... the actual Strictly Come Dancing as opposed to this cèilidh version!

The most important thing is

that this event is fundraising for a very good cause so will hopefully attract a big audience. Tickets are £25 and are available by contacting Donald on donniemaroot@hotmail.co.uk

A Christmas gift

For those who read last week's column and got in touch with me to express concern that I didn't buy my mother a Christmas present, I should probably clarify that (as well as a pile of washing) I brought home a couple of tickets for a very interesting Celtic Connections gig!

Jamie MacDougall sings the songs of Harry Lauder in the Tron Theatre at 8pm on Wednesday January 22.

Oban musician Craig takes top accordion prize in Perth

Oban musician Craig McFadyen was celebrating recently after winning the Senior Pipe Music Accordion Solo at the All Scotland Accordion and Fiddle Festival.

The festival, which takes place in Perth, is a major occasion in the Scottish music calendar, incorporating the official Scottish Accordion Championships.

Craig, 28, said it was the first time he had entered the competition in Perth, adding: 'It was very much a last-minute thought – I only entered the week before.'

'I won the same competition in May at the Highlands and Islands Music and Dance Festival in Oban, but am delighted to have taken the Perth prize too.'

The competition, which sees entrants come from



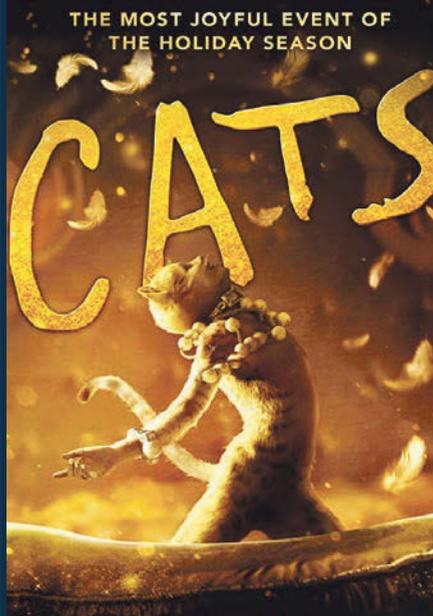
Craig McFadyen was delighted to win his section.

all over the country have to play a March, Strathspey and Reel - pipe tunes played

in the pipe idiom, and Craig was up against 12-14 competitors on the day.

OBAN PHOENIX CINEMA WHAT'S ON THIS WEEK

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COMING SOON: JOJO RABBIT - LITTLE WOMEN - SORRY WE MISSED YOU

FRIDAY 3RD JANUARY

Frozen 2 | U 13:15
Star Wars: The Rise of Skywalker | 12A 13:30/15:45
Cats | U 16:45/19:30
Motherless Brooklyn | 15 18:45

SATURDAY 4TH JANUARY

Star Wars: The Rise of Skywalker | 12A 10:30
Frozen 2 | U 11:30★/13:45
Cats | U 13:45/16:15
Knives Out | 12A 16:00
Motherless Brooklyn | 15 18:45
André Rieu 70 Years Young 19:00

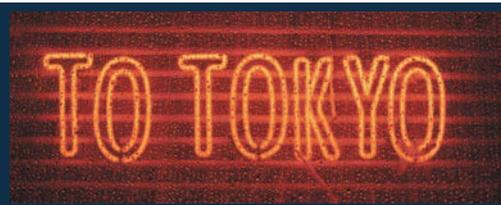
SUNDAY 5TH JANUARY

Star Wars: The Rise of Skywalker | 12A 12:00
Frozen 2 | U 12:30
Last Christmas | 12A 14:45
André Rieu 70 Years Young 15:00
Knives Out | 12A 17:00
Cats | U 17:30/20:00
Motherless Brooklyn | 15 19:45



ANDRÉ RIEU 70 YEARS YOUNG
André Rieu invites you to celebrate his incredible life & career together with him and his world-famous Johann Strauss Orchestra this New Year. André Rieu: 70 Years Young comes to cinemas on 4 and 5 January!

SAT 4 | 19:00 SUN 5 | 15:00



TO TOKYO RATED 15

Challenged by her step-sister to return home, a young woman hiding from her past in a remote Japanese village, is abducted into a fantastic wilderness and pursued by a monster, with only four nights to escape to Tokyo and face her demons.

SAT 11 JAN | 20:15 FOLLOWED BY A Q&A WITH THE WRITER/DIRECTOR OF THE FILM CASTAR STALE-JONES

MONDAY 6TH JANUARY

Star Wars: The Rise of Skywalker | 12A 12:00/16:15
Frozen 2 | U 16:30
Motherless Brooklyn | 15 19:00
Cats | U 19:30

TUESDAY 7TH JANUARY

Cats | U 12:00/19:30
Star Wars: The Rise of Skywalker | 12A 16:15
Frozen 2 | U 16:30
Motherless Brooklyn | 15 19:00

WEDNESDAY 8TH JANUARY

Motherless Brooklyn | 15 12:00★/19:00
Star Wars: The Rise of Skywalker | 12A 16:15
Frozen 2 | U 16:30
Cats | U 19:30

THURSDAY 9TH JANUARY

Last Christmas | 12A 14:30★
Star Wars: The Rise of Skywalker | 12A 16:15
Frozen 2 | U 16:45
Motherless Brooklyn | 15 19:15
Cats | U 19:30

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

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

Oban festive quiz

If you've had enough of the leftovers and Christmas telly, and are looking for something to fire up the grey matter, why not test your Oban knowledge with our quiz. All the questions relate to items you will have read about in The Oban Times - so let's see who has been paying attention this year!



Q1: Which Oban hotel was originally the home of John Stuart McCaig, best known for commissioning McCaig's Tower?

Q2: Which league do Oban Saints play in?

Q3: How many top 10 finishes did Robert MacIntyre secure in his first European Tour?

Q4: Which fantasy television drama did Oban Whisky team up with this year?

Q5: How many times has the Royal National Mòd been held in Oban?

Q6: Where was the 2019 Royal National Mòd held?

Q7: What does BID stand for in BID4Oban?

Q8: Who is BID4Oban's chief executive?

Q9: Who is coxswain at Oban lifeboat station?

Q10: What is the name of the Oban lifeboat?

Q11: What was the name of the raft which won the Oban Raft Race 2019?

Q12: What musical set in Imperial Russia of 1905 was performed by Spotlight Musical Theatre Group in March 2019 in Oban?

Q13: Which local golfer has made his mark on the international golf scene this year?

Q14: What mythical creature

helped light up the town during the winter festival?

Q15: What Oban sports club celebrated their 150th anniversary this year?

Q16: Which band won the 2019 Unsigned Oban Live competition.

Q17: What is the name of Oban's feline ambassador

Q18: Who is the captain of Oban Lorne RFC

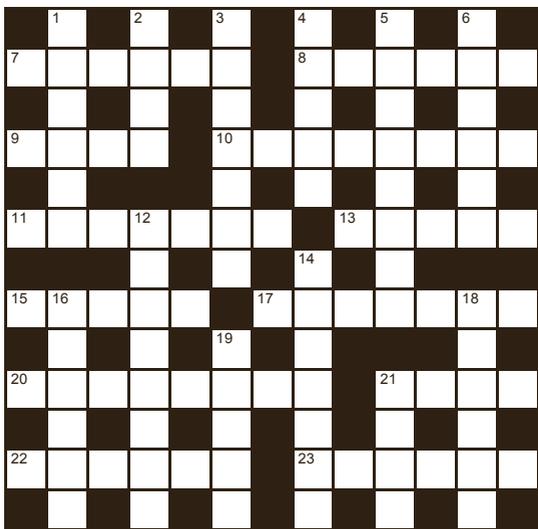
Q19: Saint Columba landed on Iona in 563 after being exiled from where?

Q20: What event announced this year that it was going to take a break

Q21: What are the names of the two ships operated by Northern Lighthouse Board Oban.

- ANSWERS**
1. The Regent Hotel
 2. Central Scottish Amateur Football League
 3. Seven Division 1B
 4. Game of Thrones
 5. 16
 6. Glasgow Business Improvement District
 7. Andrew Spence
 8. A: Ally Cereche, B: Ally Cereche
 9. RNLB Mora Edith
 10. RNLB Mora Edith
 11. MacVicar's Farewell
 12. Fiddler on the Roof (from Oban Distillery)
 13. Robert MacIntyre (Bob)
 14. A Unicorn
 15. Oban Bowling Club
 16. Argyll Ceilidh Trail
 17. Parsley
 18. Iwan Roberts
 19. Ireland
 20. Oban Live
 21. NTV Pharos; NTV Polstar

Crossword



Across

- 7 Beach wear (6)
- 8 English school exam (1,5)
- 9 Touch on (4)
- 10 Tree with cascading yellow flowers (8)
- 11 Royal head (7)
- 13 Weasel relative (5)
- 15 Tie (5)
- 17 School subject (7)
- 20 Environmentalist's concern (4,4)
- 21 Curse (4)
- 22 Online newsgroup system (6)
- 23 Salary (6)

Down

- 1 Spanish town (6)
- 2 Released bullet (4)
- 3 Sloping script (7)
- 4 Striped cat (5)
- 5 Waste (8)
- 6 Dupe (6)
- 12 Plentiful (8)
- 14 As you breathe up a mountain (4,3)
- 16 Cut out (6)
- 18 Film location (6)
- 19 Italian carbs (5)
- 21 Raise up (4)

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION



WHAT'S ON

In partnership with Oban Town Diary BID4oban.co.uk

THURSDAY 2ND JANUARY
Slimming World Fort William
Salvation Army Hall
3:00pm, 5:00pm & 7:00pm
Tel: Gillian 07796 040803

Oban Health Walks
Oban Congregational Church
10:00am - 12:00pm
Event - Manran
Corran Halls. 8pm

SATURDAY 4TH JANUARY
Parkrun
Ganavan Sands. 9.30am

Live Music & Entertainment @ Markie Dans
Disco with Stevo. Open till 2:00am

SUNDAY 5TH JANUARY
Hill Walk
Kingairloch. All day

Morning Service - Refreshments follow
Salvation Army Hall
11:00am - 12:00pm
Live Music & Entertainment @

Markie Dans
QUIZ NIGHT at 9:30pm
£1 per person, max of 6 per team
Win £20 bar voucher

MONDAY 6TH JANUARY
Oban Men's Shed
Salvation Army Hall. 9:00am - 12:00pm
Slimming World Fort William
Salvation Army Hall
9.30am & 11.30am
Tel: Gillian 07796 040803

Fellowship Meeting
New Hope Kitchen. 2pm
Martyn's Monday Club
New Hope Kitchen. 7pm-9pm
Slimming World Lochgilphead
Union Street/Argyll Street
5:30pm & 7:30pm
Tel: Rhona 07880 878906

TUESDAY 7TH JANUARY
Oban Men's Shed
Salvation Army Hall
9:00am - 12:00pm
Carers Coffee Morning

North Argyll Carers Centre
10:30am - 12:00pm

Martyn's Monday Club Ladies
New Hope Kitchen. 7pm-9pm
Live Music & Entertainment @

Markie Dans
Open till 2:00am

WEDNESDAY 8TH JANUARY

Oban Men's Shed
Salvation Army Hall
9:00am - 12:00pm

Open Day
Greenshoots Garden. 10.30am-3.30pm

Hope Kitchen Beach clean
(meet opposite the View). 10.30am

Slimming World Oban
Glencrudden Church Hall
9:30am, 11:30am, 5:30pm & 7:30pm
Tel: Gillian 07796 040803

Knitting Group
New Hope Kitchen. 2pm
Live Music & Entertainment @
Markie Dans
Open till 2:00am

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

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Oban Accordion & Fiddle Club
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Scottish Dance Band
Friday 10th January 2020
7.30pm till late
The Royal Hotel. Tickets: £15
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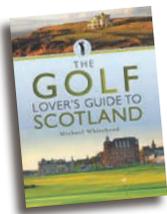
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The Golf Lover's Guide to Scotland

By Michael Whitehead
Pen & Sword Books Ltd
£14.99

For anyone looking to tick a few world famous golf courses off their bucket list, this book provides all the details you might need to make the planning as seamless as possible.

Information includes slope rating, whether you need to show a handicap certificate, caddie hire options and dress code so anyone keen for a post-game bite in the clubhouse doesn't get caught out. Complete with photographs, you'll also learn the history of each course.

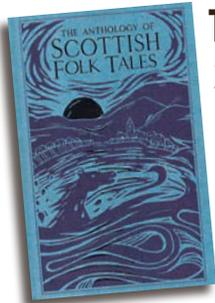


To the Land of Long Lost Friends

By Alexander McCall Smith,
Little, Brown
£18.99

The 20th book published in the much-loved series The No.1 Ladies' Detective Agency is a story of mystery, community and of course, friendship. McCall Smith injects the usual levels of intelligent charm and wit along with beautifully detailed descriptions of the Botswanian landscape.

As ever the question of the female identity is explored as characters like Mma Makutsi and Charlie butt heads over gender equality throughout.



The Anthology of Scottish Folk Tales

By various authors,
The History Press,
£12.99

Just looking at the cover of this book makes me want to curl up with a mug of something hot and dive

into all the tales it has to tell. Put together by Scotland's Storytellers and The History Press, this collection includes legends from all over the country, with each chapter signalling a change of location. Storytellers include Tom Muir, Ian Stephen, Lea Taylor and the late Lawrence Tulloch, to whom the book is dedicated.

Having always been a fan of fairytales, this is the perfect book for both young and old, while the inclusion of the Scots language, native terms and the strong connection with the landscape make it a familiar and comforting read. All of the fables leave you feeling inspired and hopeful that true kindness is not a matter of fiction.



Wintering

By Stephen Rutt,
Elliot & Thompson,
£12.99

It is impossible not to be charmed by the poignant and lyrical way in which 'Wintering' effortlessly sketches vivid portraits of these often underappreciated birds.

The reader is invited to share in the solace which Stephen Rutt finds in nature through the book's elegant and very readable prose, which although soothing, never loses its poetic impact.

Stephen notes that he 'came late to the love of geese', and after reading this poignant and illuminating study, I think I agree with him.

Festive crossword answers

1	I	N	L	A	W	S		5	E	L	F		7	T	W	A	S				
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M' ALBA

MY ALBA

DIARDAOIN 2nd Am Faoilleach THURSDAY 2nd January

17:00 Prògraman Chloinne – Children's programming
19:00 An Là – News
19:05 Am B.F.G (rpt)
20:30 Sgoil nan Sagairt/ Priest School (rpt)
21:00 ÙR/NEW: Crodh Gaidhealach an Aird Bhain: The Highland Cattle of Ardbhan
22:20 Thugainn dhan Phark/Park Bar Life (rpt)
23:20 Func (rpt)
23:50 Dhan Uisge (rpt)

DIHAOINE 3 Am Faoilleach FRIDAY 3rd January

10:45 ÙR/NEW: Perth Masters 2020
12:45 Ceol Bho Perthshire Amber (rpt)
12:55 Trusadh – Danna Gaidhealach – An t-Slighe a Chomhnaill (rpt)
14:00 ÙR/NEW: Perth Masters 2020
16:00 Geamannan Nan Eilean 2019 (rpt)
16:30 ÙR/NEW: Perth Masters 2020
18:30 Eurovision Choir Gothenburg 2019 (rpt)
18:35 Machair (rpt)
19:00 An Là – News
19:15 My Life as a Courgette (rpt)
20:25 Froachy Bay (rpt)
20:30 Two Go To Tolsta - Sgeulachd Syd Agus Millie (rpt)
21:00 Curaidh na Coille/ Birdman of Pollock (rpt)
22:00 An Klondike (rpt)
22:50 Dhan Uisge (River Douchary) (rpt)
23:00 Belladrum 2019 (Highlights) (rpt)

DISATHAIRNE 4 Am Faoilleach SATURDAY 4th January

11:15 ÙR/NEW: Perth Masters 2020
13:15 Am B.F.G (rpt)
16:45 Two Go To Tolsta - Sgeulachd Syd Agus Millie (rpt)

17:15 An Là – News
17:30 ÙR/NEW: Perth Masters 2020
19:30 Cearcall (rpt)
20:00 Machair (rpt)
20:25 Froachy Bay (rpt)
20:30 Wild Atlantic Way, with Anne London (rpt)
21:00 ÙR/NEW: Perth Masters 2020
23:00 Binneas – Na Trads (rpt)
23:10 Tatu Rioghail Dhun Eideann 2019 (rpt)

DIDÒMHAICH 5 Am Faoilleach SUNDAY 5 January

08:00 ÙR/NEW: Perth Masters 2020
10:00 Lorient is Alba :Tide Lines (rpt)
11:00 ÙR/NEW: Perth Masters 2020
13:00 Cumachd a' Yoik/The Power of Yoik 2018/19
14:00 ÙR/NEW: Perth Masters 2020
16:45 Dluth Bhearradh/Wallace & Gromit in a Close Shave (rpt)
17:15 Le Sunnd a Seoladh (rpt)
18:00 Binneas Na Trads (rpt)
18:15 An Là – News
18:30 Seachd La – News Review
19:00 Geamannan nan Eilean 2019 (rpt)
19:30 ÙR/NEW: Alleluia!
20:00 Sgoil nan Sagairt (rpt)
20:30 Two Go To Tolsta - Sgeulachd Syd Agus Millie (rpt)
21:00 Thugainn dhan Phark/Park Bar Life (rpt)
22:00 Doolin (rpt)
23:00 An Klondike (rpt)
23:50 Belladrum – Cridhe Tartan (Highlights) (rpt)

DILUAIN 6 Am Faoilleach MONDAY 6 January

17:00 Prògraman Chloinne – Children's programming
19:00 Vets : Gach Creutair Beo (rpt)
19:30 Speaking Our Language (rpt)

19:55 Earrann Eachdraidh (rpt)
20:00 An Là – News
20:30 ÙR/NEW: An Lot
21:00 Trusadh -Pudar's Peant (Why wear makeup?) (rpt)
22:00 Port (rpt)
22:30 Crodh Gaidhealach an Aird Bhain: The Highland Cattle of Ardbhan (rpt)
23:50 Binneas – Na Trads (rpt)

DIMÀIRT 7 Am Faoilleach TUESDAY 7 January

17:00 Prògraman Chloinne – Children's programming
19:00 Fuine (rpt)
19:30 Speaking Our Language (rpt)
19:55 Earrann Eachdraidh (rpt)
20:00 An Là – News
20:30 Dreach Ur (rpt)
21:00 Farpaisean Chon-Chaorach (rpt)
22:00 Trusadh -Pudar's Peant (Why wear makeup?) (rpt)
23:00 Oran na Mna (rpt)
23:30 Alleluia! (rpt)

DICIADAIN 8 Am Faoilleach WEDNESDAY 8 January

17:00 Prògraman Chloinne – Children's programming
19:00 Vets : Gach Creutair Beo (rpt)
19:30 Speaking Our Language (rpt)
19:55 Earrann Eachdraidh (rpt)
20:00 An Là – News
20:30 ÙR/NEW: Wild Atlantic Way, with Anne London
21:00 DIY le Donnie (rpt)
21:45 Belladrum – Chridhe Tartan (Highlights) (rpt)
22:00 Fonn Fonn Fonn (rpt)
22:25 Port (rpt)
23:00 Murchadh MacPharlain: Bard Mhealboist (rpt)



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Slighe a' Chosta an Iar le Anne London / Wild Atlantic Way with Anne London

Bho Latha na Bliadhn' Ùir, 8:30f
From New Year's Day, 8.30pm

Tha Anne London air ais air turas-rathaid eile. Thig cuide rihte gu Slighe Chosta an Iar na h-Èireann.

Anne London embarks on another road trip, join her on the Wild Atlantic Way in Ireland.



Crodh Gàidhealach an Àird Bhàin - The Highland Cattle of Ardbhan

2 Faoilleach, 9f
2 January, 9pm

Film mu theaghlach à Uibhist a Tuath agus an crodh iongantach is ainmeil a tha iad ag àrach.

A film about a family from North Uist and their world-famous herd of Highland cattle.



Thugainn dhan Phark - Park Bar Life

Latha na Bliadhn' Ùir, 9f
New Year's Day, 9pm

Feuch an dearbh sinn dè a tha a' tàladh Ghàidheil de gach aois thar iomadach bliadhna.

Joe MacNeil explores the enduring draw for Gaels young and old of Glasgow's Park Bar.



An Lot

Bho 6 Faoilleach, 8.30f
From 6 January, 8.30f

Sreath ùr a' leantainn Sweeny tron dàrna bhliadhna aige mar chroitear làn-ùine.

Crofter Sweeny is back with a new series following his second year as a full-time crofter.

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WIN £200 WORTH OF SHOPPING

TROLLEY

DASH

COURTESY OF TESCO OBAN

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&C's for exclusions). All you have to do is collect four tokens over four weeks starting on 12th December, get them to us by 10am Thursday 9th January and you will be entered into a prize draw to win this fantastic trolley dash. What are you waiting for, banish those post-Christmas blues and start collecting your tokens!

All four tokens must be sent in a single envelope, along with your name, address and telephone number, 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 family are not eligible to enter. The editor's decision is final.



TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Winner must be at Tesco, Lochside, Oban, PA34 4HP for 9.30am January 20th. Excludes tobacco, lottery, baby food, non-food items and alcohol. Quantity limited to two per item. The winner will be given a hand held scanner to monitor spend to the value of £200.

We will protect your personal data. We only gather what we need for the requirements of this competition. Entry data will be deleted/disposed immediately upon the competition entry deadline and in a manner appropriate to GDPR regulations. Entrant's details will not be used for any other activity.

DIGITAL SUBSCRIBERS

Digital subscribers who have an active subscription covering the period from December 13, 2019, to February 3, 2020, 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 20, 2020.

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Argyll and Islands AGM to focus on next generation of farmers and crofters

A discussion panel at the forthcoming Argyll and the Islands Regional annual general meeting (AGM) will focus on the views of the next generation of farmers and crofters.

The AGM will take place on Friday January 10, starting at 11am in Tarbert Bowling Club. The morning session will see the regional AGM and the presentation of the Argyll and the Islands Stalwart Award.

The highlight of the afternoon will be a panel session

chaired by the region's Next Generation Committee representative Ian Dickson from Scalpsie Farm, Bute.

Panel members include: Jenny Baillie, regional manager, Scottish Association of Young Farmers Clubs (SAYFC); Jenny Brunton, policy manager, NFU Scotland; Ian Davidson, national advisor, Scottish Land Matching Service; Colin Ferguson, chairman, NFU Scotland Next Generation Committee; and John McCulloch, chairman, SAYFC West Rural and Agri

Affairs Committee. Regional Board chairman John Dickson said: 'As an industry, we need to focus on how we support the next generation of farmers and crofters to get them into the sector.'

'At NFUS, our challenge is how we encourage the next generation to also get involved in the union.'

'This panel will be an opportunity for members to hear views on the future for the next generation of farmers and crofters in what are going to be challenging times.'

'I would encourage those who are coming along to bring a young person with them - maybe a son, daughter, nephew or niece who is involved in your family business.'

'We want to ensure young people have a bright future in the sector and want them to become involved in agri-affairs, policy lobbying and NFU Scotland. To help get the next generation involved, NFUS Farming or Crofting membership now entitles family members to be signed up at no extra cost.'



Lorn Ploughing Match committee members presented a £300 cheque to Argyll Beats Cardiovascular Disease charity representatives at Lorn and Islands Hospital, Oban, on Friday December 20. The committee thanks all the businesses, competitors and spectators for their continued support of the event over the years. From left: John MacCormick, Dr Nicky Campbell, Charlie Campbell, Betty Graham, Donnie Campbell and Caroline Henderson.

Around the markets

Dingwall & Highland Marts Ltd, December 17 sold 12 prime cattle. Prime heifers (12) averaged 196.6p (-0.9p) and sold to 204.0p per kg for a 565kg Limousin cross selling to Messrs John M Munro Ltd, Dingwall and £1,254.00 gross for a 660kg Limousin cross both from Bridgend Farm, Dingwall.

Other leading prices per kg: Heifers: Bridgend Farm, (LimX), 200.0p, (CharX), 199.0p. Other leading prices per head: Heifers: Bridgend Farm, (LimX), £1,218.75, (CharX), £1,213.90.

New season lambs (290) averaged 186.2p (-7.5p) and sold to 211.1p per kg and £95.00 gross for a pen of 45kg Beltex crosses from Torgorm, Conon Bridge, selling to Messrs Fraser Brothers, Butchers, Dingwall.

SQQ 36.5kg to 45.5kg (204) averaged 186.7p (-7.6p) per kg Feeding sheep (42) sold to £96 gross for a Texel ram from Teanluick, Beauty.

Other leading prices per head and per kg: New season lambs: SuffX - Torgorm, £89, 193.5p; Chev - Torgorm, £88, 200.0p; TexX - The Meadows, Culreach, £88, Dunain Mains, Inverness, 193.2p; Cross - Shewglie, Glenurquhart, £88, The Meadows, 188.9p; BF - Shewglie, £85.50; CHM - Dunain Mains, £84, 186.7p; Mule - Old Spittal Farm, Glenshee, £82.50. Feeding sheep: Tex ram - Strathaird Farms, Broadford, £88; TexX - 5c Balnabeen, Conon Bridge, £88; Chev - Shewglie, £80; TexX - The Dell

of Killiehuntly, Kingussie, £70. **Caledonian Marts Ltd, December 17**, sold 2105 Prime Lambs, Ewes and Tups. All lambs keenly bid for especially 39.1kg-52kg which averaged 201ppkg for 1225 sold. Overall average for 1522 sold was 196.5p (+13p on the week) which resulted in the dearest trade of the season so far. Top price of the day went to J Guthrie, Cultburn for a 50kg Beltex at £113.

Top price per kg went to R A Campbell & Sons, Meikle Seggie for a pen of 3 Beltex X Lambs at 41.3kg fetching 235ppkg.

Leading Prices: Prime Lambs Per Head:- Beltex £112 Cultburn Beltex X £111 & £107 West Lundie; Texel £104 Ayton Texel X £103 East Lenniston Continental X £103 Green-craig; Continental £102.50 Claish; Suffolk £94.50 Green-craig; Mule £85.50 Ditch; BF (Tups) £74 Culcreuch BF Lambs £73 Glenturret Estates

Prime Lambs Per Kg:- Beltex x 229p & 227p Meikle Seggie Beltex 224p Borlick Texel X 221p & 220p Ditch Texel 221p Borlick Continental 220p & 219p Meikle Seggie Suffolk 207p Candy Cheviot 206p Borlick Mule 191p Innieshewan BF 188p Glenturret Estates Also forward were 583 Cast Ewes and Tups.

A good show of Ewes again met a great trade. A highlight of the sale was a tremendous run of Ewes and Rams from P J & C Wood, Knockhill, Strathkinnes averaging £137.66 for 32 sold.

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- Dealing with all daily issues professionally and liaising with site management on a regular basis
- To carry out the daily inspections; complete the forms and where a problem exists notify the management immediately
- Be responsible for plant assets that are entrusted to you i.e. materials, plant buildings and equipment and stores used therein and efficient employment of them.
- To contribute the effective and efficient operation of all plant operations from the primary stockpile onwards.
- To react promptly and effectively to site breakdowns by liaising with maintenance and assisting where needed.
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- To carry out other reasonable tasks within the scope of your operation and abilities as and when required.

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PUBLIC NOTICES

Rectification of First Registration of a Croft

A rectification has been made to the croft 1 Stronaba, Kilmonivaig on the Crofting Register held by the Registers of Scotland.

Any person who wishes to challenge the registration may apply to the Scottish Land Court by September 3, 2020.

Details of the registration can be found at www.crofts.ros.gov.uk/register/home. The croft registration number is C6265

Rule 5.6(1)(a) NOTICE TO MRS ROSE-MAE CHIN or SLIWINSKI residing formerly at West Haven, Achintore Road, Fort William, FH33 6RW and residing formerly at 1 Hillside House, Belford Road, Fort William, PH33 613T and whose whereabouts to the petitioner are unknown Court ref. no. FTW-SQ8-19

An action has been raised in Fort William Sheriff Court by RICHARD SLIWINSKI, Pursuer, calling as a Defender MRS ROSEMAE CHIN or SLIWINSKI whose last known address was formerly at West Haven, Achintore Road, Fort William, PH33 6RW and formerly at 1 Hillside House, Belford Road, Fort William, PH33 613T. If MRS ROSE-MAE CHIN or SLIWINSKI wishes to defend the action she should immediately contact the sheriff clerk at Fort William Sheriff Court, Sheriff Court House High St, Fort William PH33 6EE from whom the service copy initial writ may be obtained. If she fails to do so decree may be granted against her.

Duncan James Swarbrick, Swarbrick Law, Speyside Business Centre, Dalfaber Industrial Estate, AVIEMORE PH22 1ST. Solicitor for the petitioner

www.highland.gov.uk



TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (SCOTLAND) ACT 1997 PLANNING (LISTED BUILDING AND CONSERVATION AREAS) (SCOTLAND) ACT 1997

The applications listed below, along with plans and other documents submitted with them, may be examined online at <http://wam.highland.gov.uk>; electronically at the AREA PLANNING AND BUILDING STANDARDS OFFICE, CHARLES KENNEDY BUILDING, ACHINTORE ROAD, FORT WILLIAM, PH33 6RQ; or electronically at your nearest Council Service Point. You can find your nearest Service Point via the following link https://www.highland.gov.uk/directory/16/a_to_z

Written comments should be made to the EPC at the contact details below within the time period indicated from the date of this notice. Anyone making a representation about this proposal should note that their letter or email will be disclosed to any individual or body who requests sight of representations in respect of this proposal.

Reference Number	Development Address	Proposal Description
19/05449/FUL	Blarachaoruinn Lundavra Road, Fort William	Erection of 4 self-catering pods

Time period for comments is 14 days

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

Argyll and Bute Council

PLANNING

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

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

Ref. No.	Proposal	Site Address
19/02578/PP	Erection of dwellinghouse, installation of septic tank and formation of access.	Land Approx 150M North East Of Achnambroc, Inverinan, Taynuilt, Argyll And Bute
19/02517/PP	Erection of dwellinghouse with integral garage, installation of septic tank and formation of vehicular access	Oban Seil Croft, Clachan Seil, Isle Of Seil, Argyll And Bute
19/02100/PP	Renewal of planning permission reference 16/00778/PP (Erection of dwellinghouse, detached garage and installation of septic tank)	Aintuim Farm, Land North Of Achnadrish Lodge, Dervaig, Isle Of Mull, Argyll And Bute
19/02496/PP	Erection of 4 holiday cabins, installation of sewage treatment plant and formation of vehicular access	Land At Glenorchy Farm, Glen Orchy, Argyll And Bute
19/02459/PP	Erection of dwellinghouse, installation of ground mounted photovoltaic panels and septic tank and formation of vehicular access	Laggan Croft (Cruachan Plot), Port Ramsay, Isle Of Lismore, Oban, Argyll And Bute
19/02149/PP	Replacement roof covering from Eternit slate tile to Natural slate	42 Easdale Island, Oban, Argyll And Bute, PA34 4TB
19/02150/LIB	Replacement roof covering from Eternit slate tile to Natural slate	42 Easdale Island, Oban, Argyll And Bute, PA34 4TB
19/02511/LIB	Demolition of existing extension and erection of porch extension, installation of replacement windows and internal alterations to remove non-load bearing partitions	Ulva Manse, Ulva, Isle Of Mull, Argyll And Bute, PA73 6LZ
19/02460/PP	Erection of dwellinghouse, installation of septic tank and formation of vehicular access	Land East Of Laggan Croft (Nevis Plot), Port Ramsay, Isle Of Lismore, Oban, Argyll And Bute
19/02590/PP	Alterations and erection of extension	Cherrytree Cottage, Jamieson Street, Bowmore, Isle Of Islay, Argyll And Bute, PA43 7HL

Written comments can be made to the above address or submitted online <http://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/planning-and-environment/find-and-comment-planning-applications> within 21 days of this advert. Please quote the reference number in any correspondence. Any letter of representation the Council receives is considered a public document and will be published on our website. Anonymous or marked confidential correspondence will not be considered. A weekly list of all applications can be viewed at all Area Offices, Council Libraries and on the Councils website.

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

www.argyll-bute.gov.uk
Comhairle Earra – Ghàidheal agus Bhòid



Career opportunities



CONSTRUCTION SITE MANAGER – OBAN

We are looking for an experienced Site Manager to join our team in Dunbeg Development in Oban. The successful candidate will be responsible for organising & monitoring progress, meeting deadlines and ensuring a safe working environment. This a full time/permanent position 8am-5.30pm (Mon-Fri).

Please send CV to jobs@mkmacleod.co.uk or call 01546 602989 for further information.



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£8.72 and £9 per hour respectively

Closing date: 8am, 13/01/2020. Interviews will take place week commencing 20/01/2020.

For further information and to apply, please visit our website:

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ARGYLL & BUTE COUNCIL

EDUCATION SERVICE

REGISTRATION OF INFANT BEGINNERS IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS SESSION 2020/2021

Children who attain the age of five years between 1 March 2020 and 28 February 2021 should be registered for education during the week commencing 13 January 2020.

Parents should take their children to the appropriate local primary school on one of the school days during the above week between the hours of 10.00am and 3.00pm.

A list of all schools can be found on the Council's website <https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/education-and-learning/schools>, this includes:-

- Gaelic Medium Education
- Denominational Schools
- Non-denominational Schools

A leaflet providing information for parents on enrolment of children in school and giving details of placing request procedures (including under age placing requests) may be obtained from any school or from Education Services, Argyll House, Alexandra Parade, Dunoon, PA23 8AJ (Tel: 01369 704000).

ANNE PATERSON/LOUISE CONNOR, HEAD OF SERVICE, EDUCATION SERVICE

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Tel: 01250 884306 or M: 07885 203020

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Tel 07546 788945

WANTED

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S & S SERVICES

ISUZU

SUBARU

NEW YEAR, NEW CAR!

COME AND SEE US AT THE TESCO JANUARY SALE EVENT SATURDAY 11TH & SUNDAY 12TH JANUARY.

ISUZU D-MAX COMPLETES HAT TRICK AT THE 2020 WHAT VAN? AWARDS

The multi award-winning Isuzu D-Max has been awarded What Van? 'Pick-up of the Year' for the third consecutive year, a testimony to our ongoing desire to provide the best working pick-up for professionals. The Isuzu D-Max was awarded What Van? Pick-Up of The Year for 2020 with the monthly title praising both its substance and style yet again. This accolade being hot on the heels of being crowned, Pick-up of the Year in the Commercial Fleet Awards for the second year.

The Isuzu D-Max emerged victorious, beating strong competition from rivals in a highly contested sector.

Judges were impressed by the economy and refinement of the innovative 164 PS turbo diesel engine, that provides impressive performance and builds upon the Isuzu D-Max's reliable workhorse character.

With a 3.5 tonne towing

capacity and over 1.1 tonne payload, the Isuzu D-Max was also praised for providing a quieter, more economical driving experience. The 1.9L turbo diesel engine meets Euro 6 standards without the need for the addition of AdBlue, unlike most of the Isuzu D-Max's competitors.

The breadth of the Isuzu D-Max range also impressed judges; with single, extended and double-cab formats available, as well as a wide choice of trim levels. Coupled with the attractive five-year/125,000-mile warranty package and 5 years' roadside assistance (in the UK & Europe), the Isuzu D-Max proved it was truly built for the professionals who use it.

What Van? editor and judge James Dallas said of the win: "With competitive prices, an injection of lifestyle sophistication to



complement proven off-road and workhorse ability, a full range of body styles and a frugal engine that requires no AdBlue, the Isuzu D-Max has deservedly won a hat trick of Pick-up of the Year prizes."

Isuzu UK Managing Director William Brown added: "This third consecutive award for the

Isuzu D-Max is a testimony to the great product which our customers already love and trust. Isuzu is proud to make reliable and quality vehicles for the professionals that need them, and this award highlights the Isuzu truly is a step above the rest."

Following an already successful year for the

award-winning Isuzu D-Max, winning WhatVan? Pick-up of the Year yet again for 2020 is a fitting finale to 2019. The award-winning Isuzu D-Max has already had a successful 2019, being crowned 'Pick-Up of The Year' at the Commercial Fleet Awards and 'Pick-up of the Year' 2019 from Pickup & 4x4 Pro, 'Best Working Pick-Up' for

2019 by Professional Pick-Up & 4X4 magazine, 'Best Workhorse Pick-Up' for 2019 by Trade Van Driver and Van/Truck Brand of the year 2019 by On The Tools for the 2nd year.

For more information on the Isuzu D-Max range please see S&S Services at the Tesco Oban Roadshow 11th & 12th January 2020.



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THE PICK-UP
PROFESSIONALS

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Tesco Oban Roadshow JANUARY Sale Event

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One of the longest serving Subaru & Isuzu dealers in the UK, S & S Services are a family run business aiming to meet each customers 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 out grown 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 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.



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Christmas stocking filler £20.00 each collected from Oban or £23.00 including postage, Telephone 01631 564578

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FURNITURE

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VINTAGE STEEL GARDEN ROLLER - Small vintage steel garden roller. Excellent painted conditions. Suit smaller garden or makes a nice feature, £90.00 Telephone 01631 564578

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Bass Amp - Line6 LD400pro 400 watt modelling amp. Amazing, versatile amp in good condition. £80 Tel 07900048362 (Oban)

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6 The parties submit to the jurisdiction of the Scottish Courts and Scots Law. In the event of any dispute or

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PERSONAL NOTICE

GAYDON

Alexandra, Francis and Isobel wish to thank all the many friends and service providers for all their very kind friendship and assistance which gave their parents, the late Harry (Sam) and Florentine (Twinkle), very happy lives at home in Argyll.

Merry Christmas, Happy Hogmanay and best wishes for the future.

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DEATHS

BINNIE - Peacefully at Etive House Care Home, Benderloch on December 19, 2019 in her 88th year, Doris Mae Binnie, beloved wife of the late Ross Binnie. Sadly missed. The funeral will take place at the Church of Scotland, Glencruitten Road, Oban, on Tuesday, January 7, 2020 at 1.00 p.m., thereafter to Pennyfuir cemetery.

BRUNTON - Peacefully at home in Bunessan, Isle of Mull, with her family by her side on December 25, 2019, Maimie Brunton née MacInnes (retired head teacher), widow of the late Tom Brunton, loving mother of Sandy and Mary, much loved grannie, aunt and sister. Funeral service was held at Bunessan Parish church on Tuesday, December 31, 2019 thereafter to Suidhe Cemetery.

CLARK - Iain Mackinnon Clark 1933 - 2019. Much loved father, grandfather, partner and friend passed away in Glasgow on December 20, 2019. There will be a service at Clydebank Crematorium at 3.30pm on January 7, 2020 with a service of remembrance to follow at a later date in Stranraer.

MEMORIAMs

FERGUSON - In loving memory of my dear mother Jessie, who passed away on January 2, 2011. A happy smile, kind in nature, loving and true

In my heart you will always stay, loved and remembered every day.
- Daughter Anne.

HAY - Everlasting memories of our mum and gran, Mary, died December 31, 2014. Never more than a thought away.
- Kate, Elaine and their families.

JACKSON - In loving memory of my dear mother Liz, who died so suddenly on January 6, 2006. Always in our thoughts.
- Love Iain xxx.

LAMONT - In loving memory of my dear husband Willie, who passed away so very suddenly on New Year's Eve 2005. Always in my thoughts. Missing you more as the years go by.
- Mary.

LAUDER - Stephen - 3/3/65 - 4/1/14
In our hearts
Your memory is kept
To treasure, to love and never forget
No verse, no flowers
No tears can say
How much we miss you every day.
All our love.
- Love Ma, Dad and families xxx

MACCOLL - Archie (Kilmonivaig).
Nam chridhe gu Siorraidh
- June Anne. x
Love and miss you grandpa
- Archie, Jessie, Kate and Freddie xxxx

MACINNES - Duncan. Seventh Anniversary. It isn't what we write It isn't what we say It's how we feel deep inside As we think of you today Missing you always.
- Love Nellie and all the family.

