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Oban mum launches dyslexia support group

by Fiona Scott
fscott@obantimes.co.uk



An Oban mum is celebrating the strength of her dyslexic son and is looking for like-minded people to follow suit.

Anna Smith decided to learn more about dyslexia and set up a Dyslexia Support Group after her 11-year-old son Rufus said to her: 'I'm just stupid, mum.'

The group is for parents and care providers of primary four to S3 children who have already been diagnosed with the condition, which causes problems with reading, writing and learning.

Far from being 'stupid', Rufus shows exceptional ability in the many tasks he undertakes. It is the mainstream subjects he struggles with and Anna is hoping that, with the right help and encouragement, he and others like him can find their strengths and achieve success.

'Rufus does not enjoy reading and it is a daily battle to

get him to read his homework book – a battle which usually results in both of us getting stressed and upset,' she said.

'He can make incredible Lego models but confuses fives and sevens when he writes. He can type an incredibly imaginative story but has hand-writing that is difficult to read, and he can remember small details from a holiday we took years ago but forgets how to read the time on a clock face.'

'Everyone with dyslexia is different but if we can share what works – progress and concerns in parallel with the good support already being offered in school – it can only mean a better outcome for our children.'

Dyslexia is the most common cause of reading and writing difficulties. At least one in 10, that's half a million people in Scotland, have dyslexia. It is thought to be passed on through families and is a result of neurological differences in the brain.

Continued on page 11

Kerrera lads hailed as champs



Friends Olly Vollum and Eachann MacGregor-Louw were celebrating after successfully swimming the Sound of Kerrera in horrendous conditions on Saturday to raise money for their tiny community. For full story, turn to page 11.

Oban Times' live election coverage

Voters in Argyll and Bute will visit their local polling station today (Thursday December 12) and decide who will represent the constituency in Westminster.

Trying to become the area's Member of Parliament are Rhea Barnes (Labour), Gary Mulvaney (Conservative), Brendan O'Hara (SNP) and Alan Reid (Liberal Democrat).

Once the polls close at 10pm, the voting slips will be transported to Lochgilphead and the count will begin.

The Oban Times will be there throughout the night, keeping online readers up to date every step of the way.

To stay up to date and get all the news and views as it happens, visit www.obantimes.co.uk

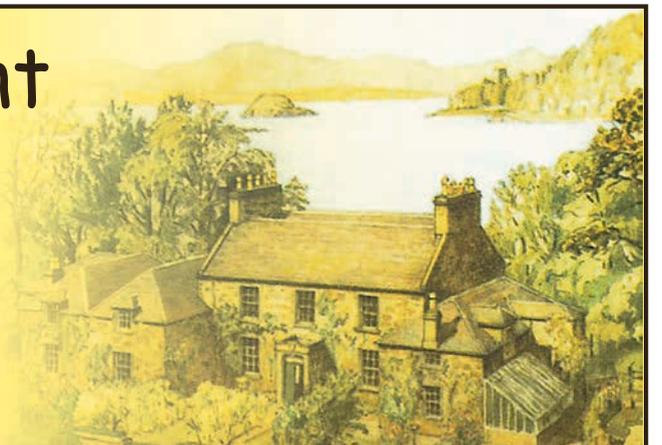
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Bingo raises over £1,200 for MND Scotland



More than £1,200 was raised for Motor Neurone Disease Scotland at a charity bingo event on Friday night. The fundraiser, which was held in The View in Oban, was organised after Brian MacDonald was diagnosed with the disease. Businesses rallied behind the fundraiser and donated to the raffle, which featured prizes such as a £1,000 venue hire at The Brander Lodge Hotel and Bistro; dinner, bed and breakfast at the Brander Lodge; a £300 voucher for 10 people at Cuan Mor; teeth whitening, and more.

Primary schools name gritters for Argyll and Bute

Where will you see Vanilla Ice, Gritny Spears, Captain Gritter Pants and The Grittersaurus keeping the roads free of ice and snow?

In Argyll and Bute – thanks to the imaginations of primary school pupils across the region.

In October, the council took delivery of 17 new vehicles to join its fleet of winter maintenance vehicles.

And staff thought one gritter in each of the council's four areas should have a name. The challenge was put out to our schools and great ideas and fantastic drawings came flooding in.

The winners were:

- Southend Primary School, Kintyre – The Grittersaurus;
- Emily Hutchins, of Strachur Primary – Vanilla Ice;
- Ayla Purfit, of Salen

Primary, Mull – Gritny Spears and;

■ Thomas Meikle, of Colgrain Primary School, Helensburgh and Lomond – Captain Gritter Pants.

Pippa Milne, executive director, said: 'Along with my fellow judge, executive director Douglas Hendry, I was absolutely blown away with all the entries. We had a lot of fun looking through all the names

and amazing drawings and we found it really difficult to choose winners.

'We are very grateful that our pupils took the time, and the effort, to come up with such wonderful ideas. Everyone who took part is very talented and should be very proud.'

Entrants will receive a certificate and the winning names will be put on the vehicles.

POLICE FILES

■ About 8.50pm on Tuesday December 3, in Cruachan Crescent, Oban, an 18-year-old woman allegedly behaved in an abusive manner and assaulted another woman.

Police attended and the woman was arrested, charged, held for court and a report was submitted to the Procurator Fiscal.

■ About 11.40pm on Wednesday December 4, police stopped a car in the Corran Brae, Oban, and the man, aged 22, who was driving was arrested for allegedly driving while under the influence of alcohol. The man was charged with the offence and a report has been submitted to the Procurator Fiscal.

■ About 5.15pm on Thursday December 5, in High Street, Oban, a man, 30, was arrested for allegedly behaving in a threatening and abusive manner towards a woman. He was charged, held for court and a report was submitted to the Procurator Fiscal.

The same man was arrested about 3.25pm on Friday December 6 in Albany Street, Oban, for a separate offence whereby the man allegedly behaved in a threatening and abusive manner towards staff at Oban Social Work Department office on the morning of Thursday December 5.

The man was charged, held for court and a report was

submitted to the Procurator Fiscal.

■ About midnight on Saturday December 7, a man allegedly assaulted a member of staff at Solas, Albany Street, Oban. A man, aged 45, was arrested, charged and a report will be submitted to the Procurator Fiscal.

■ Between 5pm on Sunday December 1 and 10.30am on Tuesday December 3, a container located near to the Fishnish ferry slip, at Criagnuire, Mull, was broken into and two Stihl saws and a Husqvarna chainsaw were stolen.

Police are investigating the incident and are appealing for any witnesses or anyone with any information to contact them on 101 or anonymously through Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.

■ About 9.10pm on Tuesday December 3, in Fionnphort, Mull, a man was allegedly assaulted by another man and subjected to racial abuse. Police are investigating the incident.

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

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Lochgilphead teen spared jail for porn offences

A Lochgilphead teenager who admitted possessing indecent images of children has been spared jail.

Connor Peter Iain Campbell, of 31 Wallace Way, was given an alternative sentence of a community payback order because of his age and previous good character when he appeared at Oban Sheriff Court last week.

The court heard how the 18-year-old had struggled with his emerging sexuality since early adolescence and had been bullied at school because of it, which led to him seeking mental health support.

Campbell admitted to possessing indecent photographs

or pseudo-photographs of children between August 23, 2017, and January 30, 2019.

The court heard it seemed the offences happened at

There were concerns at how Campbell would cope in prison.

the time of his struggles 'in finding himself'. His interest in accessing pornography on the internet began with young males his age but, as he ventured further, it included young children.

His solicitor, Kevin McGinness, said his client ac-

cepted it was not a 'victimless' case and 'the children featured in the images were exploited for a market ... he does express a great deal of shame and remorse that he was part of that market'.

A risk assessment report indicated there were concerns at how Campbell would cope in prison.

After reports, Sheriff Patrick Hughes sentenced him to three years of supervision under social workers, 200 hours of unpaid work to be carried out within 12 months, to be subject of a sexual offences prevention order for five years and be on the sexual offenders' register for three years. Sheriff

Hughes warned Campbell he would face a custodial sentence if he violated any of the orders.

A previous hearing was told the offences came to light after an investigation involving communication between the accused and a witness on social media. Campbell's phone was found to have 150 Category A images, which are the most severe; 121 at Category B; and 669 Category C still images.

There were also 110 videos or moving images found on the accused's device - 75 of those were Category A; 27 were Category B; and eight videos were classed as Category C.

Court orders man to pay costs after homophobic insults

A man who hurled homophobic insults at a police officer after hiding behind a rock has been ordered to pay her £350 compensation.

Lee Johnstone, 42, from 25 Arthur View Terrace, Danderhall, Dalkeith, appeared before Oban Sheriff Court last week and admitted behaving in a threatening and abusive way and uttering abusive and homophobic remarks.

The court heard how Johnstone had been staying at a hotel in town with his partner and another couple on September 28 this year when a disagreement broke out between him and the other man.

Police were called to the hotel to look for him and to arrest him on a matter no longer concerning the court and found him hiding behind a large rock on the beach below Corran Esplanade.

He became abusive and hos-

tile, especially targeting the woman police officer, calling her names in a full litany of insults, the court was told.

Sheriff Patrick Hughes heard how Johnstone had denied causing any damage at the hotel and felt aggrieved he had come under suspicion for it. He has since paid for £500 of damages.

He had also showed his solicitor scars on his wrists from an accident at work that he said had caused him great pain when he was handcuffed by police.

He said the pain was so bad it might have given the officers the impression he was trying to resist arrest but the pain on the scars was excruciating.

The court was told his behaviour during the incident was 'out of sorts' and that he had been drinking. When he sobered up, he was apologetic but had absolutely no recollection of what he had done.



Islanders on Seil are getting ready for the best Christmas bonnet competition.

Hats off to charity bonnet contest

Organisers of a Christmas ceilidh on Seil are challenging people to get crafting and create a winning festive bonnet.

Whether it is tinsel trimmed or spruced with sprigs of holly, there are prizes to be won.

The winners sporting their Crimbo creations on the night will be announced at the seasonal celebration at Seil Island Hall on Saturday December 28 from 7pm.

Tickets will be for sale at the door for £8 and £4 for concessions.

Proceeds are in aid of the hall development fund.

The Hector McFadyen dance band will be providing the music on the night with a raffle and a bar adding to the merriment.

A recent craft fair in the hall made £1,300.

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Young Scots encouraged to consider a career in healthcare

A new campaign is shining a spotlight on a career in healthcare – highlighting the range of opportunities available and encouraging young people to consider it as a suitable profession.

The Careers in Healthcare ‘What did you do today?’ campaign aims to show that nursing is a stable and valued career for life.

This comes after new research underlined that nearly two thirds (65 per cent) of adults in Scotland view nursing in Scotland as a positive career choice.

Evidence from the survey, commissioned by the Scottish Government in partnership with YouGov, also revealed 69 per cent of 18- to 24-year-olds view nursing positively, compared to 61 per cent of 45- to 54-year-olds.

However, the results also show that many people are not aware of the variety and prospects a career in nursing can bring.

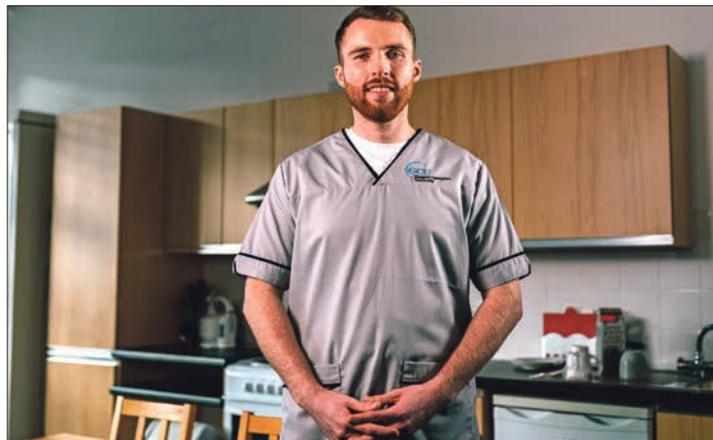
With 30 per cent admitting they were not aware of how many different career paths there are

available to nurses and just over a third (38 per cent) believing one of its greatest benefits is that every day is different.

There’s a huge variety of careers (within nursing, midwifery, the allied health professions and healthcare science) that make a real difference to people’s lives. The campaign will feature real people at the heart of the NHS and show the significant variety of opportunities within healthcare professions including nursing, midwifery, healthcare science and the allied health professions such as radiographers, dietitians and paramedics.

Fiona McQueen, Chief Nursing Officer for Scotland, said: ‘Deciding what career path to follow can be a bit daunting for young people and we want to open their eyes to the opportunities a career in healthcare can offer. Not only are these careers fascinating and varied career paths, but they are stable and well-respected.’

‘A nursing, midwifery, allied



Colin Cruickshank combines studying with working as a nurse.

health profession or healthcare science degree is highly valued, both here in Scotland and all over the world.

‘It’s wonderful to see young people having a positive view of a career in nursing.’

‘It’s one of the most rewarding jobs out there and more people studying nursing-related degrees

go on to find a job after their course than any other degree. For any young person out there, deliberating what to do next and looking for a life-changing career, I would highly recommend that they find out more about the opportunities that exist in healthcare and if they like what they discover, then apply for relevant courses at university.’

Healthcare professional

Colin Cruickshank, 25, is a part-time nursing assistant in mental health and BSc Mental Health Nursing student at Glasgow Caledonian University

As well as being a student, Colin also works as a part-time nursing assistant in forensic mental health assisting with the management and treatment of offenders with mental health issues.

Colin decided to study nursing after working as an assistant in forensic mental health. The work inspired him so much that he applied to do a nursing degree to help him progress to a fully registered mental health nurse. Colin enjoys caring for people and seeing the positive impact he can have on people’s lives.

He loves his job and would highly recommend a nursing degree to young people thinking about what career path to take.

Oban teacher helps create Gaelic course used by thousands

by David McPhee
dmcphoe@obantimes.co.uk



Kieran MacInnes.

Tens of thousands of people have signed up for a free online Gaelic course that was launched last week.

As of Monday night, more than 85,000 people were learning the language on Duolingo – a free online learning app.

It was made possible thanks to volunteers, including a school teacher in Oban.

Kieran MacInnes, acting principal teacher for Gaelic at Rockfield Primary Gaelic Unit (Bun-sgoil Achadh na Creige), even took his laptop on his honeymoon so he could continue to work on the course.

Thanks to Kieran, and other volunteers, it was launched in record-breaking time.

‘I’ve been on board with the course since we began building it seven months ago,’ Kieran told The Oban Times.

(Katie MacInnes) and my uncle (John MacInnes) helped record audio as part of the team.

‘It’s great and really humbling to see the course do so well. Feedback has been overwhelmingly positive so far. I can’t wait to help develop even further in future. I think it’s important that anyone, regardless of the availability of classes or their ability to pay, has the option to learn Gaelic if they choose to.’

‘Providing engaging and effective ways to learn the language can only be a good thing. It has certainly generated a lot of positive publicity for the language. Hopefully, more people will consider learning the language.’

Joy Dunlop, from Connel, who is now a weatherperson for the BBC, also recorded audio for the app.

To begin using the course, visit www.duolingo.com or download the Duolingo app.

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Festive fun at Rockfield Primary's holly tea

Deri France, six, and Iona Richell, eight, had 'snow' much fun at Rockfield Primary School's PTA Holly Tea on Saturday. The youngsters were among the many children enjoying the popular face painting stall, and taking on the snowball challenge run by Katy Richell at the packed event. The festive teas also went down a treat along with the rest of the fun, games and stalls raising funds for PTA projects.

16_T50-rockfieldholly01



In tune with Christmas

Oban Rotary Club hosts its annual carol concert at the Corran Halls this Sunday December 15, from 3pm featuring talent from the area and getting the town into the festive spirit raising funds for good causes.



Save the date!

Developed with Skills Development Scotland, Scotland's Biggest Parents' Evening will see all 21 DYW regional groups partner with local employers to showcase jobs and critical skills for the future through local events across the country. The Oban event takes place in the Corran Halls on January 30, from 4-7pm.

Man fined for careless driving after car hits bus

A man who caused £40,000 damage to the Easdale bus after losing control of his 4x4, has been fined £670.

Daniel Alcol, 35, of 2 The Elms, Glenmore Road, Oban, admitted careless driving on May 10 this year when it happened at Kilmore on a bend.

The West Coast Motors bus had been carrying four passengers and one of them was thrown out of her seat onto the floor, receiving minor injuries when the two vehicles collided.

The bus driver had seen Alcol's vehicle rotate clockwise towards him. Both vehicles ended up blocking the road.

Solicitor Kevin McGinness said Alcol was a highly valued employee of Scottish Sea Farms but losing his licence for more than four months would put his job in jeopardy.

He said in retrospect his client felt he had been driving a bit too fast for the conditions



after it had been raining and the road was still wet. He especially regretted the woman being injured.

Police attributed the incident to Alcol losing control due to a combination of the wet road and that his vehicle was in a mode that power was passing through its rear wheels.

As well as the fine, Sheriff Patrick Hughes imposed seven penalty points on Alcol's driving licence.

'This is a dangerous road and people must stay in control of their vehicles,' he warned.

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Annie Acton and Beth Campbell from Hope Kitchen with some of the knitwear.

17_t50_HopeKnits01

Knitwear from Hope will help vulnerable women in Israel

Knitwear from Oban's Hope Kitchen will help vulnerable people stay warm in Israel.

A group of volunteers have donated hats and gloves to the Red Carpet Nail Centre in Tel Aviv, which operates as a safe space for women who are homeless, in prostitution or struggling with addiction.

Annie Acton, who volunteers at Hope, saw the work the charity does firsthand when she lived in Israel. She said the Red Carpet Nail Centre helps people from all nationalities.

'This is just a gift of love from people who knit in Hope,' Annie added.

'I volunteered at in the centre for one day.

'There is a great need for this - it is cold out on the streets.'

When she told other volunteers about the centre, one woman said: 'We all just wanted to send our love, so we did it with knitting.'

TV tantrum lands man in custody

The owner of a former Polish grocery store in Oban was kept in custody for weeks because he was homeless, a court has heard.

Adam Wilarski, 42, admitted throwing a remote control at a TV in the bedroom at his home at 16 The Greens, Glencruitten Road, and pulling the television to the floor and breaking it on November 17 this year, putting his wife and others in the house in fear.

Oban Sheriff Court heard how the shouting and swearing that followed during the argument with his wife esca-

lated so much that Wilarski's teenage daughter put on a set of headphones to drown it out. His son was also party to what was happening.

The row moved on to Wilarski not having any gainful employment and not contributing to the household. He had run a shop in the town servicing the Polish community but it had closed, causing tensions in the couple's relationship.

It was the next day police were contacted and visited the house, seeing the damaged TV for themselves.

Wilarski was taken into

custody and charged. He had been in custody since November 18 because he did not have a bail address.

His solicitor asked Sheriff Patrick Hughes to admonish her client because of the time he had already spent in custody.

The court was told Wilarski had been married for just under 17 years with children aged 14 and 16.

A bail address was found for Wilarski with the condition he does not go into the family home. His sentence was deferred until March for good behaviour.

Oban's young people are just brilliant!

Around Oban

KAY MCDONALD

editor@obantimes.co.uk

WHO IS THIS?



I'm getting off the Christmas bandwagon this week because of a message on Facebook praising the young people in Oban High School Pipe Band who recently accompanied Skerryvore at the Trad Awards in Aberdeen and saying what wonderful ambassadors they are for Oban, which I agree with wholeheartedly.

A number of these very talented young people have helped me to welcome cruise visitors to the town over the summer months and without fail they have been polite, punctual, friendly and just lovely.

In fact, whenever I have encountered OHS Pipe Band, they have all been a

credit to their families and school, and they are not alone.

There are so many young people doing wonderful things in our community in their own way, from all the sporting teams who put so much effort into their training and playing to bring credit to their team, the solo competitors who slog away

to improve their times and travel so far to take part in events, singers and dancers and musicians who work so hard to perfect their craft and entertain us.

Then there are all those who work away quietly as young carers, helping out at home, volunteers with local groups trying to improve things for others and all the ones just trying to cope with a world that puts such huge pressures on them.

We have such a lot to be proud of in the young people in our community and I think they deserve to hear it a bit more often - they're all wonderful ambassadors for our community.

The photograph last week was of the top of the old Hydro Electric shop at the top of George Street.

No clues this week, but does anyone recognise this man?

Lismore to host first Christmas tree festival

Lismore is branching out to host its first Christmas tree festival.

This Sunday, December 15, will be the grand switch-on in the atmospheric Cathedral Church of St Moluag at 12.30pm.

The Heritage Centre and Cafe will also be open that day from 11am to 4pm serving up festive fare.

On December 21, refreshments will also be served opposite St Moluag's from 11am to 3pm and, on December 22, Christmas treats will be available to sample in the church. The midnight service on Christmas eve will be surrounded by trees and lights. A people's vote will decide the best-dressed tree with prizes to be won.

Donations from the festival will be split between church funds and a charity.

'This is our first Christmas tree festival and the idea has been well supported by the community.

'Both groups and individuals have shown great ingenuity in their ideas for decorations,' said one of the organisers, Rosemary Barry.

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Manhole cover is to be replaced

by David McPhee
dmcph@obantimes.co.uk



BEAR Scotland is set to replace a manhole cover near the Corran Halls in Oban after a man blamed it for causing a crash on his motorcycle.

Karl Hughes from Tiree says his rear wheel slipped on the 'mirror-like' manhole cover at the roundabout on the A85 on Sunday November 24.

Writing to The Oban Times, he said: 'At approximately 3.30pm, I lost control of my motorcycle at low speed at the lower of the two small roundabouts adjacent to the Corran Halls.

'I had just come off the Tiree ferry and was on my way through a very busy Oban. My rear wheel slipped on a polished, mirror like manhole cover that is at the very start of the clockwise turn.'



The accident happened just next to the Corran Halls.

He said he was in 'ferry traffic' travelling at less than 20 mph when his bike flipped and flung him onto the road.

'I suffered a multiple fracture of my left arm,' he added. 'I would, if at all possible, like

to acknowledge my heartfelt thanks to a young gent from, I believe, Dalmally who instantly stopped his car and came to my rescue.

'Not only did he help arrange moving my large mo-

torcycle out of the road but he also took me to A and E.

'I was in quite a state and the man was an absolute star. I wish I knew his name to say thanks now that I am on the mend.

'I think it would be timely to remind folk to watch out for the hazard of poor or sub-standard manhole covers and potholes etc on our roads. I plan to ensure that BEAR get this manhole repaired or removed before somebody else gets injured or worse.'

A spokesperson for BEAR Scotland said: 'We attended the location to carry out a safety inspection and erected temporary signs as a precaution to advise motorists to use extra care. A new manhole cover is expected to be installed.

'Trunk road safety is our top priority and we will continue to monitor the area.'

Thousands of indecent images found on phone

An Oban man who admitted possessing indecent images of children has been sentenced to a community payback order.

Kevin Raymond Hobbs, of 11 Croft Avenue, Oban, first pleaded guilty when he appeared before Oban Sheriff Court in October but returned last week for sentencing.

Sheriff Patrick Hughes sentenced him to two years' supervision under social workers and to carry out 200 hours of unpaid work within 12 months. He was also put on a restriction of liberty order to stay at home between 7pm and 7am for four months, and was made subject of a sexual offences prevention order to last five years as well as going on the sexual offenders' register for two years.

In October, the court heard the 31-year-old's phone had contained 4,297 indecent images, all of which were classed as Category C, the least severe, and were predominantly of female

children between the ages of nine and 15.