MACLELLAN - Short but precious memories of our darling infant son Christopher, called to Heaven on January 1, 1991. Our brightest star in the sky Loved forever
- Mum, Dad, Craig and Calum.

MACPHAIL - Treasured memories of a dear husband father and 'Shesh', John (Tiree), who passed away December 26, 2004. Also remembering loved ones gone before and after. The years we spent together Those happy days we knew Are lived again so often In my memories of you.
- Jean x
He laboured hard for those he loved
Then left us to remember
- May, Irene and families.

McKINNON - Treasured memories of my dear husband Charles McKinnon who died suddenly on December 28, 2005. Also my dear mother Catherine Brown who died July 26, 2001. Also remembering those who gave before and since Not just today but every day In silence we remember.
- May, Colonsay.



Oban Sea Cadets awarded Pennant

Oban Sea Cadets were celebrating just before Christmas after receiving their Pennant Award for efficiency for 2019 (Royal Navy inspection). This means that the local branch is meeting the needs of its young people in all respects, including training, safety, environment and welfare. PO Robert Neil (SCC), 1st Lieutenant and Unit Training Officer with Oban Sea Cadets, said: 'Very well done to all involved!'

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Oban and Lorn residents receive BEM in New Year Honours list

by David McPhee
dmcph@obantimes.co.uk



Two people from Oban and Lorn have been included in The Queen's New Year Honours List.

Nan Johnstone and Kenneth Alasdair Macdonald have been awarded British Empire Medals (BEMs).

Nan, who is the head of mathematics at Oban High School, received the honour for services to STEM Education and the community in Oban.

And Kenneth, who is known as Alasdair and lives in Connel, was chosen for services to the community in Strathfillan, North Argyll, for his accordion playing.

Speaking to The Oban Times, Nan said: 'I was stunned, but delighted. A letter came in the middle of November and I have had to keep it a secret.'

Speaking about receiving the letter, Nan added: 'I honestly was very stunned, completely and utterly. I was not expecting it at all. It took me a while to realise it was me.'

Nan, 59, has been teaching at Oban High School since 1983, when she arrived to do her probation at the school.

Her accomplishments were outlined in the honours document, which read: 'She is an outstanding protagonist and role model for STEM with her infectious enthusiasm through almost 37 years of teaching.'



Nan Johnstone and Kenneth Alasdair Macdonald have been awarded British Empire Medals in the New Year's Honours list – Nan for services to STEM education and Oban High School Pipe Band, and Kenneth for services to the community of Strathfillan.

'She developed and implemented many innovative programmes, including Maths across the Curriculum locally, primary feeder schools maths competitions and a highly successful, "How to pass Higher Maths evening", helping the wider school community.'

'She has adopted several novel and exciting ways to engage pupils and parents in learning about maths, such as maths weeks, with after school events, guest lectures and competitions.'

'She has also made a huge contri-

butio to the helping and running of Oban High School Pipe Band 2006.'

Alasdair, 82, who spent the majority of his life living in Bridge of Orchy, has been entertaining the community in Strathfillan since 1960.

After retiring to Connel near Oban in 2001, he continued to make at least one 80-mile return journey every week to play his accordion and accompanying hymn singing in three churches in Strathfillan and Inishshale Parish.



He has been doing this for 58 years, since 1960. He still plays at the churches in Bridge of Orchy and Crianlarich - 50 miles away.

The document stated: 'That is part of his continuing service to the community. His service is a crucial factor in holding the congregations together.'

'For many years he provided entertainment at the Bridge of Orchy Village Hall children's parties. He plays the pipes on Remembrance Sunday and also at weddings and funerals.'

THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK

We are travelling on very soon into another year, a new year, which brings the opportunity to change things to make a new start.

Perhaps motivated by New Year Resolutions, we may wish for a healthier lifestyle, we may want to repair relationships and be more grateful for friends, for family and our communities.

The start of a new year is always a nostalgic time as we take our memories into the coming months. We can choose to hang on to the baggage of old resentments and reluctance to forgive, or we can do what the Bible recommends, from Paul's advice to the church in Philippi, which is to remember only "...what is true, honourable, just, pure, pleasing and commendable...". He also writes to confirm that forgiveness from God towards each other can be complete in God's love for us, which is renewed each day. Then God's peace can be known in our hearts, displayed in the way we live, bringing new hope into our lives with God being the keeper of our memories.

God can incorporate a sense of wonder and newness into the way we live, into our perspectives, our attitudes, motives and our relationships. He can help us to face the future unafraid, knowing that whatever we have done, or left undone, it is never too late to make a fresh start.

Have a Happy New Year and Good New Beginnings.

Reverend Carol Leech

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Shinty review of the season

It's the business end of the shinty season as The Oban Times looks back on the second half of 2019.

July 2019

Mowi Premiership

Kingussie finished July with a two point lead at the top of the Premiership, although they only played one league match during the month edging out Oban Camanachd 3-2.

Mowi National Division

Fort William looked in a hurry to seal the title and they had now notched up 11 straight league wins.

Mowi North Division 1

Glengarry were two points clear of second-placed Fort William with a game in hand. However, Newtonmore were just four points off the top having played three games fewer than the leaders.

Mowi South Division 1

Aberdour were eight points clear at the top of the division despite losing 7-2 to the Inveraray seconds.

Mowi North Division 2

Lochcarron and Strathspey continued to battle it out for the title and the west coast side led by a point having played a game more.

Mowi South Division 2

Kilmory enjoyed a two point lead over Glenorchy at the summit but had played a game more. The Oban Celtic colts were third.

Tulloch Homes Camanachd Cup

Caberfeidh, Newtonmore, Oban Camanachd and Kyles Athletic all reached the semi-finals at the start of the month. Newtonmore defeated Caberfeidh 7-5 in an epic semi-final at the end of the month.

Artemis Macaulay Cup

Andrew MacCuish scored twice as Oban Camanachd reached the Macaulay final with a 4-1 victory over Glasgow Mid Argyll. In the other semi-final, Ruairidh Anderson got the winner as Kingussie beat Newtonmore 2-1.

Liberty British Aluminium Balliemore Cup

Fort William's 4-1 victory over Glenurquhart took them through to the final to face Glasgow Mid Argyll who defeated Strathglass 3-0 in their semi.

HIS Sutherland Cup

Lochside Rovers lifted the HIS Sutherland Cup, defeating the Lovat reserves 2-1 after extra time in the final. Ross Campbell put Lochside ahead, but Raymond Rennie levelled a minute later. Lewis Buchanan scored the match-winning goal seven minutes into extra time.

Mowi WCA National Division 1

League leaders Badenoch lead Skye by four points, but the islanders had two games in hand.

Young Scots star on Irish tour

Scotland's U17s completed another successful Ireland tour. The Scots opened by beating Kildare U17 (5-3-5) 26-7 (0-0-7) at the 6,200 capacity St Conleth's Park, the home of County Kildare GAA. Lachie Shaw

grabbed a hat-trick, whilst Liam Borthwick and Conor Kennedy also found the net.

Next up was the annual meeting with Dublin U17 at Parnell Park the following day and Scotland U17 made it two out of two, winning (10-3-3) 39-6 (0-0-6).

Ross Gordon grabbed a hat-trick, whilst Duncan Matheson and Lachie Shaw both scored twice. Martin Pringle, Kieran MacPherson and Liam Borthwick scored the other Scotland goals. Lachie Shaw converted three two pointers taking his tally over the two matches to 23 points.

August 2019

Mowi Premiership

After taking five out of six points, Lovat ended the month a point clear at the top of the table although they had played more games than their nearest rivals.

Mowi National Division

Fort William clinched the league championship, and a return to the premiership, by beating Glenurquhart and, following their victory over Strathglass in their next match, they were just one win away from completing their league programme with a 100 per cent record.

Mowi North Division 1

Triumphs over Skye, Inverness and Kinlochshiel meant Glengarry maintained their title push and led the Newtonmore seconds by seven points although Newtonmore had four games in hand.

Mowi South Division 1

Table toppers Aberdour's nearest challenges were third placed Lochside Rovers who had plenty to do as they trailed by 12 points with four games in hand.

Mowi North Division 2

Lochcarron held a three point advantage over Strathspey who had played a game fewer.

Mowi South Division 2

Kilmory were crowned league champions after Alistair MacArthur's goal earned a 1-0 win over second placed Glenorchy in their final match.

Tulloch Homes Camanachd Cup

Oban Camanachd will play Newtonmore in the Camanachd Cup Final after Daniel Cameron's double and Andrew MacCuish's effort secured a 3-0 victory over Kyles Athletic.

Strathdearn Cup

Fort William and Newtonmore beat Kilmallie and Glenurquhart respectively to reach the Strathdearn Cup Final.

Bullough Cup

Lochside Rovers lifted their second trophy of the season after defeating Glasgow Mid Argyll 4-1 in the Bullough Cup Final. Lewis Buchanan scored twice, either side of efforts from Michael MacQueen and Craig MacDougall.

Mowi WCA National Division 1

Skye only trailed leaders Badenoch



Lochside Rovers won the HIS Sutherland Cup defeating Lovat 2-1 after extra time.

by a couple of points with a game in hand and a title play-off between the sides looked inevitable.

Lochaber are junior

Macaulay Champions

Lochaber High School won the inaugural Artemis Macaulay Junior Cup, defeating Oban High School 4-0 in the final at Ganavan. Ben MacKinnon scored twice, with Robbie Rydings and Craig MacDonald getting the others.

September 2019

Mowi Premiership

Kingussie now need just two wins from their final three matches to be sure of a first premiership title for 10 years. Just a week after losing 5-1 to Newtonmore in the Camanachd Cup Final, Oban Camanachd beat Newtonmore by the same scoreline in the league at the Eilan.

Mowi National Division

Glasgow Mid Argyll now needed a draw at Skye in their next fixture to join champions Fort William in the premiership next season. Oban Celtic finished the season strongly, taking five out of six points from their final three matches.

Mowi North Division 1

Glengarry held a five point lead at the top of the table, despite losing 3-2 against Skye. However 2018 champions Newtonmore have five games in hand.

Mowi South Division 1

Aberdour's 3-0 victory at Lochside Rovers secured the league championship. The Fife side now had to wait on the outcome of North 1 to discover whether they had to play-off for a place in next season's National Division.

Mowi North Division 2

Lochcarron were crowned North Division 2 champions after defeating second placed Strathspey Camanachd 7-5 in a thrilling match at Battery Park.

Tulloch Homes Camanachd Cup

Newtonmore raised the Tulloch Homes Camanachd Cup for the fourth successive season, beating Oban Camanachd 5-1 in the re-scheduled final in Fort William.

Atrocious weather conditions

brought the previous weekend's final to a premature end but the replay was played in the sunshine. Newtonmore's Drew MacDonald scored the only goal of the first half but efforts early in the second half from Jamie Robinson and Glen MacKintosh had Newtonmore 3-0 ahead. David Lafferty countered but Evan Menzies and another from Glen MacKintosh meant it was Newtonmore's skipper Evan Menzies who raised the famous trophy. Oban Camanachd had periods of pressure in the game and Newtonmore defender Rory Kennedy collected the coveted Albert Smith Medal as man of the match.

Strathdearn Cup

Scott Knox scored twice, either side of goals from Grant Disher and Alan Knox, as Fort William beat Newtonmore 4-0 at Spean Bridge to win the Strathdearn Cup.

Mowi WCA National Division 1

It was still neck-and-neck between Badenoch and Skye in the title race.

Mowi WCA Valerie Fraser Camanachd Cup

2017 winners Skye Camanachd won back the Mowi Valerie Fraser Camanachd Cup with an 8-6 victory over holders Badenoch at a sunny Dell.

Player of the match Lorna MacRae and Abby MacLean both scored four times for Skye and captain Ilana Paterson stepped forward to be presented with the Valerie Fraser Camanachd Cup by Jayne MacKay from sponsors Mowi.

Mowi WCA Challenge Cup

Lovat are Mowi Challenge Cup winners, defeating Inverness 7-1 at the Dell.

WCA North Double

The North came out on top in the Women's Camanachd Association senior and U21 representative matches, sponsored by the Macaulay Association, which took place at Mossfield.

North U21 lift Caol Cup

All the goals came in the first half as North U21 beat South U21 3-0 in the annual Caol Cup clash at the Jubilee, Ballachulish. Duncan Matheson scored twice and Roddy Young got the other. The North were managed

by Kilmallie's Mark MacPherson who said: 'I enjoyed being involved and it was an absolute pleasure to take these boys. They showed a great attitude and were a credit to their clubs.'

Kinlochshiel U14s win MacMaster Cup

Archie MacRae scored five times as Kinlochshiel U14 beat Oban Camanachd U14 7-1 in the Kenneth MacMaster Cup Final.

Camanachd Association Cup

Skye Camanachd beat Newtonmore 5-2 in the inaugural National Final of the Camanachd Association Cup at the Lochaber High School all-weather pitch.

This was a new 10-a-side competition in the primary school age shinty calendar.

October 2019

Mowi Premiership

Kingussie sealed the Mowi Premiership title for the first time since 2009, only suffering one defeat and three draws in the process, after they beat Kilmallie 4-1 at Canal Parks.

It also turned out to be a good season for Kilmallie who retained their Premiership place after promotion from the National Division at the end of 2018.

Mowi National Division

Glasgow Mid Argyll secured the division's second promotion spot when they beat fellow contenders Skye Camanachd 3-1 in Portree.

Mowi North Division 1

Glengarry beat challengers Newtonmore, who now had to win all their remaining matches to take the title although they could afford to drop one point and still take the trophy on goal difference.

Mowi South Division 1

Ballachulish won their final two matches to finish second in the division.

GMA Raise Mòd Cup

Glasgow Mid Argyll raised the Mòd Cup with a 3-1 penalty shoot-out victory over Bute following their 0-0 draw at Glasgow Green

Scotland Ladies lose

Scotland Ladies lost 14-10 in a close encounter with Munster Ladies in

- part two

their shinty/camogie clash at the WIT Arena in Waterford. Sarah Corrigan chipped in with a goal and a point for the Scots whilst Kirsty Deans found the net twice. Rebecca Noonan notched a goal and a point late on to give the Irish victory.

Badenoch are champs

Badenoch were confirmed Mowi WCA National Division 1 winners after they beat Skye Camanachd 8-1 in their title play-off match at the Balgate. Mowi WCA national player of the year Kirsty Deans scored seven.

North take honours

North U17 defeated the South U17 5-0 in their representative match at An Aird. Ross MacKinnon scored twice for the North with Ross Gordon, Max Campbell and Sorley Thomson getting the others.

North U14 retained the Fraser MacPhee trophy, winning 5-1 against South U14.

Taighan Macleod's brace gave the North a 2-0 lead before Oban Camanachd's Kyle MacFarlane pulled a goal back. Calum MacIver Archie MacRae and Finlay MacLennan rounded off the 5-1 win.

November 2019

Scotland Win In Ireland

Scotland retained the Mowi Quaich following a thumping 26-4 triumph over Ireland at the GAA National Games Development Centre in Abbotstown, Dublin.

Paul Divilly and Danny Cullen gave Ireland an early 2-0 lead but Scotland took control from the moment Daniel Cameron's point and Kevin Bartlett's two-pointer turned the contest their way. Craig Morrison and Andrew MacCuish added Scotland goals and despite Cillian Kiely's point, the Scots led 9-3 at half-time.

Another from Craig Morrison and strikes from Roddy MacDonald and Kevin Bartlett took Scotland's goals count to five.

Steven Macdonald, on his return from injury, chipped in with six points and substitute Savio Genini bagged two more with Ryan Mullaney giving the Irish, who didn't field any top tier players, small consolation.

Scotland skipper Stuart MacDonald was presented with the Mowi Quaich.

Young Scots lose out

A strong second half display gave Ireland U21 a 32-14 victory over Scotland U21 in their Mowi Quaich clash at the GAA National Games Development Centre in Abbotstown, Dublin on Saturday November 2.

The Scots led 13-12 at half-time but four-goal Mark Kehoe inspired the Irish to victory.

The final count saw Scotland player of the match Ruaridh Anderson score two goals with Daniel MacVicar and Innes Blackhall getting the others. Findlay MacDonald and Lachie Shaw added points.

Mowi Premiership

After winning 2-0 at Kinlochshiel in their penultimate league match, with Andrew MacCuish and Garry Lord scoring, Oban Camanachd finished second in the Mowi Premiership after being awarded the points when Lochaber were unable to fulfil their fixture at Spean Bridge.

Lochaber and Inveraray were relegated from the top flight.

Mowi North Division 1

The Newtonmore second team only dropped one point in their run-in to take Mowi North Division 1 on goal difference over Glengarry.

The outcome also meant Mowi South 1 winners Aberdour stepped up to the Mowi National Division next season as the Newtonmore colts weren't eligible to take part in the play-off match.

Skye win London Shield

Skye Camanachd U17 lifted the Mowi London Shield for the second successive season with a 4-0 victory over Newtonmore U17 at Pairc nan Laoch, Portree.

Taylor Matheson grabbed a hat-trick and Cameron MacKay got the other.

John Angus Gillies from sponsors Mowi was on hand to present the London Shield to Skye skipper Murphy Henderson.

The Douglas Mackintosh Memorial Medal for the man of the match went to Skye's Ross Gordon.

Oban Camanachd youths win

Oban Camanachd U14 were 4-3 winners in their South U14 9-a-side league play-off match against Bute U14 at Strachurmore. Innes Jackson, Ewan Campbell, twice, and Louis MacFarlane cancelled out Rory MacDonald's double and Ronnie McMillian's effort.

Annual Mowi shinty awards

There were reasons to celebrate for Oban Camanachd's Daniel Sloss and Fort William and Glengarry shinty clubs at the Mowi Conference and Awards Ceremony hosted by sponsors Mowi in the Kingsmills Hotel, Inverness.

Daniel Sloss has long since cemented his place in the Oban Camanachd first team. He was part of a side which has lifted this year's Scottish Sea Farms Glasgow Celtic Society Cup and were runners up in the Tulloch Homes Camanachd Cup and the Artemis Macaulay Cup. He represented Scotland U17 in their summer Ireland tour and was also part of Alan MacRae's Scotland U21 squad which faced their Irish counterparts.

Fort William had five reasons to celebrate. They were named Mowi club of the year and were the first recipients of the Gary Innes award for youth club of the year. Added to that, after winning the Liberty British Aluminium Balliemore Cup and completing their Mowi National Division season with a 100 per cent record, the manager of the year accolade went to bosses Victor Smith and Adam Robertson, whilst the player of the year in the same

Continued on page 34

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Oban Celtic Shinty Club awards night



Senior player of the year Neil Carmichael with manager Dougie MacIntyre and his assistant Les Kinvig.



Junior player of the year Rebecca McPhee.



U17 player of the year Jamie Anderson.



U14 player of the year Duncan MacEwan.



Young Guns captain Ross MacMillan was presented with the Carnie and Pearson Memorial Trophy by Jim and June Pearson and Catherine Carnie. Also pictured is man of the match Lorne Robertson.



Senior players player of year Ross MacMillan. Junior players player of the year was Jigme Jones, not pictured.



Senior top scorer Ross MacMillan.



Junior top scorer Scott Burnett.

Continued from page 33
division was given to Arran MacPhee who was impressive throughout. Finally, the Mowi North Division 1 player of the year prize went to outstanding Fort William second team keeper Stuart Disher. Glengarry pulled off a hat-trick of successes as manager Ewen Cameron collected this year's Mowi North Division 1 manager of the year award. Elaine Cameron was crowned WCA Mowi Development coach of the year and Mowi youth coach of the year.
New Camanachd Association Chieftain
The much-respected John MacKenzie from

Newtonmore was elected Camanachd Association Chieftain at a well-attended annual general meeting in Fort William.
Richard Gall from Fort William became the new Camanachd Association vice chieftain.
Roddie MacCuish from Oban was amongst three additions to the Camanachd Association Board, with Ross Brown and Burton Morrison also installed, whilst Youth Director Willie MacDonald from Fort William was re-elected for a second term.
2020 Artemis Macaulay Cup - Draw
The 2020 Artemis Macaulay

Cup draw was made following the Camanachd Association's AGM. Oban Camanachd and Oban Celtic were both given home draws against lower league opposition. Oban Camanachd will be confident of progressing against Bute whilst Oban Celtic start as favourites against Ballachulish. If both Oban sides progress, they will meet in the quarterfinals.
There is also an eye-catching first round meeting at An Aird between newly promoted Fort William and Kinlochshiel, who have lifted the trophy twice in the last four years.
There is also the prospect

of a Badenoch derby between Newtonmore and Kingussie in the quarter-finals although first round opponents Lochaber, who welcome Newtonmore, and Kilmallie, who host holders Kingussie, will have other ideas.
The Artemis Macaulay Cup Final takes place at Mossfield, Oban on Saturday August 22 2020.
December 2019
Stephen Sloss stays on
Oban Camanachd confirmed that Stephen Sloss continues as their first team manager. Kenny Wotherspoon also remains in place as his assistant.

Feathers badmint



Innes MacCallum was the Under 14 boys' singles champion.



The Under 14 girls' singles champion was Taylor Robinson.



Under-14 boys' doubles winners Euan Dods and Innes MacCallum with runners-up Aiden MacDonald and Zander Craik.



Viktoria Rszyka and Katie MacLellan won the Under-14 girls' doubles defeating Taylor Robinson and Darcey Millar in the final

fly at Oban High School on championships



Oban High School held their annual school badminton championships this month over two days, with 89 pupils taking part.

Numbers are so high it has proved impossible to complete all three age groups over one day. Trophies donated a couple of years ago following a plea in The Oban Times from members of the community and Argyll Beats Cardiovascular Disease were presented to winning players following hard fought matches. Most encouraging of all was the level of sportsmanship and enjoyment evident in all competitions.

All the winners and runners up from the U14, U16 and U19 competitions will represent Oban High School in the Argyll and Bute Scottish Schools competition in Atlantis Leisure, Oban, on January 28.

The National Secondary competition will be held in Perth on March 7 and 8 for pupils who are successful in the Regional Argyll and Bute competition.

Oban High School badminton players have been taking part in the Glasgow and North Strathclyde leagues this year which are held every month at Scotstoun National Badminton Centre.

With matches starting at 9am on Sunday mornings, the pupils have shown excellent commitment and it is providing invaluable experience.

Results: Under 14: Girls singles – winner Tayler

Robinson; runner-up Wiktoria Rszyka. Boys singles – winner Innes MacCallum; runner-up Euan Dods. Girls doubles winners Wiktoria Rszyka and Katie MacLellan; runners-up Taylor Robinson and Darcey Millar. Boys doubles winners Innes MacCallum and Euan Dods; runners-up Zander Craik and Aiden MacDonald.

Under 16: Girls singles – winner Ellie MacInnes; runner-up – Kaelyn Shores. Boys singles winner Morgan Gemmell; runner-up Rory Dods. Girls doubles winners Ellie MacInnes and Arden Binnie; runners-up Isla Dunlop and Jordan MacIntyre. Boys doubles winners Morgan Gemmell and Rory Dods; runners-up Finlay MacLean and Louis MacFarlane.

Under 19: Boys singles winner Fergus Carmichael; runner-up Finlay France. Girls singles winner Zoe Cook; runner up Lucy MacKinnon. Boys doubles winners Fergus Carmichael and Finlay France; runners-up Kyle MacDougall and Stuart Head. Girls doubles winners Zoe Cook and Katie MacCorquodale; runners up Lucy MacKinnon and Ella MacKechnie.

Former school PE teacher and badminton enthusiast Moira Barbour presented Innes MacCallum with the Cameron Barbour Cup for Under 14 boys and Morgan Gemmell the Stuart Barbour trophy for Under 16 boys.



Under 16 boys' singles champion Morgan Gemmell.



Ellie MacInnes was the Under 16 girls' singles champion.



Moira Barbour presented Morgan Gemmell with the Under-16 boys' championship trophy. Also pictured is runner-up Rory Dods.



Under 16 boys' doubles winners Rory Dods and Morgan Gemmell with runners-up Finlay MacLean and Louis MacFarlane.



Under 16 girls' doubles winners Ellie MacInnes and Arden Binnie with runners-up Isla Dunlop and Jordan MacIntyre.



Fergus Carmichael, left, was the Under 19 boys' singles winner defeating Finlay France in the final.



Fergus Carmichael and Finlay France were the Under 19 boys' doubles winners. They are pictured with runners-up Kyle MacDougall and Stuart Head.



Under 19 girls' singles champion Zoe Cook, right, with runner-up Lucy MacKinnon.



Under 19 girls' doubles winners Katie MacCorquodale and Zoe Cook with runners-up Lucy MacKinnon and Ella MacKechnie.

OT

January



Saints pay the penalty as they crash out of the Scottish Cup

Oban Saints and Rothie Rovers from Aberdeenshire kept a large crowd at Glencruitten richly entertained in a Scottish Amateur Cup fifth round replay which ultimately required a penalty shoot-out to decide the winner. After a goal apiece in the 90 minutes, followed by the same again in extra time, it was Rothie goalkeeper Lewis Milne who emerged the hero by saving two Saints penalties to give his side a 9-8 shoot-out victory and clinch a place in the last 16.



Clyne delivers at Oban's squash club

Scottish international squash player Alan Clyne proved a big hit when delivering coaching sessions at Atlantis Leisure.

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February

The Princess and the president

Scottish Rugby president Dee Bradbury stands shoulder to shoulder with HRH The Princess Royal as the official parties prepare to inspect the teams ahead of Scotland's bonus point victory over Italy at Murrayfield on Saturday. Gregor Townsend's men ran in five tries courtesy of a Blair Kinghorn hat-trick, a finger-tip try from Stuart Hogg and a touch down from Chris Harris. Greig Laidlaw kicked three conversions with Finn Russell adding the last. Scotland's next game is against Ireland at Murrayfield on Saturday.

Photograph: Scottish Rugby/SNS Images.



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Sporting year

May



Mixed results for Oban Squash Club

Oban Ladies' Squash Team enjoyed a convincing 18-3 win over Dunblane in an annual challenge event.



Max raises the bar at Scottish Championships

Olympic weightlifter Max Buchanan is pushed his way up the national rankings after coming third in the Scottish Championships. The 31-year-old fitness instructor from Oban lifted 113kg in the snatch discipline and 125kg in the clean and jerk to take third podium spot.

March



Performance trio in the swim

Oban Otters made waves in national and domestic swimming. Performance athletes Sam Coates, 16, and Kai Mackechnie, 11, were focused on qualifying for the Scottish National Age Group Championships (SNAG) and tested the water at the Scottish Schools Championships, while teammate Ella Mackechnie represented the Otters as a medal bearer at the European Championships in Glasgow.



April



Abi Evans.



Helen Nelson.

Sevens heaven for Abi and Helen

Two of the area's brightest rugby stars, Abi Evans and Helen Nelson, were set to shine in Hong Kong after being called up to the Scotland Women's sevens squad.

June

Lomond in at the deep end

Oban rugby player Lomond MacPherson had a baptism of fire in his first start for the Scotland Under-20 age-grade side. Playing at the 2019 World Rugby U20 Championship at the Racecourse Stadium in Rosario, Argentina, the Watsonians winger was called into the starting lineup against New Zealand.

r in pictures

July



Max Buchanan.

Magnifique McPhee wins French Grand Prix

Oban's John McPhee created history at the Shark Helmets Grand Prix de France at Le Mans by becoming the first rider to progress from Q1 to then go on to take pole position, his first outright pole position since Argentina 2017.



Downpour fails to dampen the spirits at anniversary celebrations

Oban Bowling Club's 150th Anniversary celebrations got off to a bang.



Bowled over at winning national bronze medal

Ladies from Oban Bowling Club were 'surprised and delighted' after equalling the club's best result at the National Bowling Championships, bringing home a bronze medal. The over-55s fours team of Lorna Carmichael, Janet Campbell, Rosemary Miller, and Anne Stewart, sailed through to the semi-finals in Ayr, before losing to Cumnock, who went on to win the gold medal.

August



Catriona sets Scottish 100-mile time trial record

Barcaldine cyclist Catriona MacGillivray set a Scottish 100-mile time trial record on Sunday, just over a year after giving birth to her daughter Charlotte.



September

Evans and Bradbury make their mark on distant shores

Magnus Bradbury impressed during Scotland's second Rugby World Cup match against Samoa in Kobe, Japan. Replacing Hamish Watson as blindside flanker, Magnus played a key defensive role in the national side's 34-0 victory. It was also historic time



for the Scotland Women's team, which included Oban's Abi Evans, as they not only played their first match in the Southern Hemisphere,

but also recorded one of their biggest victories in a decade in the first of two games against the Springboks in Cape Town.

October



Mackinnon's pure gold as he takes third Mull win

It was worth the wait. Three years on from the last Beatson's Building Supplies Mull Rally and 50 years on from the first, the Hebridean island once again echoed to the sound of 150 rally cars competing along some of the world's most entertaining roads.

November

Bob is crowned Rookie of the Year

Oban was bursting with pride after Robert 'Bob' MacIntyre was crowned the 2019 European 1 Rookie of the Year as well as the Challenge Tour Graduate of the Year. The Glencruitten golfer battled his way into the top 15 in the last event of the season, the DP World Tour Championship in Dubai, to clinch these accolades.



December



School pupils at Man City training academy

Pupils from Oban and Tiree high schools were put through their paces when they visited Manchester City's training academy. Staff from Oban High School took the 44 pupils, including five from Tiree, to the Etihad Training Academy.

OT



Bob MacIntyre pictured with the sign outside Glencruitten Golf Club.

'My holiday is getting home'

Robert MacIntyre rests before being back in the spotlight

by David McPhee
dmcph@obantimes.co.uk



Robert MacIntyre sat down with *The Oban Times* when he was home for the holidays to discuss his whirlwind year.

In the first of a two-part series, Bob talks about the support he receives from the town and we reveal the impact his success has had on Glencruitten Golf Club.

Next week, the 23-year-old golfer outlines his plans for the future and takes a look back at his 2019 highlights – of which there were many.

When Robert MacIntyre succeeds, Oban succeeds.

The town is fully behind the 23-year-old golfer, who has catapulted his way onto the world stage.

In his first season on the European Tour, Robert 'Bob' MacIntyre played 30 events, making 25 cuts, with seven top 10 finishes and he ended the year ranked 64th in the world.

But the cherry on the cake for Bob was when he was crowned the European Tour Rookie of the Year.

'You can only challenge for that once in your life, so to be crowned, that is something I will remember forever and

something that will never be taken away from me,' he told *The Oban Times*.

Bob has now become a tourist attraction in his own right, with people flying out from Oban to watch him play abroad.

But the town has supported him since his days as an amateur.

In 2015, Oban rallied behind Bob to raise more

'I look back and I think of the wee junior boy who could hardly cross two burns here and now he is playing golf at the top table in the world'

than £3,500 to help the young golfer with his travelling expenses.

Gareth Evans helped organise the golf scramble, which attracted 45 teams, made up of three and four people.

And when he came home for the holidays, Bob said that kind of support is needed.

Speaking to *The Oban*

Times, he said: 'The whole town is pretty much behind me and I think that is what you need. For someone to achieve what they want to achieve, there needs to be support, whether it is financial, emotional, whatever, you need it all.'

None have supported him more than his very own Glencruitten Golf Club, who boast a large banner of Bob at the entrance to the club.

'The club has been great,' he said. 'The whole town has been great, but it is not just the town. It is the whole country.'

'My social media, Twitter especially, it has been crazy.'

'The messages I get. I have letters sent to the golf course.'

'I never thought playing a sport that I love, doing what I love, would have an impact on other people the way it has. I try to reply to everyone, whether it is kids or older people, it is just the way I am. If someone says hello to me on the street, I will say hello back. It is just who I am.'

The Oban golfer is home until January 7, before his season restarts, and he has been nursing a bruised hand.

'I have needed time off,' he told *The Oban Times*. 'If most people take a week off



Bob pictured with the Challenge Tour Graduate of the Year trophy and the big one – the Henry Cotton European Tour Rookie of the Year shield.

work, or two weeks off work, they might go on holiday at certain times of the year, my holiday is getting home.

'I just love spending time at home with the two boys seeing my sister and the wee one. Things are busy, but it is the way I like it. When you come home you can chill out, but they still keep you on your toes.'

Speaking about his achievements, Neil Armour, a junior golf coach at Glencruitten Golf Club said: 'I just think it is absolutely fantastic.'

'I look back and I think of the wee junior boy who could hardly cross two burns here and now he is playing golf

at the top table in the world. It is just amazing and what he has done for the club and ourselves for that matter.'

'He has made me interested in golf again.'

'I watch golf now that I did not used to before. I just think he has given the whole town and the whole area a wee lift.'

'On a Sunday when Bob is in contention the atmosphere in here [Glencruitten Golf Club] is amazing. I have been here for years and we have not had that feeling.'

'A Sunday in here with Bob in contention is unbelievable. Shouts from all over the club, both TVs on.'

'People you have not seen

GOLF

for ages up watching it. It has just been amazing for the club and amazing for the town.'

He added: 'You don't change Bob. Bob is Bob.'

He attributes Bob's success to a surge of people taking up the sport.

'We had junior golf and we had 20 kids turning up in all weather. Whereas before Bob's success we had maybe one, two. The difference he has made – kids want to play golf now. Where is the next Bob MacIntyre coming from?'

Saints half term report – part three

With Oban Saints currently enjoying a festive break Derek Black takes a look back at the season so far continuing this week with Saints exploits in the second half of the league campaign:

Saturday 28 September Blantyre RGM 2 Oban Saints 5

Oban Saints bounced back from their West of Scotland Cup exit against Inverclyde with a convincing Central Scottish Amateur Football League Division 1B away win against closest challengers Blantyre RGM in Bellshill last Saturday afternoon.

At a sunny Sir Matt Busby Sports Complex a Lewis Cameron hat-trick and a goal each from James Ford and Donald Campbell gave Saints the points and the luxury of some valuable game time for babes Gavin Forgive and Aaron McKay.

With Co-manager Willie Gemmell unavailable the double headache of Cammy Hill withdrawing from the travelling party at the eleventh hour and Kerr Newbigging failing a pre-match fitness test rested on the shoulders of Donald Campbell ably assisted by coach Peter MacCallum and secretary David Buchanan. Campbell promoted himself from the bench to take the number nine shirt and gave Matt Rippon the nod to partner Myles McAuley in midfield.

Also making a rare start, and producing a typically assured performance, was Thomas MacCulloch deputising in goal for the unavailable Graham Douglas.

Saturday 26 October Oban Saints 6 Garrowhill Thistle 1

Following the drama of the Scottish Amateur Cup tie

against Vale of Earn which took two games and a penalty shoot-out to resolve Oban Saints returned to league business at Glencruitten for the visit of Garrowhill Thistle.

Second half substitute Matt Rippon successfully converted his third penalty kick of the season to round off a 6-1 win adding to a brace from Donald Campbell and a hat-trick from leading goalscorer Craig MacEwan.

Management duo Donald Campbell and Willie Gemmell made two changes to the starting line-up from the previous week's trip to Crieff promoting Cammy Hill from the bench to replace David Beaton and rewarding Gavin Forgive for his recent impressive displays for the second team with a place in midfield affording Matty Kelly a rest following his exertions with the Central Scottish Amateur Football League Select.

Saturday 16 November Clydebank 0 Oban Saints 2

A goal keeping crisis forced Oban Saints to cast the net far and wide in search of a stand-in for regular number one Graham Douglas for last Saturday's trip to Clydebank. With Ben Pollock, Murdo MacKenzie and all other back-up options also unavailable, former Celtic youth keeper Jamie Strachan answered the call and produced an assured performance to pave the way for Saints ninth consecutive Central Scottish Amateur Football League Division 1B win.

Second half goals from Dene Cassells and Lewis Cameron were enough to secure the points against a stuffy Clydebank side who battled hard throughout.

With Co-Manager Donald Campbell beginning a work



Saints leading goalscorer Craig MacEwan netted a hat-trick against Garrowhill Thistle.

related football sabbatical and Scottish amateur international left full back Scott Maitland also missing, the remaining half of the management duo, club stalwart Willie Gemmell, opted for a change of formation and took his place in the middle of a back three alongside Steven MacLeod and Captain Dene Cassells.

In midfield were Matty Kelly, Lewis Cameron and Myles McAuley with Ruaridh Horne and Ross Maitland as wing backs. Up front were Cammy Hill and Craig MacEwan. Making up a strong bench were David Beaton, James Ford, Gavin Forgive, Aaron McKay and Matt Rippon.

Saturday 23 November Oban Saints 2 Craigneuk 0

Oban Saints warmed up for their impending Scottish Amateur Cup trip to Rothienorman with a less than convincing home win against Central Scottish Amateur Football League Division 1B basement boys Craigneuk who battled hard throughout the 90 minutes at Glencruitten.

Two early strikes from leading goalscorer Craig MacEwan were enough to clinch Saints tenth consecutive league victory making it 10 out of 10 with a far from 10 out of 10 performance in a dour encounter which did little to excite the home support.

Now in sole charge due to management colleague Donald Campbell's work commitments in deepest, darkest Warwickshire, Willie Gemmell made five changes to the starting line-up from the previous week's trip to Clydebank. Graham Douglas

and Scott Maitland were once again available for selection while James Ford and teenagers Gavin Forgive and Aaron McKay were all promoted from the bench. Also making welcome returns to the squad after long absences were Kerr Newbigging and Fraser MacFarlane.

Saturday 7 December Oban Saints 1 Blantyre RGM 0

Ten man Oban Saints produced a battling backs-to-the-wall performance at a rain soaked Oban High School last Saturday afternoon to cement their place at the top of Central Scottish Amateur Football League Division 1B.

Leading goalscorer Craig MacEwan put Saints ahead with his 15th goal of the season but a red card for goalkeeper Graham Douglas gave the home faithful a nervous closing 24 minutes to endure along with the horrendous weather conditions.

Saints co-manager Willie Gemmell made one enforced change to the starting line-up from the previous week's trip to Rothienorman. James Ford failed to shake off the knee injury picked up in the Scottish Amateur Cup win over Rothie Rovers and was replaced by Craig MacEwan.

Saints lined up with Graham Douglas in goal behind a familiar back four of Ruaridh Horne, Steven MacLeod, Captain Dene Cassells and Scott Maitland. Matty Kelly partnered Myles McAuley in the holding midfield roles with David Beaton, Lewis Cameron and Craig MacEwan supporting central striker Cammy Hill.

On the bench were Ross Maitland, Kerr Newbigging, Matt Rippon, Aaron McKay and Gavin Forgive.



Saints Scottish Amateur International midfielder Lewis Cameron scored his sides second goal in a 2-0 win over Clydebank.



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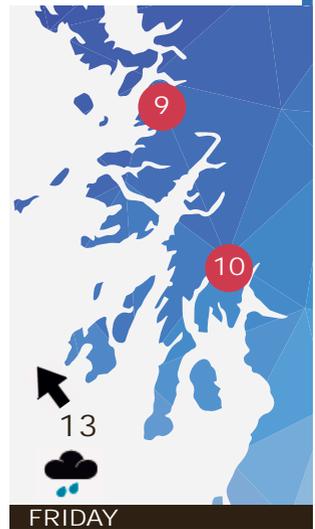


WEATHER

Thursday
Light rain and a moderate breeze
Temperatures
5°C to 6°C.

Friday
Heavy rain and a moderate breeze
Temperatures
10°C to 11°C.

Weekend Outlook
Saturday
Light rain showers and a moderate breeze
Sunday
Light rain and a moderate breeze
Temperatures
9°C to 13°C.



TIDAL INFORMATION

Tide tables for Oban during the week from **Thursday January 2, 2020** are listed below with differences for major ports listed on the right. All times are GMT (add one hour BST)

Thur	04.15	1.7	10.09	3.4
	16.53	2.0	22.13	3.1
Fri	05.04	1.9	11.06	3.2
	17.49	2.0	23.13	3.0
Sat	05.59	1.9	12.26	3.2
	18.50	2.0	** ** *	**
Sun	00.40	2.9	06.59	2.0
	13.53	3.2	19.51	1.9
Mon	02.05	3.0	08.04	1.9
	14.54	3.3	20.48	1.8
Tues	03.03	3.2	09.08	1.8
	15.42	3.5	21.37	1.6
Wed	03.50	3.4	10.02	1.6
	16.24	3.7	22.21	1.3

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

MacIntyre rests before being back in the spotlight

Saints half term report – part three



Oban Celtic's Old Crocks and the Young Guns before their annual Boxing Day challenge match at Mossfield Stadium. Photographs: Kevin McGlynn.