In his defence, solicitor Kevin McGinness said at the time of the offence his client had been drinking due to work cutting grass and building a new hotel in the town's harbour area dried up, and alcohol had been a major factor for his offending. Hobbs has since sought help.

Police unearthed the indecent images when they searched his home on January 31, 2019, and seized a number of devices, in particular a Samsung mobile phone found in his bedroom.

Sheriff Hughes said the 'sheer number of images' found on Hobbs's phone was 'a great concern' but pointed out they were at the lowest level of seriousness and, after considering reports, added: 'There's nothing to suggest it is an ongoing issue with you.'

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Members of the Oban Royal Voluntary Service at this year's awards lunch. 17_150_RVS01

Oban volunteers recognised for their long years of service

The dedicated work of five Royal Voluntary Service members was recognised at an awards ceremony last week.

The lunch was held in the Royal Hotel on December 4 and resulted in five people from the Oban branch picking up prizes.

Molly Driver was thanked for 45 years of service, receiving a clasp and citation in the process.

Morven Stewart was gifted

with her 20-year clasp and citation, while Eamon Arthur picked up an accolade for 15 years of service.

Marry MacAulay and Teresa Russell were both given badges for five years of volunteering.

The volunteers help run a cafe in the Lorn and the Islands Hospital in Oban.

Speaking about Molly Driver's 45-year award, Cathy Dolan of the Oban Royal Voluntary Service said: 'She

started because there was a fire at a hotel 45 years ago and she went down to help serve tea and coffee to people involved in it.'

From there, Molly, who is now in her 80s, signed up to the RVS and has been helping out ever since.

'It is fantastic,' Cathy added.

Oban RVS needs volunteers of all ages. Anyone who would like to sign up or find out more, can do so by calling Cathy on 07740 870738.

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OT

Mull man thought police were attackers

A man who lashed out at police after missing his ferry home to Mull has been fined £120.

Garrett Argue, 42, who lives in an unserviced caravan at Fionnphort, Mull, had been shopping in Oban when he missed his ferry home on September 30 this year.

He went for a few drinks then returned to the CalMac ferry terminal where he slumped on a bench to try to sleep it off.

Ferry staff called police but when officers tried to rouse him he sat up, started shouting and swearing and drunkenly lashed out.

Argue was taken into custody but later said he had thought he was being attacked when he woke up.

Sheriff Patrick Hughes said it had been an 'unfortunate incident' and seemed to be 'a one-off'. Argue had no other convictions.

Warm welcome for new Lochnell head

by David McPhee
dmcph@obantimes.co.uk



Lochnell Primary School welcomed its new head teacher last month.

Louise Chisholm, former Kinlochleven Primary School head teacher, has settled in over the past few weeks and was inspired to take up the position after watching the pupils speak about how proud they were of the school.

Children created an online video advertising the vacancy, highlighting all that is good within the school, as well as revealing qualities they would like in a head teacher.

Ms Chisholm told The Oban Times: 'My first impression of Lochnell Primary School was gained through watching the video made by staff and children as part of the head teacher recruitment process.



Ms Chisholm came from Kinlochleven Primary.

'The way in which the children spoke of their sense of belonging and how proud

they were of the school, alongside the staff commitment and teamwork to

improving learner outcomes, prompted me to apply for the post.

'During the selection process, I met with pupils, staff and Parent Council members in the school and it became clear the ethos of the school was built on compassion, kindness and respect.'

Originally from Falkirk, Ms Chisholm, who has lived in Ballachulish for 20 years, has an abundance of experience in a variety of different roles.

Prior to becoming a teacher, she helped run an engineering company, which her husband now manages.

However, she has also worked in everything from health and safety to being a park ranger.

Her diverse experience has allowed her to build transferable skills that she has

brought to her current role.

'Since taking up the post two weeks ago, I have been warmly welcomed by the entire school and local community,' Ms Chisholm added.

'I am grateful for the support shown to me everyone at Lochnell Primary and Nursery as well as Argyll and Bute Council.

'Mrs Alison Ralston, previously acting head teacher, has been wonderful in helping me integrate into the school and it was particularly special to receive a lovely card from Mrs Shirley Mathieson, who had been head teacher for 18 years offering her support.

'I feel both honoured and privileged to be able to take over the leadership of such an inclusive school community and look forward to building upon the successes already achieved.'

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Keira Chamberlain wins a unicorn at Oban and Lorn Lions' Santa meet and greet at the Royal Hotel.

Lion's Santa is a roaring success

Oban and Lorn Lions Club teamed up with Santa at the weekend to help make children's Christmas wishes come true.

The man in red helped by his elves was at the Royal Hotel on Saturday meeting children and

handing out gifts. Among those who met him were twins Grace and Flora MacDougall aged five and their big sister Heather who is seven.

Lucky Keira Chamberlain, seven, a pupil at Rockfield Primary School won a toy

unicorn after guessing its name correctly.

Rainbow Sparkle is now the newest member of the Chamberlain family's Oban household.

For more photographs from the event, visit www.obantimes.co.uk



Busy hands at Dervaig Primary School.

Dervaig Does Christmas

Young craft makers have been getting ready for Dervaig Does Christmas this Sunday coming to the village hall, writes Kathie Griffiths.

Children from Dervaig Primary School, with helping hands from parents, have been busy making hand-made crafts using as little plastic as possible and plan to

sell them at the event in aid of their new playground project.

To find out what plans are in store for the playground, go to the funding page at dervaigprimaryschool.co.uk

The pupils will be running just one of more than 20 craft stalls in the hall at the festive craft day, doors open from 1pm and shut at 3pm.

Man warned to expect jail after court appearance

An Oban man who admitted offences including supplying drugs and selling back stolen gardening tools for a reward, has been warned he faces jail.

Daniel Guy, 45, currently in Edinburgh Prison, pleaded guilty to two theft-by-house-breaking charges, one of re-set and one of being involved in supplying heroin.

Last week at Oban Sheriff Court he was remanded in custody until January 29 for reports and sentencing.

A West Bay flat and Oban Fish and Chip Shop in George Street were two of the properties broken into by Guy on June 20 and July 6 this year respectively.

Staff at the chip shop



had opened up to find a trail of coins leading from the store to the rear of the property, with one of the tills unaccounted for and a cash drawer gone from the other and £300 missing.

On March 16 this year, police raided a house in Quarry Road after smelling cannabis strongly while conducting

door-to-door inquiries for a separate matter.

Nine plastic wraps containing heroin belonging to Guy were found as well as a tick list with names and numbers and £380 in cash. He candidly told police he was selling the 'deals' for £40 and was using the money from the sales to fund his own addiction.

Guy also took garden tools he knew to have been stolen back to West Coast Tool and Plant Hire on July 6 last year, where they went missing from and claimed a £300 reward.

Sentence was deferred to January 29 for reports to be prepared.

Natural history group stays on track

Lorn Natural History Group's December field trip resumes exploration of the Caledonia Way along the Sustrans Cycle Track.

This time members will venture further north than ever before, following the track through the South Ballachulish area.

The trip is this Saturday, December 14, meeting at 10am. The directions to the meeting place are travel north on the A828. About half a mile before the road goes under the Ballachulish Bridge and immediately before the Dragon's Tooth Golf Club, there is a minor road off to the right sign-posted Glenachulish. Take this road and continue for about a mile to the Forestry Commission car park at the end of the road. Meet there (NN 0468 5890).

Anyone going along should bring a packed lunch, hot drink, clothing for all weathers and wear stout waterproof footwear.

Car-share is encouraged.

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David Ross joined the business in 2017, after having worked for R A Clement Associates in Oban for 14 years, and joined up again with his old colleague, Marcus. Initially, David headed up the Dingwall office of Mackay and Co but has now moved to the recently-opened Oban office.

'Oban is where I'm from originally and I've spent much of my working life here. So when Marcus and I talked about opening an office here, I was delighted by the idea. I was pleased to be back in the area, which I am very familiar with in terms of the kind of businesses you

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David has experience in many sectors across industry and has particular expertise in the voluntary sector. 'I have been, and am currently, treasurer for several local charities, which helps immensely when talking to clients as you have seen what it's like from their point of view, which gives a much better understanding of the issues they face. The same issues are often transferable to other types of business.'

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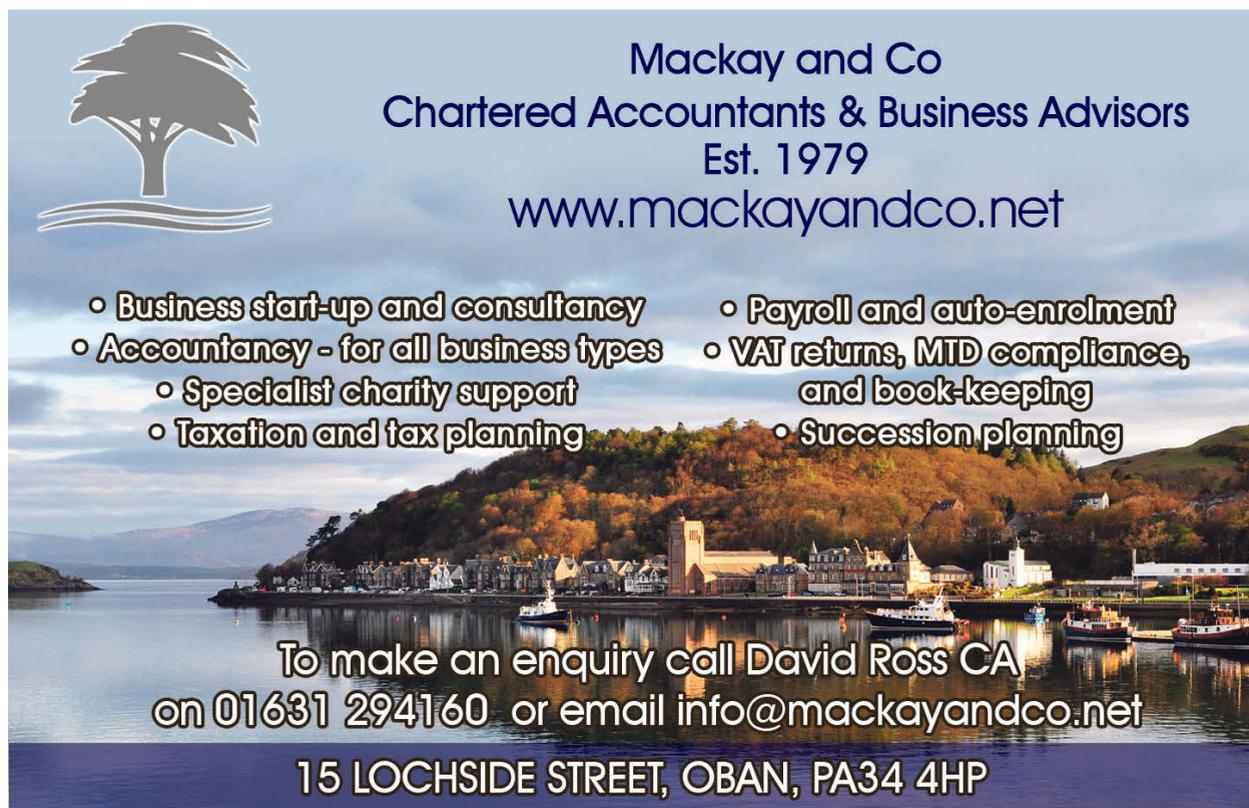
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OT



Oban Distillery senior manager Callum Rew, and operator Patrick Steeman raise a glass to all those who contributed.

Dram good fundraising takes place at distillery

Staff at Oban Distillery have been raising a glass to all those who contributed to their charity tours in aid of Children in Need.

More than 40 members of the public signed up for one of three informal tours on Saturday November 16, raising a grand total of £550.05 in the process.

Distillery operator Patrick Steeman was delighted with the amount raised and now hopes that the Diageo Foundation, run by distillery owners Diageo, will match the total and double the funding.

'It would be great if we could make over £1,000 for this great cause,' said Patrick.

'It really was a great effort from everyone involved.'