Young Guns' firepower too much for Golden Oldies

Oban Celtic Shinty Club's annual boxing day game ended with the Young Guns winning 3-2 against the Old Crocks in a keenly contested game with 34 players taking

part on the day and a good crowd gathered to join in the festive fun.

The game started with the Young Guns on the front foot applying early pressure and

after 15 minutes the deadlock was broken with a blistering shot from Daniel MacMillan into the roof of the net.

With the game flowing from end-to-end, the Old Crocks rear guard of John McCormack, Lorne Robertson, Robert Gillies and David Hill were undone once more with a Lennon Campbell rocket from 30 yards.

The Old Crocks, with Donald MacKay and Damien MacIntyre leading the forward line, were beginning to make the Young Guns keeper work towards the end of the half but were unable to find the net and the half ended 2-0.

At the start of the second half, both teams made several changes, the most notable being first team manager Dougie Macintyre taking up position in the Old Crocks goal. And he went on to produce a string of great saves

to keep his team in the game. Scott Burnett pulled a goal back for the Old Crocks who were now applying steady pressure on the Young Guns' goal by way of Askew, Duffy, MacKay and Burnett.

The Young Guns pulled further ahead with a fast break away that perhaps the Old Crocks might have kept up with had they been 30 years younger.

The third goal came from Lewis McPhee.

The two youngest players on the park combined, with Duncan MacEwan playing a ball up the line to an even younger Iain Duffy who slipped the ball through to the on-rushing MacPhee and with the keeper coming out MacPhee calmly slotted the ball through MacIntyre's legs for the third goal.

Ten minutes later the Old Crocks pulled a goal back through Allan Duffy with a well-taken shot from 20 yards

SHINTY

out. This made for an exciting last 10 minutes with both teams pushing for the next goal but the game finished 3-2 to the Young Guns.

A sporting game was well refereed by Andrew Mackenzie.

At the prizegiving held in Oban's Lodge 180 later in the evening Ross MacMillan picked up the Carnie and Pearson Memorial Trophy for the Young Guns from Jim and June Pearson and Catherine Carnie.

Lorne Robertson was voted man of the match.

The club thanks everyone involved for making the day possible.

Oban Celtic Shinty Club wishes everyone a Happy New Year.

See page 34 for photographs of the awards night presentation.



Little and large: young Daniel Duffy gets his shot on target despite the attention of the slightly larger John McCormack.



Murray 'Elvis' MacGregor enters into the fun of things.



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Glencoe Mountain Resort remains resilient after fire

by Richard Mason
rmason@obantimes.co.uk

Despite the almost complete destruction of its base station building in a fire, staff at Glencoe resort remain in good spirits as people began heading up the access chair on Friday December 27.

While the cause of the fire is yet to be confirmed, it is believed to have started at the counter of the cafe around 2am on Christmas Day.

Due to this being the only day of the year when there are no staff on site or anyone in the accommodation, fire crews were not alerted until 4.40am.

The remnants of the fire could still be smelt on Friday as the first visitors ascended the chairlifts, but for staff it was business as usual.

Resort managing director Andy Meldrum, said: 'From the CCTV footage, we can see that at about 1.30am something started smoking at the counter then half an hour later it burst into flames. It then burned for three hours

before fire crews got here. We think the alarm must have been heard by someone who stopped here late at night in a caravan or car, but are grateful to whoever called the fire service.'

The building has a metal roof and part of it contains a loft which made it difficult for crews to contain the fire.

'The question is will people want to stay in the microlodges now the cafe is gone.'

A Scottish Fire and Rescue Service spokesman told the Lochaber Times: 'The first appliance arrived at 4.51am and all eight appliances finished at 3.13pm. An appliance was sent out at 6pm for a re-inspection and to dampen down hot spots. Crews were finished at 6.30pm.'

What happens next is in the hands of the insurance company, but Mr Meldrum told the Lochaber Times he

expects the building will have to be demolished.

He said: 'To rebuild the entire building would take up to 18 months, but we will bring in a temporary cafe, toilets and any thing else we need to run the resort as normal through our loss of business cover.'

'All the other infrastructure on the mountain is fine, the accommodation is unaffected, but the question is whether people will want to stay in the microlodges now the cafe is gone.'

While many have offered to help, there is not much that can now be done at the moment.

Mr Meldrum concluded: 'The best way you can support us is by coming and enjoying what we have to offer. We plan to rebuild, but the only way to do that is by having a good and busy ski season.'

VIEWPHOTOS
www.lochabertimes.co.uk



The Glencoe resort building was extensively damaged in a fire on Christmas Day.



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Festive messages from your MP and MSP



Ian Blackford, Member of Parliament for Ross, Skye and Lochaber.

I was deeply honoured the people of Ross, Skye and Lochaber returned me to Parliament this month and I will continue to be a strong voice for people across the Highlands.

Christmas provides an opportunity to look ahead to the future with hope. For people in Scotland that means facing the reality of the choice that lies ahead; a future tied to broken Brexit Britain or a one with hope and opportunity as an independent Scotland in the European Union.

The SNP stood on a manifesto to give Scotland a choice over its future and to escape Brexit and we won 80 per cent of Scotland's seats in Westminster. People in Scotland must soon have their chance to choose – to take the future of our country into our own hands or to leave it to Boris Johnson. Tory attempts to deny our democratic mandate will only strengthen the case for independence.

As your representative, I will continue to work tirelessly for everyone across Ross, Skye and Lochaber, challenging Tory austerity, Brexit chaos and the climate emergency. 2020 is a year we can look forward to, a year when we can 'take back control' for our economy, our communities and for Scotland. I wish you and your family a very Merry Christmas.



Na h-Eileanan an Iar SNP MSP Alasdair Allan.

2019 has not been the quietest or most predictable of years.

Christmas and Hogmanay provide everyone with a chance to have a rest from all that. But looking back, it is impossible not to reflect on a year where a snap election and a chaotic Brexit process dominated national events.

In the islands, I have many positive recollections of 2019, a year that began for me with the moving Iolaire centenary commemorations on January 1.

Communities throughout the islands have achieved many great things throughout the year.

To take a few of those at random, I think of the Eilidh MacLeod fundraising events which have done so much good for young people; the campaign for a new hospital in Barra which is now making progress and the success of Sgoil Lionacleit at the Gaelic schools debating competition held in the Parliament.

Looking ahead to 2020, I am sure we will see more of that community spirit on show in the islands, not least with Peat and Diesel's well-deserved climb in this year's Christmas charts!

Tha mi a' guidhe Nollaig chrìdeil agus bliadhna mhath ùr dhan a h-uile duine.

Merry Christmas and a happy New Year!

Campaigners' fury over kelp dredging plan

The Scottish Government says no trials have been commissioned or are planned for the mechanical harvesting of kelp along the west coast of Scotland, writes Mark Entwistle.

The government was forced to issue the denial earlier this month after reports that mechanical dredging trials were to begin in July 2020 sparked a furious backlash from environmental campaigners.

Holyrood now says any such reports are incorrect and a proposed work programme has been 'wrongly interpreted'.

At a meeting in September, a government steering group agreed that before any desk studies or field trials of any harvest method of any species could be considered, a scenario mapping exercise should be conducted.

This, says the government, is to ensure the review is grounded in where the future opportunities for the seaweed sector may be, but balanced with environmental

considerations and of those communities and sectors who share that space.

Only species identified as having potential – taking into account socio-economic and environmental considerations – would be subject to further scrutiny through desk studies and only then, if the criteria is met, could any pilot or field trials begin.

Any trial using a vehicle or a vessel to remove a substance or an object from the seabed would still need a licence from Marine Scotland, require consultation and would only be granted once ministers are satisfied the activity is carried out within environmental limits.

The scenario mapping exercise is expected to begin in January and end in July 2020.

However, environmental campaigners and politicians are vowing to fight any plans to allow mechanical kelp dredging off the coast of Lochaber.

Andrew Squire, of Lochaber Environmental Group and

the area branch of Extinction Rebellion, told the Lochaber Times: "The Scottish Government has just been criticised by the Committee on Climate Change for failing to take sufficiently urgent and radical action."

"To even be considering kelp dredging at this time, which would simultaneously devastate the marine habitat and remove an essential carbon store, beggars belief."

Highlands and Islands Green Party MSP John Finnie is equally opposed and said: "I was extremely proud to have worked with community campaigners to deliver a legal ban on kelp dredging last year. We know kelp plays a huge role in mitigating climate change and is home to thousands of precious marine species. If the Scottish Government is foolish enough to move forward with plans to dredge kelp forests it will find the huge opposition along the west coast hasn't gone away and, if we have to, we'll beat the government again."



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Fort dentist in takeover deal

by Mark Entwistle
mentwistle@obantimes.co.uk

Fort William's only dental practice and its partner in Glencoe have been acquired by Scottish dental group Clyde Munro.

Since opening in 2001, M&S Dental Care has become a vital service to Fort William and the surrounding area, realising the vision of owner Gregor Muir to make NHS and independent dental care accessible.

The practice has subsequently expanded to become one of the largest in the Highlands, with eight surgeries, 10 dentists and one hygienist serving a growing customer base.

Along with M&S Dental Care in Glencoe, which was acquired in 2013, it serves more than 20,000 patients, with some travelling from as



far afield as Inverness, Skye, Mallaig and The Trossachs.

Mr Muir believes the Clyde Munro partnership will bring further benefits to his 30-strong team, while maintaining the strong culture and identity of the practices.

'This business is deeply personal to me and along with our loyal and driven team we've created practices we're immensely proud of,' he said.

'It was important to them and our customers that we didn't sell out to a faceless corporate firm that would change our fabric.'

'Unlike many other groups, Clyde Munro is Scotland-specific, so it understands the complex market. The enthusiasm of its team is infectious.'

'It is exciting to become part of a bigger group as it will provide access to mentoring

Dentist Gregor Muir with practice managers Gillian Matheson, left, and Jillian Bruce. Photograph: Iain Ferguson

and the ability to bounce ideas off top operators in the field.'

Clyde Munro is an entirely Scottish-based and Scottish-focused dental group.

Founded by Jim Hall in 2015, it has enjoyed rapid growth and this latest acquisition takes the company's portfolio to 38 practices.

Mr Hall, said: 'Gregor's ethos is remarkable and it is thanks to his commitment to staff and patients that the practices have become a vital part of the communities they serve.'

'We want to help him further still and ensure the North West Highlands benefits from leading dental care for many years to come.'



Alex Drysdale and, below, the other artists who were commended. Photograph: Iain Ferguson, alba.photos

Alex is poster boy of West Highland Line

An artistic Banavie Primary School pupil has finished top in the West Highland Line's 125th anniversary poster competition, writes Mark Entwistle.

Winners of the short story and photography sections had already received their awards and on Friday December 20 it was the turn of poster winner Alex Drysdale, aged 11.

The presentations were once again held at the Highland Bookshop in Fort William and the young artists who were commended and highly commended for their posters were also present.



Alex's poster has now been converted into a display and hangs in Fort William Rail Station.

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LT

Arisaig trust receives £258,150 boosting community projects

by Mark Entwistle
mentwistle@obantimes.co.uk

Two projects involving new housing in Arisaig along with a scheme to repair the village's sea wall has received a grant of £258,150 from the Scottish Land Fund.

Arisaig Community Trust will use the money to buy land for the new housing and to acquire ownership of the shorefront in order to upgrade it for residents and visitors.

A delighted Pamela King, director of the Arisaig Community Trust, said: 'This is a very exciting award for Arisaig and will enable us to purchase three separate areas of land in the village, bringing them into community ownership for the first time.'

'We have developed plans for a community-led housing project, which will prioritise



owner-occupied residences and provide affordable, sustainable homes for rent in the village.

'A multi-use playing field, play park and adjoining area, which we would like to turn into a new orchard, will also be bought with this award, as well as a considerable part of the village shore front, which we will improve with better parking, pathways, seating and amenities.'

'This will enhance the area for both residents and visitors, supporting the local economy

with new homes and helping ensure tourism is managed sustainably.

'It is a fantastic opportunity for people to get involved in real and direct change in the village.'

Also in the Highlands, a former school on the island of Eriskay is set for a new life as an exhibition centre.

Eriskay Historical Society will use its £48,234 grant to turn the former school on the island into a heritage centre and to renovate the adjacent schoolhouse so that it can be made available for rent.

Sandra MacInnes, secretary of Comann Eachdraidh Eirisgeidh (Eriskay Historical Society), said: 'We are delighted to have been awarded the Scottish Land Fund which will give us the financial assistance to purchase the former Eriskay School from Comhairle nan Eilean Siar.

'This will enable us to renovate the former school and utilise the space to have a dedicated exhibition area to showcase the history and heritage of the island as well as having office space for the Eriskay Pony Society and a tearoom where the community and visitors can meet and socialise.'

The grants to Comann Eachdraidh Eirisgeidh and Arisaig Community Trust are amongst 10 totalling £1,313,841 that have been awarded to groups across Scotland during the latest round of grants from the Scottish Land Fund.

John Watt, chairman of the Scottish Land Fund Committee, said: 'Through these grants we have been able to support groups in both inner city areas and in some of the remotest parts of Scotland,

helping local people to come together to undertake a range of activities designed to create stronger communities.'

Sandra Holmes, head of community assets at HIE, said the successful projects were all great examples of people taking control of local resources for the long-term benefit of their communities.

'Comann Eachdraidh Eirisgeidh for instance, has ambitious plans to renovate the school into a modern community hub, while the grant to Arisaig Community Trust will enable it to purchase land for a much-needed affordable housing development,' she said.

'Ownership will give these communities greater control over important assets and will help ensure its long-term future. We wish all the successful groups the very best in their new ventures.'

WHAT'S ON

■ On Saturday January 4, Nevis Radio begins their fitness-focused Loch Ness Challenge to raise money for the station.

You must swim or row the equivalent length of Loch Ness, 22.5 miles, in 12 weeks, at your local pool or fitness centre.

Individuals or teams can enter by emailing admin@nevisradio.co.uk.

■ Nevis Hillwalking Club's first hike of 2020 will be Beinn Mheadhoin, Kingairloch, on Sunday January 5. More information can be found on the club's Facebook page, through www.nevishillwalking.club or by calling 01397 701975.

■ Off Beat Bikes will have their first of four Ladies Back to Basics bike rides on Tuesday January 7. It is a session for ladies who might not have ridden a bike in a while – or ever – and want to get comfortable in a safe and supportive environment.

Starting at 10am, you can get more details at the shop, contacting their Facebook page or by calling 01397 704008.

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Drivers and wildlife benefit from new bridge at Glencoe

by Mark Entwistle
mentwistle@obantimes.co.uk

Concerns over the impact on wildlife saw developers take special measures during construction work on the newly opened Allt Fhiodhan Bridge on the A82 in Glencoe.

As well as the bulk of the work being programmed to take place during the summer months to avoid impacting the salmon spawning season, special mammal walkways were also incorporated into the design to allow any wildlife to safely cross under the new £1.5million bridge.

The six months of construction were funded by Transport Scotland. The bridge was built to replace the previous, sub-standard bridge on the A82, which is located around one mile south east of Glencoe village.



The new, box-culvert design is 6m wider than the previous structure and includes a 2.5m wide footpath for pedestrians.

It has been designed to last for 120 years and is able to handle significantly

higher water flows in the Allt Fhiodhan burn, which flows into the River Coe. A temporary bridge was installed to allow two-way traffic to continue to flow during the construction of the new bridge; meaning disruption

was kept to a minimum throughout the project.

Approximately 1,200 tonnes of rock armour was installed around the new structure to protect the foundation and the river banks from any potential wash-out

The new bridge in Glencoe is now open to traffic.

during high river flows. Minor landscaping work will be carried out around the new structure in the spring, but there will be no impact to road users.

A new, greener embankment is also set to be created early next year downstream of the new structure using a traditional technique known as 'willow spiling'. Live willow rods are woven between live willow uprights and the area behind is filled with soil for the willow to root into. This is done in a terrace formation helping to create a strong, natural river bank. Cabinet Secretary for Transport, Infrastructure and Connectivity Michael Matheson said he was delighted to see this important piece of work being delivered to ensure the Allt Fhiodhan Bridge is fit for the future.

"The A82 is a key route and

this investment underlines the Scottish Government's commitment to providing a safe and reliable trunk road network for the communities and businesses that rely on it,' he added.

Commenting on the project, Eddie Ross, BEAR Scotland's North West Representative, said: 'We are delighted that the new A82 Allt Fhiodhan Bridge is now fully open to traffic following six months of construction.'

'The newly widened carriageway will ensure the A82 trunk road remains a safe, reliable route to towns and villages in the north west of Scotland, and the new design will ensure the structure will last for over 120 years.'

'We thank all road users for their patience during the construction of this new £1.5M bridge and hope they are pleased with the results.'

JANUARY SALES AT GORDONS CHEMISTS!

The festive period is coming to a close and the January rush is underway! If your own personal wish list expanded with all of our amazing Christmas OFFERS, or if you want to get a heads start on your 'new year, new me' 2020 then fear not! At Gordons Chemists - we've got you covered with a fabulous range of REDUCTIONS to help you kick start the New Year!

Gordons Chemists are known for their amazing offers, and 2020 is no different. Start your year in good health with Paradox Oil Capsules 60 pack priced at JUST £4.99, saving you £5.00! And be prepared for those pesky winter coughs with Bronchostop Cough Syrup 120ml, ONLY £3.99, saving you £2.00!

Struggling with a bit of the January blues? There's nothing that good hair and glowing skin can't fix! Our EXCLUSIVE Bbold Dark Tanning Lotion promo pack is ONLY £9.95! Equipped with a FREE microfibre glove Bbold's Dark Tanning Lotion will leave you bronzed, glowing and feeling a million dollars! Keep those fly-aways at bay in the winter weather with L'Oréal Elnett's Supreme Hold Hairspray 200ml REDUCED to just £2.99 from £5.09! Or for a frown-free January - keep them pearly whites sparkling with Sensodyne's Rapid Relief Whitening Toothpaste 75ml for ONLY £2.49! That's HALF PRICE!

Speaking of staying frown-free, our Nivea Q10 Power 60+ Day and Night creams (50ml) are reduced to HALF PRICE! At just £6.99 each, they're just two of our products included in our HALF PRICE Nivea promotion this month! Self-care is so important, so don't forget to make sure he looks after his skin this year too, with O'Keefe's Working Hands Cream 96g priced at just £5.99 saving you £2.00! Or keep the families breath smelling minty fresh with Oral B's Pro Expert Clean Mint Toothpaste 75ml, REDUCED to JUST £1.75 from £3.49!

And when better a time to get stuck into some deep cleaning than at the start of the New Year. Let us take the hassle out of washing the dishes with Sun's All-in-1 Dishwasher Tablets 45pk for ONLY £3.99! Saving you an INCREDIBLE £4.00! If it's not in store, check online at www.gordonschemist.com. Whatever your wishes and resolutions may be for this year, we at Gordons Chemists would like to wish you all a happy and healthy 2020!

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JANUARY

Five disused hospital beds from Fort William's Belford Hospital are on their way to help patients in war-torn countries. Volunteers from Caol-based charity Lochaber Supports Refugees Shirley, Irene, Norma, Lorraine and Viv are pictured getting their biggest shipment to date ready.

FEBRUARY

Work to demolish Fort William's old cinema is well under way, with heavy machinery ripping apart the walls and roof. Angus MacDonald, who bought the Cameron Square site, says he is delighted with the rapid progress being made to clear the area for a new cinema.



MARCH

A woman who ensured her workplace was cleared of the public and colleagues after a man placed a handgun in front of a member of staff was presented with a bravery award. Sandra MacLean, 63, who at the time of the incident worked as a supervisor at Fort William Library, ensured the building was cleared, then re-entered the library by herself after police had been contacted. The handgun proved to be a replica.

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Tue. 4 February 2020, 1300-1630hrs, Oban
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Wed. 26 February 2020, 1000-1330hrs, Lochgilphead
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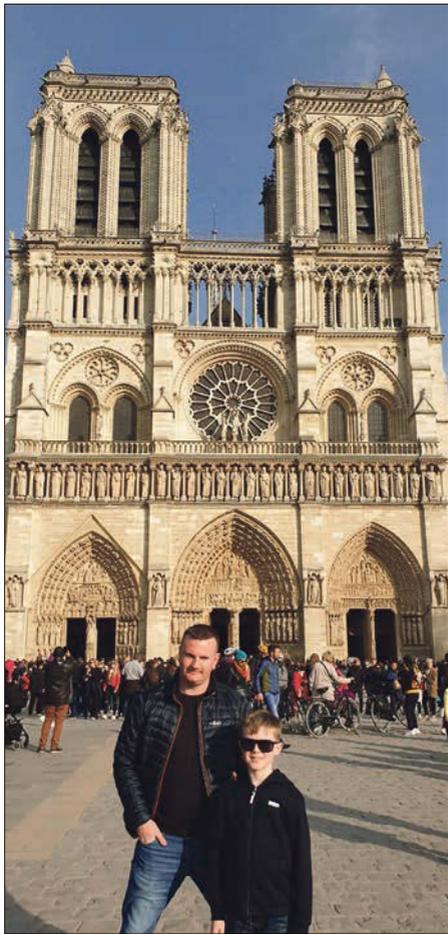
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APRIL



A Fort William father told how onlookers stood in tension-filled silence, with many elderly Parisiennes in tears, as they witnessed the inferno that engulfed the world famous Notre-Dame Cathedral in the French capital.

MAY



A group of young traditional musicians from Mallaig High School and their teacher flew the flag for Lochaber and Scotland on a visit to China. The four-day trip to Chengdu and Beijing saw the five-strong party from Mallaig take part in the ninth Young Cultural Ambassador Event. The group played at three schools and the opening and closing ceremonies of the main event at Sichuan Conservatoire.

JUNE



A trip to teach surgical skills to medics in Cambodia was hailed a success by retired doctor David Sedgwick. Mr Sedgwick retired from his post at the Belford Hospital, Fort William, five years ago after more than two decades working in the hospital's operating theatres.



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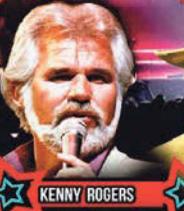
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Inverlochy pupils put their own spin on Christmas story

Children from primary four to seven worked with Alan 'The Drama Man' Grey to prepare their Christmas show.

They had great fun creating original sketches featuring sneaky Santas, 'gangsta' Santas, a Brexit Christmas and even Santa in handcuffs. Luckily they let him go before December 24.

Carol singing and musical performances by pupils rounded off the show.



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Lundavra youngsters excel with festive pantomime and concert

Lundavra Primary School pupils staged an eclectic Christmas concert with colourful costumes and a pantomime, writes Richard Mason.

Some students played musical instruments before the curtain went up on the pantomime.

Group songs, individual scenes and fun costumes made for a great show with a day time and evening performance for parents.



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Pet-proof your festive season

This week we have a special Festive Season-themed article written for the Lochaber Times by Mairi Thom, veterinary surgeon with Crown Vets in Fort William, on how to 'pet proof' your celebrations and make sure you don't end up spending time with your furry companion in the surgery!

Picture the scene – it's a snowy morning during the Christmas holidays with Milly and Molly the Labradors toasting themselves by the log fire, while feline friends Dougal and Donnie are curled up together in the armchair.

Snap back to reality – you've just come in from a rainy morning dog walk. You are drying the kitchen floor where the Labs have shaken water when you realise Milly, the black one, has reached up with her long legs and stretched over the counter to snatch the Christmas cake from the back.

Realising what is happening you dash over to prevent her from ingesting 2kg of toxic raisins. Then you hear shrieking coming from next door.

Your daughter has spotted Dougal has a piece of tinsel hanging from his mouth and seems to be struggling to swallow the rest of it.

Meanwhile Donnie is hiding behind the sofa where he has been in refuge ever since the Christmas tree went up and Molly has discovered the fancy 90 per cent cocoa chocolate bar you were given as a present and was saving until later for watching the Snowman on TV.



Fort William vet Mairi Thom, above right, is on hand to help with any festive season pet mishaps.



You should have pet-proofed Christmas! Raisin/currant/sultana toxicity is poorly understood but in some dogs even a small amount can cause acute kidney failure which can be irreversible if not caught early.

Treatment is by causing the dog to vomit within a specific time frame otherwise a period of time on IV fluids is usually necessary. Keeping mince pies and Christmas cake high up and well enough away from long-legged dogs is far better than a trip to the vet.

That is what one of our clients discovered when she thought she had left the 2.5kg of dried fruit ready to make Christmas cake

far enough back on the counter. I suppose when two Labrador sisters are involved in a crime together they end up having to go to the vets together!

Many people have heard about chocolate toxicity in dogs. It can cause a range of signs from non-life threatening vomiting and diarrhoea to cardiac rhythm problems and seizures.

Dark chocolate is far more dangerous than milk chocolate. If your dog does ingest chocolate it is very helpful to know the type of chocolate, how many grams and the weight of your dog.

Your vet can use this information to work out the risk and whether

he/she needs to be seen as an emergency.

Cats are generally fussy eaters, less likely to eat foreign articles than your typical Labrador. However, they often show interest in Christmas trees and the tinsel and ribbons on them!

Sometimes it gets caught under the tongue while the other end causes the bowel to concertina up. It is very dangerous to try to pull anything out and of course you may not see the foreign body at all.

It is always best to phone your vet if your cat is vomiting more frequently than normal.

Despite Yuletide merriment some people can find this time of

year stressful. This is true for many cats and their feelings may not be obvious to their owners.

Cats do not like a lot of change in their environment so when a large tree appears in their living space, wrapping paper, boxes and Sellotape come out, when family and friends come to visit and new kittens appear, this can be very worrying to your cat.

Stress often displays itself as inappropriate urination – this can be behavioural or even a medical problem causing severe inflammation in the bladder.

This is especially dangerous in male cats who can sometimes block their urethra and be unable to urinate. This is an emergency, so if you see your male cat straining to urinate with nothing passing or yowling in discomfort phone the vet immediately.

Ways to help your cat de-stress involve giving them somewhere to hide, preferably high up where they can observe but choose not to be part of what is going on.

Anti anxiety supplements are also available at the vets along with Feliway plug-in diffusers which contain a pheromone known to be helpful in reducing stress.

There are many other dangers to watch out for at Christmas but hopefully you will find ways to pet proof this year so that you don't have to make any unwanted trips to the vet during your turkey dinner.

If you do need advice, it is always best to phone as there is always emergency cover available.

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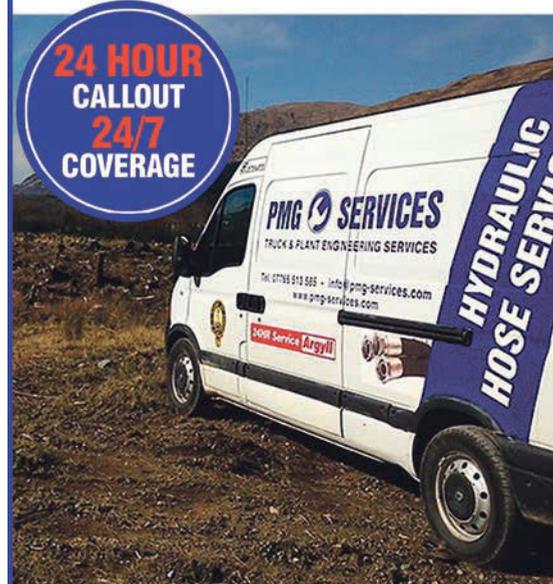
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Friendly support helps stave off loneliness the Western Isles

For some people Christmas and New Year can be a difficult time with festive cheer in short supply.

But the Western Isles Association for Mental Health and the Samaritans want people who might not have anyone else to turn to, to talk to them.

In a joint message with the Point and Sandwick Trust, they said: 'It's good to talk – and we are here.'

Social isolation is becoming an increased problem, but the WIAMH base on Bayhead in Stornoway is available for drop in sessions for those who might be struggling.

Del Gunn is the Project Manager for WIAMH, he said: 'When everybody seems to be celebrating, others aren't. For them, it's not a time of celebration. Some people actually dread Christmas coming along.'

'This is not always a good time and the message to the public is, if you know someone who is struggling in your own community, talk to



Point and Sandwick Trust chairman Angus McCormack, right, with Del Gunn, Western Isles Association for Mental Health manager, and Cathy MacArthur, WIAMH chairwoman in April 2019.

them. There's a good chance they'll really appreciate it. Just talk to people. And if you pass someone in the street, say 'hi' or 'hello'. It can mean the world to someone who is experiencing a lot of loneliness at this time of year.'

The centre will be open on the week of New Year on Monday, Tuesday and Friday

until 4pm and until 3pm on Saturday.

People can call in for a cup of tea and a friendly face to the Stornoway base, but anyone who is in need of urgent help is encouraged to call 111 for NHS 24 acute services.

Samaritans can be reached on 116 123 for a confidential chat.

MacPhail

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A look back on 2019 articles

31/01/19

"None of us know how long we are going to have in this life, so when we are here we may as well approach it with positivity. The futility of worrying that time is running out is borne out by the fact that whether we are eighteen, forty, sixty or eighty one, what is gone is gone, what is done is done and the important thing is that we have our whole lives ahead. That life ahead may be one day or it may be many decades but never will we know. Right up to that unknown time, we have the chance to try new things and to follow the winds of fulfilment and happiness."

14/02/19

"Love is undoubtedly one of the most powerful forces running through mankind and it is no coincidence that it has been the favoured subject of poem, song and other vehicles of literature since these art-forms were

conceived. As well as being powerful, love is one of the most complex areas of life and under its wide umbrella are many variants."

23/03/19

"I haven't discussed Brexit in detail with Beastie, but I think most politicians and a fair percentage of the population could take a leaf out of his book by not allowing legitimate and essential debate to escalate into abuse and long-term conflict. #belikebeastie"

04/04/19

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

08/08/18

"Never before in the history of the Highlands has the music of a people exploded forward with such a power. The glowing embers of our music that survived over three hundred and fifty years of cultural suppression have "taken light" and the flame is spreading like a forest blaze of hope for the future."

12/09/19

"There are of course many steps I've missed and plenty made in the wrong direction but there are some journeys that internally we know are right for us. When we identify these destinations – even if they are a thousand miles away – we must seize the day and take the step."

31/10/19

"Twenty years have passed in the blink of an eye, and so too will the next. I hope then, I will be writing a similar article and feeling exactly as I am right now. Life has a habit of dealing both good and bad, happiness and pain, and often, the two, simultaneously, so when we experience the good, we must relish it and embrace the feeling."

We may not see tomorrow but today the earth is ours

Unknown the new horizons in the hands of higher powers

But now we bear the blessings when the golden stars align

Feel the grace and hold the wonder you're alive.

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Special smelter 90th anniversary

by Mark Entwistle
mentwistle@obantimes.co.uk

It is exactly 90 years to the day that the very first aluminium was cast at the Lochaber smelter on December 30, 1929.

Construction had started six years previously on the smelter and the associated hydro-electric scheme, employing a large workforce.

In the intervening nine decades, hundreds of local men and women have spent either all or part of their working lives at the site in Fort William.

And earlier this month a special event to mark the 90th anniversary of the smelter's commencement of aluminium production and the generation of electricity by the hydro scheme, was held in Fort William.

Present and former staff were invited to hear speeches from Douglas Dawson, the CEO of Liberty, the division of parent company GFG Alliance which oversees the operations of the smelter, and local MP - although at the time of the event only an election candidate - Ian Blackford.



Sandy Austin recounted details of his 40 years working at the smelter to the Lochaber Times. Photograph: Iain Ferguson, alba.photos

Three of the former employees attending the event, which also included a special display and exhibition of historical artefacts associated with the smelter over its nine decades, were David Cameron, from Inverloch, Andrew Cameron from Acharacle and Sandy Austin, from Fort William.

David started at the smelter straight after leaving school aged 16 in 1969, eventually retiring in 2013.

His 44 years' service saw him rise through the ranks from apprentice electrician to operations manager at the smelter power station.

And the smelter was very much a family affair for David, who showed off a precious keepsake that once belonged to his grandfather. He said: 'My grandfather got this watch for 25 years' service here in 1953, so if you work that back it would take his employment here to 1928 - just

before the smelter started operating.

'He retired in 1965 and I started in 1969, so there was only a four-year gap in our family when it comes to employment at the smelter.'

David, who still has a small role at the smelter despite officially being retired, believes the plant is still a vital creator of local jobs.

'Yes, it is very important for the jobs it creates although I don't think it's as community-orientated a place as much it was. I was brought up in Inverloch village where almost everybody to a man worked in the smelter. It was the village of the smelter. The village was built for smelter workers.'

'When I started here, there was in excess of 500 people working on this site. It was a good place to work and things have changed with all the investment over the years, although you tend to find with investment anywhere it comes with a reduction in jobs.'

'Back in the 1970s the health of people who worked here was not great. I can remember old men walking around Inverloch coughing and you just knew they worked here because of the environment

they worked in. It was just horrendous back then. You couldn't see 20 feet in front of you with the fumes belching out.'

'So a lot of things have been improved in the years. I came right up from an apprentice electrician to operations manager at the power station. I worked here all my life. There were good opportunities here and they treated you well.'

'It was a great company to work for in my opinion.'

Andrew also agreed the smelter was still as important for the local economy as it had always been: 'It is still very important, having been the mainstay of the community from when it started and has remained so ever since,' he said.

'This was a huge development for not just the town, or Lochaber, but the whole of the Highlands at the time when you take into account, not just the infrastructure, but the initial engineering phases such as digging tunnels,' said Andrew, who also started as an apprentice in 1973, before spending some years away and then rejoining the workforce also on the power generation side of the operation at the site in 1985.

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Anniversary rekindles memories

'My story is very similar to Davie's. It's really good to be able to come along today. It was always a happy place to work here and I'm sure it still is.'

For his part, Sandy, who lives in Fort William, came originally from Glasgow in 1973 and then worked at the smelter as a power engineer for 40 years.

'I came up from Glasgow in a Mini with my bag and a pair of skis at the age of 23,' he told us.

'I met my wife up here, got married and had kids and am still here. People came from all over to work here and they either loved it or hated it.'

'It was still pretty isolated back in the 1970s and some people found that difficult to deal with after moving here.'

'Over the years the plant tried to employ people from outwith the area such as graduates, but they tended to just use it as a stepping stone in their career before leaving.'

'I think it's great what the company is doing here now with all the investment for the future. It's a place that is always evolving to meet the needs of the future.'



Top left, Exhibition of raw materials and analysis techniques from 90 years ago; above, former employees enjoyed revisiting the site and memories of their time working at the smelter; left, local historian Richard Sidgwick examines some of the exhibits on display; and far left, employees of Jamaha Estates – which oversees the estate lands that came with the purchase of the smelter – look over old maps of the land where they work. Photograph: Iain Ferguson, alba.photos

WHAT'S ON @ CORRAN HALLS



JANUARY 2020

THU JAN
02

MANRAN

Doors: 8pm
Tickets: £20
+ £1 Booking Fee

Strictly over 14yrs,
14-17yrs must be accompanied by an Adult



FRI JAN
10

LEGENDS OF AMERICAN COUNTRY SHOW

Doors: 7:15pm Start: 8pm
Tickets: All Tickets £20
+£1 Booking Fee
Reserved Seating



SAT JAN
18

PRINCESS OF POP

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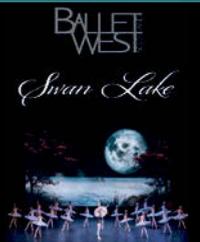
Doors: 1:30pm Start: 2pm | Tickets: £17 + 1 Booking Fee



SAT JAN
25

Ballet West presents
SWAN LAKE

Matinee Doors: 2pm Start: 2:30pm
Evening Doors: 7pm Start: 7:30pm
Tickets: £15



FEBRUARY

SAT FEB
29

BON GIOVI

Doors: 7:00pm
Start: 7:30pm
All Tickets £19
+£1 booking fee



UPCOMING SHOWS

JULY

SAT JUL
25

IRELAND! THE SHOW

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All Tickets £25
Reserved Seating



SEPTEMBER

SAT SEP
05

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8pm (Doors 7:30pm)
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OCTOBER

SAT OCT
10

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LT

LETTERS

Write to us: send your letters to editor@obantimes.co.uk
or The Editor, PO Box 1, Oban, Argyll PA34 4HBWishing all our readers
a very happy New Year!

Well, another Christmas has been and gone and hopefully it's been a happy one for all our readers, with minimum stress.

Now another new year is upon us. No doubt there will be plenty of opinion and debate on Brexit in the media over the next few weeks and months, but for now, let's look closer to home – this week's paper is chock full of heart-warming stories and photographs, including all the schools' festive parties and nativity plays, plus Lochaber Scouts and Guides bringing the Peace Flame and with it the message of peace and good will.

We also loved reading about the special 90th anniversary event at Lochaber smelter. The exhibition of historical artefacts brought back many memories.

Happy New Year, everyone, and here is to making more memories in 2020.

Scottish Sea Farms only uses
licensed medicines

In response to the letter, 'Fish farm research and new boats are not enough' (The Oban Times, December 12), we're keen to reassure Mr Archer that Scottish Sea Farms does not use chemicals to treat salmon. We use only licensed medicines prescribed by qualified veterinarians and administered in the authorised dosage.

One of these licensed medicines, Paramove®, does indeed include hydrogen peroxide. However contrary to the commonly held misconception, hydrogen peroxide is not bleach (sodium hypochlorite); it is a mild antiseptic most commonly used in the veterinary care of cats, dogs, horses and farmed fish, as well as several everyday personal care products such as mouthwashes, eye drops and contact lens solutions.

In the case of farmed salmon specifically, hydrogen peroxide is used in diluted form to help remove marine parasites from fish. Post-treatment, it breaks down into water and oxygen, neither of which is harmful to the environment.

Also reassuring to know, Scotland's salmon farmers are leading the way with regards

to keeping veterinary medicines off dinner plates, with no medicinal residue detected in our end product. (Source: Veterinary Medicines Directorate, Defra.)

Lesley Rice, Scottish Sea Farms.

Trip down memory lane
with Inveraray ceilidh

It is not very often I enjoy ceilidhs these days, but listening on RNG, [December 22,] a recorded ceilidh, held at Inveraray Castle back in 1974, was exceptional and soul inspiring.

At the head of proceedings was the great Lewis man Donald 'Beag' Thomson, a stalwart of the Gaelic language, and teacher at Oban High School for many years.

The quality of this particular ceilidh was outstanding from start to finish and I'm not saying that because he was my clan chief, and that at that time I was working on the roof of the castle itself.

Ethel MacCallum gave a great account of the culture behind those ceilidhs and to hear the Argyllshire accents again was a reminder of the quality available in that area at the time.

As Donald himself said one or more times, when the National Mod was held in Oban, it's a great day for Oban and an even greater day for Argyllshire, indeed this ceilidh was the very best I've ever heard.

Aonghas Eoghainn Mhoir, By email.

Pre-referendum referendum

I see the SNP are still banging on about independence, claiming the recent election result gives them a mandate so to do. Correct me if I'm wrong, but I seem to recall that they had roughly the same number of seats (and maybe more?) in the run-up to IndyRef '14.

I don't think every SNP voter wants independence, nor do I think that every non-SNP voter doesn't, so as I see it the only sensible answer to the oft-stated claim of the SNP to "speak for Scotland" is to have a pre-referendum referendum requiring a 55 per cent majority for either side to win, and the simple question on the ballot paper should be something like "Should there be another referendum on Scottish independence?"

If the YES side wins, the First Minister can take that result to Westminster and say to Boris, 'Here's proof positive that the majority of Scots want IndyRef 2: how's about it?'

If the NO side wins, that's it, go home, end of story; move on.

Davie Kerr, Onich, Lochaber.