Organisers wish to thank Ann Fraser, who helped organise the tours, Shona MacVicar (graphics), Pamela Lochart, Kay McDonald, Oban FM and The Oban Times for spreading the word, Callum Rew (Oban Distillery senior manager) and Deirdre Henderson (Oban Distillery brand manager) for allowing the tours to take place, and members of the Oban public who bought the tickets.

Rockfield Centre awarded £60,000

The William Grant Foundation has awarded £60,000 to The Rockfield Centre (TRC) in Oban, writes David McPhee.

This latest award forms part of a package of funding secured to complete phase two of the capital works on the main building.

This latest cash award will enable Oban Communities Trust (OCT) to keep the capital works at The Rockfield Centre on track for completion in spring 2020.

The William Grant Foundation's vision is for a Scotland where everyone has the opportunity to thrive.

Removing barriers to opportunities and reducing disadvantage is pivotal to the foundation, as is nurturing strengths and talents to protect, promote and sustain culture and physical environment in a way that strengthens communities.

The four main tenets of the William Grant Foundation of health and social causes, youth opportunities, natural and built environment and Scottish culture and heritage are mirrored by The Rockfield Centre's four themes of Arts and Culture, History and Heritage, Education and Enterprise, and Community Wellbeing.

'It will be put to great use to provide exactly the facilities the foundation supports'

Eleanor MacKinnon, project facilitator, said: 'We are delighted the William Grant Foundation has awarded us this fantastic amount. It will be put to great use to provide exactly the facilities the foundation supports.'

Gordon McNab, OCT chair-

man, added: 'The Rockfield Centre is showing there is national support for such a facility in Oban and that we can provide the range of activities that will make a difference to our communities.'

'That's why the community bought the building, and once completed, everyone will reap the benefits from this worthwhile project.'

The work on the former primary school building is being carried out by local contractor TSL and the renovation of the windows and stonework, roof work and ventilation systems is almost complete, with exterior painting well under way.

Internally, the fit-out of the services has begun and, with this funding added to the package, areas such as the lift and external stairs will be completed over coming months.

Fundraising will continue

to support the interior fit out to accommodate the variety of activities planned.

Nick Addington, chief executive of the William Grant Foundation, said: 'The William Grant Foundation is delighted to be supporting the redevelopment of The Rockfield Centre, led by the Oban Communities Trust.'

'The foundation is particularly interested in supporting community assets that deliver strong social outcomes and enrich lives and communities. We recognise the wide benefits that this will bring to people who live in and around Oban and congratulate the trust and the local community for the significant progress they have made.'

The range and diversity of activities at the community huts continues to grow. Check out the website and what's on for details.

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Tobermory Christmas lights switch-on is a hit with residents and visitors

Mull residents enjoyed a busy Tobermory late-night shopping and Christmas lights switch-on recently.

Sophie Cattanach of Isle of Mull Soap Co said: 'There was a fantastic atmosphere in Tobermory. The Main Street was heaving and the mulled wine was flowing!'

She said the annual festive shopping event had increased in size from previous years, adding: 'It was lovely to meet visitors who'd travelled here especially to make a weekend of it. Lots of folk also brought their own cups/plastic glasses, which was a great idea, top-

ping up as they went along. The kids loved the lantern parade, led by the brilliant High School Pipe Band, which was a new addition to the night.'

'Santa's grotto was a huge hit with the kids as always - lots of magic and happy smiley faces. The hog roast rolls and hot waffles with ice-cream were going down a treat, too.'

Tobermory Gift Shop won the best shop window competition, while the island choir Natural Voices kept shoppers entertained, singing their hearts out at the clock and then moving from shop to

shop, with lots of laughter in the distillery.

Sophie continued: 'We even had a special guest appearance this year, our own new kitten Rusty walked himself down to the party and had to be escorted home in the taxi.'

'We are so thankful for everyone who came into the shop to top up on their soaps - we really appreciate the strong emphasis on shopping local and the fantastic community spirit in our town, supporting local families and local causes.'

'Tobermory's Christmas lights are looking beautiful.'

Major milestone for Barcaldine hatchery

The first batch of young salmon produced at Scottish Sea Farms' (SSF) new £55 million Barcaldine Hatchery have been transferred to sea pens.

The young salmon, called smolts, arrived at Barcaldine as eggs back in January of this year. They were hatched and reared using a recirculating aquaculture system (RAS).

They had an average weight of 160 grams – more than double that of smolts grown by the company when using traditional hatchery methods.

SSF's freshwater manager Pål Tangvik said: 'This is a major milestone for all of this year, not just at Barcaldine but across the company. The new hatchery has given us greater control over key factors, including water quality, oxygen levels and speed of flow, meaning we have been able to ensure the best growing environment for the salmon. The result is bigger, more robust smolts that will be better able to withstand the natural challenges of the marine environment. We will also be able to shorten the time

these salmon will spend at sea by up to two months, which will reduce their exposure to these challenges and increase survival rates.'

Owing to the facility's ideal location on the shores of Loch Creran, the young salmon were transferred directly from the hatchery to a well-boat, before being transported to marine farms in the Oban area and Shetland. This removed the need for transportation by road or air.

Operations manager Noelia Rodriguez said the methods at the Barcaldine farm use 98 per cent less freshwater and significantly less energy.

The facility, which includes four incubation units and four hatcheries, has taken more than two years to build and is due to have its official opening in 2020.

SSF managing director Jim Gallagher added: 'We haven't rushed the process. The RAS technology enables us to control with pinpoint accuracy when the salmon are ready to go to sea, giving the fish the best possible experience.'

Kerrera pals' epic swim for charity

Two plucky pals have swum the Sound of Kerrera raising more than £4,000 to improve island life for their tiny community, writes Kathie Griffiths.

Olly Vollum and Eachann MacGregor-Louw, both nine, braved darkness, cold water and a wintry squall to swim 900 metres back home from Gallanach on the mainland on Saturday.

The epic swim hails the boys, born and bred on Kerrera, as the youngest ever swimmers to make the crossing.

So far their Justgiving page has brought in donations from more than 120 well-wishers in aid of an ambitious project that will turn the island's old school into a thriving community centre.

Money has also been pouring in from impressed family and friends boosting funds beyond the boys' wildest dreams – their original target was just £100. On the day, the tide took



Family and friends celebrate the boys' success.

the boys off the straightest route, adding another 300 metres onto their courageous challenge.

Their mums, Gill Vollum and Sheila MacGregor-Louw, swam behind with dads Tim Vollum and Corrie Louw on a paddleboard and in a rib as back-up.

Supporters, including The Oban Times, also travelled

alongside on the ferry cheering them on with a welcoming-party of islanders waiting on the island's jetty.

Despite all their practice in the run-up to Saturday, there was still a few nerves just before getting into the water, said Eachann.

'We were a bit nervous just before we got in the water. We'd only ever swum half-way

across before, then turned back. It's brilliant! We've done it, absolutely brilliant,' he added. And Olly said: 'It feels amazing.'

Aideen Shields, who is co-ordinating the old school community centre project, said: 'The boys are incredible. They've given the project the best Christmas present ever. Their passion and determination to take on the challenge is so inspirational.'

Ferry skipper Phil Salvadore was also impressed. He said: 'It wouldn't have been easy for them in the water. They are a couple of little heroes. I'm so proud of them. You get tri-athletes swimming this sound who couldn't do it as fast as they did.'

The swim took just over 30 minutes.

Donations can still be made via justgiving.com/fundraising/kerrera-kids-swim

Rufus Smith can build complex Lego models but has difficulty reading the time on a clock face.



Oban mum sets up dyslexia support group from P4 to S3 youngsters

Continued from page one
Now that he has been diagnosed, Park Primary School pupil Rufus admits he is much more accepting of his condition and is delighted that his mum is now looking to help others.

'I think it's a great thing she is doing,' he told us.

'It is really important that people know more about dyslexia and how it make some things people take for granted that bit more difficult for us.'

People with dyslexia often excel in certain areas such

a creative thinking, special awareness or the arts, proven by many famous dyslexics such as Einstein, Van Gogh, Walt Disney, Steven Spielberg, Richard Branson, Jamie Oliver and Alan Sugar.

Anna hopes that by bringing parents and carers together, they can share tips on how to support and encourage their children, which can complement the support they receive at school.

'Dyslexic pupils are usually bright but struggle to learn in the standard classroom

set-up,' she added. 'Being a pupil with dyslexia can be challenging, but a completely different approach to learning could help them achieve their potential.'

If parents suspect their child has dyslexia, their first point of contact should be the school so assessments can be undertaken.

Anna wants the group to meet once a term. For more information, text Anna on 07769 322922 or visit the Oban Dyslexia Supporters' Group Facebook page.

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OT

New minister is inducted in ceremony for linked parishes

by Douglas Small
editor@obantimes.co.uk

It was with great pleasure that on Thursday November 28, the linked parishes of St Oran's, Ardchattan and Coll welcomed Willem Jacobus Bezuidenhout as new minister.

Mr Bezuidenhout was inducted at a ceremony in St Oran's Church which was followed by a celebration in Connel Village Hall.

It is three years since the congregation at St Oran's has been without a minister and one year since the congregation at Ardchattan has had a minister.

Willem Bezuidenhout was first ordained in the Dutch Reformed Church in South Africa in 1977 and comes to Oban with an impressive and varied background.

It was in 1989 that Mr Bezuidenhout left the Reformed Church to work in



Willem Jacobus Bezuidenhout, left, is inducted into his new ministry.

South Africa's Department of Foreign Affairs. In 1990, he was a media liaison officer in the office of President F W de Klerk when Nelson Mandela was released from prison. Thereafter there were hugely significant talks between the African National Congress and National Party which have subsequently been universally recognised.

In 1992, after leaving the

Department of Foreign Affairs, Mr Bezuidenhout spent three years as a secondary school teacher before joining the Presbyterian Church in South Africa.

He came to Scotland in 2006 and, after a short period of familiarisation, took up the charge at Balfon Church which was linked to Fintry.

In 2010, Mr Bezuidenhout went to Dumfries and was

inducted as the minister to Kirkmichael, Tinwald and Torthorwald in the Presbytery of Dumfries and Kirkcudbright. He was latterly the minister at Barlanark-Greyfriars Church in Glasgow.

During his time in Balfon, Mr Bezuidenhout was convener of the World Mission and Ecumenical Relations Committee and chaired the South African link.

Throughout his career he has maintained a keen interest in working with whichever community he has happened to find himself. He has particularly enjoyed having a working relationship with local youth services and schools.

The linked churches are deeply privileged that Mr Bezuidenhout has come to be minister and are delighted to welcome him and his wife, Hazel, and their children Calum, Libby and Cara.

NHS Highland chairman position is confirmed

Professor Boyd Robertson has been confirmed in the position of chairman of NHS Highland on a permanent basis.

Announcing the appointment, Health Secretary Jeane Freeman said: 'I am very pleased to announce that after being appointed interim chairman of NHS Highland nine months ago, Professor Robertson will now take up the position on a permanent basis.'

'This is a critical leadership role and Professor Robertson has extensive experience in Scotland's public life, including senior leadership roles.'

'Professor Robertson and the board were tasked specifically with responding to the Sturrock Review's substantive recommendations. This includes the need to take forward a more compassionate and person-centred approach to leadership and governance.'

'This work is well under way and we continue to provide direct support to NHS Highland and to scrutinise



Professor Boyd Robertson.

progress against its action plan.

'The priority, as always across NHS Scotland, is safe and effective patient care, and I am confident that under Professor Robertson's leadership people across the Highlands will receive the excellent level of service they deserve.'

Professor Robertson is a former principal of Sabhal Mòr Ostaig college, the National Centre for Gaelic Language.

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Santa at brought big smiles to small faces at Tobermory.

VIP drops into Tobermory lifeboat station

Tobermory RNLI hosted Santa Claus on Friday November 29, raising £430 for the town Christmas lights fund.

Prior to the arrival of the special visitor, Santa's elves worked hard to transform the lifeboat station garage into a festive grotto. Santa arrived just before the switching on of Tobermory's Christmas lights and in the next two hours met 126

children to give them early Christmas presents.

Upstairs, there was more Yuletide fun with biscuit decorating for the youngsters and mulled wine for the grown-ups.

Speaking exclusively from his base in Lapland, Santa said: 'It was lovely to take time out of my busy schedule to meet the boys and girls from Tobermory and the Isle of Mull. They all told

me that they have been very good this year.

'Thanks to all the grown-ups for donating to such a great local cause. The Tobermory Christmas lights will be a helpful navigational aid when I'm back on Mull on my sleigh on Christmas Eve.'

'A big thank you, too, to my very special helpers from the fundraising group. Ho ho ho!'

Pupils make mystery movie for Film G competition

Pupils at Oban High School had a great time taking part in a fun hands-on learning experience last week as part of a FilmG workshops programme.

It was one of 35 being delivered by FilmG across Scotland, and gave the children a unique opportunity to work with a professional film-maker and actor to make a five-minute short film in Gaelic which they can enter into a competition being run by FilmG.

The FilmG project has been running for 12 years and the youth category has grown beyond all expectation, from 12 films in the first year to 70 youth entries last year and the bulk of these entries come through FilmG's innovative workshops programme.

There are 15 tutors on the FilmG bank, based in many regions, from Lewis, to Glasgow, to Inverness.

Oban pupils were joined by freelance film-maker Hamish



MacLeod and actor David Walker. Hamish works on a range of creative projects for broadcast as

well as for private clients. He is also a member of up and coming Gaelictronica band INYAL.

Oban High Calum Garvin and Calum McLuckie making tough decisions in the edit.

Veteran actor David has starred in numerous Gaelic productions, both on stage and on screen.

Learners and fluent-speaking pupils joined forces for FilmG and filmed their mystery-drama on Lochnell Estate. Oban's film can be seen along with the other entries later this month. The main youth category prize is £1,000 for Best Film.

FilmG project manager Eilidh Rankin said: 'The FilmG workshops programme is a fantastic opportunity for high school pupils to get their teeth into a project and to speak Gaelic outwith the formal classroom environment.'

'We encourage pupils to use their individual talents within the team, with room for everyone to shine. We hope FilmG continues

to uncover budding writers, actors, prop-makers, make-up artists, interviewers, social media officers, camera operators and directors for many years to come.'

Independent film-makers of high school age are also encouraged to go it alone, with a £500 prize available to the Best Young Film-maker, with other awards open to independent entrants as well.

The recent addition of the Best Youth Group Film award – which is open to primary classes and youth clubs for children of primary age – has also been a hit and organisers of FilmG hope to see equally healthy entry numbers this year.

The FilmG project is funded by MG ALBA, and delivered by Cànan Graphics Studio on the Isle of Skye, with Bòrd na Gàidhlig also providing support.

The FilmG deadline is December 10. For more information visit: filmg.co.uk.

MacPhail

ANGUS MACPHAIL

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With a wild blustery wind coming from the south-south-west, I ventured out to the garden as the glow from the rising winter sun was waking the world.

The stinging bite of the cold lashing wind and the strong brew of the coffee being sipped I hoped would give some inspiration in the conjuring of a subject for this week's Oban Times offering.

The caffeine and the cutting cold worked wonders and not one but two subjects came to mind. The first of these was sparked as I looked in the sitting room window and illuminating the view was the warm glow of the Christmas lights round the tree that we erected a few days ago. In the words of the Andy Williams hit from 1963, this is 'the most wonderful time of the year'.

As we near Christmas and the celebrations of the mid-winter solstice, excitement and goodwill of the season are growing and are visible throughout the towns and cities, the villages and the islands. They are also visible on people's faces and in their demeanour.

When we went to a garden centre at the weekend to find

a suitable tree, the place was full of the sounds, smells and sights of Christmas. With seasonal music gently playing in the background, candles burning with the scent of cinnamon and mulled wine, and with trees, tinsel and decorations dominating the shelves, it brought flooding back all the long ingrained warm associations of Christmas.

There was a marked mood of celebration and happiness in the air that is unique to this time of year and is surely good for the soul.

A bit less soothing to the soul but in many ways just as exciting is the second of my wind and rain inspired subjects – the rising anticipation for today's General Election. Over the past few weeks, the prevalence of the election in the mainstream media and on social media has, as one would hope and expect, become the main topical content.

As well as the fascinating and fiery debates crossing and criss-crossing from all angles is the usual slipping of standards of civility among many.

I've always enjoyed a good discussion and debate about politics, but when you

witness otherwise good and sensible people losing their composure and lashing out at those with opposing views, it is a reminder not of the woes of politics, but of the failure of mankind to empathise with the views of others.

The advent of social media has made this more visible among the general public and from the protective cocoon of the keyboard, insults are flying around in a way that was much less common in the 'real-life' of direct human contact.

The running of a country is a complicated operation and there are many ways to approach the myriad issues. The mixing, the clashing, merging and the mangling of the different parties and ideologies is never going to be smooth but it can be civil.

Except in the case of extreme ideologies, there is no place for falling out because of holding a different view from that of your neighbour.

As voters walk through the snow that is predicted for today (Thursday), I hope the goodwill of the season will seep into political discussion and attitudes to those of opposing political stance.

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Feel like you're playing snakes and ladders and hopscotch at the same time while standing in the middle of a minefield? Sounds like you are trying to sort out your pension – or pensions!

The trouble is that no one stays in the same job forever these days; a 'job for life' was something our grandparents had.

If you've got several pension pots, you may get a better deal when you start drawing retirement benefits if you combine them. There are rules that may allow you to take small pots as a lump sum, part of which will be taxed.

It can be difficult to keep track of a number of smaller pots and payments and remember that different rules apply to defined benefit schemes – if ever there was a time to make sure you have expert advice it has to be when you are sorting out your pension.

But who do you get to advise you?

The Pensions Advisory Service (TPAS)

is an independent organisation that is grant-aided by the Department for Work and Pensions.

It works to make pensions understandable for everyone, providing independent and impartial information and guidance about pensions, free of charge, to members of the public.

It provides the telephone service for the Government service, Pension Wise and as such does not offer regulated financial advice or provide detailed tax information.

Neither does it deal with complaints or disputes relating to the State Pension.

You can find help from Pension Wise from other organisations like the Citizens Advice Bureau.



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Your Pension Choice Could Affect your Benefits

Since April 2015, workplace and personal pension savers have been able to access their pension in more flexible ways giving them more freedom to decide what to do with their money. Of course, with more freedom comes more responsibility to make sure you decide on the right option for you. [CAB NAME] says that your decision to access your pension could affect your right to certain benefits and therefore it is really important that pension savers know the pros and cons before making a decision.

Gillian McInnes Manager of Argyll and Bute Citizens Advice Bureau says:

“Deciding to access your pension savings can have an impact on the state benefits claimed by you and your dependents resulting in a reduction in your household income. On the other hand choosing to leave your pension pot untouched could also affect you if you are deemed to be depriving yourself of money purposely in order to increase your benefit entitlement.”



“The rules around benefits are complicated and seeking advice before you make a decision on your pension is crucial. You can get to know your pension options and how they can affect on your benefits by booking a free and impartial Pension Wise appointment at your local Citizens Advice Bureau.”

Anyone aged 50 or over with a defined contribution pension scheme is eligible for a Pension Wise appointment. Call Pension Wise on 0800 138 3944 or go online at www.pensionwise.gov.uk to book your appointment. Or contact your local Citizens Advice Bureau to find out more.

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BUSINESS NEWS

Rapid growth of electric vehicles and low carbon technology in Scotland

Northern Scotland's roads could see 116 times the number of electric vehicles by 2032, according to Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks (SSEN).

The future electricity scenario analysis, undertaken by Regen, has mapped out the potential impact of meeting the country's climate change commitments and what it means for SSEN's licence area north of the central belt, including the Scottish islands.

The study provides a snapshot of what the energy system might look like in 2032 in four different scenarios – Community Renewables, Two Degrees, Consumer Evolution and Steady Progression – outlined by the system operator, National Grid's Future Energy Scenarios framework.

Stewart Reid, head of Future Networks at SSEN, said: 'This study will help us understand and prepare for the changing way we'll be using electricity in the future and the impact it will have on the electricity network.'

'With one in two homes potentially driving an electric vehicle by 2032, up from only 3,500 currently, it's crucial Scotland's ambitious 2045 net zero target is met with action now. At SSEN we are working to manage this transition, so nobody is left behind.'

Islay adventure firm makes tourism splash

Islay's exclusive wildlife experience has received a five-star grading from VisitScotland.

Islay Sea Adventures, based in Port Ellen Marina, was upgraded from a four-star grading by the national tourism organisation's Quality Assurance (QA) Scheme in recognition of its exceptional visitor experience.

The QA Scheme is a benchmark for quality across the tourism industry and operates across accommodation, visitor attractions and food sectors.

The business becomes the fifth five-star wildlife experience in Argyll and Bute following improvements made to its website and incorporating the use of digital tablets into their wildlife tours.

The boat tours give visitors the chance to see the spectacular range of wildlife offered by the coast and waters of Islay. These include seals, porpoises and an abundance of seabirds, as well as the occasional sighting of a sea eagle.

Four tours are available, including nature watching in a special conservation area and a visit to Corryvreckan, the world's third largest whirlpool. Fishing tours are also on offer as well as a seafood foraging experience.

As well as its spectacular wildlife offering, Isle of Islay is also known as the whisky island with a remarkable nine distilleries. Visitors



Islay Sea Adventures' skippers Harold Hastie and Alex Campbell, left, VisitScotland regional director David Adams McGilp and skippers Neil Smith and Angus Newman.

Photograph: VisitScotland

can see Laphroaig, Lagavulin and Ardbeg from the unique viewpoint of the sea when on a tour.

Angus Newman, a skipper for Islay Sea Adventures, said: 'We are delighted to receive

this award from VisitScotland. It is a testament to the hard work of the whole team in the past year to enhance the visitor experience we offer.'

Visit www.islay-sea-adventures.co.uk

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West Coast and islands well represented as 2020 Scottish Rural Awards shortlist announced

A host of businesses from the West Coast and Outer and Inner Hebrides are among the finalists in the 2020 Scottish Rural Awards.

The hospitality and tourism initiative categories have done particularly well, with four out of the 10 shortlisted Tourism Initiative finalists coming from the islands: The Colonsay Festival of Spring (Colonsay), Eilean Dorcha Festival (Benbecula), Uist Gifts and Information (Uist), and HebHolidays (covering the Outer Hebrides).

Taking five out of the 12 shortlisted businesses in the Hospitality Award were: The Three Chimneys (Skye), Glenegedale House (Islay), Tigh na Mara Guesthouse (Coll), The Coll Hotel (Coll) and RiverBeds Luxury Wee Lodges (Ballachulish).

Arran's prestigious Auchrannie



Comedian and farmer Jim Smith will host this year's awards.

Resort has been shortlisted for the Best Rural Employer Award.

The Wee Isle Dairy on Gigha, the only dairy shortlisted in its category, and Salar Smokehouse in South Uist are both finalists

for the Best Scottish Artisan Food Award. The new eco distillery Nc'nean Distillery at Drimmin, by Lochaline on the Morvern peninsula, is a finalist in the Most Sustainable

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

The winner and runner-up for each award will be unveiled at the Scottish Rural Awards ceremony and gala dinner hosted by comedian Jim Smith at the Glasgow Hilton on April 2, 2020. Early bird tickets for the event are available until December 20, 2019, here.

Those who have made special contributions to the Scottish countryside will also be honoured with two separate accolades: the Rural Hero Award and the Lifetime Achievement Award.

Browse the full list of Scottish Rural Awards finalists at www.scottishruralawards.org

HIE help Bute firm to expand and create jobs

A family-run business on the Isle of Bute is embarking on a £330,000 expansion project that will double its workforce and boost turnover.