Beachd Ailein

ALLAN CAMPBELL

editor@obantimes.co.uk

Bliadhna mhath ùr dhuibh agus mòran dhiubh! Nach bu mhath gum b' e bliadhna bhiodh an seo a bheireadh sòlas agus soirbheachadh dhuinn air fad ach ged a tha e nàdarra a bhith dòchasach a thaobh leithid sin, aig an aon àm tha eòlas beatha gar rabhadh nach seachain sinn dùbhlain a bhios aig amannan do-dhèanta. Ach tha fios againn cuideachd nach eil cron ann a bhith ag amas air cinn-uidhe àraid agus gu dearbh mur eil sinn a' cuimseachadh air an leithid sin nach eil uimhir a dhòchas air adhartas a choileanadh. Mar bu dual bidh daoine a' cur iartasan pearsanta de gach seòrsa romhpa fhèin leithid call cuideam agus leasachaidhean caitheamh-beatha, agus bidh sin feumail dhan fheadhainn againn aig am bheil de smachd orra fhèin 's gun tèid aca air cumail rin amasan. Ach tha eachdraidh iomadh dachaigh ag innse gum bheil an dùbhlain a bhith a' cumail ri amasan den t-seòrsa seo ro dhoirbh dha mòran againn, ach 's math gum bheil a' mhisneachd againn a bhith a' tilleadh thuca bliadhna an deidh bliadhna! Fhad 's

a mhaireas an cothrom tha fhios gum mair dòchas gun ruig sinn ceann-uidhe a mhiannaicheamaid uaireigin. Ach tha rudan co-cheangailte ri cor na dùthcha is an t-saoghail a dh'iarraimaid 's dòcha fhaicinn a' tachairt cuideachd, agus dè chuireadh sibhse air an liosta sin?

Theagamh gur e fear de na ciad iartasan a bhios aig mòran 's e gun tig sioladh ann an ùpraid phoilitigs na dùthcha agus gun libhrig an Riaghaltas ùr na chaidh a ghealltainn anns an t-suirghe a ghabh àite ron taghadh choitcheann. Mar eisimpleir bidh beòshlaint chroitearan is thuathanaich an crochadh gu mòr air na geallaidhean taice a tha dol a ghabhail àite ionmhas Eòrpach an deidh dealachadh Bhreatainn bhon Aonadh Eòrpach, rud nach eil a-nise ach seachdainean air falbh. Agus am faigh gnìomhachas an iasgaich againn na buannachdan ris an robh e an dùil mar thoradh air an dealachadh? Chan eil brìgh cùmhnan an dealachaidh sin fhathast cinnteach agus ri linn sin chan iongnadh iomagain a bhith air mòran a thaobh na buaidhe a dh'fhaodadh

a bhith air tèarainteachd an cuid chosnaidhean. Leis an sgaradh bheachd phoilitigeach eadar cinn a deas is tuath Bhreatainn a thaobh na Rioghachd Aonaichte fhèin, dè tha an dàn a thaobh reifreann eile air neo-eisimeileachd dha Alba? Am faodadh sin tachairt, agus am faodadh Alba fhathast tilleadh dhan Aonadh Eòrpach mar bhall ùr? Ceistean toinnte! Ach aon rud air an cuireamaid uile meas saoilidh mi, 's e bhith a' faicinn luchd-poilitigs a' co-obrachadh gus math slugh, sheirbheisean, agus eaconamaidh na dùthcha seach a bhith a' cur seachad am beatha a' glamhadh a chèile gun sgur 's gun èifeachd do dhuine sam bith!

I wish you all a happy and prosperous New Year! Unquestionably 2020 brings many challenges but we must hope that our post-Brexit economy and employment remains buoyant, and that our new government's policies will recognise and respect diversity of political opinion!

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

PLOCKTON

■ Plockton and District Horticultural and Arts and Crafts Society held a workshop in Plockton hall on December 11, called Donald's Festive Workshop. Donald Mackintosh from Inverinate taught 14 members how to make a perfect decoration. Wine and mince pies were served.

■ On December 17 a large crowd attended Plockton High School when Plockton Primary School presented its panto, The Xmas Wish, which was very much enjoyed by the audience.

■ On December 19, a Christmas service was held in the Plockton Free Church when Plockton Primary School children all took part in carol singing and readings.

■ The Lochalsh branch of Royal British Legion Scotland distributed 20 food parcels in their area for Christmas.

■ The biggest attraction in Plockton during the festive season is the home of Ewen and Sybil Cameron, at 2 Frithard Road, which has the most lights in the area.

■ The AGM of Plockton Harbour CIC was held in Plockton hall on December 7, when 20 members attended. There were 28 apologies. Chairman Jimmy Ferguson gave a report on the year; Peter Davies presented the report on ongoing operations, mooring inspections and pontoon works; treasurer Gill Bennett presented an excellent report, which showed a profit on the year. The existing directors resigned and were duly re-elected.

■ Recent deaths with local connections included Margaret Gordon, Inverness; Margaret Falconer, Dornie, and Donald Macrae, Glenshiel.

CORRAN FERRY

Highland Council will be testing the market by contacting prospective contractors – scheduled to be sent out on January 6 – to give notice that a procurement for the Corran Ferry service may be coming forward. A questionnaire will seek the views of suppliers and potential suppliers of ferry services to the council.

The Prior Information Notice is not a contract tender invitation but a market testing exercise to understand what the ferry operator market thinks is appropriate in terms of: vessels and refit/relief/breakdown cover; slipways and infrastructure; crewing model and fares structure.

This work relates to the Corran Ferry outline business case, which is focused on the immediate transport issues associated with the service, and what is required to ensure its future sustainability.



Fiona Hyslop MSP visit to Abernethy Nature Reserve, which also received funding.

Photograph: Ewen Weatherspoon/ SNH

£5M award for Highlands and Islands tourism

Nine projects in the Highlands and Islands will share a £5 million European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) award to promote the outstanding scenery, wildlife and culture of the Highlands and Islands, Scottish Tourism and Culture Secretary Fiona Hyslop announced on December 28.

The fund invests in projects in the Highlands and Islands which improve the experience of visitors exploring the region's nature and culture.

Ms Hyslop said: "Tourism is a major part of the Highland and Islands' economies and it's essential that its social and economic benefits are shared as widely as possible. That's why I'm pleased to announce the successful applicants for grants from the Natural Cultural and Heritage Fund to improve their experience for visitors.

"This fund will create jobs and help projects in remote

areas to enhance their offer to the millions of people who visit the region every year.

"Thanks to support from the European Regional Development Fund, the wonderful landscapes, nature and culture of the Highlands and Islands will welcome new visitors in a way that is sustainable and creates long-term benefits for local communities."

Projects to receive funding include:

■ West Highland College UHI – The Coast that Shaped the World (£350,371) – This project will develop a website, app and programme of digital exhibitions along the west coast of Scotland. Stories of coastal communities will convey how maritime cultural, and natural, heritage helped to shape the world. Local stories will be mapped and gathered, creating a website and app to inspire potential visitors.

■ National Trust Scotland, Corrieshalloch Gorge Gateway to Nature, near Ullapool, (£923,000) – A new visitor centre will form a gateway to Corrieshalloch Gorge and the Falls of Measach. The project will also improve and expand car parking and develop new path networks with wayfinding and signage.

■ Lews Castle College UHI, UVAP – Uibhist Virtual Archaeology Project (£271,000) – This project will create a series of augmented reality experiences and mixed-media exhibitions for seven archaeological sites along the Hebridean Way walking route.

Funding for the Natural and Cultural Heritage Fund comes from the Scottish Government's European Regional Development Fund programme, with match funding from other sources bringing overall investment to more than £7million.

VIEW FROM THE CHAMBER

Take your business to the next level in 2020

What makes all the difference in business? Building strong business relationships. It's easy to say, but not always so easy to do, especially in these times of near-constant online 'contact' but not much IRL (In real life!) chances to get together.

Lack of time, pressure of deadlines and competing priorities often mean the 'not-urgent but important' work of nurturing and building connections gets put on the back-burner.

Why not start 2020 with a commitment to invest a bit more time in making and building your local business connections? Joining your local Chamber of Commerce is a really easy way to do this.

Our regular monthly networking lunches, business visits and training events are a fantastic way to invest in your business and to share your business news and views with the wider business community.

We've got an exciting year planned for 2020 – including a fantastic overseas trade mission to Nova Scotia in March!

There's so much to get involved in – from our innovative new Leadership programme for managers, regular monthly lunches, business forum meetings with ministers, seminars on key topics like employment law, Brexit and the road to net zero for business – we offer lots of ways to keep our member businesses up to date with important business issues and in touch with each other.

We'll also be running our popular tourism roadshows around Lochaber in February – if you're in tourism, this is a great chance to come along to ask questions of key organisations like VisitScotland, freetobook and Expedia.

There's lots of great reasons for joining Lochaber Chamber of Commerce – why not come along to an event to see what we're all about? Check out our events calendar on www.lochaberchamber.co.uk or give us a call for a chat on 01397 705 765.

We'd love to welcome you in 2020!

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January



Runners shake off New Year celebrations

Almost 130 runners took part in Lochaber Athletic Club's (LAC) annual New Year's Day Aonach Mor uphill race which provided a tricky test in changeable conditions. Snowfall greeted runners at the finish line at the top gondola station at Nevis Range as the traditional race up the downhill track at Aonach Mor once again provided the perfect solution to clearing hazy heads from the

February



Fort William appoint new manager

Newly appointed Fort William FC interim manager Russell Macmorran says he is looking forward to making his debut on the touchline after his first week in charge of training. The 42-year-old Glencoe-based police officer took over the reins at the Lochaber side after the board terminated the contract of Kris Anderson earlier this week. Inset Kris Anderson.

March

Dieguno crowned Scottish Schoolboy champion again

Twelve-year-old Josh Dieguno from Caol became Scottish Schoolboy Boxing Champion for the second consecutive year in March at Ravenscraig in Motherwell when he unanimously outpointed Doonhammer boxing club's Stephen Cairns in the final of the 2006 41.5kg weight division.



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Sporting year

April



Nelson leads Scotland 7s and called up to play for the Baa-Baas

One of Lochaber's brightest rugby stars is to shine in Hong Kong next week after being called up to the Scotland Women's 7s squad.

Helen Nelson, originally from Glencoe, will lead the team in the HSBC World Sevens Qualifiers and flew out on Saturday, ahead of the tournament which takes place over today (Thursday April 4) and tomorrow at the Hong Kong Stadium. She will be joined in the squad by Oban's Abi Evans.

The pair competed in this year's Women's Six Nations Championships and the former is looking forward to turning her hand to the abbreviated game.

Nelson, who plays at Montpellier, has also been selected to play for the world-famous Barbarians in America on April 26.

May



Dabill ends Lampkin's reign at Six Days Trial

James Dabill was crowned the Scottish Six Days Trial 2019 champion on Saturday, ending Dougie Lampkin's run of seven straight victories and dashing the veteran's hopes of a 13th victory in the world-famous event.

June



Jubilant Jags clinch league title

South Lochaber Thistle (SLT) clinched the Greater Glasgow Premier League Division Two title in style with a hard fought 2-1 win over Helensburgh.

Playing at Lochaber High School for the second week in a row, the Kinlochleven-based outfit knew promotion was ensured for both teams but the destination of the league title had come down to this final fixture.

r in pictures

July

McFall golf day raises more than £4,000 for charity

The fine weekend weather saw more than 100 golfers taking to the greens of Fort William Golf Club for the annual McFall Funeral Directors Charity Day Texas Scramble.

The day was sponsored by Jamie Manson and Beth MacBeath of McFall Funeral Directors, Inverlochy, and raised an outstanding amount of £4,626 for local charity Lochaber Hope.



August



Fort William win Balliemore Cup

Fort William lifted the Liberty British Aluminium Balliemore Cup for the second time in three seasons with a 3-2 extra-time triumph over Glasgow Mid Argyll at An Aird.

September



Norwegian wins men's Salomon Glen Coe Skyline

Lochaber AC athlete Andrew Barrington battled his way to a top four slot in Sunday's Salomon Glen Coe Skyline 2019. Oban-based Barrington was pipped into fourth spot behind eventual winner Erik Johannes Husom, with the first four runners all finishing within nine minutes of each other. For Norwegian Husom, 24, it was his first attempt at a sky race and he was thrilled to triumph in 7:55:00.

Georgia Tindley, who lives in Kingussie, Cairngorms, was the first female home in a time of 8:29:57, to add her third Salomon Glen Coe Skyline win to her collection.

The three-day Salomon Skyline Scotland plays out every September in Lochaber.

October



LYC holds annual prizegiving and AGM

Lochaber Yacht Club held its AGM and social event on Friday, marking the end of the sailing season for this year.

November



Lochaber Judo Club success

Lochaber Judo Club's young judoka proudly show off the medals they won at the recent Invergordon Judo Festival last month.

December



Lochaber find antidote to Medics to win bowl

Two penalties from the boot of Jonathan McCook saw Lochaber lift the West Regional Bowl for the first time in monsoon conditions at Banavie on Saturday.

The weather was horrendous come kick-off time but the hill filled up as spectators came to watch Lochaber compete in their first final possibly since the Brinn Cup win many years ago.



LT

SHINTY



Martin MacGillvray of Morrison Construction hands over the new camans to club treasurer Anne Davies.

Glengarry shinty club picks up four new camans

Glengarry Shinty Club got an early Christmas present recently when it received four camans from Martin MacGillvray of Morrison Construction, which has been working on a project in Invergarry.

Anne Davies, club treasurer, accepted the camans from Mr MacGillvray. The club greatly appreciates this sponsorship. Saturday December 21 saw Glengarry Shinty Club's annual Christmas hamper raffle draw.

The club thanks MFR radio star Daniel Gilchrist for making the draw at The Bothy, Fort Augustus, and are indebted to Elaine for organising it. Thanks also go to the many local businesses, parents, friends and players who helped make this such a success.

More than £1,000 was raised for club funds, which is a very welcome boost. Prizewinners were: 1 Gemma Islerdemir; 2 Anne MacKenzie; 3 Jay Humson; 4 Peter MacKenzie.

LOTTERY NUMBERS

Lochaber club lotteries

Caol Regeneration Lotto: The numbers for the draw on December 19 were 1, 3 and 14. There were no winners so the jackpot for the next draw on January 9 will be £300.

Caol Community Centre Bingo Club Lotto: The numbers for the draw on December 22 were 13, 16 and 20. No winners so the next jackpot is £100.

Fort William Golf Club Lotto: The numbers for the draw on December 19 were 1, 4 and 20. No winners so the jackpot for the draw on January 9 will be £300. There will be no draw on January 2.

Ballachulish Shinty Lottery: The numbers drawn on December 22 were 11, 16 and 19. No winners this week, so it is £1,000 jackpot for the next draw.

FOOTBALL

SLT back in action

South Lochaber Thistle get back to action after the festive break with a home game on Saturday January 4 against league leaders East Kilbride YM.

This will be a tough game for SLT against the unbeaten East Kilbride outfit but manager Alan Gray is confident that if his team play to their full potential they can cause an upset and take all three points.



Finlay Wild leads Lochaber Athletic Club's traditional Boxing Day Torlundy Race. Photograph: Iain Ferguson, alba.photos

Runners race off Christmas dinner in boxing day race

The traditional Lochaber Athletic Club boxing day race had 76 runners pounding the roads while many were still unable to move from the Christmas festivities.

Finlay Wild led the pack from the start and comfortably finished first in a time of 43.38. Second place went to Esmond Tresidder in 45.11 and Dougie Harvey finished third in 49.08.

The first lady home was

Caroline Marwich who clocked up a time of 53.46 and finished in 14th position overall.

Quite soon behind was second place lady Sarah MacDonald, in 54.49, and third place was clinched by Lisette Walter in 59.16.

Jamie McConnell was the first junior to finish in a time of 54.09, while the first over-40 finisher was Stuart Pringle in 51.32. First over 50 was Alan Smith in 53.28.



A large number of runners took part in Lochaber Athletic Club's traditional Boxing Day Torlundy Race. Photograph: Iain Ferguson, alba.photos

Nevis Range turns clock back to 1989



SKIING

Skiers and snowboarders on the slopes of Aonach Mor at Nevis Range Mountain Experience on Saturday December 21, helped the venue celebrate 30 years as a snow sports, mountain biking and outdoor activities destination.

During the day all visitors were skiing and snowboarding for the same price as it was back in 1989, with many snow sports enthusiasts clad in ski gear from the 1980s.

Skiers helped celebrate 30 years of Nevis Range.



Some of the recipients of the first monthly Junior Boxing awards, from left, Aiden Love, Sam MacMillan, Tamzin MacKenzie and Marcus MacAlpine. Photograph: Iain Ferguson, alba.photos

Lochaber boxing club recognises youth commitment with new awards

Lochaber Phoenix Boxing Club has announced the first recipients of a new award to recognise commitment and ability amongst young people attending regular training sessions.

The junior section for ages nine to 16 currently hosts up to 30 young people in each session, from beginners to more experienced, under the direction of usually two to three fully qualified coaches, building fitness and encouraging a healthy lifestyle.

Many of the youngsters come along purely for this and are encouraged by meeting new people of their own age from across Lochaber while learning how to exercise safely in ways suitable for their build and age.

Punchbags

The club, with help from Liberty, recently installed two new extra-long punchbags, making it easier for those of a smaller stature to reach areas away from the bottom, which can sometimes become

firmer due to gravity. Those who really want to fully participate in the sport and are judged ready by the coaches can move on to 'learning the ropes' in the ring, sparring first of all on training pads with the coaches, before taking part in carefully monitored sparring with others in the class.

Trophies went to: Toby Jackson, Most Improved Youth Boy; Tamzin MacKenzie, Most Improved Youth Girl; Sam MacMillan,

BOXING

Hardest Trainer and most appearances at gym sessions; Marcus McAlpine and Aiden Love, best middle youth group age competing against other youths.

Training

Youth training sessions are held between 5.30pm and 6.45pm every Monday, Wednesday and Thursday. For more information go to the Lochaber Phoenix Boxing Club Facebook page.

Fort's Falcons flying high in netball league

Fort William's netball team, the Falcons, have been flying high so far this season, being the only west coast-based side in the Highland and Moray league.

The Falcons have enjoyed convincing wins over Lossiemouth and Gordonstoun and two narrow defeats by the strong Fyrish sides.

Their performances have improved greatly on last year, and with several matches still to play in early 2020 there is a real buzz about the club.

Friendly matches

Netball participation is growing on the west coast, as well as nationally. The Falcons arrange regular friendly matches and mini tournaments against the Oban Breakers Netball Club and Isle of Mull Netball. A new Mallaig club is to get under way in January.

Falcons club secretary Christina Wood is one of the original members of the club and has been active in it since it started out a decade ago in 2009 apart from two breaks to have her children.

She told the Lochaber



The Falcons are the only west coast-based side in the Highland and Moray league.

Times: 'The Falcons are a ladies' club of mixed ages and abilities, many coming along to training simply to have fun.

Totally new

'They have ladies who have played all their lives, some who have come back to it

having played in school and some who are totally new to it. Everyone is welcome.'

Training takes place at Lochaber High School on Tuesdays from 7-8pm (term time only), between September and May.

The club is always on the

NETBALL

lookout for new players, and are a friendly bunch. You can also follow the Falcons' progress and events by following the page 'West Coast Netball' on Facebook.



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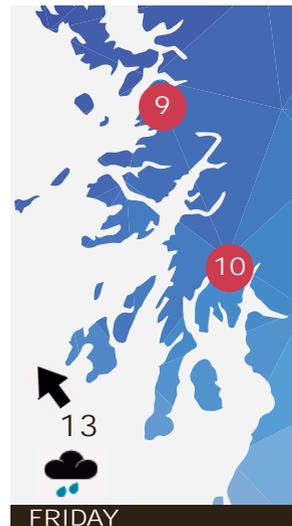


WEATHER

Thursday
Light rain and a moderate breeze
Temperatures 5°C to 6°C.

Friday
Heavy rain and a moderate breeze
Temperatures 10°C to 11°C.

Weekend Outlook
Saturday
Light rain showers and a moderate breeze
Sunday
Light rain and a moderate breeze
Temperatures 9°C to 13°C.



TIDAL INFORMATION

Tide tables for Oban during the week from **Thursday January 2, 2020** are listed below with differences for major ports listed on the right. All times are GMT (add one hour BST)

	04.15	1.7	10.09	3.4
Thur	16.53	2.0	22.13	3.1
Fri	05.04	1.9	11.06	3.2
	17.49	2.0	23.13	3.0
Sat	05.59	1.9	12.26	3.2
	18.50	2.0	** ** *	** *
Sun	00.40	2.9	06.59	2.0
	13.53	3.2	19.51	1.9
Mon	02.05	3.0	08.04	1.9
	14.54	3.3	20.48	1.8
Tues	03.03	3.2	09.08	1.8
	15.42	3.5	21.37	1.6
Wed	03.50	3.4	10.02	1.6
	16.24	3.7	22.21	1.3

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

Runners race off
Christmas dinner
in boxing day race

Fort's Falcons
flying high in
netball league



Teams taking part in the annual Boxing Day 'friendly' match at Lochaber Rugby Club. Photographs: Iain Ferguson, alba.photos



The Battle of Banavie ends in a diplomatic draw

Lochaber held their annual Boxing Day event on Thursday. The first team were joined by a few of the under-18's team and a few over-18 former players.

The good weather drew a huge crowd out to watch from the hill and a few even joined in for the second half.

The players were piped onto the pitch by under-18's player Ben Fulford before the game got under way.

Under-18's player Ronnie Fulford got the first try for the President's team after a superb lobbed pass out to the right wing.

Alexander Murray John levelled things up for the Captain's team after he broke through and showed his brother Edward a clean pair of heels.

The President's team took an early lead with Daniel

Thomas crossing the line and Ronnie Fulford getting his second try.

Players on both sides were able to show off their skill sets in an open free flowing game and a few of the younger players in particular were impressive but the old boys still showed them a thing or two.

Christopher Simpson and Edward Murray John stretched the Presidents' lead further with a brace of tries before Jonathan McCook got one back for the Captain's team.

Conor Taylor scored next for the President's XV after another rampaging run from the No 8 before Edward Murray John got his second try when he stretched for the line and under-18's player Stuart McQueen got another for the Presidents.

McQueen will be looking

RUGBY

to break into the first team towards the end of the season when he turns 18.

Lewis Morrison showed his speed to get a try for the Captains team before club captain Callum MacDonald got another.

The game ended after Conor Taylor broke through but gave the ball to Daniel Thomas to score his second try and as always a tactical draw was declared.

Lochaber are back in league action on Saturday January 11 when they host Cowal. Kick off is at 2pm and the club hopes you can all make it along as they look to make a winning start to 2020.

**Ronnie Fulford
is tackled by
Alan Hamilton.**



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OT

It's a dog's life for Alan...

by Fiona Scott
fscott@obantimes.co.uk



Off-road adventurer Alan Stewart is coming to the end of the latest chapter of his action-packed life story, but you can bet his very worn boots there will be something else on the horizon.

Raised in Ardrishaig, Alan, and his wife Fiona, are currently based in Aviemore, at the foot of the Cairngorm mountain range, where together they run the Cairngorm Sleddog Centre.

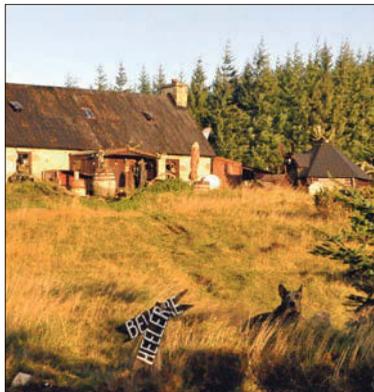
Climate change, however, has thrown up new challenges for the sport in this country and the 63-year-old, who now has to travel to Europe to train and run his dogs in competitions, has decided to call it a day.

'Sled dogging is unlike any other outdoor adventure you can experience in the UK but the dogs require cool conditions when they are out on a run,' he told The Oban Times.

'That's not so easy to do now and dog welfare is paramount, so I will keep the 19 working Alaskan huskies but once they come to their natural end I won't be replacing them.'

For the Stewarts dog sledding is not just a hobby, 'it's a way of life', said Alan, who never raises his voice to his canine friends. Instead he whispers instructions into a mini radio, the other end of which is attached to his lead dog's harness.

'I will miss the daily routine we have established over the 18 years



Clockwise from above left: Alan and Fiona Stewart with one of their 19 working Alaskan Huskies; Alan built all the trails on the Rothiemurchas estate; among his mushing memorabilia Alan has a corner dedicated to Alexander 'Scotty' Allan whose racing exploits inspired Jack London for the main character of Call of the Wild; Arnold, the Stewart's Australian Blue Heeler - 80 per cent Dingo - guards their home.

or so, not to mention the dogs, but maybe it's time to slow down a bit and treat Fiona to a bit of a break.

Fiona, however, is not holding her breath: 'We ended up here because I said I thought it would be nice to have a dog,' she said. 'I dread to think what is coming next. My request was for an extended holiday!'

For Alan, there are no limits. Having spent his youth shellfish diving with diver Sandy Munro, he trained as a commercial deep saturation diver while living in Sydney, Australia.

His offshore work took him to the Middle East, India, China, Norway and the North Sea.

In 1982, he returned to Scotland where he completed a saturation course at Fort William and became a member of the 'Broady Bunch', a deep dive team led by superintendent Chris Broady.

Alan continues to work as a dive rep during the summer season. When he's not working, Alan

enjoys off-road safari racing and remote motor bike trips in crazy places.

A keen motocross and safari buggy enthusiast, one of Alan's ambitions is to bring a safari racing championship to Kilmartin where he spent many happy years racing with Mid Argyll Motocross Club.

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The real Elf on the Shelf – Finn from Mull



Every year little elves wreak havoc in homes across the world in what is known as the Elf on a Shelf tradition, writes David McPhee.

It started in 2005 with an American picture book about how Santa sends an elf to watch over children between Thanksgiving and Christmas Eve to make sure they are well behaved.

The idea is Santa's little helper sits on a shelf and watches the children

by day and each night, he or she returns to the North Pole to report on whether the children were naughty or nice. However, when everyone is asleep, the little helper comes to life and leaves behind something, usually a mess, for the child to find the next morning.

Tobermory mum Naomi Marsh has taken the idea to another level.

Speaking to The Oban Times, Naomi, who runs the Island Crafts

shop on Tobermory's Main Street, said: 'My son is 10 months old and doesn't really catch the concept of 'The elf on the shelf' so I decided to make him the elf of the shelf.'

From December 1 until Christmas Eve, Naomi and her partner, Nathan Mortimer, posted a photograph a day of their son Finn dressed as an elf, getting up to all sorts of mischief.

In one, he had sabotaged a family portrait. In another he is seen in

front of the toilet completely covered in Christmas wrapping paper – with a roll of paper in his lap. Others show Finn making 'snow' angels with flour and tying his mum and dad up with Christmas lights.

Naomi said it has been great fun and they plan on doing it again next year.

To view the rest of the photographs, visit www.obantimes.co.uk, or #FinnTheRealElf on Facebook.

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24/25 ARGYLL SQUARE, OBAN

OT

Festive fun for Oban and

by David McPhee
dmcphoe@obantimes.co.uk



Whether it was dancing at their Christmas party or performing in a nativity play, Oban and Lorn children embraced the Christmas spirit.

And while they were gearing up for their end-of-year activities, Santa Claus juggled his preparations to ensure he visited all the schools.

Children and staff revelled in the festive fun.

Lochnell Primary School was overrun by elves, children at St Columba's were excited to meet Santa and onesies took centre stage in the Taynuilt nativity play.

The feeling was summed up by Oban's St Columba's Primary School, which posted: 'We had the best afternoon at our Christmas party today.

'We danced our socks off and had loads of tasty food.

'Thank you to everyone who helped make our party such a success.'



Left: Strath of Appin Primary School pupils delighted their audience with a fantastic nativity play. Below left: Santa Claus visited Oban's Park Primary School. Below: Lochnell Primary School was overrun by elves.



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d Lorn primary schools



Above: Park Primary School pupils enjoyed their Christmas party. Top right: the cast of this year's Taynuilt school nativity play. Far right: Lochnell Primary School staff made Christmas-themed treats. Right: Park pupils all smiles at their Christmas party.

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And when better a time to get stuck into some deep cleaning than at the start of the New Year. Let us take the hassle out of washing the dishes with Sun's All-in-1 Dishwasher Tablets 45pk for ONLY £3.99! Saving you an INCREDIBLE £4.00! If it's not in store, check online at www.gordonschemist.com. Whatever your wishes and resolutions may be for this year, we at Gordons Chemists would like to wish you all a happy and healthy 2020!

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GORDONS
CHEMISTS



OT



Damian Heaney received the school captains' vote.



School staff battle it out for door decoration honours

What better way to get into the Christmas spirit than with some friendly rivalry.

Earlier this month, Oban High School teachers and staff went head-to-head in the hotly-contested Christmas Door Competition.

The contest received more than 70 entries and after hundreds of votes, four came out on top.

Winner of the public vote was Cara Potts and her class, while Damian Heaney and

Left: Benita Hensman-Martin received the guest vote from councillor Yvonne McNeilly.

his class had the school captains' backing.

Argyll and Bute Council's policy lead for education Yvonne McNeilly was this year's guest judge.

She chose Benita Hensman-Martin and her class, while head teacher Peter Bain gave his vote to Laura Currie and her class.

Posting on social media, the school said: 'The standard was superb and obviously it was a difficult decision for the judges. Thank you to all teachers and their pupils who put in so much time and effort across the school to create a wonderful atmosphere at this festive time.'



Laura Currie won the head teacher's vote.



Cara Potts won the public vote.

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Tour and fair a big success



Oban High School's Louise McKechnie and Debbie Gillies with some of the treats on offer. 17_T52_OHSChristmasFair08



Parents were given a tour of Oban High School. 17_T52_OHSChristmasFair01

Parents of Oban High School pupils got to experience a day in the life of their children, writes David McPhee.

They were invited to the school on Wednesday December 18 when they joined the Breakfast Club, attended a morning assembly, before taking a tour of the school.

The parents ended the day with a trip to Oban High School Christmas Fair, which showcased the artistic and creative skills of many of the students.

An Oban High School spokesperson

said: 'Our Christmas Fair this morning was so successful we ran out of stock by lunchtime.

'A great fundraising effort for the Laurinburg Exchange. Clearly there's great demand for the artistic and creative talents of our students.'

Treats

There was a Christmas tree-making table, artwork, lamps made out of glass bottles, as well as cakes and treats.

The most impressive festive display in the school, however, had to be head

teacher Peter Bain's office. Mr Bain came back from working in Tiree to find his office had been transformed into Santa's Grotto.

The support department and senior pupils, with help from some staff, put their design skills to good use and housed the head teacher's desk within a wood and cardboard grotto.

They further spruced up his office by covering his television in wrapping paper and supplying him with Christmas-themed toilet roll.



Pupils were able to create their own Christmas tree decorations. 17_T52_OHSChristmasFair03



Maria Clark tests out Peter Bain's new and improved desk. 17_T52_OHSChristmasFair02



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OT

Oban FM show brings mental health to fore

by Fiona Scott
fscott@obantimes.co.uk



A trained psychologist from Barcaldine hopes that by reaching out over the airwaves she can help destigmatise mental health issues in the Oban area.

Mental Health Musings with Mer is hosted by Marion Elkin-Greener, and the show is packed with guests, music and chat every Tuesday, from 3pm to 5pm.

Primarily aimed at raising awareness of mental health and addiction, the two-hour long programme opens up discussion on a wide range of issues, with the host herself drawing from personal experiences and years of study.

'I have not had an addiction to drugs or alcohol but I have a respect for addiction because of my own issues with food,' said Marion, who specialised



in addiction while living and working in Chicago.

'It all comes from the same area of the brain and most addictions are linked in some way to mental health.'

Marion approached the radio station on the suggestion of her husband Steve and was delighted with the response she received from station

manager Laura Johnston.

'I was co-facilitating with Martin's Monday Club and I also attend the ladies group there which I get a lot out of.'

'When Steve suggested I ask about volunteering with Oban FM, I didn't quite know how they would react to the suggestion of a mental health-themed programme

but Laura got on board straight away.

'Des MacMillan from Martyn's Monday Club was my first guest. I respect him and the group so much and really want to support them in what they are doing.'

As well as members of the Monday Club, Marion's guests list has also included Graham Morgan from the Mental Health Commission among others.

All of the music Marion plays on her show has connections with mental health and addiction whether it be in the lyrics or through the musicians themselves.

'I choose my music very carefully,' she added. 'And I like to try and link it to

the subject matter. It's a bit all over the place but I love putting it all together and picking my play lists.'

'The feedback has been tremendous. I have a page on Facebook called Mental Health Musings and I encourage my listeners to private message me there, it's all confidential, and then what I do is open their issues up on air using different names.'

'All my discussions come through my Facebook page and are all anonymous and strictly confidential.'

'I don't really care if there are two people listening or 200 people listening. As long as the message is getting out there I'm happy.'

For those of you who have not yet discovered this excellent community radio station, Oban FM can be found by tuning into 103.3 or by going to www.obanfm.com

Eilidh MacLeod trust makes music live on in Mull

Continued from page one

musicians in their ambitions in Eilidh's memory.

'This financial support could only be made possible through the huge generosity of the many people who have donated to our fundraising efforts and the organisations who have supported our work.'

Other groups who benefited included Castlebay Community School and Sgoil Lionacleit Pipe Band in the Western Isles, Lewis and Harris Youth Pipe Band, Skye Youth Pipe Band Highland and the Ceilidh Trail (Feisean nan Gaidheal) Across Scotland.

Manchester Community Pipe Band has also received a special award from the trust in recognition of the work it does in its area.

It is hoped a further round of funding will be made in the first half of 2020.

Any groups wanting to be considered for the next round of funding should contact Eilidh's Trust at hello@eilidhstrust.org.uk



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Scouts and Guides light way for peace

by Fiona Scott
fscott@obantimes.co.uk



Oban Scouts and Guides have joined their counterparts across the world in sending a message of peace around the globe.

Members of both groups, along with family and friends, welcomed the Peace Light from Bethlehem to St Columba's Cathedral on Friday December 20 where it will burn brightly until 12th Night, Sunday January 5.

Originating from the Eternal Flame in Bethlehem, the International Peace Light initiative was launched by the Austrian Broadcasting Corporation in 1984 when a child travelled to the birth-place of Christ and collected a flame to take back to Austria.

Sent from the Austrian Scouts and Guides, the flame is now used throughout



Members of the First Argyll Scout Group helped spread the peace message in Oban.

Europe and travelling on to North America, Canada and Mexico.

The 'eternal flame' was brought to St Columba's Cathedral from Glasgow by outgoing First Argyll Scouts regional leader Jeff Anderson and from there, members of the public lit candles and took them home to spread the

flame throughout the area.

'The chain of light symbolises the removal of barriers between nations and people by overcoming the darkness caused by hate,' said Mr Anderson.

'Argyll Scouts have really embraced this tradition which also promotes frankness, warmth and family.'

'Oblivious' driver fined over motorbike crash

A driver's lapse of concentration landed a biker in hospital with fractured ribs and a collapsed lung, Oban Sheriff Court has heard.

Last week Frank Lawson, 72, from 3 Brunton Gardens, Glenrothes, admitted careless driving and was fined £375 with five penalty points added to his licence.

The court heard how retired off-shore worker Lawson was on the A82 at Bridge of Orchy on October 14 this year when he slowed down in his Land Rover Freelander and was indicating to pull across the road into the bridge of Orchy Hotel forecourt when he failed to see an oncoming motorbike and drove into its path.

Procurator fiscal David Glancy said Lawson had appeared 'oblivious' to the biker. CCTV footage was shown.

The impact with the orange Harley-Davidson caused the 57-year-old motorcyclist to part company with the bike. It spun into planters outside the hotel then rebounded into

the road where its rider had skidded further on.

The court heard the motorcyclist lost consciousness at the scene and was airlifted to hospital in Glasgow where he was treated for fractured ribs, a collapsed lung and other injuries. Although he is recovering, his rehabilitation is slower than he and medical staff hoped.

The only explanation Lawson could give was that the low sunlight may have 'blended' with the colour of the bike, the court was told.

Sentencing him, Sheriff Simon Fraser said: 'This was a momentary lapse of concentration, as far as I'm aware you have had a completely blameless driving record for more than half a century. I'm quite sure you have replayed that moment many times in your head. All of us who drive make mistakes at some point that only we recognise but that no one else sees. You were very unfortunate, as was the motorcyclist. I'm sure if you could rewind the clock 30 seconds you would.'

MOREPHOTOS
www.obantimes.co.uk

Father James MacNeil gave readings at the ceremony, while Scout leader Jack Anderson provided music to accompany the hymns.

At the end of the service members of the congregation received a Jelly Baby or 'Peace Baby' as they were known at the end of the First World War.

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OT

Junior pupils have ball at Jingles

It was the turn of Oban High School's first and second-year pupils to dance the night away on Tuesday December 17, and boy did they make the most of it, writes Fiona Scott.

The Senior Pupil Leadership Team worked alongside staff to decorate the hall and put together an excellent programme of music and entertainment, which included the high school's Traditional School of Music and a set from DJ extraordinaire Sam Coates. **Photographs: Kevin McGlynn**





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Photographed with all the goodies for Hope Kitchen are, from left: Richard Dale, Andy Crabb, Euan Paterson, Arlene Ditchfield (front), Jordan Grigor and Claire Purdie.



SAMS raffle sees Hope Kitchen's customers as overall winners

Hope Kitchen in Oban has received hundreds of food donations and household items after staff at the Scottish Association for Marine Science (SAMS) held a Christmas raffle with a difference.

Every year SAMS raises money for a local charity through its Christmas party raffle and this year chose Hope Kitchen as the beneficiary. The charity helps to

provide food, shelter and companionship to vulnerable and marginalised people living within the area of Oban and Lorn.

Instead of buying raffle tickets with cash, SAMS staff handed over items such as tinned food, pasta and Christmas treats as payment.

Claire Purdie of the SAMS Social Club said: 'Each year we raise money for a nominated charity but when

we chose Hope Kitchen we realised they would probably benefit most from donations of food and household items.

'We were overwhelmed by the number of donations; the response from staff was fantastic.

'The work of Hope Kitchen is a lifeline for many people and particularly important at this time of year. We were delighted to hand over such a sizeable donation.'

Oban man jailed for smearing faeces on walls of police cell

COURT

A man who smeared his police cell with faeces was about to get off with a warning for possessing a chemical high, a court has heard.

James McMillan, 26, was arrested in Sutherland Drive, Oban, on July 17 last year after police found a small amount of the drug on him for personal use. He was taken to the police station but it had been of-

ficers' intentions to let him go with a warning until they noticed an overpowering odour coming from his cell.

Faeces had been smeared on the wall and near an intercom in the cell. An attempt had been made to make graffiti from it. McMillan was the sole occupant.

McMillan, who is currently in prison, admitted possessing the chemical high and the faeces-related charge. He was fined £75 and jailed for three

months respectively. The court was told how McMillan had not been himself at the time. These two offences came at the end of a course of conduct that landed him in jail earlier this year with a 28-month sentence.

A few years ago McMillan was hit by a car in England and became addicted to his prescribed drugs. When they were stopped, he took them illegally before turning to heroin and other drugs, the court heard.

Drink driver banned from the road

A social worker three times over the drink-drive limit will lose her job and home as well as her licence.

Monika Sloninska of Albany Apartments, Oban, appeared at Oban Sheriff Court on December 18 where she admitted being more than three times over the drink drive limit on December 10 in Taynuilt - having 68

micrograms of alcohol in 100 millilitres of breath, exceeding the prescribed limit of 22 micrograms.

The 45-year-old, whose job relies on being able to drive and whose home is tied accommodation had decided she was fine to drive after drinking alcohol the day before.

Police received a call from

someone who had seen her in a shop in Taynuilt and 40 minutes later, around midday, they stopped her on the main road. She smelled strongly of alcohol.

Sloninska was fined £325 and banned from driving for one year, reduced to nine months if she passes a drink-driving rehabilitation course.

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OT

Behind the Scenes at Atlantis

Well, it has been another whirlwind of an Atlantis year, filled with activities, clubs, whacky new sports, fantastic personal achievements and bold new plans for the future.

Here are some highlights of how December brought us round into the home straight and set us up for a new year.

Centre life

Our Games Hall roof is, fittingly, a 'crowning' final project for the end of the year. The works to fix the leaking sections have been commissioned and were due to be completed in time for Christmas. Our fleet of spin bikes had a comprehensive service this month too.

Maintenance might seem a bit hum-drum to anyone else, but at Atlantis we celebrate it! We see normal wear and tear as a measure of how well equipment is getting used, which in turn tells us how well Atlantis is getting used. So, the bikes have a fresh new lease of life, ready for another year of enthusiastic pedalling! We really



can't over-emphasise how big a difference the understanding and patience of the Atlantis community makes when it comes to things needing fixed.

This year has brought us some significant maintenance projects and we really appreciate your tolerance during works and your enthusiasm for the end product – thank you.

Atlantis in the community

This month saw another fantastic Atlantis Dance Show with a full programme of brilliant performance. We were delighted to welcome Oban Dance Academy as part of the event, bringing with them a piece which was included

in the show. Thank you again to them for joining us and to everyone who put in all the hard work in preparing for the night.

The Otters have been busy too! – the swimmers had a Gala on December 1 which was another resounding success.

We love witnessing the work that is done by the Otters family, not least the positive impact this close-knit group of parents, families and friends have on each other and the wider community.

We're privileged to have so many community enterprises and projects in our wee town, not least our very own radio station. Atlantis have long worked closely with Oban FM and are so grateful for how they help us let you all know what's going on at the centre. This month, we made the decision to move to daily 'what's on' radio updates to give you as accurate and regular information as possible. So tune in!

Staff news

This month, the Atlantis manage-

ment team attended LivingWorks: safeTALK – this was a mental health awareness course run by the Job Centre.

This is excellent training on how everyone can increase their mental health awareness and suicide alertness. We think it's important to keep ourselves informed about the many different and changing ways mental health affects our community.

It was really helpful for the team to take the time to learn how Atlantis can help, often just by doing the simplest of things well. Thank you to the Job Centre, Des from Martyn's Monday Club and everyone involved in making the training happen.

We were so impressed with the candidates who made it through to interview for our latest full-time position this month. The standard of applications made the decision making process very hard indeed.

Craig MacCorquodale really impressed the panel at his interview which led to him being offered the full-time position.

The staff team will really benefit

from Craig's new role as he brings considerable skills in badminton, archery and swimming. And he's not hanging about either, with his Level 2 swimming teacher trainer booked for January already. Congratulations Craig!

Craig's appointment is a lovely note with which to wrap up the staff team year.

Like every year, it's brought its challenges but the management team have been consistently made to feel very proud and very thankful of the whole Atlantis staff.

Having a team that can be relied on to get the job done is one thing, having a group of individuals committed to realising Atlantis' values by going the extra mile and who look out for one another along the way is another precious thing altogether. Bring on next year!

GETINTOUCH

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Festive songs brought lots of cheers and applause for these young performers.

Lismore children spread Christmas cheer

Christmas came early for Lismore Primary School, which started its celebrations in November by making the school's traditional Christmas Cake.

Each family donated a different ingredient and after a lot of weighing and measuring, each child took it in turns to stir the mixture and make a wish.

In early December the pupils were invited to perform songs and carols at the island's Holly Lunch.

Guests were given a sneak preview of the school play and joined the children in singing

some traditional Christmas songs and carols.

On December 13, the children performed their musical play, A Place for a Baby, which tells the story of an angel who is sent around the world by God to find the perfect place for baby Jesus to be born.

Through songs, costumes and actions, the cast led the audience around the globe from North America and Hawaii to Spain, Switzerland, China and of course, Lismore.

There was a hardly a dry eye in the house when the younger children formed a tableau of

the Nativity as the finale. The audience were then treated to mulled wine and mince pies while the children sang some more carols and Christmas songs.

The final event of the term was the Family Christmas Lunch, when parents joined their children in school for a traditional turkey lunch with all the trimmings. There were fun quizzes and games and the children performed songs and carols for their parents.

The lunch was a fitting end to another successful term at Lismore Primary School.

MacPhail

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A look back on 2019 articles

31/01/19

"None of us know how long we are going to have in this life, so when we are here we may as well approach it with positivity. The futility of worrying that time is running out is borne out by the fact that whether we are eighteen, forty, sixty or eighty one, what is gone is gone, what is done is done and the important thing is that we have our whole lives ahead. That life ahead may be one day or it may be many decades but never will we know. Right up to that unknown time, we have the chance to try new things and to follow the winds of fulfilment and happiness."

14/02/19

"Love is undoubtedly one of the most powerful forces running through mankind and it is no coincidence that it has been the favoured subject of poem, song and other vehicles of literature since these art-forms were

conceived. As well as being powerful, love is one of the most complex areas of life and under its wide umbrella are many variants."

23/03/19

"I haven't discussed Brexit in detail with Beastie, but I think most politicians and a fair percentage of the population could take a leaf out of his book by not allowing legitimate and essential debate to escalate into abuse and long-term conflict. #belikebeastie"

04/04/19

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

08/08/18

"Never before in the history of the Highlands has the music of a people exploded forward with such a power. The glowing embers of our music that survived over three hundred and fifty years of cultural suppression have "taken light" and the flame is spreading like a forest blaze of hope for the future."

12/09/19

"There are of course many steps I've missed and plenty made in the wrong direction but there are some journeys that internally we know are right for us. When we identify these destinations – even if they are a thousand miles away – we must seize the day and take the step."

31/10/19

"Twenty years have passed in the blink of an eye, and so too will the next. I hope then, I will be writing a similar article and feeling exactly as I am right now. Life has a habit of dealing both good and bad, happiness and pain, and often, the two, simultaneously, so when we experience the good, we must relish it and embrace the feeling."

We may not see tomorrow but today the earth is ours

Unknown the new horizons in the hands of higher powers

But now we bear the blessings when the golden stars align

Feel the grace and hold the wonder you're alive.

Happy New Year to you all!

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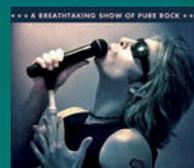
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If you live in Lochaber and feel like a spot of treasure hunting, there is no need to rush down the A82 to Tyndrum hoping to pick up the odd nugget or two from the spoil heaps of Scotland's latest gold mine or buying a metal detector and going up to Loch Arkaig to look for the fabled French Louis d'or sent across from France to prop up the ailing Jacobite army.

Just pull into the new Alexander Ross House car park next to the Charles Kennedy Building, formerly Fort William's Secondary school on Achintore Road, and look for the sign which says 'Archives'. Enter and be prepared to find treasures that will take your breath away.

This is no rusting back-shed containing a few dry, dusty files on Bonnie Prince Charlie and what he wore and had to eat when he was on the run after Culloden. It is much more. The Lochaber Archive Centre is a modern building. It conforms to the highest international standards in terms of preservation, storage and cataloguing. This place holds a truly amazing variety of records relating to Lochaber, old and new, in minute books, correspondence, maps, plans and photographs.

The collections include: education records from the 1860s, including logbooks and ad-



Loch Arkaig looking south to the pine woods destroyed by the commandos in 1942 during a training exercise.

Photograph Iain Thorne

mission registers for more than 60 Lochaber schools; poor relief records, 1845-1930; property valuation rolls, 1874-1990; Fort William Burgh records, 1874-1975; police archives, 1875-1946; Abridgements of Sasines - property transactions - from 1781 to 1971, Invernesshire and Argyllshire; church records including kirk session and presbytery records for parishes in the Lochaber Presbytery, 1724-1991; estate and family papers of the Camerons of Lochiel from 1624, which consists of a large collection of material relating to the 1715, 1719 and 1745 Jacobite risings; the Cameron-Head of Inverailort papers from 1799 including letters, reports and accounts of the Commando occu-

pation during the Second World War; boxes of papers relating to different MacColl families; Knoydart estate papers, 1810-1945; the West Highland Museum collections which include: Jacobite material, Arisaig estate papers, Ben Nevis Observatory visitors' books and smaller private collections.

There are small archives of individuals, estate and solicitors' offices - societies and other organisations; maps and plans and Ordnance Survey plans scale 25:1 miles dating from 1870. Genealogical resources on microfilm for the Lochaber area, census returns, 1841-1901, Old Parish Registers, the International Genealogical Index and a substantial run of

Oban Times from 1861 on microfilm also feature. All open to the public and available for copying other than in a few isolated cases to conform with the Data Protection Act.

My favourites are the fabulous Lochiel and Inverailort papers which are a mine of information on estate management, forestry, deer stalking, crofting and just about every other aspect of how large estates used to function.

Of interest is the correspondence between Sir Donald Cameron of Lochiel's agents and Scottish Command in 1942 about a fire started by the Commandos during a training exercise near Achnacarry Castle where they were billeted.

On 29 April that year, Lochiel's secretary sent the following letter to the Command Land Agent in Edinburgh: 'Dear Sir, I regret very much to inform you that a very serious fire occurred on the Lochiel Estates, starting about 12.30pm on Monday 27th April. The fire started on ground covered under sections 51 and 52 of the Defence of the Realm Regulations and the inference is that the fire was caused by the operations of the War Department. The matter is being investigated by the police. Meanwhile I have to inform you that the whole of Lochiel's Old Forest [on the south side of Loch Arkaig] consisting of very valuable pine trees, has been completely destroyed from Achnacarry to the head of Glenmallie - a distance of nine miles. There have also, I fear, been a number of sheep burned in the fire. The fire is still burning, in spite of all efforts that have been made and the



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of Lochaber

number of people that have been collected. The extent of the damage is not possible to ascertain at this juncture. I, therefore, must intimate that a claim will follow...The gravity of this matter, which involves the destruction of a large part of the Lochiel estate, is one which I hope you will appreciate and give your immediate attention to.

The claim, including 12-and-a-half miles of fencing, the loss of timber, sport and grazing over a five-year period of rehabilitation, plus legal fees, amounted to £123,694. After a long delay the army offered £20,000 but Lochiel stuck out for £50,000 and eventually a figure somewhere between was agreed. Subsequent investigations and at least two special courts of inquiry put the cause down to a soldier, or soldiers, throwing lit cigarettes away when they were rock-climbing in the area.

When the War Office requisitioned Inverailort castle and estate in 1940 for a top secret Special Training Centre where groups of selected volunteer soldiers were to be taught new methods of irregular warfare, Mrs Cameron-Head, the owner, was furious.

The Cameron-Head papers reveal not only was she turned out of her home that year but she had lost lucrative stalking and fishing lets and incurred expenses hiring extra gillies and stalkers for the forthcoming season. Her patience was sorely tested when army trucks taking most of her furniture from the castle to a storage depot in Fort William, went off the road destroying the contents. From then, until

her death the following year due to her anxiety, she waged war on the unfortunate officer in charge. In one letter she complained bitterly about Commandos climbing the kitchen garden wall and stealing her gooseberries, accusing him of putting them up to it to get fresh food for the mess. It did not seem to occur to her these men were about to leave the UK and dropped in enemy territory to try and halt an invasion and all she could do was complain about a few bits of fruit!

There were other similar incidents. Early in 1904, there had been a dispute over the boundary between Inverailort and Glenaladale estate. The matter raged on for months until July 9 when Colonel John MacDonald, the owner of Glenaladale, sent a letter from the Cadogan Hotel, Sloane Street, London, to MacDonald & Graham, the Head's Inverness solicitors, saying: 'Dear Sirs, I have your letter of 2nd inst with copy letter from Mr Head to you of the 1st. I have never in my experience known of anyone, laying claim to the position of a gentleman, behaving in the manner in which Mr Head has thought fit to do in this matter. Without reference to me he has sent a copy of a private letter of mine to him to Mr Bainbridge [the stalking tenant]. By his own actions he has superseded the necessity of any one on my part. I decline to take further notice of his letter. Yours faithfully (Signed) John A Macdonald'.

The Lochaber Archive is a valuable asset for the West Highlands and needs to be supported. Visit it, contribute to it, use it - or lose it.

DOWN MEMORY LANE

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



Muckairn Church Nativity play

Oban Times reader John Hay from Taynuilt sent us this photograph. He said: 'Over the festive season, I wondered if you would be interested in printing this photograph in the 'Down Memory Lane' section. It's Taynuilt's Muckairn Church nativity play. I'm not 100 per cent, but fairly sure it's 1988 or 1989. They might have at least asked them to smile!' If you recognise yourself or anyone in the photograph, let us know as we'd love to hear all about the show. Email us at editor@obantimes.co.uk

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OT

LETTERS

Write to us: send your letters to editor@obantimes.co.uk
or The Editor, PO Box 1, Oban, Argyll PA34 4HBWishing all our readers
a very happy New Year!

Well, another Christmas has been and gone and hopefully it's been a happy one for all our readers, with minimum stress.

Now another new year is upon us. No doubt there will be plenty of opinion and debate on Brexit in the media over the next few weeks and months, but for now, let's look closer to home – this week's paper is chock full of heart-warming stories and photographs, including all the schools' festive parties, jingles and nativity plays, plus Oban High School's concert for our pensioners; and one story we were delighted to read about was the two Mull projects that will be among the first to benefit from grants set up in memory of young Barra piper Eilidh MacLeod. But the article that really put a smile on our faces was the Elf on the Shelf on page three. Happy New Year, everyone!

Scottish Sea Farms only uses
licensed medicines

In response to the letter, 'Fish farm research and new boats are not enough' (The Oban Times, December 12), we're keen to reassure Mr Archer that Scottish Sea Farms does not use chemicals to treat salmon. We use only licensed medicines prescribed by qualified veterinarians and administered in the authorised dosage.

One of these licensed medicines, Paramove®, does indeed include hydrogen peroxide. However contrary to the commonly held misconception, hydrogen peroxide is not bleach (sodium hypochlorite); it is a mild antiseptic most commonly used in the veterinary care of cats, dogs, horses and farmed fish, as well as several everyday personal care products such as mouthwashes, eye drops and contact lens solutions.

In the case of farmed salmon specifically, hydrogen peroxide is used in diluted form to help remove marine parasites from fish. Post-treatment, it breaks down into water and oxygen, neither of which is harmful to the environment.

Also reassuring to know, Scotland's salmon farmers are leading the way with regards

to keeping veterinary medicines off dinner plates, with no medicinal residue detected in our end product. (Source: Veterinary Medicines Directorate, Defra.)

Lesley Rice, Scottish Sea Farms.

Trip down memory lane
with Inveraray ceilidh

It is not very often I enjoy ceilidhs these days, but listening on RNG, [December 22,] a recorded ceilidh, held at Inveraray Castle back in 1974, was exceptional and soul inspiring.

At the head of proceedings was the great Lewis man Donald 'Beag' Thomson, a stalwart of the Gaelic language, and teacher at Oban High School for many years.

The quality of this particular ceilidh was outstanding from start to finish and I'm not saying that because he was my clan chief, and that at that time I was working on the roof of the castle itself.

Ethel MacCallum gave a great account of the culture behind those ceilidhs and to hear the Argyllshire accents again was a reminder of the quality available in that area at the time.

As Donald himself said one or more times, when the National Mod was held in Oban, it's a great day for Oban and an even greater day for Argyllshire, indeed this ceilidh was the very best I've ever heard.

Aonghas Eoghainn Mhoir, By email.

Pre-referendum referendum

I see that the SNP are still banging on about independence, claiming the recent election result gives them a mandate so to do. Correct me if I'm wrong, but I seem to recall that they had roughly the same number of seats (and maybe more?) in the run-up to IndyRef '14.

I don't think every SNP voter wants independence, nor do I think that every non-SNP voter doesn't, so as I see it the only sensible answer to the oft-stated claim of the SNP to "speak for Scotland" is to have a pre-referendum referendum requiring a 55 per cent majority for either side to win, and the simple question on the ballot paper should be something like "Should there be another referendum on Scottish independence?"

If the YES side wins, the First Minister can take that result to Westminster and say to Boris, 'Here's proof positive that the majority of Scots want IndyRef 2: how's about it?'

If the NO side wins, that's it, go home, end of story; move on.

Davie Kerr, Onich, Lochaber.

Beachd Ailein

ALLAN CAMPBELL

editor@obantimes.co.uk

Bliadhna mhath ùr dhuibh agus mòran dhiubh! Nach bu mhath gum b' e bliadhna bhiodh an seo a bheireadh sòlas agus soirbheachadh dhuinn air fad ach ged a tha e nàdarra a bhith dòchasach a thaobh leithid sin, aig an aon àm tha eòlas beatha gar rabhadh nach seachain sinn dùbhlain a bhios aig amannan do-dhèanta. Ach tha fios againn cuideachd nach eil cron ann a bhith ag amas air cinn-uidhe àraid agus gu dearbh mur eil sinn a' cuimseachadh air an leithid sin nach eil uimhir a dhòchas air adhartas a choileanadh. Mar bu dual bidh daoine a' cur iartasan pearsanta de gach seòrsa romhpa fhèin leithid call cuideam agus leasachaidhean caitheamh-beatha, agus bidh sin feumail dhan fheadhainn againn aig am bheil de smachd orra fhèin 's gun tèid aca air cumail rin amasan. Ach tha eachdraidh iomadh dachaigh ag innse gum bheil an dùbhlain a bhith a' cumail ri amasan den t-seòrsa seo ro dhoirbh dha mòran againn, ach 's math gum bheil a' mhisneachd againn a bhith a' tilleadh thuca bliadhna an dèidh bliadhna! Fhad 's

a mhaireas an cothrom tha fhios gum mair dòchas gun ruig sinn ceann-uidhe a mhiannaicheamaid uaireigin. Ach tha rudan co-cheangailte ri cor na dùthcha is an t-saoghail a dh'iarramaid 's dòcha fhaicinn a' tachairt cuideachd, agus dè chuireadh sibhse air an liosta sin?

Theagamh gur e fear de na ciad iartasan a bhios aig mòran 's e gun tig sioladh ann an ùpraid phoilitigs na dùthcha agus gun libhrig an Riaghaltas ùr na chaidh a ghealltainn anns an t-suirghe a ghabh àite ron taghadh choitcheann. Mar eisimpleir bidh beòshlaint chroitearan is thuathanaich an crochadh gu mòr air na geallaidhean taice a tha dol a ghabhail àite ionmhas Eòrpach an dèidh dealachadh Bhreatainn bhon Aonadh Eòrpach, rud nach eil a-nise ach seachdainean air falbh. Agus am faigh gnìomhachas an iasgaich againn na buannachdan ris an robh e an dùil mar thoradh air an dealachadh? Chan eil brìgh cùmhnan an dealachaidh sin fhathast cinnteach agus ri linn sin chan iongnadh iomagain a bhith air mòran a thaobh na buaidhe a dh'fhaodadh

a bhith air tèarainteachd an cuid chosnaidhean. Leis an sgaradh bheachd phoilitigeach eadar cinn a deas is tuath Bhreatainn a thaobh na Rioghachd Aonaichte fhèin, dè tha an dàn a thaobh reifreann eile air neo-eisimeileachd dha Alba? Am faodadh sin tachairt, agus am faodadh Alba fhathast tilleadh dhan Aonadh Eòrpach mar bhall ùr? Ceistean toinnte! Ach aon rud air an cuireamaid uile meas saoilidh mi, 's e bhith a' faicinn luchd-phoilitigs a' co-obrachadh gus math sluaigh, sheirbheisean, agus eaconamaidh na dùthcha seach a bhith a' cur seachad am beatha a' glamhadh a chèile gun sgur 's gun èifeachd do dhuine sam bith!

I wish you all a happy and prosperous New Year! Unquestionably 2020 brings many challenges but we must hope that our post-Brexit economy and employment remains buoyant, and that our new government's policies will recognise and respect diversity of political opinion!

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

Festive buskers prove a real tonic around Oban

by Fiona Scott
fscott@obantimes.co.uk



Oban was alive with the sound of Christmas music in the run up to the big day, with various groups getting out and about to spread some festive cheer.

Seil Sound Community Choir did the rounds at Lorn and Islands hospital, providing some medicinal music for patients and staff alike.

Led by Maggie Thorpe, who works as a consultant in the X-ray department, the 20 or so choir members entertained the public in the waiting/cafeteria area before embarking on a tuneful tour of the wards.

The group have been visiting the hospital annually for 'as long as they can remember', delighting everyone present with both traditional and modern Christmas favourites.

On Saturday December 21 it was the shoppers who were entertained, with Oban High School Pipe Band performing outside Tesco and RNLI Volunteers in good voice outside McCaig's Warehouse.

An impromptu visit from the Oban Lifeboat Crew on board the Mora Edith MacDonald gave the carol singers some extra backing as their session came to an end – much to the delight of everyone who had stopped what they were doing to listen.



Top left: Seil Sound Community Choir were a big hit during their recent visit to Lorn and Islands Hospital; top right, Oban High School Pipe Band entertained shoppers at Tesco; bottom left, RNLI volunteers were in good voice on the quayside and they were joined by members of Oban Lifeboat crew, bottom right, on board the Mora Edith Macdonald.

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LEISURE & ENTERTAINMENT

YOUR GUIDE TO WHAT'S ON IN ARGYLL AND LOCHABER

Highland festival-goers have a Blas for 15th year

Organisers of this year's Blas Festival have reported another successful event, with Highland audiences being entertained by some of the country's top musicians, for the 15th year.

And they are now looking forward to what 2020 has in store for the Gaelic festival.

Blas, which means 'taste' or 'sample', is organised by Fèisean nan Gàidheal in partnership with The Highland Council and took place in venues across the Highlands and Islands from Aviemore to Barra, Stornoway to Strathay in November.

This year's festival featured Niteworks, Project Smok, Gary Innes Band, Gaelic singer Kathleen MacInnes, Sian, Cape Breton sisters Dawn and Margie Beaton,



Tide Line's Robert Robertson and Ross Wilson and many more. Two special partnerships, with SEALL Festival of Small Halls and 432 brought Niteworks to The Ironworks

and a world-class line up of musicians including Capercaillie's Donald Shaw, fiddler Duncan Chisholm and Granton-on-Spey multi-instrumentalist and

Sian, was just one of the groups to take the stage at the 2019 Blas Festival.

composer Hamish Napier to village halls in Edinbane and Kyleakin. Education was also an important aspect of Blas Festival with schools across the Highlands benefiting from workshops and visits from some of the participating artists as well as a Gaelic seminar, Gaelic: Crisis and Resilience, in partnership with UHI.

Arthur Cormack of Fèisean nan Gàidheal, which organises the Blas Festival on behalf of The Highland Council, said: 'We were very happy to have gone ahead with Blas Festival this year, albeit at a later time of year. We had

some notable successes with the events we ran, which included 29 concerts, one seminar with UHI, 28 school workshops, nine workshops featuring collaboration between Scottish and Irish musicians as well as music and dance workshops in another four communities.

'We also staged four performances of a new Gaelic medium commission – Gaol no Gonadh? – based around Gaelic songs of love and loss, Dawn and Margie Beaton visited from Cape Breton and delighted Highland audiences and we collaborated with a wide range of promoters with the addition of Eden Court, The Ironworks, Aros, Urras an Eilein and the SEALL Festival of Small Halls.

'Audience numbers are

still being collated. The attendance by fewer tourists in the Highlands at this time of year seems to have been offset by local people coming out to events. Gaelic language was promoted and used, Highland culture was celebrated and quality events were brought to venues large and small which is what we aim to do every year with Blas Festival. We are happy with how things went this year and we hope our audiences, young and old, enjoyed the events they attended and are looking forward to next year's Blas Festival already.'

If you attended any event during Blas Festival, the organisers would appreciate your thoughts and feedback. You can fill out a short survey at www.blas-festival.com

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Source: YouGov 2018

Glasgow Letter

ROBERT ROBERTSON

robert.d.robertson@hotmail.co.uk



Strictly Come Cèilidh Dancing

Happy New Year, Glasgow Letter readers! There are lots of exciting events coming up in January and February throughout the city.

One that is worth mentioning immediately is Strictly Come Cèilidh Dancing on Friday January 10 in the Glasgow University Union.

This event has been organised by Donald "Maroot" MacLeod in aid of the Eilidh MacLeod Memorial Trust.

There will be 10 "celebrity" dancers who will swap partners between each dance and three "celebrity" judges who will mark each competitor after each dance.

I use the word celebrity loosely, as you can probably imagine! I am one of the judges but I am beginning to question my qualifications for the role after finding out that one of my fellow judges is Rachel MacLaggan - a professional Highland Dancer and founder member of Flings and Things who regularly dance with the Red Hot Chilli Pipers!

Our third judge is my good pal, Darren MacLean, who (thankfully) I feel is more at my own level of dancing professionalism. The old joke about being a champ dancer or a damn chancer springs to



Donnie Maroot and Darren MacLean having a laugh ahead of the Strictly Come Ceilidh Dancing event that is Donnie organising and at which Darren will be judging. Hopefully the judges will not come to blows!

mind!

Competitors on the evening will be Mánran's Ewen Henderson, Skerryvore's Martin Gillespie, Sian's Ceitlin LR Smith, Trail West's Seonaidh MacIntyre, Alba Choir's Joy Dunlop, Iain Beggs and Mairi MacLennan from BBC Alba series Bannan, Shona Masson (presenter on BBC Alba), Alana MacInnes (who found fame years ago with "the dress"), and Lorne MacDougall - possibly the biggest celebrity of all of us having featured in Doctor Who, Brave, Still Game, Whisky Galore, and Strictly Come Dancing... the actual Strictly Come Dancing as opposed to this cèilidh version!

The most important thing is

that this event is fundraising for a very good cause so will hopefully attract a big audience. Tickets are £25 and are available by contacting Donald on donniemaroot@hotmail.co.uk

A Christmas gift

For those who read last week's column and got in touch with me to express concern that I didn't buy my mother a Christmas present, I should probably clarify that (as well as a pile of washing) I brought home a couple of tickets for a very interesting Celtic Connections gig!

Jamie MacDougall sings the songs of Harry Lauder in the Tron Theatre at 8pm on Wednesday January 22.

Oban musician Craig takes top accordion prize in Perth

Oban musician Craig McFadyen was celebrating recently after winning the Senior Pipe Music Accordion Solo at the All Scotland Accordion and Fiddle Festival.

The festival, which takes place in Perth, is a major occasion in the Scottish music calendar, incorporating the official Scottish Accordion Championships.

Craig, 28, said it was the first time he had entered the competition in Perth, adding: 'It was very much a last-minute thought - I only entered the week before.'

'I won the same competition in May at the Highlands and Islands Music and Dance Festival in Oban, but am delighted to have taken the Perth prize too.'

The competition, which sees entrants come from



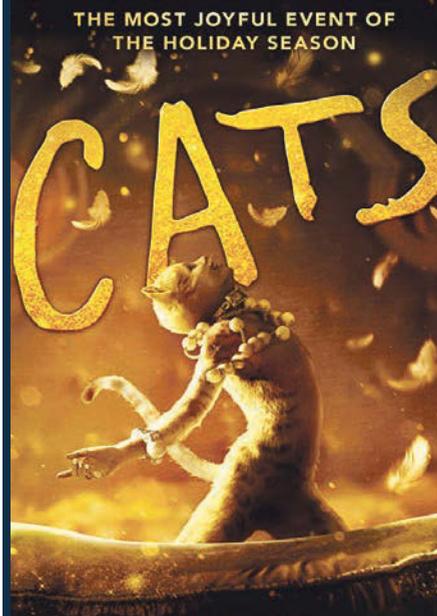
Craig McFadyen was delighted to win his section.

all over the country have to play a March, Strathspey and Reel - pipe tunes played

in the pipe idiom, and Craig was up against 12-14 competitors on the day.

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Frozen 2 | U 13:15
Star Wars: The Rise of Skywalker | 12A 13:30/15:45
Cats | U 16:45/19:30
Motherless Brooklyn | 15 18:45

SATURDAY 4TH JANUARY

Star Wars: The Rise of Skywalker | 12A 10:30
Frozen 2 | U 11:30★/13:45
Cats | U 13:45/16:15
Knives Out | 12A 16:00
Motherless Brooklyn | 15 18:45
André Rieu 70 Years Young 19:00

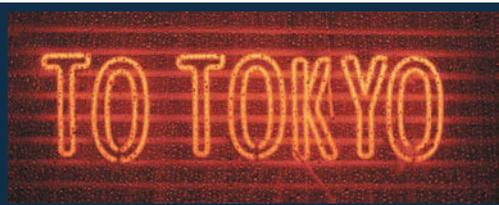
SUNDAY 5TH JANUARY

Star Wars: The Rise of Skywalker | 12A 12:00
Frozen 2 | U 12:30
Last Christmas | 12A 14:45
André Rieu 70 Years Young 15:00
Knives Out | 12A 17:00
Cats | U 17:30/20:00
Motherless Brooklyn | 15 19:45



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Challenged by her step-sister to return home, a young woman hiding from her past in a remote Japanese village, is abducted into a fantastic wilderness and pursued by a monster, with only four nights to escape to Tokyo and face her demons.

SAT 11 JAN | 20:15 FOLLOWED BY A Q&A WITH THE WRITER/DIRECTOR OF THE FILM CASTAR STALE-JONES

MONDAY 6TH JANUARY

Star Wars: The Rise of Skywalker | 12A 12:00/16:15
Frozen 2 | U 16:30
Motherless Brooklyn | 15 19:00
Cats | U 19:30

TUESDAY 7TH JANUARY

Cats | U 12:00/19:30
Star Wars: The Rise of Skywalker | 12A 16:15
Frozen 2 | U 16:30
Motherless Brooklyn | 15 19:00

WEDNESDAY 8TH JANUARY

Motherless Brooklyn | 15 12:00★/19:00
Star Wars: The Rise of Skywalker | 12A 16:15
Frozen 2 | U 16:30
Cats | U 19:30

THURSDAY 9TH JANUARY

Last Christmas | 12A 14:30★
Star Wars: The Rise of Skywalker | 12A 16:15
Frozen 2 | U 16:45
Motherless Brooklyn | 15 19:15
Cats | U 19:30

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

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

Oban festive quiz

If you've had enough of the leftovers and Christmas telly, and are looking for something to fire up the grey matter, why not test your Oban knowledge with our quiz. All the questions relate to items you will have read about in The Oban Times - so let's see who has been paying attention this year!



Q1: Which Oban hotel was originally the home of John Stuart McCaig, best known for commissioning McCaig's Tower?

Q2: Which league do Oban Saints play in?

Q3: How many top 10 finishes did Robert MacIntyre secure in his first European Tour?

Q4: Which fantasy television drama did Oban Whisky team up with this year?

Q5: How many times has the Royal National Mòd been held in Oban?

Q6: Where was the 2019 Royal National Mòd held?

Q7: What does BID stand for in BID4Oban?

Q8: Who is BID4Oban's chief executive?

Q9: Who is coxswain at Oban lifeboat station?

Q10: What is the name of the Oban lifeboat?

Q11: What was the name of the raft which won the Oban Raft Race 2019?

Q12: What musical set in Imperial Russia of 1905 was performed by Spotlight Musical Theatre Group in March 2019 in Oban?

Q13: Which local golfer has made his mark on the international golf scene this year?

Q14: What mythical creature

helped light up the town during the winter festival?

Q15: What Oban sports club celebrated their 150th anniversary this year?

Q16: Which band won the 2019 Unsigned Oban Live competition.

Q17: What is the name of Oban's feline ambassador

Q18: Who is the captain of Oban Lorne RFC

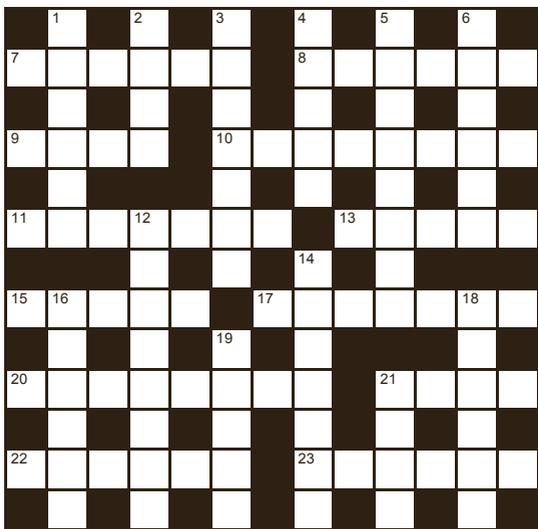
Q19: Saint Columba landed on Iona in 563 after being exiled from where?

Q20: What event announced this year that it was going to take a break

Q21: What are the names of the two ships operated by Northern Lighthouse Board Oban.

- ANSWERS**
1. The Regent Hotel
 2. Central Scottish Amateur Football League
 3. Seven Division 1B
 4. Game of Thrones
 5. 16
 6. Glasgow Business Improvement District
 7. Andrew Spence
 8. A: Ally Cereche, B: Ally Cereche
 9. RNLB Mora Edith
 10. RNLB Mora Edith
 11. MacVicar's Farewell
 12. Fiddler on the Roof (from Oban Distillery)
 13. Robert MacIntyre (Bob)
 14. A Unicorn
 15. Oban Bowling Club
 16. Argyll Ceilidh Trail
 17. Parsley
 18. Iwan Roberts
 19. Ireland
 20. Oban Live
 21. NTV Pharos; NTV Polstar

Crossword



Across

- 7 Beach wear (6)
- 8 English school exam (1,5)
- 9 Touch on (4)
- 10 Tree with cascading yellow flowers (8)
- 11 Royal head (7)
- 13 Weasel relative (5)
- 15 Tie (5)
- 17 School subject (7)
- 20 Environmentalist's concern (4,4)
- 21 Curse (4)
- 22 Online newsgroup system (6)
- 23 Salary (6)

Down

- 1 Spanish town (6)
- 2 Released bullet (4)
- 3 Sloping script (7)
- 4 Striped cat (5)
- 5 Waste (8)
- 6 Dupe (6)
- 12 Plentiful (8)
- 14 As you breathe up a mountain (4,3)
- 16 Cut out (6)
- 18 Film location (6)
- 19 Italian carbs (5)
- 21 Raise up (4)

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION



WHAT'S ON

In partnership with Oban Town Diary BID4oban.co.uk

THURSDAY 2ND JANUARY
Slimming World Fort William
Salvation Army Hall
3:00pm, 5:00pm & 7:00pm
Tel: Gillian 07796 040803

Oban Health Walks
Oban Congregational Church
10:00am - 12:00pm
Event - Manran
Corran Halls. 8pm

SATURDAY 4TH JANUARY
Parkrun
Ganavan Sands. 9.30am

Live Music & Entertainment @ Markie Dans
Disco with Stevo. Open till 2:00am

SUNDAY 5TH JANUARY
Hill Walk
Kingairloch. All day

Morning Service - Refreshments follow
Salvation Army Hall
11:00am - 12:00pm
Live Music & Entertainment @

Markie Dans
QUIZ NIGHT at 9:30pm
£1 per person, max of 6 per team
Win £20 bar voucher

MONDAY 6TH JANUARY
Oban Men's Shed
Salvation Army Hall. 9:00am - 12:00pm
Slimming World Fort William
Salvation Army Hall
9.30am & 11.30am
Tel: Gillian 07796 040803

Fellowship Meeting
New Hope Kitchen. 2pm
Martyn's Monday Club
New Hope Kitchen. 7pm-9pm
Slimming World Lochgilphead
Union Street/Argyll Street
5:30pm & 7:30pm
Tel: Rhona 07880 878906

TUESDAY 7TH JANUARY
Oban Men's Shed
Salvation Army Hall
9:00am - 12:00pm
Carers Coffee Morning

North Argyll Carers Centre
10:30am - 12:00pm

Martyn's Monday Club Ladies
New Hope Kitchen. 7pm-9pm

Live Music & Entertainment @ Markie Dans

Open till 2:00am
WEDNESDAY 8TH JANUARY
Oban Men's Shed
Salvation Army Hall
9:00am - 12:00pm

Open Day
Greenshoots Garden. 10.30am-3.30pm
Hope Kitchen Beach clean
(meet opposite the View). 10.30am
Slimming World Oban
Glencrudden Church Hall
9:30am, 11:30am, 5:30pm & 7:30pm
Tel: Gillian 07796 040803

Knitting Group
New Hope Kitchen. 2pm
Live Music & Entertainment @ Markie Dans
Open till 2:00am

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

COMMUNITY NOTICEBOARD

Oban Accordion & Fiddle Club
Hot Supper Dance
with Charlie Kirkpatrick's Scottish Dance Band
Friday 10th January 2020
7.30pm till late
The Royal Hotel. Tickets: £15
Includes 2 course supper
For tickets contact **01631 562077 or 07979520792**

Inveraray & District
Accordion & Fiddle Club
Inveraray Inn
Wednesday 8th January 2020
at 7.30pm
Guest Artistes
Ross MacPherson Trio
Supporting players most welcome

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bbc.co.uk/alba



Slighe a' Chosta an Iar le Anne London / Wild Atlantic Way with Anne London

Bho Latha na Bliadhn' Ùir, 8:30f
From New Year's Day, 8.30pm

Tha Anne London air ais air turas-rathaid eile. Thig cuide rihte gu Slighe Chosta an Iar na h-Èireann.

Anne London embarks on another road trip, join her on the Wild Atlantic Way in Ireland.



Crodh Gàidhealach an Àird Bhàin - The Highland Cattle of Ardbhan

2 Faoilleach, 9f
2 January, 9pm

Film mu theaghlach à Uibhist a Tuath agus an crodh iongantach is ainmeil a tha iad ag àrach.

A film about a family from North Uist and their world-famous herd of Highland cattle.



Thugainn dhan Phark - Park Bar Life

Latha na Bliadhn' Ùir, 9f
New Year's Day, 9pm

Feuch an dearbh sinn dè a tha a' tàladh Ghàidheil de gach aois thar iomadach bliadhna.

Joe MacNeil explores the enduring draw for Gaels young and old of Glasgow's Park Bar.



An Lot

Bho 6 Faoilleach, 8.30f
From 6 January, 8.30f

Sreath ùr a' leantainn Sweeny tron dàrna bhliadhna aige mar chroitear làn-ùine.

Crofter Sweeny is back with a new series following his second year as a full-time crofter.

Co-bhanntachd eadar MG ALBA agus am BBC
A partnership between the BBC and MG ALBA



WIN £200 WORTH OF SHOPPING

TROLLEY

DASH

COURTESY OF **TESCO OBAN**

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&C's for exclusions). All you have to do is collect four tokens over four weeks starting on 12th December, get them to us by 10am Thursday 9th January and you will be entered into a prize draw to win this fantastic trolley dash. What are you waiting for, banish those post-Christmas blues and start collecting your tokens!

All four tokens must be sent in a single envelope, along with your name, address and telephone number, 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 family are not eligible to enter. The editor's decision is final.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Winner must be at Tesco, Lochside, Oban, PA34 4HP for 9.30am January 20th. Excludes tobacco, lottery, baby food, non-food items and alcohol. Quantity limited to two per item. The winner will be given a hand held scanner to monitor spend to the value of £200.

We will protect your personal data. We only gather what we need for the requirements of this competition. Entry data will be deleted/disposed immediately upon the competition entry deadline and in a manner appropriate to GDPR regulations. Entrant's details will not be used for any other activity.

DIGITAL SUBSCRIBERS

Digital subscribers who have an active subscription covering the period from December 13, 2019, to February 3, 2020, 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 20, 2020.



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Argyll and Islands AGM to focus on next generation of farmers and crofters

A discussion panel at the forthcoming Argyll and the Islands Regional annual general meeting (AGM) will focus on the views of the next generation of farmers and crofters.

The AGM will take place on Friday January 10, starting at 11am in Tarbert Bowling Club. The morning session will see the regional AGM and the presentation of the Argyll and the Islands Stalwart Award.

The highlight of the afternoon will be a panel session

chaired by the region's Next Generation Committee representative Ian Dickson from Scalpsie Farm, Bute.

Panel members include: Jenny Baillie, regional manager, Scottish Association of Young Farmers Clubs (SAYFC); Jenny Brunton, policy manager, NFU Scotland; Ian Davidson, national advisor, Scottish Land Matching Service; Colin Ferguson, chairman, NFU Scotland Next Generation Committee; and John McCulloch, chairman, SAYFC West Rural and Agri

Affairs Committee. Regional Board chairman John Dickson said: 'As an industry, we need to focus on how we support the next generation of farmers and crofters to get them into the sector.'