Port Bannatyne Marina Limited has secured £90,000 from Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE).

The marina currently provides 80 permanent berths, 25 visitor berths and repair facilities for boats up to 13.5 metres.

The expansion will see the installation of a new slipway and hoist to accommodate lift-out of larger vessels up to 25 tonnes. The company will also upgrade the toilets and showers so they are fully accessible, and create a new drying area and administration office.

The project will enable the marina to attract visitors looking for a higher standard of facilities, and secure more maintenance contracts for larger vessels. It will provide security for the existing four employees and create a further four posts over the next three years.

John Stirling, Port Bannatyne Marina director, said: 'Improving and expanding the services we offer means we can keep pace with the changes. Support from HIE is great news for us, great news for our customers and great news for Bute.'



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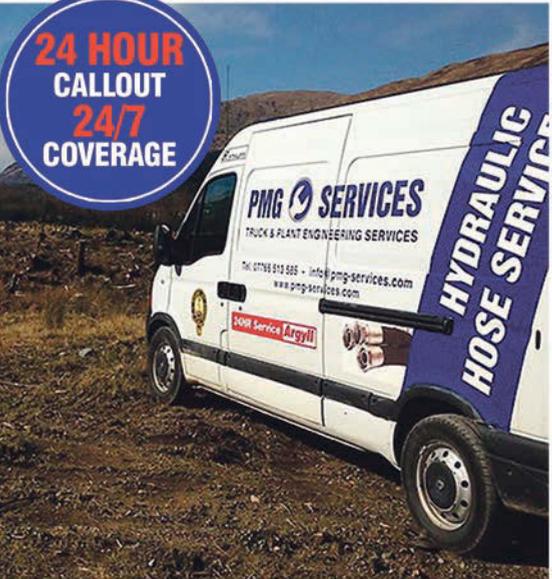
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Tom Weir statue site targeted by callous thieves

In the run up to the fifth anniversary of the unveiling a statue in honour of Scotland's most loved mountain man, Tom Weir, the site where it is located at Balmaha on Loch Lomondside, was targeted by thieves.

They broke into donations posts and stole funds earmarked for maintaining the popular statue and associated picnic area.

The theft of the money was discovered by visitors to the site who immediately reported it to the proprietor of the adjacent Oak Tree Inn, Sandy Fraser, who looks after the popular site on behalf of conservation and heritage charity, the Friends of Loch Lomond and the Trossachs and the Tom Weir Memorial Group.

Sandy said: 'This is very sad news and a setback for the efforts to raise funds to maintain this hugely popular site. Hopefully, the police will be able to track down the thieves who are undermining the great work of voluntary groups in honouring the memory of Tom Weir who did so much to popularise the great outdoors.'

James Fraser, chairman of the Friends, added: 'We are very disappointed the Tom Weir site has been targeted by thieves who used bolt cutters to remove padlocks from three donation posts.'

'Fortunately, we regularly empty the donation posts so the amount stolen will not have been substantial but, nonetheless, this thoughtless act serves as reminder that we need to remain vigilant and increase our efforts to protect this very special heritage site which has been enjoyed by almost a million visitors over the past five years.'

The Tom Weir site, which incorporates a statue of Tom, a mountain garden and a picnic area beside Balmaha Bay on the lochside is visited by around 200,000 visitors a year. Organisers are busy preparing to mark the millionth visitor in the run up to the fifth anniversary of the statue unveiling on the December 29 which is also the 105th anniversary of Tom's birthday.

A visit to historic Kilmartin

Morvern Lines

IAIN THORNER

ian.thorner@btinternet.com



On a beautiful day last month, a friend and I took the road from Morvern to Kilmartin to renew an interest in the history and antiquities of this special part of Argyll.

There were three sites in particular that we wanted to see – the parish church, the stones and grave markers in its surrounding graveyard, and the hill fort of Dunadd.

We first visited the museum craft and book shop in search of a hot drink after the journey. Moving quickly across to the adjacent church, a stark notice on the door told us that, although the building had become surplus to requirements by the Church of Scotland, entry to see the medieval crosses which had been taken inside from the graveyard for their protection, was still possible.

Worse was to come when we heard from a local resident the extraordinary revelation that plans for a staggering £7 million redevelopment of the museum do not include the nearby church which is as much a part of the cultural heritage of the glen as the Neolithic and Bronze Age monuments the museum clearly seeks to capitalise on. How odd!

The Reverend Angus Macleod, the Church of Scotland minister for the area, writing in 1952 for the New Statistical Account for Scotland, said with pride that Kilmartin Parish Church was one of the finest in the whole of Argyll, both for its architectural appearance and its interior neatness; it was built practically on the site of a church erected in 1601, although some historians maintain there was a place of worship on the same footprint stretching back to the time of St Martin, an Irishman who has been linked with Iona and St Columba.

The present church was designed by the London-based architect, Joseph Gordon Davis, and built in 1834-5 in the Gothic style. It has been described by some architectural purists as 'gawky' but that depends on the point of view. Be that as it may, the spacious interior – with its fine stained-glass window in the north aisle, Jesus, the Light of the World, by A Ballantine and Son, the prominent Edinburgh firm of decorators and stained glass-makers, circa 1905; the slender four-bay arcades and their stone face-masks; the laird's loft; several white marble tablets let into the walls commemorating local statesmen,



soldiers and founders of the British Empire; the pulpit with its lectern which can be raised or lowered by a winding mechanism to suit the height of the preacher; and a fine timber panelled ceiling, all support the reason for it being listed by Historic Environment Scotland (HES).

Unlike some other churches in Argyll, which have already fallen victim to the view held by the trustees of the Church of Scotland that all churches should be sold as soon as the Sunday collections fall below a certain level, the spacious and well-lit interior of Kilmartin church lends itself well to displays, interpretation and educational talks.

Why, we wanted to know, isn't this building being bought by the museum group whose stated plans include space for the local community and other organisations to deliver cultural activities and an array of temporary exhibitions? It certainly looks much more attractive and in keeping with the local landscape than the dazzling-white and glass palace

shown in the redevelopment drawings and montages.

HES has designated the collection of carved stones surrounding Kilmartin church a Scheduled Monument because it is one of the largest in the West Highlands, with at least 113 recorded stones. According to the wording of the designation, these stones have the potential to contribute greatly towards our understanding of West Highland sculpture and religious art, and the character of funerary monuments in general.

The largest group of carvings displayed at Kilmartin are grave slabs dating to the 15th and 16th centuries. They consist largely of long tapered slabs of local stone and display a number of motifs typical of West Highland sculpture, such as effigies of both warriors and ecclesiastics, combinations of intricate scrollwork and interlace, and detailed swords with edges and borders defined by dogtooth or nail head patterns, as well as roll mouldings. Some have had 'Poltalloch' carved on them. The story



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martin Glen



Kilmartin Parish Church built in 1834-5 and one of two gruesome winged angels of death carved on the lid of the Rev Archibald Malcolm's tomb. Photographs: Iain Thornber



Kilmichael who died in 1685 aged 80, bears the following text: 'Many were the poor he led to Heaven, with steadfast heart, with steady voice and profound faith. He poured forth his life, made glorious death, and unlocked the gates of Paradise. He displayed unwavering grace, enjoyed a blessed life and met a peaceful end.' Not a bad epilogue for any clergyman.

My favourite is a monument built into the east wall of the churchyard bearing a Latin inscription which, when translated, reads: 'Mr William MacLachlan, rector of Kilmartin, desires that his mortal remains, and those of his wife Grisel MacGilchrist and their children, should lie in this resting place as spoils of death. 1686.'

William, an Episcopalian, died in Ireland in or after 1690, having deserted his charge for not conforming to Presbyterianism and is best remembered for losing one of the minute books of the Synod of Argyll. His wife, mentioned in the inscription, belonged to a family which produced some of the earliest lawyers in Argyll. Not all his children are buried at Kilmartin. Margaret, who married Alexander MacDougall, tutor of Gallanach, who died in 1737, aged 57, is buried at Killelan on the island of Mull.

Before leaving Kilmartin, we heard that a local group has expressed an interest in acquiring the former church as a community hub. Good luck to them but given the cost of heating and maintaining so large a building, their tenure cannot be expected to last. It is clearly incumbent on the trustees of the Church of Scotland, the Kilmartin Museum Redevelopment Group and other stakeholders to work together with the local group to save this outstanding parish church for the nation.

goes that they were found on Poltalloch estate and were defaced on orders of the factor. Why is it that factors always get blamed for their employers' misdemeanours? One of the long recumbent slabs which looks medieval has a coat of arms for a member of the Malcolm of Poltalloch family but as it was granted in 1817 long after the deceased had died, it is obviously a mid 19th-century fake.

Of particular interest is the large cross situated in the church which shows the Crucified Saviour on one side and Christ in Majesty on the other. Although the figure of Christ is not unknown in medieval sculpture, this example is extremely unusual in that it is executed in the West Highland tradition.

Other stones of interest mark the graves of the family of James Gow, the farm manager of Poltalloch Estate who was brought from Perthshire in 1796 to supervise agricultural improvements. Another commemorates his son James who died in 1837 aged 33.

A slab to Mr Archibald Malcolm, minister of

DOWN MEMORY LANE

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



This splendid photograph was brought in to us by David White from Lismore, and shows the cast of Crusoe's Courtship, produced by Oban Parish Church Dramatic Club in December 1935.



This cheery photograph from our archive of 1996 has little information other than that the children are pupils at Ballachulish Primary School. Can anyone tell us more?



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LETTERS

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Make sure your vote counts in crucial General Election

This is a momentous day in the United Kingdom, as the country goes to the polls for a General Election.

The national news media have debated in depth all the issues identified by the various parties, with very obvious attention being focused on a couple of controversial concerns namely Brexit and climate change.

There are, of course, other major subjects for debate not the least of which here in Scotland is the desire or otherwise for a second referendum on independence – either within or outwith the European Union.

Here in Argyll and Bute, there is a four-horse race between the SNP, Conservatives, Labour and the Lib Dems. We do not presume to advise you for whom to vote but we would urge everyone who is entitled to vote to ensure they do so. It is a right and privilege that has been hard won.

Swim is an astonishing achievement for boys

It was, quite simply, an astonishing achievement by two nine-year-old lads.

For Olly Vollum and Eachann McGregor-Louw to become, we think, the youngest swimmers to ever cross the Sound of Kerrera was remarkable – and all the more so for being done successfully on a cold day of foul weather.

As we reported last week ahead of the attempt, the boys planned to swim from the mainland 600m across open sea to their island home, all in support of the big Kerrera project to create a new island community centre.

They smashed it and raised thousands of pounds for the cause into the bargain. Well done to both of you.

Middle-aged men in West are in no position to lecture

Professor Colin Davidson epitomises the views of many middle-aged men who got us into the climate and ecological crisis in the first place.

According to him, greenhouse gas emissions are directly related to the world's growing population. This is simply not true. Even though the human population's rapid expansion is an important issue that needs to be addressed, it is excessive consumption by privileged people in the west that is the overarching driver of greenhouse gas emissions. The richest 10 per cent of the world's population produce 50 per cent of global emissions.

I have made personal changes to reduce my own carbon footprint, but this will not solve the problem. Individual changes are important, but we can't think of them as substitutes for the systemic change that is needed.

With respect to the professor's point that striking from school will not achieve anything, staying in school didn't prevent previous generations from messing up the planet. I don't think older people are in any position to lecture us about our efforts to do something to tackle the climate and nature emergencies.

**Holly Gillibrand, 14,
Youth climate striker, Fort William.**

Fish farms research and new boat are not enough

How kind of Scottish Sea Farms to invest in research and a new boat to enable better 'treatment for gill health issues' (The Oban Times, December 5). If only they didn't put the poor fish in conditions which create these serious problems in the first place.

So before you cheer too loudly, think about where all these medicines end up – in our seas or on your dinner plate?