'At NFUS, our challenge is how we encourage the next generation to also get involved in the union.'

'This panel will be an opportunity for members to hear views on the future for the next generation of farmers and crofters in what are going to be challenging times.'

'I would encourage those who are coming along to bring a young person with them - maybe a son, daughter, nephew or niece who is involved in your family business.'

'We want to ensure young people have a bright future in the sector and want them to become involved in agri-affairs, policy lobbying and NFU Scotland. To help get the next generation involved, NFUS Farming or Crofting membership now entitles family members to be signed up at no extra cost.'



Lorn Ploughing Match committee members presented a £300 cheque to Argyll Beats Cardiovascular Disease charity representatives at Lorn and Islands Hospital, Oban, on Friday December 20. The committee thanks all the businesses, competitors and spectators for their continued support of the event over the years. From left: John MacCormick, Dr Nicky Campbell, Charlie Campbell, Betty Graham, Donnie Campbell and Caroline Henderson.

Around the markets

Dingwall & Highland Marts Ltd, December 17 sold 12 prime cattle.

Prime heifers (12) averaged 196.6p (-0.9p) and sold to 204.0p per kg for a 565kg Limousin cross selling to Messrs John M Munro Ltd, Dingwall and £1,254.00 gross for a 660kg Limousin cross both from Bridgend Farm, Dingwall.

Other leading prices per kg: Heifers: Bridgend Farm, (LimX), 200.0p, (CharX), 199.0p.

Other leading prices per head: Heifers: Bridgend Farm, (LimX), £1,218.75, (CharX), £1,213.90.

New season lambs (290) averaged 186.2p (-7.5p) and sold to 211.1p per kg and £95.00 gross for a pen of 45kg Beltex crosses from Torgorm, Conon Bridge, selling to Messrs Fraser Brothers, Butchers, Dingwall.

SQQ 36.5kg to 45.5kg (204) averaged 186.7p (-7.6p) per kg

Feeding sheep (42) sold to £96 gross for a Texel ram from Teanluick, Beauty.

Other leading prices per head and per kg: New season lambs: SuffX - Torgorm, £89, 193.5p; Chev - Torgorm, £88, 200.0p; TexX - The Meadows, Culreach, £88, Dunain Mains, Inverness, 193.2p; Cross - Shewglie, Glenurquhart, £88, The Meadows, 188.9p; BF - Shewglie, £85.50; CHM - Dunain Mains, £84, 186.7p; Mule - Old Spittal Farm, Glenshee, £82.50.

Feeding sheep: Tex ram - Strathaird Farms, Broadford, £88; TexX - 5c Balnabeen, Conon Bridge, £88; Chev - Shewglie, £80; TexX - The Dell

of Killiehuntly, Kingussie, £70.

Caledonian Marts Ltd, December 17, sold 2105 Prime Lambs, Ewes and Tups.

All lambs keenly bid for especially 39.1kg-52kg which averaged 201ppkg for 1225 sold. Overall average for 1522 sold was 196.5p (+13p on the week) which resulted in the dearest trade of the season so far. Top price of the day went to J Guthrie, Cultburn for a 50kg Beltex at £113.

Top price per kg went to R A Campbell & Sons, Meikle Seggie for a pen of 3 Beltex X Lambs at 41.3kg fetching 235ppkg.

Leading Prices: Prime Lambs Per Head:- Beltex £112 Cultburn Beltex X £111 & £107 West Lundie; Texel £104 Ayton Texel X £103 East Lenniston Continental X £103 Green-craig; Continental £102.50 Claish; Suffolk £94.50 Green-craig; Mule £85.50 Ditch; BF (Tups) £74 Culcreuch BF Lambs £73 Glenturret Estates

Prime Lambs Per Kg:- Beltex x 229p & 227p Meikle Seggie

Beltex 224p Borlick

Texel X 221p & 220p Ditch

Texel 221p Borlick

Continental 220p & 219p Meikle Seggie

Suffolk 207p Candy

Cheviot 206p Borlick

Mule 191p Innieshewan

BF 188p Glenturret Estates

Also forward were 583 Cast Ewes and Tups.

A good show of Ewes again met a great trade.

A highlight of the sale was a tremendous run of Ewes and Rams from P J & C Wood, Knockhill, Strathkinnes averaging £137.66 for 32 sold.

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- Dealing with all daily issues professionally and liaising with site management on a regular basis
- To carry out the daily inspections; complete the forms and where a problem exists notify the management immediately
- Be responsible for plant assets that are entrusted to you i.e. materials, plant buildings and equipment and stores used therein and efficient employment of them.
- To contribute the effective and efficient operation of all plant operations from the primary stockpile onwards.
- To react promptly and effectively to site breakdowns by liaising with maintenance and assisting where needed.
- To inspect, carry out and ensure that plant routines are regularly adhered to and that the cleanliness of the plant mechanism, plant area, adjacent buildings, and equipment are at all times properly and regularly inspected, cleaned in accordance with site instructions.
- To carry out other reasonable tasks within the scope of your operation and abilities as and when required.

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- Ability to work to deadlines
- Previous experience within a similar industry.

Please submit your CV and covering letter to Paul Kersley, Engineering Manager (Mechanical) e.mail: paul.kersley@aggregate.com

Closing date for applications: Monday 13th January 2020.

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PUBLIC NOTICES

Rectification of First Registration of a Croft

A rectification has been made to the croft 1 Stronaba, Kilmonivaig on the Crofting Register held by the Registers of Scotland.

Any person who wishes to challenge the registration may apply to the Scottish Land Court by September 3, 2020.

Details of the registration can be found at www.crofts.ros.gov.uk/register/home. The croft registration number is C6265

Rule 5.6(1)(a) NOTICE TO MRS ROSE-MAE CHIN or SLIWINSKI residing formerly at West Haven, Achintore Road, Fort William, FH33 6RW and residing formerly at 1 Hillside House, Belford Road, Fort William, PH33 613T and whose whereabouts to the petitioner are unknown Court ref. no. FTW-SQ8-19

An action has been raised in Fort William Sheriff Court by RICHARD SLIWINSKI, Pursuer, calling as a Defender MRS ROSEMAE CHIN or SLIWINSKI whose last known address was formerly at West Haven, Achintore Road, Fort William, PH33 6RW and formerly at 1 Hillside House, Belford Road, Fort William, PH33 613T. If MRS ROSE-MAE CHIN or SLIWINSKI wishes to defend the action she should immediately contact the sheriff clerk at Fort William Sheriff Court, Sheriff Court House High St, Fort William PH33 6EE from whom the service copy initial writ may be obtained. If she fails to do so decree may be granted against her.

Duncan James Swarbrick, Swarbrick Law, Speyside Business Centre, Dalfaber Industrial Estate, AVIEMORE PH22 1ST. Solicitor for the petitioner

www.highland.gov.uk



TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (SCOTLAND) ACT 1997 PLANNING (LISTED BUILDING AND CONSERVATION AREAS) (SCOTLAND) ACT 1997

The applications listed below, along with plans and other documents submitted with them, may be examined online at <http://wam.highland.gov.uk>; electronically at the AREA PLANNING AND BUILDING STANDARDS OFFICE, CHARLES KENNEDY BUILDING, ACHINTORE ROAD, FORT WILLIAM, PH33 6RQ; or electronically at your nearest Council Service Point. You can find your nearest Service Point via the following link https://www.highland.gov.uk/directory/16/a_to_z

Written comments should be made to the EPC at the contact details below within the time period indicated from the date of this notice. Anyone making a representation about this proposal should note that their letter or email will be disclosed to any individual or body who requests sight of representations in respect of this proposal.

Reference Number	Development Address	Proposal Description
19/05449/FUL	Blarachaoruinn Lundavra Road, Fort William	Erection of 4 self-catering pods

Time period for comments is 14 days
ePlanning Centre, The Highland Council, Glenurquhart Road, INVERNESS IV3 5NX
Email: eplanning@highland.gov.uk

Argyll and Bute Council

PLANNING

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

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

Ref. No.	Proposal	Site Address
19/02578/PP	Erection of dwellinghouse, installation of septic tank and formation of access.	Land Approx 150M North East Of Achnambroc, Inverinan, Taynuilt, Argyll And Bute
19/02517/PP	Erection of dwellinghouse with integral garage, installation of septic tank and formation of vehicular access	Oban Seil Croft, Clachan Seil, Isle Of Seil, Argyll And Bute
19/02100/PP	Renewal of planning permission reference 16/00778/PP (Erection of dwellinghouse, detached garage and installation of septic tank)	Aintuim Farm, Land North Of Achnadrish Lodge, Dervaig, Isle Of Mull, Argyll And Bute
19/02496/PP	Erection of 4 holiday cabins, installation of sewage treatment plant and formation of vehicular access	Land At Glenorchy Farm, Glen Orchy, Argyll And Bute
19/02459/PP	Erection of dwellinghouse, installation of ground mounted photovoltaic panels and septic tank and formation of vehicular access	Laggan Croft (Cruachan Plot), Port Ramsay, Isle Of Lismore, Oban, Argyll And Bute
19/02149/PP	Replacement roof covering from Eternit slate tile to Natural slate	42 Easdale Island, Oban, Argyll And Bute, PA34 4TB
19/02150/LIB	Replacement roof covering from Eternit slate tile to Natural slate	42 Easdale Island, Oban, Argyll And Bute, PA34 4TB
19/02511/LIB	Demolition of existing extension and erection of porch extension, installation of replacement windows and internal alterations to remove non-load bearing partitions	Ulva Manse, Ulva, Isle Of Mull, Argyll And Bute, PA73 6LZ
19/02460/PP	Erection of dwellinghouse, installation of septic tank and formation of vehicular access	Land East Of Laggan Croft (Nevis Plot), Port Ramsay, Isle Of Lismore, Oban, Argyll And Bute
19/02590/PP	Alterations and erection of extension	Cherrytree Cottage, Jamieson Street, Bowmore, Isle Of Islay, Argyll And Bute, PA43 7HL

Written comments can be made to the above address or submitted online <http://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/planning-and-environment/find-and-comment-planning-applications> within 21 days of this advert. Please quote the reference number in any correspondence. Any letter of representation the Council receives is considered a public document and will be published on our website. Anonymous or marked confidential correspondence will not be considered. A weekly list of all applications can be viewed at all Area Offices, Council Libraries and on the Councils website.

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

www.argyll-bute.gov.uk
Comhairle Earra – Ghàidheal agus Bhòid



Career opportunities



CONSTRUCTION SITE MANAGER – OBAN

We are looking for an experienced Site Manager to join our team in Dunbeg Development in Oban. The successful candidate will be responsible for organising & monitoring progress, meeting deadlines and ensuring a safe working environment. This a full time/permanent position 8am-5.30pm (Mon-Fri).

Please send CV to jobs@mkmacleod.co.uk or call 01546 602989 for further information.



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www.kilmartin.org/home/get-involved/vacancies/

ARGYLL & BUTE COUNCIL

EDUCATION SERVICE

REGISTRATION OF INFANT BEGINNERS IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS SESSION 2020/2021

Children who attain the age of five years between 1 March 2020 and 28 February 2021 should be registered for education during the week commencing 13 January 2020.

Parents should take their children to the appropriate local primary school on one of the school days during the above week between the hours of 10.00am and 3.00pm.

A list of all schools can be found on the Council's website <https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/education-and-learning/schools>, this includes:-

- Gaelic Medium Education
- Denominational Schools
- Non-denominational Schools

A leaflet providing information for parents on enrolment of children in school and giving details of placing request procedures (including under age placing requests) may be obtained from any school or from Education Services, Argyll House, Alexandra Parade, Dunoon, PA23 8AJ (Tel: 01369 704000).

ANNE PATERSON/LOUISE CONNOR, HEAD OF SERVICE, EDUCATION SERVICE

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ISUZU D-MAX COMPLETES HAT TRICK AT THE 2020 WHAT VAN? AWARDS

The multi award-winning Isuzu D-Max has been awarded What Van? 'Pick-up of the Year' for the third consecutive year, a testimony to our ongoing desire to provide the best working pick-up for professionals. The Isuzu D-Max was awarded What Van? Pick-Up of The Year for 2020 with the monthly title praising both its substance and style yet again. This accolade being hot on the heels of being crowned, Pick-up of the Year in the Commercial Fleet Awards for the second year.

The Isuzu D-Max emerged victorious, beating strong competition from rivals in a highly contested sector.

Judges were impressed by the economy and refinement of the innovative 164 PS turbo diesel engine, that provides impressive performance and builds upon the Isuzu D-Max's reliable workhorse character.

With a 3.5 tonne towing

capacity and over 1.1 tonne payload, the Isuzu D-Max was also praised for providing a quieter, more economical driving experience. The 1.9L turbo diesel engine meets Euro 6 standards without the need for the addition of AdBlue, unlike most of the Isuzu D-Max's competitors.

The breadth of the Isuzu D-Max range also impressed judges; with single, extended and double-cab formats available, as well as a wide choice of trim levels. Coupled with the attractive five-year/125,000-mile warranty package and 5 years' roadside assistance (in the UK & Europe), the Isuzu D-Max proved it was truly built for the professionals who use it.

What Van? editor and judge James Dallas said of the win: "With competitive prices, an injection of lifestyle sophistication to



complement proven off-road and workhorse ability, a full range of body styles and a frugal engine that requires no AdBlue, the Isuzu D-Max has deservedly won a hat trick of Pick-up of the Year prizes."

Isuzu UK Managing Director William Brown added: "This third consecutive award for the

Isuzu D-Max is a testimony to the great product which our customers already love and trust. Isuzu is proud to make reliable and quality vehicles for the professionals that need them, and this award highlights the Isuzu truly is a step above the rest."

Following an already successful year for the

award-winning Isuzu D-Max, winning WhatVan? Pick-up of the Year yet again for 2020 is a fitting finale to 2019. The award-winning Isuzu D-Max has already had a successful 2019, being crowned 'Pick-Up of The Year' at the Commercial Fleet Awards and 'Pick-up of the Year' 2019 from Pickup & 4x4 Pro, 'Best Working Pick-Up' for

2019 by Professional Pick-Up & 4x4 magazine, 'Best Workhorse Pick-Up' for 2019 by Trade Van Driver and Van/Truck Brand of the year 2019 by On The Tools for the 2nd year.

For more information on the Isuzu D-Max range please see S&S Services at the Tesco Oban Roadshow 11th & 12th January 2020.



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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 out grown 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 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.



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PERSONAL NOTICE

GAYDON

Alexandra, Francis and Isobel wish to thank all the many friends and service providers for all their very kind friendship and assistance which gave their parents, the late Harry (Sam) and Florentine (Twinkle), very happy lives at home in Argyll.

Merry Christmas, Happy Hogmanay and best wishes for the future.

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DEATHS

BINNIE - Peacefully at Etive House Care Home, Benderloch on December 19, 2019 in her 88th year, Doris Mae Binnie, beloved wife of the late Ross Binnie. Sadly missed. The funeral will take place at the Church of Scotland, Glencruitten Road, Oban, on Tuesday, January 7, 2020 at 1.00 p.m., thereafter to Pennyfuir cemetery.

BRUNTON - Peacefully at home in Bunessan, Isle of Mull, with her family by her side on December 25, 2019, Maimie Brunton née MacInnes (retired head teacher), widow of the late Tom Brunton, loving mother of Sandy and Mary, much loved grannie, aunt and sister. Funeral service was held at Bunessan Parish church on Tuesday, December 31, 2019 thereafter to Suidhe Cemetery.

CLARK - Iain Mackinnon Clark 1933 - 2019. Much loved father, grandfather, partner and friend passed away in Glasgow on December 20, 2019. There will be a service at Clydebank Crematorium at 3.30pm on January 7, 2020 with a service of remembrance to follow at a later date in Stranraer.

MEMORIAMs

FERGUSON - In loving memory of my dear mother Jessie, who passed away on January 2, 2011. A happy smile, kind in nature, loving and true

In my heart you will always stay, loved and remembered every day.
- Daughter Anne.

HAY - Everlasting memories of our mum and gran, Mary, died December 31, 2014. Never more than a thought away.
- Kate, Elaine and their families.

JACKSON - In loving memory of my dear mother Liz, who died so suddenly on January 6, 2006. Always in our thoughts.
- Love Iain xxx.

LAMONT - In loving memory of my dear husband Willie, who passed away so very suddenly on New Year's Eve 2005. Always in my thoughts. Missing you more as the years go by.
- Mary.

LAUDER - Stephen - 3/3/65 - 4/1/14
In our hearts
Your memory is kept
To treasure, to love and never forget
No verse, no flowers
No tears can say
How much we miss you every day.
All our love.
- Love Ma, Dad and families xxx

MACCOLL - Archie (Kilmonivaig).
Nam chridhe gu Siorraidh
- June Anne. x
Love and miss you grandpa
- Archie, Jessie, Kate and Freddie xxxx

MACINNES - Duncan. Seventh Anniversary. It isn't what we write It isn't what we say It's how we feel deep inside As we think of you today Missing you always.
- Love Nellie and all the family.

MACLELLAN - Short but precious memories of our darling infant son Christopher, called to Heaven on January 1, 1991. Our brightest star in the sky Loved forever
- Mum, Dad, Craig and Calum.

MACPHAIL - Treasured memories of a dear husband father and 'Shesh', John (Tiree), who passed away December 26, 2004. Also remembering loved ones gone before and after. The years we spent together Those happy days we knew Are lived again so often In my memories of you.
- Jean x
He laboured hard for those he loved
Then left us to remember
- May, Irene and families.

McKINNON - Treasured memories of my dear husband Charles McKinnon who died suddenly on December 28, 2005. Also my dear mother Catherine Brown who died July 26, 2001. Also remembering those who gave before and since Not just today but every day In silence we remember.
- May, Colonsay.



Oban Sea Cadets awarded Pennant

Oban Sea Cadets were celebrating just before Christmas after receiving their Pennant Award for efficiency for 2019 (Royal Navy inspection). This means that the local branch is meeting the needs of its young people in all respects, including training, safety, environment and welfare. PO Robert Neil (SCC), 1st Lieutenant and Unit Training Officer with Oban Sea Cadets, said: 'Very well done to all involved!'

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Oban and Lorn residents receive BEM in New Year Honours list

by David McPhee
dmcph@obantimes.co.uk



Two people from Oban and Lorn have been included in The Queen's New Year Honours List.

Nan Johnstone and Kenneth Alasdair Macdonald have been awarded British Empire Medals (BEMs).

Nan, who is the head of mathematics at Oban High School, received the honour for services to STEM Education and the community in Oban.

And Kenneth, who is known as Alasdair and lives in Connel, was chosen for services to the community in Strathfillan, North Argyll, for his accordion playing.

Speaking to The Oban Times, Nan said: 'I was stunned, but delighted. A letter came in the middle of November and I have had to keep it a secret.'

Speaking about receiving the letter, Nan added: 'I honestly was very stunned, completely and utterly. I was not expecting it at all. It took me a while to realise it was me.'

Nan, 59, has been teaching at Oban High School since 1983, when she arrived to do her probation at the school.

Her accomplishments were outlined in the honours document, which read: 'She is an outstanding protagonist and role model for STEM with her infectious enthusiasm through almost 37 years of teaching.'



Nan Johnstone and Kenneth Alasdair Macdonald have been awarded British Empire Medals in the New Year's Honours list – Nan for services to STEM education and Oban High School Pipe Band, and Kenneth for services to the community of Strathfillan.

'She developed and implemented many innovative programmes, including Maths across the Curriculum locally, primary feeder schools maths competitions and a highly successful, "How to pass Higher Maths evening", helping the wider school community.'

'She has adopted several novel and exciting ways to engage pupils and parents in learning about maths, such as maths weeks, with after school events, guest lectures and competitions.'

'She has also made a huge contri-

but ion to the helping and running of Oban High School Pipe Band 2006.'

Alasdair, 82, who spent the majority of his life living in Bridge of Orchy, has been entertaining the community in Strathfillan since 1960.

After retiring to Connel near Oban in 2001, he continued to make at least one 80-mile return journey every week to play his accordion and accompanying hymn singing in three churches in Strathfillan and Inishshale Parish.

He has been doing this for 58 years, since 1960. He still plays at the churches in Bridge of Orchy and Crianlarich - 50 miles away.

The document stated: 'That is part of his continuing service to the community. His service is a crucial factor in holding the congregations together.'

'For many years he provided entertainment at the Bridge of Orchy Village Hall children's parties. He plays the pipes on Remembrance Sunday and also at weddings and funerals.'

THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK

We are travelling on very soon into another year, a new year, which brings the opportunity to change things to make a new start.

Perhaps motivated by New Year Resolutions, we may wish for a healthier lifestyle, we may want to repair relationships and be more grateful for friends, for family and our communities.

The start of a new year is always a nostalgic time as we take our memories into the coming months. We can choose to hang on to the baggage of old resentments and reluctance to forgive, or we can do what the Bible recommends, from Paul's advice to the church in Philippi, which is to remember only "...what is true, honourable, just, pure, pleasing and commendable...". He also writes to confirm that forgiveness from God towards each other can be complete in God's love for us, which is renewed each day. Then God's peace can be known in our hearts, displayed in the way we live, bringing new hope into our lives with God being the keeper of our memories.

God can incorporate a sense of wonder and newness into the way we live, into our perspectives, our attitudes, motives and our relationships. He can help us to face the future unafraid, knowing that whatever we have done, or left undone, it is never too late to make a fresh start.

Have a Happy New Year and Good New Beginnings.

Reverend Carol Leech

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Shinty review of the season

It's the business end of the shinty season as The Oban Times looks back on the second half of 2019.

July 2019

Mowi Premiership

Kingussie finished July with a two point lead at the top of the Premiership, although they only played one league match during the month edging out Oban Camanachd 3-2.

Mowi National Division

Fort William looked in a hurry to seal the title and they had now notched up 11 straight league wins.

Mowi North Division 1

Glengarry were two points clear of second-placed Fort William with a game in hand. However, Newtonmore were just four points off the top having played three games fewer than the leaders.

Mowi South Division 1

Aberdour were eight points clear at the top of the division despite losing 7-2 to the Inveraray seconds.

Mowi North Division 2

Lochcarron and Strathspey continued to battle it out for the title and the west coast side led by a point having played a game more.

Mowi South Division 2

Kilmory enjoyed a two point lead over Glenorchy at the summit but had played a game more. The Oban Celtic colts were third.

Tulloch Homes Camanachd Cup

Caberfeidh, Newtonmore, Oban Camanachd and Kyles Athletic all reached the semi-finals at the start of the month. Newtonmore defeated Caberfeidh 7-5 in an epic semi-final at the end of the month.

Artemis Macaulay Cup

Andrew MacCuish scored twice as Oban Camanachd reached the Macaulay final with a 4-1 victory over Glasgow Mid Argyll. In the other semi-final, Ruairidh Anderson got the winner as Kingussie beat Newtonmore 2-1.

Liberty British Aluminium Balliemore Cup

Fort William's 4-1 victory over Glenurquhart took them through to the final to face Glasgow Mid Argyll who defeated Strathglass 3-0 in their semi.

HIS Sutherland Cup

Lochside Rovers lifted the HIS Sutherland Cup, defeating the Lovat reserves 2-1 after extra time in the final. Ross Campbell put Lochside ahead, but Raymond Rennie levelled a minute later. Lewis Buchanan scored the match-winning goal seven minutes into extra time.

Mowi WCA National Division 1

League leaders Badenoch lead Skye by four points, but the islanders had two games in hand.

Young Scots star on Irish tour

Scotland's U17s completed another successful Ireland tour. The Scots opened by beating Kildare U17 (5-3-5) 26-7 (0-0-7) at the 6,200 capacity St Conleth's Park, the home of County Kildare GAA. Lachie Shaw

grabbed a hat-trick, whilst Liam Borthwick and Conor Kennedy also found the net.

Next up was the annual meeting with Dublin U17 at Parnell Park the following day and Scotland U17 made it two out of two, winning (10-3-3) 39-6 (0-0-6).

Ross Gordon grabbed a hat-trick, whilst Duncan Matheson and Lachie Shaw both scored twice. Martin Pringle, Kieran MacPherson and Liam Borthwick scored the other Scotland goals. Lachie Shaw converted three two pointers taking his tally over the two matches to 23 points.

August 2019

Mowi Premiership

After taking five out of six points, Lovat ended the month a point clear at the top of the table although they had played more games than their nearest rivals.

Mowi National Division

Fort William clinched the league championship, and a return to the premiership, by beating Glenurquhart and, following their victory over Strathglass in their next match, they were just one win away from completing their league programme with a 100 per cent record.

Mowi North Division 1

Triumphs over Skye, Inverness and Kinlochshiel meant Glengarry maintained their title push and led the Newtonmore seconds by seven points although Newtonmore had four games in hand.

Mowi South Division 1

Table toppers Aberdour's nearest challenges were third placed Lochside Rovers who had plenty to do as they trailed by 12 points with four games in hand.

Mowi North Division 2

Lochcarron held a three point advantage over Strathspey who had played a game fewer.

Mowi South Division 2

Kilmory were crowned league champions after Alistair MacArthur's goal earned a 1-0 win over second placed Glenorchy in their final match.

Tulloch Homes Camanachd Cup

Oban Camanachd will play Newtonmore in the Camanachd Cup Final after Daniel Cameron's double and Andrew MacCuish's effort secured a 3-0 victory over Kyles Athletic.

Strathdearn Cup

Fort William and Newtonmore beat Kilmallie and Glenurquhart respectively to reach the Strathdearn Cup Final.

Bullough Cup

Lochside Rovers lifted their second trophy of the season after defeating Glasgow Mid Argyll 4-1 in the Bullough Cup Final. Lewis Buchanan scored twice, either side of efforts from Michael MacQueen and Craig MacDougall.

Mowi WCA National Division 1

Skye only trailed leaders Badenoch



Lochside Rovers won the HIS Sutherland Cup defeating Lovat 2-1 after extra time.

by a couple of points with a game in hand and a title play-off between the sides looked inevitable.

Lochaber are junior

Macaulay Champions

Lochaber High School won the inaugural Artemis Macaulay Junior Cup, defeating Oban High School 4-0 in the final at Ganavan. Ben MacKinnon scored twice, with Robbie Rydings and Craig MacDonald getting the others.

September 2019

Mowi Premiership

Kingussie now need just two wins from their final three matches to be sure of a first premiership title for 10 years. Just a week after losing 5-1 to Newtonmore in the Camanachd Cup Final, Oban Camanachd beat Newtonmore by the same scoreline in the league at the Eilan.

Mowi National Division

Glasgow Mid Argyll now needed a draw at Skye in their next fixture to join champions Fort William in the premiership next season. Oban Celtic finished the season strongly, taking five out of six points from their final three matches.

Mowi North Division 1

Glengarry held a five point lead at the top of the table, despite losing 3-2 against Skye. However 2018 champions Newtonmore have five games in hand.

Mowi South Division 1

Aberdour's 3-0 victory at Lochside Rovers secured the league championship. The Fife side now had to wait on the outcome of North 1 to discover whether they had to play-off for a place in next season's National Division.

Mowi North Division 2

Lochcarron were crowned North Division 2 champions after defeating second placed Strathspey Camanachd 7-5 in a thrilling match at Battery Park.

Tulloch Homes Camanachd Cup

Newtonmore raised the Tulloch Homes Camanachd Cup for the fourth successive season, beating Oban Camanachd 5-1 in the re-scheduled final in Fort William.

Atrocious weather conditions

brought the previous weekend's final to a premature end but the replay was played in the sunshine. Newtonmore's Drew MacDonald scored the only goal of the first half but efforts early in the second half from Jamie Robinson and Glen MacKintosh had Newtonmore 3-0 ahead. David Lafferty countered but Evan Menzies and another from Glen MacKintosh meant it was Newtonmore's skipper Evan Menzies who raised the famous trophy. Oban Camanachd had periods of pressure in the game and Newtonmore defender Rory Kennedy collected the coveted Albert Smith Medal as man of the match.

Strathdearn Cup

Scott Knox scored twice, either side of goals from Grant Disher and Alan Knox, as Fort William beat Newtonmore 4-0 at Spean Bridge to win the Strathdearn Cup.

Mowi WCA National Division 1

It was still neck-and-neck between Badenoch and Skye in the title race.

Mowi WCA Valerie Fraser Camanachd Cup

2017 winners Skye Camanachd won back the Mowi Valerie Fraser Camanachd Cup with an 8-6 victory over holders Badenoch at a sunny Dell.

Player of the match Lorna MacRae and Abby MacLean both scored four times for Skye and captain Ilana Paterson stepped forward to be presented with the Valerie Fraser Camanachd Cup by Jayne MacKay from sponsors Mowi.

Mowi WCA Challenge Cup

Lovat are Mowi Challenge Cup winners, defeating Inverness 7-1 at the Dell.

WCA North Double

The North came out on top in the Women's Camanachd Association senior and U21 representative matches, sponsored by the Macaulay Association, which took place at Mossfield.

North U21 lift Caol Cup

All the goals came in the first half as North U21 beat South U21 3-0 in the annual Caol Cup clash at the Jubilee, Ballachulish. Duncan Matheson scored twice and Roddy Young got the other. The North were managed

by Kilmallie's Mark MacPherson who said: 'I enjoyed being involved and it was an absolute pleasure to take these boys. They showed a great attitude and were a credit to their clubs.'

Kinlochshiel U14s win MacMaster Cup

Archie MacRae scored five times as Kinlochshiel U14 beat Oban Camanachd U14 7-1 in the Kenneth MacMaster Cup Final.

Camanachd Association Cup

Skye Camanachd beat Newtonmore 5-2 in the inaugural National Final of the Camanachd Association Cup at the Lochaber High School all-weather pitch.

This was a new 10-a-side competition in the primary school age shinty calendar.

October 2019

Mowi Premiership

Kingussie sealed the Mowi Premiership title for the first time since 2009, only suffering one defeat and three draws in the process, after they beat Kilmallie 4-1 at Canal Parks.

It also turned out to be a good season for Kilmallie who retained their Premiership place after promotion from the National Division at the end of 2018.

Mowi National Division

Glasgow Mid Argyll secured the division's second promotion spot when they beat fellow contenders Skye Camanachd 3-1 in Portree.

Mowi North Division 1

Glengarry beat challengers Newtonmore, who now had to win all their remaining matches to take the title although they could afford to drop one point and still take the trophy on goal difference.

Mowi South Division 1

Ballachulish won their final two matches to finish second in the division.

GMA Raise Mòd Cup

Glasgow Mid Argyll raised the Mòd Cup with a 3-1 penalty shoot-out victory over Bute following their 0-0 draw at Glasgow Green

Scotland Ladies lose

Scotland Ladies lost 14-10 in a close encounter with Munster Ladies in

- part two

their shinty/camogie clash at the WIT Arena in Waterford. Sarah Corrigan chipped in with a goal and a point for the Scots whilst Kirsty Deans found the net twice. Rebecca Noonan notched a goal and a point late on to give the Irish victory.

Badenoch are champs

Badenoch were confirmed Mowi WCA National Division 1 winners after they beat Skye Camanachd 8-1 in their title play-off match at the Balgate. Mowi WCA national player of the year Kirsty Deans scored seven.

North take honours

North U17 defeated the South U17 5-0 in their representative match at An Aird. Ross MacKinnon scored twice for the North with Ross Gordon, Max Campbell and Sorley Thomson getting the others.

North U14 retained the Fraser MacPhee trophy, winning 5-1 against South U14.

Taighan Macleod's brace gave the North a 2-0 lead before Oban Camanachd's Kyle MacFarlane pulled a goal back. Calum MacIver Archie MacRae and Finlay MacLennan rounded off the 5-1 win.

November 2019

Scotland Win In Ireland

Scotland retained the Mowi Quaich following a thumping 26-4 triumph over Ireland at the GAA National Games Development Centre in Abbotstown, Dublin.

Paul Divilly and Danny Cullen gave Ireland an early 2-0 lead but Scotland took control from the moment Daniel Cameron's point and Kevin Bartlett's two-pointer turned the contest their way. Craig Morrison and Andrew MacCuish added Scotland goals and despite Cillian Kiely's point, the Scots led 9-3 at half-time.

Another from Craig Morrison and strikes from Roddy MacDonald and Kevin Bartlett took Scotland's goals count to five.

Steven Macdonald, on his return from injury, chipped in with six points and substitute Savio Genini bagged two more with Ryan Mullaney giving the Irish, who didn't field any top tier players, small consolation.

Scotland skipper Stuart MacDonald was presented with the Mowi Quaich.

Young Scots lose out

A strong second half display gave Ireland U21 a 32-14 victory over Scotland U21 in their Mowi Quaich clash at the GAA National Games Development Centre in Abbotstown, Dublin on Saturday November 2.

The Scots led 13-12 at half-time but four-goal Mark Kehoe inspired the Irish to victory.

The final count saw Scotland player of the match Ruaridh Anderson score two goals with Daniel MacVicar and Innes Blackhall getting the others. Findlay MacDonald and Lachie Shaw added points.

Mowi Premiership

After winning 2-0 at Kinlochshiel in their penultimate league match, with Andrew MacCuish and Garry Lord scoring, Oban Camanachd finished second in the Mowi Premiership after being awarded the points when Lochaber were unable to fulfil their fixture at Spean Bridge.

Lochaber and Inveraray were relegated from the top flight.

Mowi North Division 1

The Newtonmore second team only dropped one point in their run-in to take Mowi North Division 1 on goal difference over Glengarry.

The outcome also meant Mowi South 1 winners Aberdour stepped up to the Mowi National Division next season as the Newtonmore colts weren't eligible to take part in the play-off match.

Skye win London Shield

Skye Camanachd U17 lifted the Mowi London Shield for the second successive season with a 4-0 victory over Newtonmore U17 at Pairc nan Laoch, Portree.

Taylor Matheson grabbed a hat-trick and Cameron MacKay got the other.

John Angus Gillies from sponsors Mowi was on hand to present the London Shield to Skye skipper Murphy Henderson.

The Douglas Mackintosh Memorial Medal for the man of the match went to Skye's Ross Gordon.

Oban Camanachd youths win

Oban Camanachd U14 were 4-3 winners in their South U14 9-a-side league play-off match against Bute U14 at Strachurmore. Innes Jackson, Ewan Campbell, twice, and Louis MacFarlane cancelled out Rory MacDonald's double and Ronnie McMillian's effort.

Annual Mowi shinty awards

There were reasons to celebrate for Oban Camanachd's Daniel Sloss and Fort William and Glengarry shinty clubs at the Mowi Conference and Awards Ceremony hosted by sponsors Mowi in the Kingsmills Hotel, Inverness.

Daniel Sloss has long since cemented his place in the Oban Camanachd first team. He was part of a side which has lifted this year's Scottish Sea Farms Glasgow Celtic Society Cup and were runners up in the Tulloch Homes Camanachd Cup and the Artemis Macaulay Cup. He represented Scotland U17 in their summer Ireland tour and was also part of Alan MacRae's Scotland U21 squad which faced their Irish counterparts.

Fort William had five reasons to celebrate. They were named Mowi club of the year and were the first recipients of the Gary Innes award for youth club of the year. Added to that, after winning the Liberty British Aluminium Balliemore Cup and completing their Mowi National Division season with a 100 per cent record, the manager of the year accolade went to bosses Victor Smith and Adam Robertson, whilst the player of the year in the same

Continued on page 34

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Oban Celtic Shinty Club awards night



Senior player of the year Neil Carmichael with manager Dougie MacIntyre and his assistant Les Kinvig.



Junior player of the year Rebecca McPhee.



U17 player of the year Jamie Anderson.



U14 player of the year Duncan MacEwan.



Young Guns captain Ross MacMillan was presented with the Carnie and Pearson Memorial Trophy by Jim and June Pearson and Catherine Carnie. Also pictured is man of the match Lorne Robertson.



Senior players player of year Ross MacMillan. Junior players player of the year was Jigme Jones, not pictured.



Senior top scorer Ross MacMillan.



Junior top scorer Scott Burnett.

Continued from page 33
division was given to Arran MacPhee who was impressive throughout. Finally, the Mowi North Division 1 player of the year prize went to outstanding Fort William second team keeper Stuart Disher. Glengarry pulled off a hat-trick of successes as manager Ewen Cameron collected this year's Mowi North Division 1 manager of the year award. Elaine Cameron was crowned WCA Mowi Development coach of the year and Mowi youth coach of the year.
New Camanachd Association Chieftain
The much-respected John MacKenzie from

Newtonmore was elected Camanachd Association Chieftain at a well-attended annual general meeting in Fort William.
Richard Gall from Fort William became the new Camanachd Association vice chieftain.
Roddie MacCuish from Oban was amongst three additions to the Camanachd Association Board, with Ross Brown and Burton Morrison also installed, whilst Youth Director Willie MacDonald from Fort William was re-elected for a second term.
2020 Artemis Macaulay Cup - Draw
The 2020 Artemis Macaulay

Cup draw was made following the Camanachd Association's AGM. Oban Camanachd and Oban Celtic were both given home draws against lower league opposition. Oban Camanachd will be confident of progressing against Bute whilst Oban Celtic start as favourites against Ballachulish. If both Oban sides progress, they will meet in the quarterfinals.
There is also an eye-catching first round meeting at An Aird between newly promoted Fort William and Kinlochshiel, who have lifted the trophy twice in the last four years.
There is also the prospect

of a Badenoch derby between Newtonmore and Kingussie in the quarter-finals although first round opponents Lochaber, who welcome Newtonmore, and Kilmallie, who host holders Kingussie, will have other ideas.
The Artemis Macaulay Cup Final takes place at Mossfield, Oban on Saturday August 22 2020.
December 2019
Stephen Sloss stays on
Oban Camanachd confirmed that Stephen Sloss continues as their first team manager. Kenny Wotherspoon also remains in place as his assistant.

Feathers badmint



Innes MacCallum was the Under 14 boys' singles champion.



The Under 14 girls' singles champion was Taylor Robinson.



Under-14 boys' doubles winners Euan Dods and Innes MacCallum with runners-up Aiden MacDonald and Zander Craik.



Viktoria Rszyka and Katie MacLellan won the Under-14 girls' doubles defeating Taylor Robinson and Darcey Millar in the final

fly at Oban High School on championships



Oban High School held their annual school badminton championships this month over two days, with 89 pupils taking part.

Numbers are so high it has proved impossible to complete all three age groups over one day. Trophies donated a couple of years ago following a plea in The Oban Times from members of the community and Argyll Beats Cardiovascular Disease were presented to winning players following hard fought matches. Most encouraging of all was the level of sportsmanship and enjoyment evident in all competitions.

All the winners and runners up from the U14, U16 and U19 competitions will represent Oban High School in the Argyll and Bute Scottish Schools competition in Atlantis Leisure, Oban, on January 28.

The National Secondary competition will be held in Perth on March 7 and 8 for pupils who are successful in the Regional Argyll and Bute competition.

Oban High School badminton players have been taking part in the Glasgow and North Strathclyde leagues this year which are held every month at Scotstoun National Badminton Centre.

With matches starting at 9am on Sunday mornings, the pupils have shown excellent commitment and it is providing invaluable experience.

Results: Under 14: Girls singles – winner Tayler

Robinson; runner-up Wiktoria Rszyka. Boys singles – winner Innes MacCallum; runner-up Euan Dods. Girls doubles winners Wiktoria Rszyka and Katie MacLellan; runners-up Taylor Robinson and Darcey Millar. Boys doubles winners Innes MacCallum and Euan Dods; runners-up Zander Craik and Aiden MacDonald.

Under 16: Girls singles – winner Ellie MacInnes; runner-up – Kaelyn Shores. Boys singles winner Morgan Gemmell; runner-up Rory Dods. Girls doubles winners Ellie MacInnes and Arden Binnie; runners-up Isla Dunlop and Jordan MacIntyre. Boys doubles winners Morgan Gemmell and Rory Dods; runners-up Finlay MacLean and Louis MacFarlane.

Under 19: Boys singles winner Fergus Carmichael; runner-up Finlay France. Girls singles winner Zoe Cook; runner up Lucy MacKinnon. Boys doubles winners Fergus Carmichael and Finlay France; runners-up Kyle MacDougall and Stuart Head. Girls doubles winners Zoe Cook and Katie MacCorquodale; runners up Lucy MacKinnon and Ella MacKechnie.

Former school PE teacher and badminton enthusiast Moira Barbour presented Innes MacCallum with the Cameron Barbour Cup for Under 14 boys and Morgan Gemmell the Stuart Barbour trophy for Under 16 boys.



Under 16 boys' singles champion Morgan Gemmell.



Ellie MacInnes was the Under 16 girls' singles champion.



Moira Barbour presented Morgan Gemmell with the Under-16 boys' championship trophy. Also pictured is runner-up Rory Dods.



Under 16 boys' doubles winners Rory Dods and Morgan Gemmell with runners-up Finlay MacLean and Louis MacFarlane.



Under 16 girls' doubles winners Ellie MacInnes and Arden Binnie with runners-up Isla Dunlop and Jordan MacIntyre.



Fergus Carmichael, left, was the Under 19 boys' singles winner defeating Finlay France in the final.



Fergus Carmichael and Finlay France were the Under 19 boys' doubles winners. They are pictured with runners-up Kyle MacDougall and Stuart Head.



Under 19 girls' singles champion Zoe Cook, right, with runner-up Lucy MacKinnon.



Under 19 girls' doubles winners Katie MacCorquodale and Zoe Cook with runners-up Lucy MacKinnon and Ella MacKechnie.

OT

January



Saints pay the penalty as they crash out of the Scottish Cup

Oban Saints and Rothie Rovers from Aberdeenshire kept a large crowd at Glencruitten richly entertained in a Scottish Amateur Cup fifth round replay which ultimately required a penalty shoot-out to decide the winner. After a goal apiece in the 90 minutes, followed by the same again in extra time, it was Rothie goalkeeper Lewis Milne who emerged the hero by saving two Saints penalties to give his side a 9-8 shoot-out victory and clinch a place in the last 16.



Clyne delivers at Oban's squash club

Scottish international squash player Alan Clyne proved a big hit when delivering coaching sessions at Atlantis Leisure.

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February

The Princess and the president

Scottish Rugby president Dee Bradbury stands shoulder to shoulder with HRH The Princess Royal as the official parties prepare to inspect the teams ahead of Scotland's bonus point victory over Italy at Murrayfield on Saturday. Gregor Townsend's men ran in five tries courtesy of a Blair Kinghorn hat-trick, a finger-tip try from Stuart Hogg and a touch down from Chris Harris. Greig Laidlaw kicked three conversions with Finn Russell adding the last. Scotland's next game is against Ireland at Murrayfield on Saturday.

Photograph: Scottish Rugby/SNS Images.



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Sporting year

May



Mixed results for Oban Squash Club

Oban Ladies' Squash Team enjoyed a convincing 18-3 win over Dunblane in an annual challenge event.



Max raises the bar at Scottish Championships

Olympic weightlifter Max Buchanan is pushed his way up the national rankings after coming third in the Scottish Championships. The 31-year-old fitness instructor from Oban lifted 113kg in the snatch discipline and 125kg in the clean and jerk to take third podium spot.

March



Performance trio in the swim

Oban Otters made waves in national and domestic swimming. Performance athletes Sam Coates, 16, and Kai Mackechnie, 11, were focused on qualifying for the Scottish National Age Group Championships (SNAG) and tested the water at the Scottish Schools Championships, while teammate Ella Mackechnie represented the Otters as a medal bearer at the European Championships in Glasgow.



April



Abi Evans.



Helen Nelson.

Sevens heaven for Abi and Helen

Two of the area's brightest rugby stars, Abi Evans and Helen Nelson, were set to shine in Hong Kong after being called up to the Scotland Women's sevens squad.

June

Lomond in at the deep end

Oban rugby player Lomond MacPherson had a baptism of fire in his first start for the Scotland Under-20 age-grade side. Playing at the 2019 World Rugby U20 Championship at the Racecourse Stadium in Rosario, Argentina, the Watsonians winger was called into the starting lineup against New Zealand.



r in pictures

July



Max Buchanan.

Magnifique McPhee wins French Grand Prix

Oban's John McPhee created history at the Shark Helmets Grand Prix de France at Le Mans by becoming the first rider to progress from Q1 to then go on to take pole position, his first outright pole position since Argentina 2017.



Downpour fails to dampen the spirits at anniversary celebrations

Oban Bowling Club's 150th Anniversary celebrations got off to a bang.



Bowled over at winning national bronze medal

Ladies from Oban Bowling Club were 'surprised and delighted' after equalling the club's best result at the National Bowling Championships, bringing home a bronze medal. The over-55s fours team of Lorna Carmichael, Janet Campbell, Rosemary Miller, and Anne Stewart, sailed through to the semi-finals in Ayr, before losing to Cumnock, who went on to win the gold medal.

August



Catriona sets Scottish 100-mile time trial record

Barcaldine cyclist Catriona MacGillivray set a Scottish 100-mile time trial record on Sunday, just over a year after giving birth to her daughter Charlotte.



September

Evans and Bradbury make their mark on distant shores

Magnus Bradbury impressed during Scotland's second Rugby World Cup match against Samoa in Kobe, Japan. Replacing Hamish Watson as blindside flanker, Magnus played a key defensive role in the national side's 34-0 victory. It was also historic time



for the Scotland Women's team, which included Oban's Abi Evans, as they not only played their first match in the Southern Hemisphere,

but also recorded one of their biggest victories in a decade in the first of two games against the Springboks in Cape Town.

October



Mackinnon's pure gold as he takes third Mull win

It was worth the wait. Three years on from the last Beatson's Building Supplies Mull Rally and 50 years on from the first, the Hebridean island once again echoed to the sound of 150 rally cars competing along some of the world's most entertaining roads.

November

Bob is crowned Rookie of the Year

Oban was bursting with pride after Robert 'Bob' MacIntyre was crowned the 2019 European 1 Rookie of the Year as well as the Challenge Tour Graduate of the Year. The Glencruitten golfer battled his way into the top 15 in the last event of the season, the DP World Tour Championship in Dubai, to clinch these accolades.



December



School pupils at Man City training academy

Pupils from Oban and Tirie high schools were put through their paces when they visited Manchester City's training academy. Staff from Oban High School took the 44 pupils, including five from Tirie, to the Etihad Training Academy.

OT



Bob MacIntyre pictured with the sign outside Glencruitten Golf Club.

'My holiday is getting home'

Robert MacIntyre rests before being back in the spotlight

by David McPhee
dmphee@obantimes.co.uk



Robert MacIntyre sat down with *The Oban Times* when he was home for the holidays to discuss his whirlwind year.

In the first of a two-part series, Bob talks about the support he receives from the town and we reveal the impact his success has had on Glencruitten Golf Club.

Next week, the 23-year-old golfer outlines his plans for the future and takes a look back at his 2019 highlights – of which there were many.

When Robert MacIntyre succeeds, Oban succeeds.

The town is fully behind the 23-year-old golfer, who has catapulted his way onto the world stage.

In his first season on the European Tour, Robert 'Bob' MacIntyre played 30 events, making 25 cuts, with seven top 10 finishes and he ended the year ranked 64th in the world.

But the cherry on the cake for Bob was when he was crowned the European Tour Rookie of the Year.

'You can only challenge for that once in your life, so to be crowned, that is something I will remember forever and

something that will never be taken away from me,' he told *The Oban Times*.

Bob has now become a tourist attraction in his own right, with people flying out from Oban to watch him play abroad.

But the town has supported him since his days as an amateur.

In 2015, Oban rallied behind Bob to raise more

'I look back and I think of the wee junior boy who could hardly cross two burns here and now he is playing golf at the top table in the world'

than £3,500 to help the young golfer with his travelling expenses.

Gareth Evans helped organise the golf scramble, which attracted 45 teams, made up of three and four people.

And when he came home for the holidays, Bob said that kind of support is needed.

Speaking to *The Oban*

Times, he said: 'The whole town is pretty much behind me and I think that is what you need. For someone to achieve what they want to achieve, there needs to be support, whether it is financial, emotional, whatever, you need it all.'

None have supported him more than his very own Glencruitten Golf Club, who boast a large banner of Bob at the entrance to the club.

'The club has been great,' he said. 'The whole town has been great, but it is not just the town. It is the whole country.'

'My social media, Twitter especially, it has been crazy.'

'The messages I get. I have letters sent to the golf course.'

'I never thought playing a sport that I love, doing what I love, would have an impact on other people the way it has. I try to reply to everyone, whether it is kids or older people, it is just the way I am. If someone says hello to me on the street, I will say hello back. It is just who I am.'

The Oban golfer is home until January 7, before his season restarts, and he has been nursing a bruised hand.

'I have needed time off,' he told *The Oban Times*. 'If most people take a week off



Bob pictured with the Challenge Tour Graduate of the Year trophy and the big one – the Henry Cotton European Tour Rookie of the Year shield.

work, or two weeks off work, they might go on holiday at certain times of the year, my holiday is getting home.

'I just love spending time at home with the two boys seeing my sister and the wee one. Things are busy, but it is the way I like it. When you come home you can chill out, but they still keep you on your toes.'

Speaking about his achievements, Neil Armour, a junior golf coach at Glencruitten Golf Club said: 'I just think it is absolutely fantastic.'

'I look back and I think of the wee junior boy who could hardly cross two burns here and now he is playing golf

at the top table in the world. It is just amazing and what he has done for the club and ourselves for that matter.'

'He has made me interested in golf again.'

'I watch golf now that I did not used to before. I just think he has given the whole town and the whole area a wee lift.'

'On a Sunday when Bob is in contention the atmosphere in here [Glencruitten Golf Club] is amazing. I have been here for years and we have not had that feeling.'

'A Sunday in here with Bob in contention is unbelievable. Shouts from all over the club, both TVs on.'

'People you have not seen

GOLF

for ages up watching it. It has just been amazing for the club and amazing for the town.'

He added: 'You don't change Bob. Bob is Bob.'

He attributes Bob's success to a surge of people taking up the sport.

'We had junior golf and we had 20 kids turning up in all weather. Whereas before Bob's success we had maybe one, two. The difference he has made – kids want to play golf now. Where is the next Bob MacIntyre coming from?'

Saints half term report – part three

With Oban Saints currently enjoying a festive break Derek Black takes a look back at the season so far continuing this week with Saints exploits in the second half of the league campaign:

Saturday 28 September Blantyre RGM 2 Oban Saints 5

Oban Saints bounced back from their West of Scotland Cup exit against Inverclyde with a convincing Central Scottish Amateur Football League Division 1B away win against closest challengers Blantyre RGM in Bellshill last Saturday afternoon.

At a sunny Sir Matt Busby Sports Complex a Lewis Cameron hat-trick and a goal each from James Ford and Donald Campbell gave Saints the points and the luxury of some valuable game time for babes Gavin Forgive and Aaron McKay.

With Co-manager Willie Gemmell unavailable the double headache of Cammy Hill withdrawing from the travelling party at the eleventh hour and Kerr Newbigging failing a pre-match fitness test rested on the shoulders of Donald Campbell ably assisted by coach Peter MacCallum and secretary David Buchanan. Campbell promoted himself from the bench to take the number nine shirt and gave Matt Rippon the nod to partner Myles McAuley in midfield.

Also making a rare start, and producing a typically assured performance, was Thomas MacCulloch deputising in goal for the unavailable Graham Douglas.

Saturday 26 October Oban Saints 6 Garrowhill Thistle 1

Following the drama of the Scottish Amateur Cup tie

against Vale of Earn which took two games and a penalty shoot-out to resolve Oban Saints returned to league business at Glencruitten for the visit of Garrowhill Thistle.

Second half substitute Matt Rippon successfully converted his third penalty kick of the season to round off a 6-1 win adding to a brace from Donald Campbell and a hat-trick from leading goalscorer Craig MacEwan.

Management duo Donald Campbell and Willie Gemmell made two changes to the starting line-up from the previous week's trip to Crieff promoting Cammy Hill from the bench to replace David Beaton and rewarding Gavin Forgive for his recent impressive displays for the second team with a place in midfield affording Matty Kelly a rest following his exertions with the Central Scottish Amateur Football League Select.

Saturday 16 November Clydebank 0 Oban Saints 2

A goal keeping crisis forced Oban Saints to cast the net far and wide in search of a stand-in for regular number one Graham Douglas for last Saturday's trip to Clydebank. With Ben Pollock, Murdo MacKenzie and all other back-up options also unavailable, former Celtic youth keeper Jamie Strachan answered the call and produced an assured performance to pave the way for Saints ninth consecutive Central Scottish Amateur Football League Division 1B win.

Second half goals from Dene Cassells and Lewis Cameron were enough to secure the points against a stuffy Clydebank side who battled hard throughout.

With Co-Manager Donald Campbell beginning a work



Saints leading goalscorer Craig MacEwan netted a hat-trick against Garrowhill Thistle.

related football sabbatical and Scottish amateur international left full back Scott Maitland also missing, the remaining half of the management duo, club stalwart Willie Gemmell, opted for a change of formation and took his place in the middle of a back three alongside Steven MacLeod and Captain Dene Cassells.

In midfield were Matty Kelly, Lewis Cameron and Myles McAuley with Ruaridh Horne and Ross Maitland as wing backs. Up front were Cammy Hill and Craig MacEwan. Making up a strong bench were David Beaton, James Ford, Gavin Forgive, Aaron McKay and Matt Rippon.

Saturday 23 November Oban Saints 2 Craigneuk 0

Oban Saints warmed up for their impending Scottish Amateur Cup trip to Rothienorman with a less than convincing home win against Central Scottish Amateur Football League Division 1B basement boys Craigneuk who battled hard throughout the 90 minutes at Glencruitten.

Two early strikes from leading goalscorer Craig MacEwan were enough to clinch Saints tenth consecutive league victory making it 10 out of 10 with a far from 10 out of 10 performance in a dour encounter which did little to excite the home support.

Now in sole charge due to management colleague Donald Campbell's work commitments in deepest, darkest Warwickshire, Willie Gemmell made five changes to the starting line-up from the previous week's trip to Clydebank. Graham Douglas

and Scott Maitland were once again available for selection while James Ford and teenagers Gavin Forgive and Aaron McKay were all promoted from the bench. Also making welcome returns to the squad after long absences were Kerr Newbigging and Fraser MacFarlane.

Saturday 7 December Oban Saints 1 Blantyre RGM 0

Ten man Oban Saints produced a battling backs-to-the-wall performance at a rain soaked Oban High School last Saturday afternoon to cement their place at the top of Central Scottish Amateur Football League Division 1B.

Leading goalscorer Craig MacEwan put Saints ahead with his 15th goal of the season but a red card for goalkeeper Graham Douglas gave the home faithful a nervous closing 24 minutes to endure along with the horrendous weather conditions.

Saints co-manager Willie Gemmell made one enforced change to the starting line-up from the previous week's trip to Rothienorman. James Ford failed to shake off the knee injury picked up in the Scottish Amateur Cup win over Rothie Rovers and was replaced by Craig MacEwan.

Saints lined up with Graham Douglas in goal behind a familiar back four of Ruaridh Horne, Steven MacLeod, Captain Dene Cassells and Scott Maitland. Matty Kelly partnered Myles McAuley in the holding midfield roles with David Beaton, Lewis Cameron and Craig MacEwan supporting central striker Cammy Hill.

On the bench were Ross Maitland, Kerr Newbigging, Matt Rippon, Aaron McKay and Gavin Forgive.



Saints Scottish Amateur International midfielder Lewis Cameron scored his sides second goal in a 2-0 win over Clydebank.



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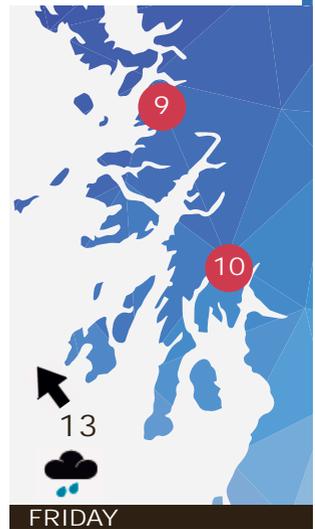


WEATHER

Thursday
Light rain and a moderate breeze
Temperatures
5°C to 6°C.

Friday
Heavy rain and a moderate breeze
Temperatures
10°C to 11°C.

Weekend Outlook
Saturday
Light rain showers and a moderate breeze
Sunday
Light rain and a moderate breeze
Temperatures
9°C to 13°C.



TIDAL INFORMATION

Tide tables for Oban during the week from **Thursday January 2, 2020** are listed below with differences for major ports listed on the right. All times are GMT (add one hour BST)

Thur	04.15	1.7	10.09	3.4
	16.53	2.0	22.13	3.1
Fri	05.04	1.9	11.06	3.2
	17.49	2.0	23.13	3.0
Sat	05.59	1.9	12.26	3.2
	18.50	2.0	** ** *	**
Sun	00.40	2.9	06.59	2.0
	13.53	3.2	19.51	1.9
Mon	02.05	3.0	08.04	1.9
	14.54	3.3	20.48	1.8
Tues	03.03	3.2	09.08	1.8
	15.42	3.5	21.37	1.6
Wed	03.50	3.4	10.02	1.6
	16.24	3.7	22.21	1.3

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

MacIntyre rests before being back in the spotlight

Saints half term report – part three



Oban Celtic's Old Crocks and the Young Guns before their annual Boxing Day challenge match at Mossfield Stadium. Photographs: Kevin McGlynn.

Young Guns' firepower too much for Golden Oldies

Oban Celtic Shinty Club's annual boxing day game ended with the Young Guns winning 3-2 against the Old Crocks in a keenly contested game with 34 players taking

part on the day and a good crowd gathered to join in the festive fun.

The game started with the Young Guns on the front foot applying early pressure and

after 15 minutes the deadlock was broken with a blistering shot from Daniel MacMillan into the roof of the net.

With the game flowing from end-to-end, the Old Crocks rear guard of John McCormack, Lorne Robertson, Robert Gillies and David Hill were undone once more with a Lennon Campbell rocket from 30 yards.

The Old Crocks, with Donald MacKay and Damien MacIntyre leading the forward line, were beginning to make the Young Guns keeper work towards the end of the half but were unable to find the net and the half ended 2-0.

At the start of the second half, both teams made several changes, the most notable being first team manager Dougie Macintyre taking up position in the Old Crocks goal. And he went on to produce a string of great saves

to keep his team in the game. Scott Burnett pulled a goal back for the Old Crocks who were now applying steady pressure on the Young Guns' goal by way of Askew, Duffy, MacKay and Burnett.

The Young Guns pulled further ahead with a fast break away that perhaps the Old Crocks might have kept up with had they been 30 years younger.

The third goal came from Lewis McPhee.

The two youngest players on the park combined, with Duncan MacEwan playing a ball up the line to an even younger Iain Duffy who slipped the ball through to the on-rushing MacPhee and with the keeper coming out MacPhee calmly slotted the ball through MacIntyre's legs for the third goal.

Ten minutes later the Old Crocks pulled a goal back through Allan Duffy with a well-taken shot from 20 yards

SHINTY

out. This made for an exciting last 10 minutes with both teams pushing for the next goal but the game finished 3-2 to the Young Guns.

A sporting game was well refereed by Andrew Mackenzie.

At the prizegiving held in Oban's Lodge 180 later in the evening Ross MacMillan picked up the Carnie and Pearson Memorial Trophy for the Young Guns from Jim and June Pearson and Catherine Carnie.

Lorne Robertson was voted man of the match.

The club thanks everyone involved for making the day possible.

Oban Celtic Shinty Club wishes everyone a Happy New Year.

See page 34 for photographs of the awards night presentation.



Little and large: young Daniel Duffy gets his shot on target despite the attention of the slightly larger John McCormack.



Murray 'Elvis' MacGregor enters into the fun of things.



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Glencoe Mountain Resort remains resilient after fire

by Richard Mason
rmason@obantimes.co.uk

Despite the almost complete destruction of its base station building in a fire, staff at Glencoe resort remain in good spirits as people began heading up the access chair on Friday December 27.

While the cause of the fire is yet to be confirmed, it is believed to have started at the counter of the cafe around 2am on Christmas Day.

Due to this being the only day of the year when there are no staff on site or anyone in the accommodation, fire crews were not alerted until 4.40am.

The remnants of the fire could still be smelt on Friday as the first visitors ascended the chairlifts, but for staff it was business as usual.

Resort managing director Andy Meldrum, said: 'From the CCTV footage, we can see that at about 1.30am something started smoking at the counter then half an hour later it burst into flames. It then burned for three hours

before fire crews got here. We think the alarm must have been heard by someone who stopped here late at night in a caravan or car, but are grateful to whoever called the fire service.'

The building has a metal roof and part of it contains a loft which made it difficult for crews to contain the fire.

'The question is will people want to stay in the microlodges now the cafe is gone.'

A Scottish Fire and Rescue Service spokesman told the Lochaber Times: 'The first appliance arrived at 4.51am and all eight appliances finished at 3.13pm. An appliance was sent out at 6pm for a re-inspection and to dampen down hot spots. Crews were finished at 6.30pm.'

What happens next is in the hands of the insurance company, but Mr Meldrum told the Lochaber Times he

expects the building will have to be demolished.

He said: 'To rebuild the entire building would take up to 18 months, but we will bring in a temporary cafe, toilets and any thing else we need to run the resort as normal through our loss of business cover.'

'All the other infrastructure on the mountain is fine, the accommodation is unaffected, but the question is whether people will want to stay in the microlodges now the cafe is gone.'

While many have offered to help, there is not much that can now be done at the moment.

Mr Meldrum concluded: 'The best way you can support us is by coming and enjoying what we have to offer. We plan to rebuild, but the only way to do that is by having a good and busy ski season.'

VIEWPHOTOS
www.lochabertimes.co.uk



The Glencoe resort building was extensively damaged in a fire on Christmas Day.



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Festive messages from your MP and MSP



Ian Blackford, Member of Parliament for Ross, Skye and Lochaber.

I was deeply honoured the people of Ross, Skye and Lochaber returned me to Parliament this month and I will continue to be a strong voice for people across the Highlands.

Christmas provides an opportunity to look ahead to the future with hope. For people in Scotland that means facing the reality of the choice that lies ahead; a future tied to broken Brexit Britain or a one with hope and opportunity as an independent Scotland in the European Union.

The SNP stood on a manifesto to give Scotland a choice over its future and to escape Brexit and we won 80 per cent of Scotland's seats in Westminster. People in Scotland must soon have their chance to choose – to take the future of our country into our own hands or to leave it to Boris Johnson. Tory attempts to deny our democratic mandate will only strengthen the case for independence.

As your representative, I will continue to work tirelessly for everyone across Ross, Skye and Lochaber, challenging Tory austerity, Brexit chaos and the climate emergency. 2020 is a year we can look forward to, a year when we can 'take back control' for our economy, our communities and for Scotland. I wish you and your family a very Merry Christmas.



Na h-Eileanan an Iar SNP MSP Alasdair Allan.

2019 has not been the quietest or most predictable of years.

Christmas and Hogmanay provide everyone with a chance to have a rest from all that. But looking back, it is impossible not to reflect on a year where a snap election and a chaotic Brexit process dominated national events.

In the islands, I have many positive recollections of 2019, a year that began for me with the moving Iolaire centenary commemorations on January 1.

Communities throughout the islands have achieved many great things throughout the year.

To take a few of those at random, I think of the Eilidh MacLeod fundraising events which have done so much good for young people; the campaign for a new hospital in Barra which is now making progress and the success of Sgoil Lionacleit at the Gaelic schools debating competition held in the Parliament.

Looking ahead to 2020, I am sure we will see more of that community spirit on show in the islands, not least with Peat and Diesel's well-deserved climb in this year's Christmas charts!

Tha mi a' guidhe Nollaig chrìdeil agus bliadhna mhath ùr dhan a h-uile duine.

Merry Christmas and a happy New Year!

Campaigners' fury over kelp dredging plan

The Scottish Government says no trials have been commissioned or are planned for the mechanical harvesting of kelp along the west coast of Scotland, writes Mark Entwistle.

The government was forced to issue the denial earlier this month after reports that mechanical dredging trials were to begin in July 2020 sparked a furious backlash from environmental campaigners.

Holyrood now says any such reports are incorrect and a proposed work programme has been 'wrongly interpreted'.

At a meeting in September, a government steering group agreed that before any desk studies or field trials of any harvest method of any species could be considered, a scenario mapping exercise should be conducted.

This, says the government, is to ensure the review is grounded in where the future opportunities for the seaweed sector may be, but balanced with environmental

considerations and of those communities and sectors who share that space.

Only species identified as having potential – taking into account socio-economic and environmental considerations – would be subject to further scrutiny through desk studies and only then, if the criteria is met, could any pilot or field trials begin.

Any trial using a vehicle or a vessel to remove a substance or an object from the seabed would still need a licence from Marine Scotland, require consultation and would only be granted once ministers are satisfied the activity is carried out within environmental limits.

The scenario mapping exercise is expected to begin in January and end in July 2020.

However, environmental campaigners and politicians are vowing to fight any plans to allow mechanical kelp dredging off the coast of Lochaber.

Andrew Squire, of Lochaber Environmental Group and

the area branch of Extinction Rebellion, told the Lochaber Times: "The Scottish Government has just been criticised by the Committee on Climate Change for failing to take sufficiently urgent and radical action."

"To even be considering kelp dredging at this time, which would simultaneously devastate the marine habitat and remove an essential carbon store, beggars belief."

Highlands and Islands Green Party MSP John Finnie is equally opposed and said: "I was extremely proud to have worked with community campaigners to deliver a legal ban on kelp dredging last year. We know kelp plays a huge role in mitigating climate change and is home to thousands of precious marine species. If the Scottish Government is foolish enough to move forward with plans to dredge kelp forests it will find the huge opposition along the west coast hasn't gone away and, if we have to, we'll beat the government again."



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Fort dentist in takeover deal

by Mark Entwistle
mentwistle@obantimes.co.uk

Fort William's only dental practice and its partner in Glencoe have been acquired by Scottish dental group Clyde Munro.

Since opening in 2001, M&S Dental Care has become a vital service to Fort William and the surrounding area, realising the vision of owner Gregor Muir to make NHS and independent dental care accessible.

The practice has subsequently expanded to become one of the largest in the Highlands, with eight surgeries, 10 dentists and one hygienist serving a growing customer base.

Along with M&S Dental Care in Glencoe, which was acquired in 2013, it serves more than 20,000 patients, with some travelling from as



far afield as Inverness, Skye, Mallaig and The Trossachs.

Mr Muir believes the Clyde Munro partnership will bring further benefits to his 30-strong team, while maintaining the strong culture and identity of the practices.

'This business is deeply personal to me and along with our loyal and driven team we've created practices we're immensely proud of,' he said.

'It was important to them and our customers that we didn't sell out to a faceless corporate firm that would change our fabric.'

'Unlike many other groups, Clyde Munro is Scotland-specific, so it understands the complex market. The enthusiasm of its team is infectious.'

'It is exciting to become part of a bigger group as it will provide access to mentoring

Dentist Gregor Muir with practice managers Gillian Matheson, left, and Jillian Bruce. Photograph: Iain Ferguson

and the ability to bounce ideas off top operators in the field.'

Clyde Munro is an entirely Scottish-based and Scottish-focused dental group.

Founded by Jim Hall in 2015, it has enjoyed rapid growth and this latest acquisition takes the company's portfolio to 38 practices.

Mr Hall, said: 'Gregor's ethos is remarkable and it is thanks to his commitment to staff and patients that the practices have become a vital part of the communities they serve.'

'We want to help him further still and ensure the North West Highlands benefits from leading dental care for many years to come.'



Alex Drysdale and, below, the other artists who were commended. Photograph: Iain Ferguson, alba.photos

Alex is poster boy of West Highland Line

An artistic Banavie Primary School pupil has finished top in the West Highland Line's 125th anniversary poster competition, writes Mark Entwistle.

Winners of the short story and photography sections had already received their awards and on Friday December 20 it was the turn of poster winner Alex Drysdale, aged 11.

The presentations were once again held at the Highland Bookshop in Fort William and the young artists who were commended and highly commended for their posters were also present.



Alex's poster has now been converted into a display and hangs in Fort William Rail Station.

BLACKS TOWN & COUNTRY

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24/25 ARGYLL SQUARE, OBAN

LT

Arisaig trust receives £258,150 boosting community projects

by Mark Entwistle
mentwistle@obantimes.co.uk

Two projects involving new housing in Arisaig along with a scheme to repair the village's sea wall has received a grant of £258,150 from the Scottish Land Fund.

Arisaig Community Trust will use the money to buy land for the new housing and to acquire ownership of the shorefront in order to upgrade it for residents and visitors.

A delighted Pamela King, director of the Arisaig Community Trust, said: 'This is a very exciting award for Arisaig and will enable us to purchase three separate areas of land in the village, bringing them into community ownership for the first time.'

'We have developed plans for a community-led housing project, which will prioritise



owner-occupied residences and provide affordable, sustainable homes for rent in the village.

'A multi-use playing field, play park and adjoining area, which we would like to turn into a new orchard, will also be bought with this award, as well as a considerable part of the village shore front, which we will improve with better parking, pathways, seating and amenities.'

'This will enhance the area for both residents and visitors, supporting the local economy

with new homes and helping ensure tourism is managed sustainably.

'It is a fantastic opportunity for people to get involved in real and direct change in the village.'

Also in the Highlands, a former school on the island of Eriskay is set for a new life as an exhibition centre.

Eriskay Historical Society will use its £48,234 grant to turn the former school on the island into a heritage centre and to renovate the adjacent schoolhouse so that it can be made available for rent.

Sandra MacInnes, secretary of Comann Eachdraidh Eirisgeidh (Eriskay Historical Society), said: 'We are delighted to have been awarded the Scottish Land Fund which will give us the financial assistance to purchase the former Eriskay School from Comhairle nan Eilean Siar.

'This will enable us to renovate the former school and utilise the space to have a dedicated exhibition area to showcase the history and heritage of the island as well as having office space for the Eriskay Pony Society and a tearoom where the community and visitors can meet and socialise.'

The grants to Comann Eachdraidh Eirisgeidh and Arisaig Community Trust are amongst 10 totalling £1,313,841 that have been awarded to groups across Scotland during the latest round of grants from the Scottish Land Fund.

John Watt, chairman of the Scottish Land Fund Committee, said: 'Through these grants we have been able to support groups in both inner city areas and in some of the remotest parts of Scotland,

helping local people to come together to undertake a range of activities designed to create stronger communities.'

Sandra Holmes, head of community assets at HIE, said the successful projects were all great examples of people taking control of local resources for the long-term benefit of their communities.

'Comann Eachdraidh Eirisgeidh for instance, has ambitious plans to renovate the school into a modern community hub, while the grant to Arisaig Community Trust will enable it to purchase land for a much-needed affordable housing development,' she said.

'Ownership will give these communities greater control over important assets and will help ensure its long-term future. We wish all the successful groups the very best in their new ventures.'

WHAT'S ON

■ On Saturday January 4, Nevis Radio begins their fitness-focused Loch Ness Challenge to raise money for the station.

You must swim or row the equivalent length of Loch Ness, 22.5 miles, in 12 weeks, at your local pool or fitness centre.

Individuals or teams can enter by emailing admin@nevisradio.co.uk.

■ Nevis Hillwalking Club's first hike of 2020 will be Beinn Mheadhoin, Kingairloch, on Sunday January 5. More information can be found on the club's Facebook page, through www.nevishillwalking.club or by calling 01397 701975.

■ Off Beat Bikes will have their first of four Ladies Back to Basics bike rides on Tuesday January 7. It is a session for ladies who might not have ridden a bike in a while – or ever – and want to get comfortable in a safe and supportive environment.

Starting at 10am, you can get more details at the shop, contacting their Facebook page or by calling 01397 704008.

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Drivers and wildlife benefit from new bridge at Glencoe

by Mark Entwistle
mentwistle@obantimes.co.uk

Concerns over the impact on wildlife saw developers take special measures during construction work on the newly opened Allt Fhiodhan Bridge on the A82 in Glencoe.

As well as the bulk of the work being programmed to take place during the summer months to avoid impacting the salmon spawning season, special mammal walkways were also incorporated into the design to allow any wildlife to safely cross under the new £1.5million bridge.

The six months of construction were funded by Transport Scotland. The bridge was built to replace the previous, sub-standard bridge on the A82, which is located around one mile south east of Glencoe village.



The new, box-culvert design is 6m wider than the previous structure and includes a 2.5m wide footpath for pedestrians.

It has been designed to last for 120 years and is able to handle significantly

higher water flows in the Allt Fhiodhan burn, which flows into the River Coe. A temporary bridge was installed to allow two-way traffic to continue to flow during the construction of the new bridge; meaning disruption

was kept to a minimum throughout the project.

Approximately 1,200 tonnes of rock armour was installed around the new structure to protect the foundation and the river banks from any potential wash-out

The new bridge in Glencoe is now open to traffic.

during high river flows. Minor landscaping work will be carried out around the new structure in the spring, but there will be no impact to road users.

A new, greener embankment is also set to be created early next year downstream of the new structure using a traditional technique known as 'willow spiling'. Live willow rods are woven between live willow uprights and the area behind is filled with soil for the willow to root into. This is done in a terrace formation helping to create a strong, natural river bank. Cabinet Secretary for Transport, Infrastructure and Connectivity Michael Matheson said he was delighted to see this important piece of work being delivered to ensure the Allt Fhiodhan Bridge is fit for the future.

"The A82 is a key route and

this investment underlines the Scottish Government's commitment to providing a safe and reliable trunk road network for the communities and businesses that rely on it,' he added.

Commenting on the project, Eddie Ross, BEAR Scotland's North West Representative, said: 'We are delighted that the new A82 Allt Fhiodhan Bridge is now fully open to traffic following six months of construction.'

'The newly widened carriageway will ensure the A82 trunk road remains a safe, reliable route to towns and villages in the north west of Scotland, and the new design will ensure the structure will last for over 120 years.'

'We thank all road users for their patience during the construction of this new £1.5M bridge and hope they are pleased with the results.'

JANUARY SALES AT GORDONS CHEMISTS!

The festive period is coming to a close and the January rush is underway! If your own personal wish list expanded with all of our amazing Christmas OFFERS, or if you want to get a heads start on your 'new year, new me' 2020 then fear not! At Gordons Chemists - we've got you covered with a fabulous range of REDUCTIONS to help you kick start the New Year!

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Speaking of staying frown-free, our Nivea Q10 Power 60+ Day and Night creams (50ml) are reduced to HALF PRICE! At just £6.99 each, they're just two of our products included in our HALF PRICE Nivea promotion this month! Self-care is so important, so don't forget to make sure he looks after his skin this year too, with O'Keefe's Working Hands Cream 96g priced at just £5.99 saving you £2.00! Or keep the families breath smelling minty fresh with Oral B's Pro Expert Clean Mint Toothpaste 75ml, REDUCED to JUST £1.75 from £3.49!

And when better a time to get stuck into some deep cleaning than at the start of the New Year. Let us take the hassle out of washing the dishes with Sun's All-in-1 Dishwasher Tablets 45pk for ONLY £3.99! Saving you an INCREDIBLE £4.00! If it's not in store, check online at www.gordonschemist.com. Whatever your wishes and resolutions may be for this year, we at Gordons Chemists would like to wish you all a happy and healthy 2020!

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JANUARY

Five disused hospital beds from Fort William's Belford Hospital are on their way to help patients in war-torn countries. Volunteers from Caol-based charity Lochaber Supports Refugees Shirley, Irene, Norma, Lorraine and Viv are pictured getting their biggest shipment to date ready.

FEBRUARY

Work to demolish Fort William's old cinema is well under way, with heavy machinery ripping apart the walls and roof. Angus MacDonald, who bought the Cameron Square site, says he is delighted with the rapid progress being made to clear the area for a new cinema.



MARCH

A woman who ensured her workplace was cleared of the public and colleagues after a man placed a handgun in front of a member of staff was presented with a bravery award. Sandra MacLean, 63, who at the time of the incident worked as a supervisor at Fort William Library, ensured the building was cleared, then re-entered the library by herself after police had been contacted. The handgun proved to be a replica.

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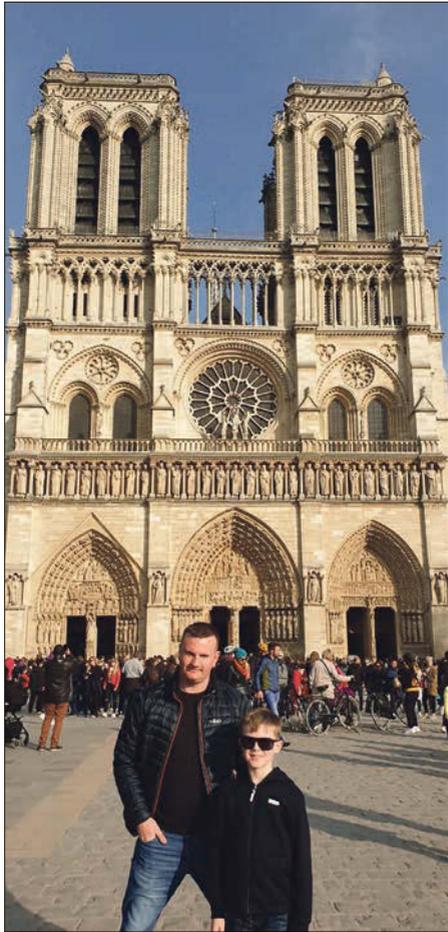
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APRIL



A Fort William father told how onlookers stood in tension-filled silence, with many elderly Parisiennes in tears, as they witnessed the inferno that engulfed the world famous Notre-Dame Cathedral in the French capital.

MAY



A group of young traditional musicians from Mallaig High School and their teacher flew the flag for Lochaber and Scotland on a visit to China. The four-day trip to Chengdu and Beijing saw the five-strong party from Mallaig take part in the ninth Young Cultural Ambassador Event. The group played at three schools and the opening and closing ceremonies of the main event at Sichuan Conservatoire.

JUNE



A trip to teach surgical skills to medics in Cambodia was hailed a success by retired doctor David Sedgwick. Mr Sedgwick retired from his post at the Belford Hospital, Fort William, five years ago after more than two decades working in the hospital's operating theatres.

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They had great fun creating original sketches featuring sneaky Santas, 'gangsta' Santas, a Brexit Christmas and even Santa in handcuffs. Luckily they let him go before December 24.

Carol singing and musical performances by pupils rounded off the show.



MOREPHOTOS
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Lundavra youngsters excel with festive pantomime and concert

Lundavra Primary School pupils staged an eclectic Christmas concert with colourful costumes and a pantomime, writes Richard Mason.

Some students played musical instruments before the curtain went up on the pantomime.

Group songs, individual scenes and fun costumes made for a great show with a day time and evening performance for parents.



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Pet-proof your festive season

This week we have a special Festive Season-themed article written for the Lochaber Times by Mairi Thom, veterinary surgeon with Crown Vets in Fort William, on how to 'pet proof' your celebrations and make sure you don't end up spending time with your furry companion in the surgery!

Picture the scene – it's a snowy morning during the Christmas holidays with Milly and Molly the Labradors toasting themselves by the log fire, while feline friends Dougal and Donnie are curled up together in the armchair.

Snap back to reality – you've just come in from a rainy morning dog walk. You are drying the kitchen floor where the Labs have shaken water when you realise Milly, the black one, has reached up with her long legs and stretched over the counter to snatch the Christmas cake from the back.

Realising what is happening you dash over to prevent her from ingesting 2kg of toxic raisins. Then you hear shrieking coming from next door.

Your daughter has spotted Dougal has a piece of tinsel hanging from his mouth and seems to be struggling to swallow the rest of it.

Meanwhile Donnie is hiding behind the sofa where he has been in refuge ever since the Christmas tree went up and Molly has discovered the fancy 90 per cent cocoa chocolate bar you were given as a present and was saving until later for watching the Snowman on TV.