It's true 'fish welfare and survival' needs to improve. Fellow farmers *Mowi lost 737,000 salmon – that's 2,600 tonnes – from local farms in a three-month period recently, due to algal blooms and fish health problems.

Scottish Sea Farms themselves reported 47 instances of fish deaths, totalling 356,082 fish during 2017, but by no means all of these were from gill health issues. There are other concerns.

'Water quality' may be 'monitored daily', but then it surely needs to be with so many treatment chemicals, waste fish food and

YOUR PICTURES



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

obantimes.co.uk, post it to The Editor, PO Box 1, Oban, PA34 4HB. Alternatively, hand it in to our offices in Crannog Lane, Lochavullin Industrial Estate, Oban, or to our office in

fish excrement going from the farms to the sea. There wasn't really a problem until the farms produced one. Admittedly, the more dangerous substances are restricted, but not 'harmless' ones like hydrogen peroxide (that's bleach, to you and me), which is unregulated and can be used in large quantities.

Other countries (Denmark and Canada for instance) are taking serious action over these problems, such as phasing out open cage farms. Maybe we should examine why they

are doing this. *(Mowi data quoted from Ian Roberts, director of communications for Mowi Scotland; Scottish Sea Farms data from FOI to Scottish Government via Marine Scotland).

Dennis Archer, Gallanach Road, Oban.

Lismore ferry service should be funded and saved

I found the letter from Ian Reid about the Lismore Ferry quite extraordinary as he



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High Street, Fort William. This week's photograph was by Maurice Wilkins, who said: 'Taken with my Nikon D7000 on a breezy day with such wonderful light against a dark sky.'

appeared to have no direct links with Lismore but felt qualified to pronounce on an island community's future.

I, too, do not live on Lismore and am therefore not one of the 190 people who must vacate the island daily, but as the GP for the Appin Lismore practice for 30 years, I used the Port Appin-Lismore ferry four times a week routinely and many more times in urgent or even emergency situations. There were times when weather was extreme but the ferry man

never hesitated and there were times when life threatening situations were significantly reduced. On the ferry, I often met the vet, social worker, police officer, minister or various administrators, as well as the 50,000 visitors enjoying the unique heritage of Lismore with its cathedral church and wonderful heritage centre, Comman Eachdraidh.

A recent house fire on Lismore was massively contained for neighbouring properties because the Appin fire brigade were able to access the island rapidly; they can also provide cutting equipment rapidly.

Beyond this, the ferry allows a host of people to live on the island and work on the mainland in a variety of jobs, including the Pier House and the Appin Community Cooperative.

Should the ferry perish – not as a whim of prosperity as Mr Reid suggests but as a fixture of centuries of lifeline services – this unique island would be endangered, while millions of public money are poured into trying to establish a viable community on Ulva, laudable as that is. Lismore is a totally viable and cherished traditional community which must be supported by the proper funding of all Hebridean ferry services and not leaving Argyll and Bute alone to fund.

The Barnett Formula gives 25 per cent extra funding to Scotland to fund the geographical problems of the west of Scotland and not to fund Edinburgh trams etc.

(Dr) Iain McNicol, Port Appin.

Saddened to read of Jock Turner's unfair treatment

I read with interest the report in your shinty news about Jock Turner standing down as chieftain and note with some sadness that Jock retires as the first chieftain in my memory never to present the Camanachd Cup to the winning captain if they served for two years.

I missed very few finals from 1956 until I stopped playing in the late 1970s and it was always the chieftain who presented the cup and medals.

With MacDonald and Muir's sponsorship, it was decided to alternate the sponsor one year and chieftain the next. That carried on until after 2000 or until Jock became chief. I would have thought this would have been recognised at meetings and he would not depart with this dubious distinction. I hope John MacKenzie is not treated as unfairly.

John Paterson, ex-Kyles Athletic, Kirn, Dunoon.

Beachd Ailein

ALLAN CAMPBELL

editor@obantimes.co.uk



Saoil an robh rianadairean NATO a' smaoinneadh air teachdaireachd sith na Nollaige nuair a chuir iad air dòigh coinneachadh aig toiseach An Dùbhlachd ann an Lunnainn? Bha iad a' comharrachadh seachd bliadhna bhon a chaidh a' bhuidheann a stèidheachadh an dèidh uabhasan dà chogadh mòr fhulang taobh a-staigh trithead bliadhna.

Ann an 1949, le mothachadh cràiteach air na milleanan a chailleadh agus an ùine mhòr leigheis a bha roimh gach dùthaich air an tug na blàir sin buaidh, chuir NATO sith mhaireann dha na dùthchannan a tha an nàbachd chinn a-tuath a' Chuain Shiar roimhe mar amas.

Ged nach deach aig a' chaidreachas air sin a' choileanadh gu buileach chaidh aig na buill air mòran eas-aonta eadar-nàiseanta a chothromachadh le gleustachd deasbaid thar nam bliadhnaichean. Cha b' iongnadh mar sin gum bithte a' sùileachadh gum biodh ceannardan nan dùthchannan fa leth a' tighinn gu coinneamh Lunnainn le rùn còrdadh agus co-rèiteachadh mar a bhiodh feum. Tha an t-sith phriseil

ann an suidheachadh cugal-lach, le armachd niuchalach a' bagairt sgrìos nas miosa na dad a chunnacas riamh.

Ach an àite leithid sin de lèirsinn chunnacas cuid de cheannardan le àrdan agus ladarnas a' cur euchdan NATO ann an suarachas, agus a' call sealladh air na dleastanasan eadar-nàiseanta a th' orra fhèin mar stàitirean. 'S minig a tha mi air faclan mo sheanar a thogail an seo roimhe, gun dèan amadan sam bith blàr ach gur e duine glic a ni sith! Dhealaich iad fo sgleò nach eil a' toirt cus misneachd air co-obrachadh dealasach airson math an t-saoghail, agus is bochd sin is còmhraidhean air a bhith a' dol aig an aon àm san Spàinnt air suidheachadh àrainneachd an t-saoghail agus agairt èiginneach làidir ga dhèanamh gun co-obrachadh dùthchannan an t-saoghail còmhla gus a' phlanaid a ghleidheadh.

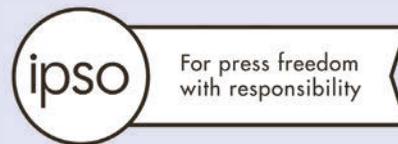
Gu mì-fhortanach, aig an ìre seo co-dhiù, saoilidh mise nach eil cus misneachaidh ann am modh-giùlain chuid de na ceannardan as cumhachdaiche, agus tha olc eile cuideachd a' nochdadh às ùr a tha na dhragh mòr.

Tha casaidean gràin-cinnidh air a bhith gan cur às leth caochladh phàrtaidhean phoilitigeach san dùthaich seo, agus ma ghabhar ri giùlan luchd-leantainn spòrs mar sgàthan air coimhearsnachdan tha e follaiseach gum bheil gràin-cinnidh agus faisisteachd a' fàs am measg luchd-taice ball-coise gu h-eadar-nàiseanta. 'S e teachdaireachd gu math dubhach a th' aig ceannard UEFA is e ag ràdh gum bheil an trioblaid aingidh seo a' sior dhol am meud.

Nuair a smaoinicheas sinn air ais air an dàrna cogadh cha b' iongnadh am fiosrachadh seo a bhith na adhbhar dragha, agus tha e tur ceart dhuinn a bhith a' sùileachadh ghluasadan làidir agus toiniseil bho cheannardan NATO agus eile gus an t-sith, agus an àrainneachd, a dhion.

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

Allan Campbell is president of An Comunn Gaidhealach and a member of Bòrd na Gàidhlig.



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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OT

DISTRICT NEWS

MULL

Calling all pantomime lovers in Bunessan: the Takeaway Theatre Company will be performing Donald Where's Yer Troosers? today (Thursday December 12).

The panto will run from 1.30pm until 2.30pm in Bunessan Hall.

The event is open to everyone and costs £5, payable at the door, with all proceeds going towards the cost of the show.

APPIN

Appin Community Transport Scheme is hosting its Christmas afternoon of coffee, cakes and carols.

It will be held on Sunday December 15 in Port Appin Hall from 2pm until 4pm.

LISMORE

Musicians on Lismore will showcase their talent on Saturday December 21 for this year's winter concert.

Organised by Lismore Voices, the concert will be held in the island hall, with doors opening at 7.30pm.

There will be mulled wine and mince pies, however, it's a BYOB (bring your own bottle) event.

Donation entry in aid of hall funds.

Lismore Primary School is inviting the community to this year's Christmas play.

A Place for a Baby will be performed in Lismore Hall on Friday December 13 at 2pm.

Seasonal refreshments will be served after the performance.

STRATHFILLAN

A police report was given at Strathfillan Community Council's November meeting.

The officer, who could not attend, but submitted a report, said there were 27 calls in the Strathfillan area.

They included: 10 road traffic related; four planned shoots; three possible drink drivers; and one rowdy resident.

The constable said: 'Nothing of

Cafe helps flush away poverty



Professor Iain Woodhouse, Dr Peter West OBE, Sarah Heward, Alan McColm, Charles Mair, Henry Kadzuwa and Karen McIntyre.

Tyndrum's Real Food Cafe is feeling flush after funding 100 toilets in Malawi.

As well as its work to raise £6,000 with charity Toilet Twinning, the cafe has just been accredited as an official Toilet Twinning village.

A Justgiving page, social media pushes and other promotions in the cafe helped bring in the funds needed, including limited edition cupcakes being sold on National Fish and Chip Day.

To mark the achievement, the cafe team were joined by Dr Peter West OBE, the Scottish Consul in Malawi; Iain Woodhouse, Professor of Applied Earth Observation at the University of Edinburgh; and Henry Kadzuwa, forestry officer and GIS unit head for the government of Malawi and

currently a PHD student at the University of Edinburgh.

Sarah Heward, co-owner of the Real Food Cafe, said: 'It is hard to believe that 2.3 billion people do not have access to a clean toilet, something that we take for granted here in the UK. At the beginning of 2019 we wanted to reach 100 toilets by the end of the year, and I am absolutely delighted we have reached our goal. We will continue to support Toilet Twinning, a fantastic charity working tirelessly to support some of the poorest communities. I hope that one day I will visit Malawi to see the fantastic work of the Toilet Twinning team.'

Lorraine Kingsley, CEO of Toilet Twinning, added: 'We are so grateful for all the Real Food Cafe has done to inspire its customers

to support its appeal to twin 100 toilets in Malawi. We hear stories all the time of how a family's life has completely changed beyond all recognition through something as simple as learning how and where to build a toilet, and about hygiene practices such as washing your hands before you eat.

'The Real Food Cafe has made Toilet Twinning a true community effort, and there is no doubt that the lifesaving benefits of their fundraising efforts will bring lasting, far-reaching transformation to communities in far-flung places.'

Malawi was chosen partly due to co-owner of the cafe Alan McColm's work in Malawi, building sustainable management systems and the strong Scotland-Malawi partnership.

major importance, however, I did attend to the serious road accident outwith our area north of Tyndrum to assist Oban colleagues.

'This was declared a major incident due to the number of casualties which involved two hospitals trauma helimed and Coastguard heli-

copter and multiple police and fire appliances. One driver was killed.

'[The] three mountain rescues - one was nothing and it sorted

itself out and the other two were breakages of limbs on Ben Lui and out towards Beinn a Chroin.

'One trend, not locally, has been identified: don't leave your car keys on a table adjacent to the front door as the MO of fishing them out with a pole and stealing the car parked in the driveway has occurred in other divisions.'

WESTERN ISLES



Alasdair Allan, MSP, above, for Na h-Eileanan an Iar, has hit out during a debate in the Scottish Parliament at the unjustifiable delivery charges islanders face.

Dr Allan pointed out to Holyrood on Wednesday last week that many islanders often have little option other than to rely on online shopping.

The power to regulate parcel delivery surcharging is reserved to the UK Government.