Fort William vet Mairi Thom, above right, is on hand to help with any festive season pet mishaps.



You should have pet-proofed Christmas! Raisin/currant/sultana toxicity is poorly understood but in some dogs even a small amount can cause acute kidney failure which can be irreversible if not caught early.

Treatment is by causing the dog to vomit within a specific time frame otherwise a period of time on IV fluids is usually necessary. Keeping mince pies and Christmas cake high up and well enough away from long-legged dogs is far better than a trip to the vet.

That is what one of our clients discovered when she thought she had left the 2.5kg of dried fruit ready to make Christmas cake

far enough back on the counter. I suppose when two Labrador sisters are involved in a crime together they end up having to go to the vets together!

Many people have heard about chocolate toxicity in dogs. It can cause a range of signs from non-life threatening vomiting and diarrhoea to cardiac rhythm problems and seizures.

Dark chocolate is far more dangerous than milk chocolate. If your dog does ingest chocolate it is very helpful to know the type of chocolate, how many grams and the weight of your dog.

Your vet can use this information to work out the risk and whether

he/she needs to be seen as an emergency.

Cats are generally fussy eaters, less likely to eat foreign articles than your typical Labrador. However, they often show interest in Christmas trees and the tinsel and ribbons on them!

Sometimes it gets caught under the tongue while the other end causes the bowel to concertina up. It is very dangerous to try to pull anything out and of course you may not see the foreign body at all.

It is always best to phone your vet if your cat is vomiting more frequently than normal.

Despite Yuletide merriment some people can find this time of

year stressful. This is true for many cats and their feelings may not be obvious to their owners.

Cats do not like a lot of change in their environment so when a large tree appears in their living space, wrapping paper, boxes and Sellotape come out, when family and friends come to visit and new kittens appear, this can be very worrying to your cat.

Stress often displays itself as inappropriate urination – this can be behavioural or even a medical problem causing severe inflammation in the bladder.

This is especially dangerous in male cats who can sometimes block their urethra and be unable to urinate. This is an emergency, so if you see your male cat straining to urinate with nothing passing or yowling in discomfort phone the vet immediately.

Ways to help your cat de-stress involve giving them somewhere to hide, preferably high up where they can observe but choose not to be part of what is going on.

Anti anxiety supplements are also available at the vets along with Feliway plug-in diffusers which contain a pheromone known to be helpful in reducing stress.

There are many other dangers to watch out for at Christmas but hopefully you will find ways to pet proof this year so that you don't have to make any unwanted trips to the vet during your turkey dinner.

If you do need advice, it is always best to phone as there is always emergency cover available.



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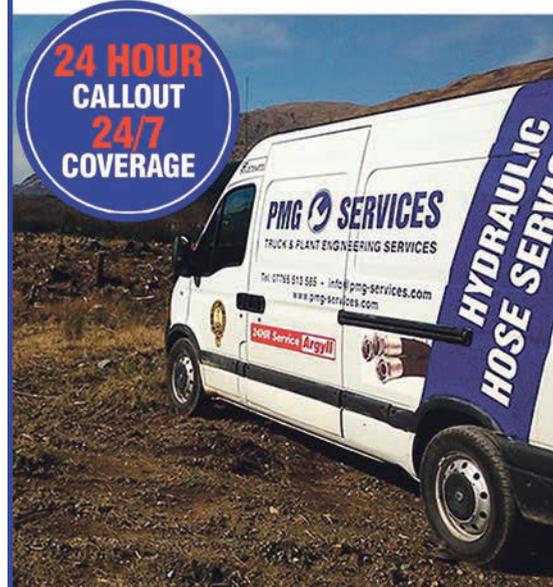
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Friendly support helps stave off loneliness the Western Isles

For some people Christmas and New Year can be a difficult time with festive cheer in short supply.

But the Western Isles Association for Mental Health and the Samaritans want people who might not have anyone else to turn to, to talk to them.

In a joint message with the Point and Sandwick Trust, they said: 'It's good to talk – and we are here.'

Social isolation is becoming an increased problem, but the WIAMH base on Bayhead in Stornoway is available for drop in sessions for those who might be struggling.

Del Gunn is the Project Manager for WIAMH, he said: 'When everybody seems to be celebrating, others aren't. For them, it's not a time of celebration. Some people actually dread Christmas coming along.'

'This is not always a good time and the message to the public is, if you know someone who is struggling in your own community, talk to



Point and Sandwick Trust chairman Angus McCormack, right, with Del Gunn, Western Isles Association for Mental Health manager, and Cathy MacArthur, WIAMH chairwoman in April 2019.

them. There's a good chance they'll really appreciate it. Just talk to people. And if you pass someone in the street, say 'hi' or 'hello'. It can mean the world to someone who is experiencing a lot of loneliness at this time of year.'

The centre will be open on the week of New Year on Monday, Tuesday and Friday

until 4pm and until 3pm on Saturday.

People can call in for a cup of tea and a friendly face to the Stornoway base, but anyone who is in need of urgent help is encouraged to call 111 for NHS 24 acute services.

Samaritans can be reached on 116 123 for a confidential chat.

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A look back on 2019 articles

31/01/19

"None of us know how long we are going to have in this life, so when we are here we may as well approach it with positivity. The futility of worrying that time is running out is borne out by the fact that whether we are eighteen, forty, sixty or eighty one, what is gone is gone, what is done is done and the important thing is that we have our whole lives ahead. That life ahead may be one day or it may be many decades but never will we know. Right up to that unknown time, we have the chance to try new things and to follow the winds of fulfilment and happiness."

14/02/19

"Love is undoubtedly one of the most powerful forces running through mankind and it is no coincidence that it has been the favoured subject of poem, song and other vehicles of literature since these art-forms were

conceived. As well as being powerful, love is one of the most complex areas of life and under its wide umbrella are many variants."

23/03/19

"I haven't discussed Brexit in detail with Beastie, but I think most politicians and a fair percentage of the population could take a leaf out of his book by not allowing legitimate and essential debate to escalate into abuse and long-term conflict. #belikebeastie"

04/04/19

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

08/08/18

"Never before in the history of the Highlands has the music of a people exploded forward with such a power. The glowing embers of our music that survived over three hundred and fifty years of cultural suppression have "taken light" and the flame is spreading like a forest blaze of hope for the future."

12/09/19

"There are of course many steps I've missed and plenty made in the wrong direction but there are some journeys that internally we know are right for us. When we identify these destinations – even if they are a thousand miles away – we must seize the day and take the step."

31/10/19

"Twenty years have passed in the blink of an eye, and so too will the next. I hope then, I will be writing a similar article and feeling exactly as I am right now. Life has a habit of dealing both good and bad, happiness and pain, and often, the two, simultaneously, so when we experience the good, we must relish it and embrace the feeling."

We may not see tomorrow but today the earth is ours

Unknown the new horizons in the hands of higher powers

But now we bear the blessings when the golden stars align

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Happy New Year to you all!

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Special smelter 90th anniversary

by Mark Entwistle
mentwistle@obantimes.co.uk

It is exactly 90 years to the day that the very first aluminium was cast at the Lochaber smelter on December 30, 1929.

Construction had started six years previously on the smelter and the associated hydro-electric scheme, employing a large workforce.

In the intervening nine decades, hundreds of local men and women have spent either all or part of their working lives at the site in Fort William.

And earlier this month a special event to mark the 90th anniversary of the smelter's commencement of aluminium production and the generation of electricity by the hydro scheme, was held in Fort William.

Present and former staff were invited to hear speeches from Douglas Dawson, the CEO of Liberty, the division of parent company GFG Alliance which oversees the operations of the smelter, and local MP - although at the time of the event only an election candidate - Ian Blackford.



Sandy Austin recounted details of his 40 years working at the smelter to the Lochaber Times. Photograph: Iain Ferguson, alba.photos

Three of the former employees attending the event, which also included a special display and exhibition of historical artefacts associated with the smelter over its nine decades, were David Cameron, from Inverloch, Andrew Cameron from Acharacle and Sandy Austin, from Fort William.

David started at the smelter straight after leaving school aged 16 in 1969, eventually retiring in 2013.

His 44 years' service saw him rise through the ranks from apprentice electrician to operations manager at the smelter power station.

And the smelter was very much a family affair for David, who showed off a precious keepsake that once belonged to his grandfather. He said: 'My grandfather got this watch for 25 years' service here in 1953, so if you work that back it would take his employment here to 1928 - just

before the smelter started operating.

'He retired in 1965 and I started in 1969, so there was only a four-year gap in our family when it comes to employment at the smelter.'

David, who still has a small role at the smelter despite officially being retired, believes the plant is still a vital creator of local jobs.

'Yes, it is very important for the jobs it creates although I don't think it's as community-orientated a place as much it was. I was brought up in Inverloch village where almost everybody to a man worked in the smelter. It was the village of the smelter. The village was built for smelter workers.'

'When I started here, there was in excess of 500 people working on this site. It was a good place to work and things have changed with all the investment over the years, although you tend to find with investment anywhere it comes with a reduction in jobs.'

'Back in the 1970s the health of people who worked here was not great. I can remember old men walking around Inverloch coughing and you just knew they worked here because of the environment

they worked in. It was just horrendous back then. You couldn't see 20 feet in front of you with the fumes belching out.'

'So a lot of things have been improved in the years. I came right up from an apprentice electrician to operations manager at the power station. I worked here all my life. There were good opportunities here and they treated you well.'

'It was a great company to work for in my opinion.'

Andrew also agreed the smelter was still as important for the local economy as it had always been: 'It is still very important, having been the mainstay of the community from when it started and has remained so ever since,' he said.

'This was a huge development for not just the town, or Lochaber, but the whole of the Highlands at the time when you take into account, not just the infrastructure, but the initial engineering phases such as digging tunnels,' said Andrew, who also started as an apprentice in 1973, before spending some years away and then rejoining the workforce also on the power generation side of the operation at the site in 1985.

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Anniversary rekindles memories

'My story is very similar to Davie's. It's really good to be able to come along today. It was always a happy place to work here and I'm sure it still is.'

For his part, Sandy, who lives in Fort William, came originally from Glasgow in 1973 and then worked at the smelter as a power engineer for 40 years.

'I came up from Glasgow in a Mini with my bag and a pair of skis at the age of 23,' he told us.

'I met my wife up here, got married and had kids and am still here. People came from all over to work here and they either loved it or hated it.'

'It was still pretty isolated back in the 1970s and some people found that difficult to deal with after moving here.'

'Over the years the plant tried to employ people from outwith the area such as graduates, but they tended to just use it as a stepping stone in their career before leaving.'

'I think it's great what the company is doing here now with all the investment for the future. It's a place that is always evolving to meet the needs of the future.'



Top left, Exhibition of raw materials and analysis techniques from 90 years ago; above, former employees enjoyed revisiting the site and memories of their time working at the smelter; left, local historian Richard Sidgwick examines some of the exhibits on display; and far left, employees of Jamaha Estates – which oversees the estate lands that came with the purchase of the smelter – look over old maps of the land where they work. Photograph: Iain Ferguson, alba.photos

WHAT'S ON @ CORRAN HALLS



JANUARY 2020

THU JAN
02

MANRAN

Doors: 8pm
Tickets: £20
+ £1 Booking Fee

Strictly over 14yrs,
14-17yrs must be accompanied by an Adult



FRI JAN
10

LEGENDS OF AMERICAN COUNTRY SHOW

Doors: 7:15pm Start: 8pm
Tickets: All Tickets £20
+£1 Booking Fee
Reserved Seating



SAT JAN
18

PRINCESS OF POP

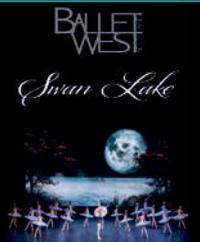
Featuring
Little Mix Magic
& Simply Ariana



Doors: 1:30pm Start: 2pm | Tickets: £17 + 1 Booking Fee

SAT JAN
25

Ballet West presents SWAN LAKE



Matinee Doors: 2pm Start: 2:30pm
Evening Doors: 7pm Start: 7:30pm
Tickets: £15

FEBRUARY

SAT FEB
29

BON GIOVI

Doors: 7:00pm
Start: 7:30pm
All Tickets £19
+£1 booking fee



UPCOMING SHOWS

JULY
25

IRELAND! THE SHOW

7:30pm (Doors 7pm)
All Tickets £25
Reserved Seating



SEPTEMBER

SAT SEP
05

HOTEL CALIFORNIA

8pm (Doors 7:30pm)
Reserved seating
All tickets £20 + £1 booking fee



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OCTOBER

SAT OCT
10

LIVE/WIRE THE AC/DC SHOW

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LT

LETTERS

Write to us: send your letters to editor@obantimes.co.uk
or The Editor, PO Box 1, Oban, Argyll PA34 4HBWishing all our readers
a very happy New Year!

Well, another Christmas has been and gone and hopefully it's been a happy one for all our readers, with minimum stress.

Now another new year is upon us. No doubt there will be plenty of opinion and debate on Brexit in the media over the next few weeks and months, but for now, let's look closer to home – this week's paper is chock full of heart-warming stories and photographs, including all the schools' festive parties and nativity plays, plus Lochaber Scouts and Guides bringing the Peace Flame and with it the message of peace and good will.

We also loved reading about the special 90th anniversary event at Lochaber smelter. The exhibition of historical artefacts brought back many memories.

Happy New Year, everyone, and here is to making more memories in 2020.

Scottish Sea Farms only uses
licensed medicines

In response to the letter, 'Fish farm research and new boats are not enough' (The Oban Times, December 12), we're keen to reassure Mr Archer that Scottish Sea Farms does not use chemicals to treat salmon. We use only licensed medicines prescribed by qualified veterinarians and administered in the authorised dosage.

One of these licensed medicines, Paramove®, does indeed include hydrogen peroxide. However contrary to the commonly held misconception, hydrogen peroxide is not bleach (sodium hypochlorite); it is a mild antiseptic most commonly used in the veterinary care of cats, dogs, horses and farmed fish, as well as several everyday personal care products such as mouthwashes, eye drops and contact lens solutions.

In the case of farmed salmon specifically, hydrogen peroxide is used in diluted form to help remove marine parasites from fish. Post-treatment, it breaks down into water and oxygen, neither of which is harmful to the environment.

Also reassuring to know, Scotland's salmon farmers are leading the way with regards

to keeping veterinary medicines off dinner plates, with no medicinal residue detected in our end product. (Source: Veterinary Medicines Directorate, Defra.)

Lesley Rice, Scottish Sea Farms.

Trip down memory lane
with Inveraray ceilidh

It is not very often I enjoy ceilidhs these days, but listening on RNG, [December 22,] a recorded ceilidh, held at Inveraray Castle back in 1974, was exceptional and soul inspiring.

At the head of proceedings was the great Lewis man Donald 'Beag' Thomson, a stalwart of the Gaelic language, and teacher at Oban High School for many years.

The quality of this particular ceilidh was outstanding from start to finish and I'm not saying that because he was my clan chief, and that at that time I was working on the roof of the castle itself.

Ethel MacCallum gave a great account of the culture behind those ceilidhs and to hear the Argyllshire accents again was a reminder of the quality available in that area at the time.

As Donald himself said one or more times, when the National Mod was held in Oban, it's a great day for Oban and an even greater day for Argyllshire, indeed this ceilidh was the very best I've ever heard.

Aonghas Eoghainn Mhoir, By email.

Pre-referendum referendum

I see the SNP are still banging on about independence, claiming the recent election result gives them a mandate so to do. Correct me if I'm wrong, but I seem to recall that they had roughly the same number of seats (and maybe more?) in the run-up to IndyRef '14.

I don't think every SNP voter wants independence, nor do I think that every non-SNP voter doesn't, so as I see it the only sensible answer to the oft-stated claim of the SNP to "speak for Scotland" is to have a pre-referendum referendum requiring a 55 per cent majority for either side to win, and the simple question on the ballot paper should be something like "Should there be another referendum on Scottish independence?"

If the YES side wins, the First Minister can take that result to Westminster and say to Boris, 'Here's proof positive that the majority of Scots want IndyRef 2: how's about it?'

If the NO side wins, that's it, go home, end of story; move on.

Davie Kerr, Onich, Lochaber.

Beachd Ailein

ALLAN CAMPBELL

editor@obantimes.co.uk

Bliadhna mhath ùr dhuibh agus mòran dhiubh! Nach bu mhath gum b' e bliadhna bhiodh an seo a bheireadh sòlas agus soirbheachadh dhuinn air fad ach ged a tha e nàdarra a bhith dòchasach a thaobh leithid sin, aig an aon àm tha eòlas beatha gar rabhadh nach seachain sinn dùbhlain a bhios aig amannan do-dhèanta. Ach tha fios againn cuideachd nach eil cron ann a bhith ag amas air cinn-uidhe àraid agus gu dearbh mur eil sinn a' cuimseachadh air an leithid sin nach eil uimhir a dhòchas air adhartas a choileanadh. Mar bu dual bidh daoine a' cur iartasan pearsanta de gach seòrsa romhpa fhèin leithid call cuideam agus leasachaidhean caitheamh-beatha, agus bidh sin feumail dhan fheadhainn againn aig am bheil de smachd orra fhèin 's gun tèid aca air cumail rin amasan. Ach tha eachdraidh iomadh dachaigh ag innse gum bheil an dùbhlain a bhith a' cumail ri amasan den t-seòrsa seo ro dhoirbh dha mòran againn, ach 's math gum bheil a' mhisneachd againn a bhith a' tilleadh thuca bliadhna an deidh bliadhna! Fhad 's

a mhaireas an cothrom tha fhios gum mair dòchas gun ruig sinn ceann-uidhe a mhiannaicheamaid uaireigin. Ach tha rudan co-cheangailte ri cor na dùthcha is an t-saoghail a dh'iarraimaid 's dòcha fhaicinn a' tachairt cuideachd, agus dè chuireadh sibhse air an liosta sin?

Theagamh gur e fear de na ciad iartasan a bhios aig mòran 's e gun tig sioladh ann an ùpraid phoilitigs na dùthcha agus gun libhrig an Riaghaltas ùr na chaidh a ghealltainn anns an t-suirghe a ghabh àite ron taghadh choitcheann. Mar eisimpleir bidh beòshlaint chroitearan is thuathanaich an crochadh gu mòr air na geallaidhean taice a tha dol a ghabhail àite ionmhas Eòrpach an deidh dealachadh Bhreatainn bhon Aonadh Eòrpach, rud nach eil a-nise ach seachdainean air falbh. Agus am faigh gnìomhachas an iasgaich againn na buannachdan ris an robh e an dùil mar thoradh air an dealachadh? Chan eil brìgh cùmhnan an dealachaidh sin fhathast cinnteach agus ri linn sin chan iongnadh iomagain a bhith air mòran a thaobh na buaidhe a dh'fhaodadh

a bhith air tèarainteachd an cuid chosnaidhean. Leis an sgaradh bheachd phoilitigeach eadar cinn a deas is tuath Bhreatainn a thaobh na Rioghachd Aonaichte fhèin, dè tha an dàn a thaobh reifreann eile air neo-eisimeileachd dha Alba? Am faodadh sin tachairt, agus am faodadh Alba fhathast tilleadh dhan Aonadh Eòrpach mar bhall ùr? Ceistean toinnte! Ach aon rud air an cuireamaid uile meas saoilidh mi, 's e bhith a' faicinn luchd-phoilitigs a' co-obrachadh gus math slugh, sheirbheisean, agus eaconamaidh na dùthcha seach a bhith a' cur seachad am beatha a' glamhadh a chèile gun sgur 's gun èifeachd do dhuine sam bith!

I wish you all a happy and prosperous New Year! Unquestionably 2020 brings many challenges but we must hope that our post-Brexit economy and employment remains buoyant, and that our new government's policies will recognise and respect diversity of political opinion!

Ailean Caimbeul
(Allan Campbell)

ailean@obantimes.co.uk



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DISTRICT NEWS

PLOCKTON

■ Plockton and District Horticultural and Arts and Crafts Society held a workshop in Plockton hall on December 11, called Donald's Festive Workshop. Donald Mackintosh from Inverinate taught 14 members how to make a perfect decoration. Wine and mince pies were served.

■ On December 17 a large crowd attended Plockton High School when Plockton Primary School presented its panto, The Xmas Wish, which was very much enjoyed by the audience.

■ On December 19, a Christmas service was held in the Plockton Free Church when Plockton Primary School children all took part in carol singing and readings.

■ The Lochalsh branch of Royal British Legion Scotland distributed 20 food parcels in their area for Christmas.

■ The biggest attraction in Plockton during the festive season is the home of Ewen and Sybil Cameron, at 2 Frithard Road, which has the most lights in the area.

■ The AGM of Plockton Harbour CIC was held in Plockton hall on December 7, when 20 members attended. There were 28 apologies. Chairman Jimmy Ferguson gave a report on the year; Peter Davies presented the report on ongoing operations, mooring inspections and pontoon works; treasurer Gill Bennett presented an excellent report, which showed a profit on the year. The existing directors resigned and were duly re-elected.

■ Recent deaths with local connections included Margaret Gordon, Inverness; Margaret Falconer, Dornie, and Donald Macrae, Glenshiel.

CORRAN FERRY

Highland Council will be testing the market by contacting prospective contractors – scheduled to be sent out on January 6 – to give notice that a procurement for the Corran Ferry service may be coming forward. A questionnaire will seek the views of suppliers and potential suppliers of ferry services to the council.

The Prior Information Notice is not a contract tender invitation but a market testing exercise to understand what the ferry operator market thinks is appropriate in terms of: vessels and refit/relief/breakdown cover; slipways and infrastructure; crewing model and fares structure.

This work relates to the Corran Ferry outline business case, which is focused on the immediate transport issues associated with the service, and what is required to ensure its future sustainability.



Fiona Hyslop MSP visit to Abernethy Nature Reserve, which also received funding.

Photograph: Ewen Weatherspoon/ SNH

£5M award for Highlands and Islands tourism

Nine projects in the Highlands and Islands will share a £5 million European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) award to promote the outstanding scenery, wildlife and culture of the Highlands and Islands, Scottish Tourism and Culture Secretary Fiona Hyslop announced on December 28.

The fund invests in projects in the Highlands and Islands which improve the experience of visitors exploring the region's nature and culture.

Ms Hyslop said: "Tourism is a major part of the Highland and Islands' economies and it's essential that its social and economic benefits are shared as widely as possible. That's why I'm pleased to announce the successful applicants for grants from the Natural Cultural and Heritage Fund to improve their experience for visitors.

"This fund will create jobs and help projects in remote

areas to enhance their offer to the millions of people who visit the region every year.

"Thanks to support from the European Regional Development Fund, the wonderful landscapes, nature and culture of the Highlands and Islands will welcome new visitors in a way that is sustainable and creates long-term benefits for local communities."

Projects to receive funding include:

■ West Highland College UHI – The Coast that Shaped the World (£350,371) – This project will develop a website, app and programme of digital exhibitions along the west coast of Scotland. Stories of coastal communities will convey how maritime cultural, and natural, heritage helped to shape the world. Local stories will be mapped and gathered, creating a website and app to inspire potential visitors.

■ National Trust Scotland, Corrieshalloch Gorge Gateway to Nature, near Ullapool, (£923,000) – A new visitor centre will form a gateway to Corrieshalloch Gorge and the Falls of Measach. The project will also improve and expand car parking and develop new path networks with wayfinding and signage.

■ Lews Castle College UHI, UVAP – Uibhist Virtual Archaeology Project (£271,000) – This project will create a series of augmented reality experiences and mixed-media exhibitions for seven archaeological sites along the Hebridean Way walking route.

Funding for the Natural and Cultural Heritage Fund comes from the Scottish Government's European Regional Development Fund programme, with match funding from other sources bringing overall investment to more than £7million.

VIEW FROM THE CHAMBER

Take your business to the next level in 2020

What makes all the difference in business? Building strong business relationships. It's easy to say, but not always so easy to do, especially in these times of near-constant online 'contact' but not much IRL (In real life!) chances to get together.

Lack of time, pressure of deadlines and competing priorities often mean the 'not-urgent but important' work of nurturing and building connections gets put on the back-burner.

Why not start 2020 with a commitment to invest a bit more time in making and building your local business connections? Joining your local Chamber of Commerce is a really easy way to do this.

Our regular monthly networking lunches, business visits and training events are a fantastic way to invest in your business and to share your business news and views with the wider business community.

We've got an exciting year planned for 2020 – including a fantastic overseas trade mission to Nova Scotia in March!

There's so much to get involved in – from our innovative new Leadership programme for managers, regular monthly lunches, business forum meetings with ministers, seminars on key topics like employment law, Brexit and the road to net zero for business – we offer lots of ways to keep our member businesses up to date with important business issues and in touch with each other.

We'll also be running our popular tourism roadshows around Lochaber in February – if you're in tourism, this is a great chance to come along to ask questions of key organisations like VisitScotland, freetobook and Expedia.

There's lots of great reasons for joining Lochaber Chamber of Commerce – why not come along to an event to see what we're all about? Check out our events calendar on www.lochaberchamber.co.uk or give us a call for a chat on 01397 705 765.

We'd love to welcome you in 2020!

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January



Runners shake off New Year celebrations

Almost 130 runners took part in Lochaber Athletic Club's (LAC) annual New Year's Day Aonach Mor uphill race which provided a tricky test in changeable conditions. Snowfall greeted runners at the finish line at the top gondola station at Nevis Range as the traditional race up the downhill track at Aonach Mor once again provided the perfect solution to clearing hazy heads from the

February



Fort William appoint new manager

Newly appointed Fort William FC interim manager Russell Macmorran says he is looking forward to making his debut on the touchline after his first week in charge of training. The 42-year-old Glencoe-based police officer took over the reins at the Lochaber side after the board terminated the contract of Kris Anderson earlier this week. Inset Kris Anderson.

March

Dieguno crowned Scottish Schoolboy champion again

Twelve-year-old Josh Dieguno from Caol became Scottish Schoolboy Boxing Champion for the second consecutive year in March at Ravenscraig in Motherwell when he unanimously outpointed Doonhamer boxing club's Stephen Cairns in the final of the 2006 41.5kg weight division.



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Sporting yea

April



Nelson leads Scotland 7s and called up to play for the Baa-Baas

One of Lochaber's brightest rugby stars is to shine in Hong Kong next week after being called up to the Scotland Women's 7s squad.

Helen Nelson, originally from Glencoe, will lead the team in the HSBC World Sevens Qualifiers and flew out on Saturday, ahead of the tournament which takes place over today (Thursday April 4) and tomorrow at the Hong Kong Stadium. She will be joined in the squad by Oban's Abi Evans.

The pair competed in this year's Women's Six Nations Championships and the former is looking forward to turning her hand to the abbreviated game.

Nelson, who plays at Montpellier, has also been selected to play for the world-famous Barbarians in America on April 26.

May



Dabill ends Lampkin's reign at Six Days Trial

James Dabill was crowned the Scottish Six Days Trial 2019 champion on Saturday, ending Dougie Lampkin's run of seven straight victories and dashing the veteran's hopes of a 13th victory in the world-famous event.

June



Jubilant Jags clinch league title

South Lochaber Thistle (SLT) clinched the Greater Glasgow Premier League Division Two title in style with a hard fought 2-1 win over Helensburgh.

Playing at Lochaber High School for the second week in a row, the Kinlochleven-based outfit knew promotion was ensured for both teams but the destination of the league title had come down to this final fixture.

r in pictures

July

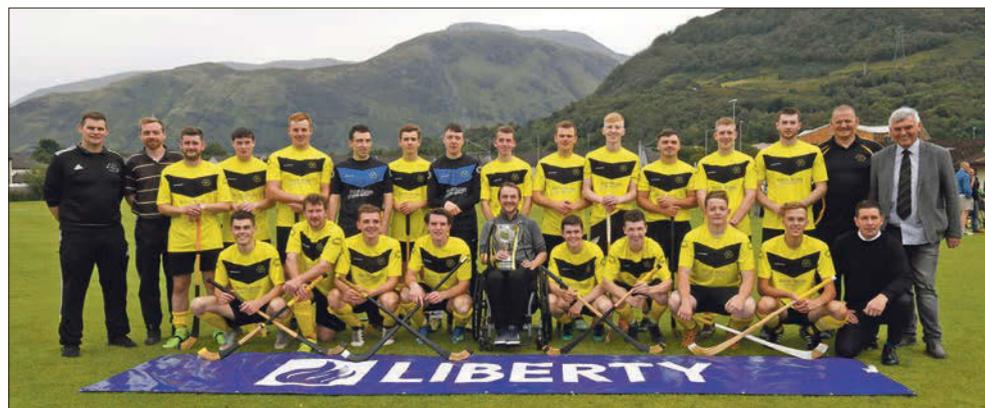
McFall golf day raises more than £4,000 for charity

The fine weekend weather saw more than 100 golfers taking to the greens of Fort William Golf Club for the annual McFall Funeral Directors Charity Day Texas Scramble.

The day was sponsored by Jamie Manson and Beth MacBeath of McFall Funeral Directors, Inverlochy, and raised an outstanding amount of £4,626 for local charity Lochaber Hope.



August



Fort William win Balliemore Cup

Fort William lifted the Liberty British Aluminium Balliemore Cup for the second time in three seasons with a 3-2 extra-time triumph over Glasgow Mid Argyll at An Aird.

September



Norwegian wins men's Salomon Glen Coe Skyline

Lochaber AC athlete Andrew Barrington battled his way to a top four slot in Sunday's Salomon Glen Coe Skyline 2019. Oban-based Barrington was pipped into fourth spot behind eventual winner Erik Johannes Husom, with the first four runners all finishing within nine minutes of each other. For Norwegian Husom, 24, it was his first attempt at a sky race and he was thrilled to triumph in 7:55:00.

Georgia Tindley, who lives in Kingussie, Cairngorms, was the first female home in a time of 8:29:57, to add her third Salomon Glen Coe Skyline win to her collection.

The three-day Salomon Skyline Scotland plays out every September in Lochaber.

October



LYC holds annual prizegiving and AGM

Lochaber Yacht Club held its AGM and social event on Friday, marking the end of the sailing season for this year.

November



Lochaber Judo Club success

Lochaber Judo Club's young judoka proudly show off the medals they won at the recent Invergordon Judo Festival last month.

December



Lochaber find antidote to Medics to win bowl

Two penalties from the boot of Jonathan McCook saw Lochaber lift the West Regional Bowl for the first time in monsoon conditions at Banavie on Saturday.

The weather was horrendous come kick-off time but the hill filled up as spectators came to watch Lochaber compete in their first final possibly since the Brinn Cup win many years ago.



LT

SHINTY



Martin MacGillvray of Morrison Construction hands over the new camans to club treasurer Anne Davies.

Glengarry shinty club picks up four new camans

Glengarry Shinty Club got an early Christmas present recently when it received four camans from Martin MacGillvray of Morrison Construction, which has been working on a project in Invergarry.

Anne Davies, club treasurer, accepted the camans from Mr MacGillvray. The club greatly appreciates this sponsorship. Saturday December 21 saw Glengarry Shinty Club's annual Christmas hamper raffle draw.

The club thanks MFR radio star Daniel Gilchrist for making the draw at The Bothy, Fort Augustus, and are indebted to Elaine for organising it. Thanks also go to the many local businesses, parents, friends and players who helped make this such a success.

More than £1,000 was raised for club funds, which is a very welcome boost. Prizewinners were: 1 Gemma Islerdemir; 2 Anne MacKenzie; 3 Jay Humson; 4 Peter MacKenzie.

LOTTERY NUMBERS

Lochaber club lotteries

Caol Regeneration Lotto: The numbers for the draw on December 19 were 1, 3 and 14. There were no winners so the jackpot for the next draw on January 9 will be £300.

Caol Community Centre Bingo Club Lotto: The numbers for the draw on December 22 were 13, 16 and 20. No winners so the next jackpot is £100.

Fort William Golf Club Lotto: The numbers for the draw on December 19 were 1, 4 and 20. No winners so the jackpot for the draw on January 9 will be £300. There will be no draw on January 2.

Ballachulish Shinty Lottery: The numbers drawn on December 22 were 11, 16 and 19. No winners this week, so it is £1,000 jackpot for the next draw.

FOOTBALL

SLT back in action

South Lochaber Thistle get back to action after the festive break with a home game on Saturday January 4 against league leaders East Kilbride YM.

This will be a tough game for SLT against the unbeaten East Kilbride outfit but manager Alan Gray is confident that if his team play to their full potential they can cause an upset and take all three points.



Finlay Wild leads Lochaber Athletic Club's traditional Boxing Day Torlundy Race. Photograph: Iain Ferguson, alba.photos

Runners race off Christmas dinner in boxing day race

The traditional Lochaber Athletic Club boxing day race had 76 runners pounding the roads while many were still unable to move from the Christmas festivities.

Finlay Wild led the pack from the start and comfortably finished first in a time of 43.38. Second place went to Esmond Tresidder in 45.11 and Dougie Harvey finished third in 49.08.

The first lady home was

Caroline Marwich who clocked up a time of 53.46 and finished in 14th position overall.

Quite soon behind was second place lady Sarah MacDonald, in 54.49, and third place was clinched by Lisette Walter in 59.16.

Jamie McConnell was the first junior to finish in a time of 54.09, while the first over-40 finisher was Stuart Pringle in 51.32. First over 50 was Alan Smith in 53.28.



A large number of runners took part in Lochaber Athletic Club's traditional Boxing Day Torlundy Race. Photograph: Iain Ferguson, alba.photos

Nevis Range turns clock back to 1989



SKIING

Skiers and snowboarders on the slopes of Aonach Mor at Nevis Range Mountain Experience on Saturday December 21, helped the venue celebrate 30 years as a snow sports, mountain biking and outdoor activities destination.

During the day all visitors were skiing and snowboarding for the same price as it was back in 1989, with many snow sports enthusiasts clad in ski gear from the 1980s.

Skiers helped celebrate 30 years of Nevis Range.



Some of the recipients of the first monthly Junior Boxing awards, from left, Aiden Love, Sam MacMillan, Tamzin MacKenzie and Marcus MacAlpine. Photograph: Iain Ferguson, alba.photos

Lochaber boxing club recognises youth commitment with new awards

Lochaber Phoenix Boxing Club has announced the first recipients of a new award to recognise commitment and ability amongst young people attending regular training sessions.

The junior section for ages nine to 16 currently hosts up to 30 young people in each session, from beginners to more experienced, under the direction of usually two to three fully qualified coaches, building fitness and encouraging a healthy lifestyle.

Many of the youngsters come along purely for this and are encouraged by meeting new people of their own age from across Lochaber while learning how to exercise safely in ways suitable for their build and age.

Punchbags

The club, with help from Liberty, recently installed two new extra-long punchbags, making it easier for those of a smaller stature to reach areas away from the bottom, which can sometimes become

firmer due to gravity. Those who really want to fully participate in the sport and are judged ready by the coaches can move on to 'learning the ropes' in the ring, sparring first of all on training pads with the coaches, before taking part in carefully monitored sparring with others in the class.

Trophies went to: Toby Jackson, Most Improved Youth Boy; Tamzin MacKenzie, Most Improved Youth Girl; Sam MacMillan,

BOXING

Hardest Trainer and most appearances at gym sessions; Marcus McAlpine and Aiden Love, best middle youth group age competing against other youths.

Training

Youth training sessions are held between 5.30pm and 6.45pm every Monday, Wednesday and Thursday. For more information go to the Lochaber Phoenix Boxing Club Facebook page.

Fort's Falcons flying high in netball league

Fort William's netball team, the Falcons, have been flying high so far this season, being the only west coast-based side in the Highland and Moray league.

The Falcons have enjoyed convincing wins over Lossiemouth and Gordonstoun and two narrow defeats by the strong Fyrish sides.

Their performances have improved greatly on last year, and with several matches still to play in early 2020 there is a real buzz about the club.

Friendly matches

Netball participation is growing on the west coast, as well as nationally. The Falcons arrange regular friendly matches and mini tournaments against the Oban Breakers Netball Club and Isle of Mull Netball. A new Mallaig club is to get under way in January.

Falcons club secretary Christina Wood is one of the original members of the club and has been active in it since it started out a decade ago in 2009 apart from two breaks to have her children.

She told the Lochaber



The Falcons are the only west coast-based side in the Highland and Moray league.

Times: 'The Falcons are a ladies' club of mixed ages and abilities, many coming along to training simply to have fun.

Totally new

'They have ladies who have played all their lives, some who have come back to it

having played in school and some who are totally new to it. Everyone is welcome.'

Training takes place at Lochaber High School on Tuesdays from 7-8pm (term time only), between September and May.

The club is always on the

NETBALL

lookout for new players, and are a friendly bunch. You can also follow the Falcons' progress and events by following the page 'West Coast Netball' on Facebook.



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WEATHER

Thursday

Light rain and a moderate breeze
Temperatures
5°C to 6°C.

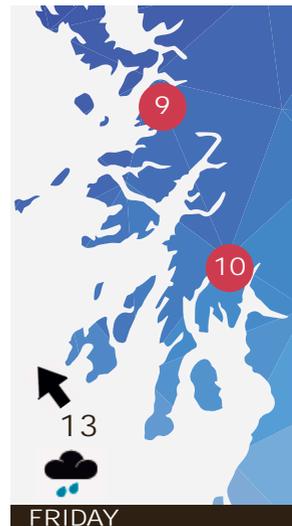
Friday

Heavy rain and a moderate breeze
Temperatures
10°C to 11°C.

Weekend

Outlook

Saturday
Light rain showers and a moderate breeze
Sunday
Light rain and a moderate breeze
Temperatures
9°C to 13°C.



TIDAL INFORMATION

Tide tables for Oban during the week from Thursday January 2, 2020 are listed below with differences for major ports listed on the right. All times are GMT (add one hour BST)

	04.15	1.7	10.09	3.4
Thur	16.53	2.0	22.13	3.1
Fri	05.04	1.9	11.06	3.2
	17.49	2.0	23.13	3.0
Sat	05.59	1.9	12.26	3.2
	18.50	2.0	** ** *	**
Sun	00.40	2.9	06.59	2.0
	13.53	3.2	19.51	1.9
Mon	02.05	3.0	08.04	1.9
	14.54	3.3	20.48	1.8
Tues	03.03	3.2	09.08	1.8
	15.42	3.5	21.37	1.6
Wed	03.50	3.4	10.02	1.6
	16.24	3.7	22.21	1.3

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

Runners race off
Christmas dinner
in boxing day race

Fort's Falcons
flying high in
netball league



Teams taking part in the annual Boxing Day 'friendly' match at Lochaber Rugby Club. Photographs: Iain Ferguson, alba.photos



The Battle of Banavie ends in a diplomatic draw

Lochaber held their annual Boxing Day event on Thursday. The first team were joined by a few of the under-18's team and a few over-18 former players.

The good weather drew a huge crowd out to watch from the hill and a few even joined in for the second half.

The players were piped onto the pitch by under-18's player Ben Fulford before the game got under way.

Under-18's player Ronnie Fulford got the first try for the President's team after a superb lobbed pass out to the right wing.

Alexander Murray John levelled things up for the Captain's team after he broke through and showed his brother Edward a clean pair of heels.

The President's team took an early lead with Daniel

Thomas crossing the line and Ronnie Fulford getting his second try.

Players on both sides were able to show off their skill sets in an open free flowing game and a few of the younger players in particular were impressive but the old boys still showed them a thing or two.

Christopher Simpson and Edward Murray John stretched the Presidents' lead further with a brace of tries before Jonathan McCook got one back for the Captain's team.

Conor Taylor scored next for the President's XV after another rampaging run from the No 8 before Edward Murray John got his second try when he stretched for the line and under-18's player Stuart McQueen got another for the Presidents.

McQueen will be looking

RUGBY

to break into the first team towards the end of the season when he turns 18.

Lewis Morrison showed his speed to get a try for the Captains team before club captain Callum MacDonald got another.

The game ended after Conor Taylor broke through but gave the ball to Daniel Thomas to score his second try and as always a tactical draw was declared.

Lochaber are back in league action on Saturday January 11 when they host Cowal. Kick off is at 2pm and the club hopes you can all make it along as they look to make a winning start to 2020.

**Ronnie Fulford
is tackled by
Alan Hamilton.**



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