However, despite these limits on its own powers, the Scottish Government last year launched its own 'Fairer parcel deliveries: action plan'.

This will develop an interactive data hub to measure the fairness of delivery pricing, improve transparency, celebrate best practice by delivery companies and make it easier for consumers to know and exercise their rights.

Dr Allan said: 'Islanders rely on being able to purchase items online that we cannot easily pick up locally. However, the Western Isles continues to be one of the worst places affected by retailers setting arbitrary and unjustifiable delivery surcharges.'

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At random

MARTIN LAING

mlaing@obantimes.co.uk



Bookends pop up at Kilmore soup lunch



Kilmore Village Hall hosted a delicious soup lunch on St Andrew's day when the venue was filled to the brim with hungry folks on a chilly day. As well as scrumptious cakes to follow the soup, there was an array of wonderful books brought by Bookends Festival, Benderloch, which hosted a pop-up at the event. Kilmore Village Hall is in need of a kitchen upgrade and this is the first of many events to savour as funds are raised for this venture. The photograph shows residents and visitors to Kilmore enjoying their soup round the table with Bookends organisers in the background.

Coining it in

I mentioned here a few weeks ago the somewhat unlikely tale of how regulars at a pub near Stirling had taken on the cause of raising money for Oban lifeboat.

It is, I think, worth another nod as the splendid customers of the Forester's Arms in Cambusbarron, a landlocked little village, have continued to embrace the campaign and have now filled countless Betty's Pots.

The initiative asks people to donate 5p coins in commemoration of Betty Frith, who was honorary treasurer for more than 20 years at the Hertford branch of the RNLI before she died. Other lifeboat stations have taken up her fundraising idea and, in April, Oban was one of the first in Scotland.

There are a number of Betty's Pots – the tiny jam jars found in B&Bs and hotels – on the bar in the Forester's, a pub I frequent occasionally, and I've now emptied them several times and brought the proceeds back to Oban.

The guys and gals have willingly risen to the challenge, encouraged with vigour by the incomparable manager Kirstie Inglis. Brilliant effort by all involved.

Tree-mendous

There is a public Christmas tree in Oban that many residents will be completely unaware of as it is located just near our office on the corner of Crannog Lane and Lochavullin Road.

It looks – or looked – absolutely fantastic until it was, I assume, damaged by the stormy weather at the weekend.

I'm told it was supplied by the good folk at BID4Oban, who responded positively to a request to brighten up what is otherwise a rather functional industrial area.

In a perhaps quirky way, I'm told, it was decorated by Margaret Cooper, from the nearby All Cars and Commercial Garage. I say quirky because the principal decorations are shiny CDs and DVDs, augmented with some colourful red tinsel.

The overall effect was a real winner that puts a smile on my otherwise grim phizog every time I pass it, which is several times a day as I travel to and from work.

What do you think?

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

'Island consumers have this year paid an extra £1.5 million in delivery charges. More has to be done to stop islanders being ripped off.'

'While the Scottish Government's recent action plan was a welcome step forward in the campaign against unfair delivery charges, ultimately the powers in this area are reserved to the UK Government and they must step up to ensure that companies stop discriminating against island customers.'

'A step forward would be for the UK government to ensure these companies use the Royal Mail for sending out smaller items, something many such companies simply refuse to do.'



The final of the 2019 National Gaelic Schools Debate took place at the Scottish Parliament on Thursday, with Benbecula's Sgoil Lionacleit emerging victorious. A very lively debate was heard with Joanne Laing and Marion MacCorquodale, pictured, from Sgoil Lionacleit going up against Raonaid Campbell and Hamish Scott from Sgoil Sir E Scott on Harris. Sgoil Lionacleit were the victors, while Raonaid Campbell won the best debater award.

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OUTDOORS

Almost 1,000 red squirrel sightings during survey week

Saving Scotland's Red Squirrels has published the results of this year's Great Scottish Squirrel Survey, when more than 600 people reported 828 sightings in just one week.

The results will enhance conservationists' understanding of squirrel populations across Scotland.

The campaign, which ran from September 23–29,

encouraged the Scottish public to spend some time exploring the outdoors while keeping a lookout for both red and grey squirrels. Sightings were reported on the project website.

Dr Mel Tonkin, Saving Scotland's Red Squirrels project manager, said: 'Sightings records give us a good indication of how red and grey squirrel populations are distributed. Monitoring changes in these populations over time helps us understand the situation and make better conservation decisions.'

'We'd like to thank everyone who took the time to get outdoors and take part in the survey.'

The results show that red squirrels are still widespread across the north of the country, with a large number of sightings reported in Scotland's central Lowlands to the north of Edinburgh and Glasgow. A National Lottery-funded project appears to be making good progress in its ambition to maintain Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park as a 'red only' zone, with work in the wider Stirling area also beginning to having a positive impact.

Sightings of red and grey squirrels can be reported at scottishsquirrels.org.uk.

Photograph: Stephen Willis, Saving Scotland's Red Squirrels.



Whale trail map is finalist for top award

Conservation charity the Hebridean Whale and Dolphin Trust is celebrating after its newly launched Hebridean Whale Trail was a finalist in a major award announced at a glittering event in London on December 4.

The spectacular trail was a finalist in the New National Treasure (UK) category – alongside London's Alexandra Palace Theatre and eventual winners the National Maritime Museum – of the National Geographic Traveller Reader Awards 2019.

The Hebridean Whale Trail is the first of its kind in the UK. It connects 33 top places across the Hebridean archipelago and Scotland's west coast that offer opportunities for land-based sightings of whales, dolphins and porpoises, or showcase the region's whale heritage.

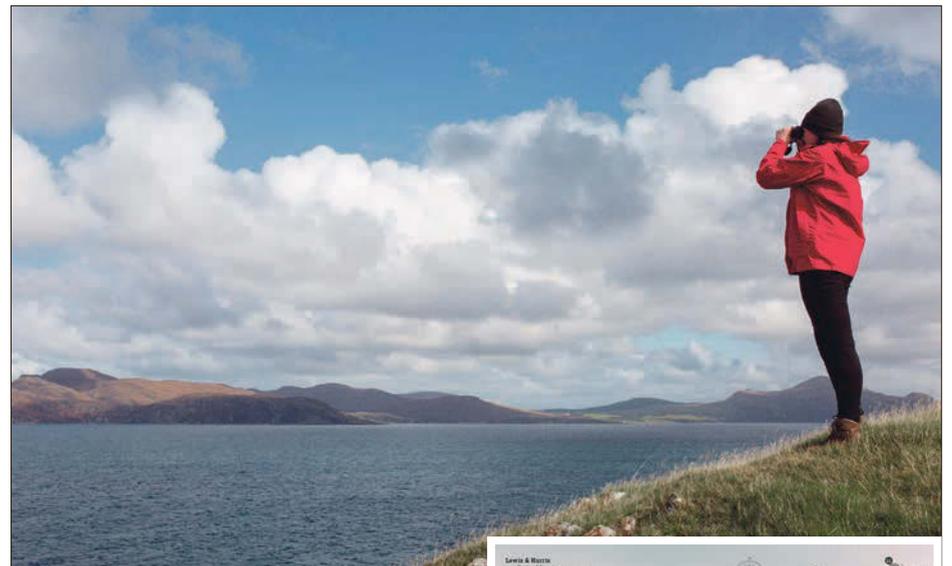
Alison Lomax, director of the Hebridean Whale and Dolphin Trust, said: 'We're thrilled to have been a finalist for this prestigious award, and hope this success will further promote the Hebridean Whale Trail, which has really caught people's imagination since its launch in June.'

'By promoting low-impact marine wildlife watching from land, the trail is championing the importance of protecting the Hebrides' wonderful and globally important marine wildlife. Collaboration was key in forging the trail, and its success is testament to the people and communities who have come together to create this exciting initiative.'

Scotland's west coast is dotted with stunning places to quietly watch out for whales, dolphins, porpoises – together known as cetaceans – and other wildlife, including basking sharks.

The trail links sites ranging from easily accessible attractions to remote and wild destinations, and features opportunities for visitors and residents to get involved in marine conservation. Its website www.whaletrail.org includes routes, transport options and site details.

While sightings can never be guaranteed, the Hebridean seas are exceptionally rich in



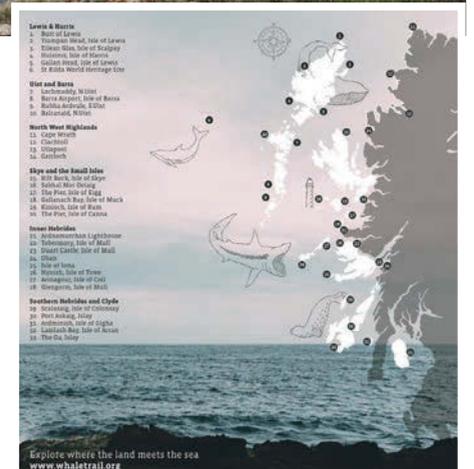
Hebridean Whale and Dolphin Trust director Alison Lomax looks out for whales, above. Photograph: Lucy Hunter. Right, the Hebridean Whale Trail map.

wildlife. More than a quarter of the world's whale and dolphin species have been recorded in the region, including many conservation priority species.

The award comes as VisitScotland prepares for the Year of Coasts and Waters 2020 – a year-long programme of events and activities spotlighting Scotland's coasts and waters.

David Adams McGilp, VisitScotland regional director, said: 'Being a finalist for this accolade, just under six months since the experience was launched, is testament to this clever initiative by the Hebridean Whale and Dolphin Trust and the energy and enthusiasm that has gone into making it a success.'

'People who have followed the trail and visited the region obviously love what they have experienced. Stunning scenery, rich natural beauty and marine wildlife, a vibrant culture



and a warm welcome are just some of the reasons that visitors from all across the world are drawn to the Hebrides.'

The Hebridean Whale and Dolphin Trust is based on the Isle of Mull and has been taking action for the conservation of cetaceans off western Scotland for over two decades.



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This week's walks

How to get the best out of your winter in mountains

Mountaineering organisations have teamed up to help those who love to walk, climb or ski get the best out of Scotland's mountains this winter.

The ThinkWINTER campaign understands the great attraction and challenges of winter in the Scottish mountains and aims to inspire and encourage people to read up and 'up-skill' to meet those challenges and achieve their aspirations.

A joint venture by Mountaineering Scotland, Scottish Mountain Rescue, Glenmore Lodge and Mountain Training Scotland, ThinkWINTER aims to get across the message that getting the best from Scotland's winter mountains depends on being well prepared and having a flexible approach to planning and what happens on the day.

Throughout the winter, social media posts will go out on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram with the hashtag #ThinkWINTER, with advice and tips on winter mountaineering.

Heather Morning, mountain safety adviser with Mountaineering Scotland, said: 'We all love to get out and enjoy Scotland's mountains in winter when they can reward us with some truly magical and memorable experiences.'

'The ThinkWINTER campaign is all about making this happen by encouraging people to improve their skills and knowledge so they can enjoy the magic of Scotland's winter mountains safely.'

Many of Scotland's mountains are serious undertakings, particularly so in winter conditions, and



will require skills and equipment beyond those needed for normal summer hill walking.

ThinkWINTER recommends that people new to winter mountaineering should first make sure their navigation and hillcraft skills are up to scratch under summer conditions and then look to develop those skills so that they are ready for the added challenges of winter.

Organisations such as Mountaineering Scotland and Glenmore Lodge, and individuals with Mountain Training's winter qualifications run specific winter navigation courses, winter skills and avalanche awareness courses to help people learn and refresh their skills.

Damon Powell, chairman of Scottish Mountain Rescue, the umbrella organisation for most mountain rescue teams in Scotland, said: 'Do go out into the outdoors and enjoy Scotland's mountains when many would say they are at their finest, but do it safely with the appropriate skills and equipment, as highlighted in the #ThinkWINTER campaign.'

Shaun Roberts, principal of Glenmore Lodge, Scotland's national outdoor training centre, said: 'One of the best things you can do to prepare for a winter day on the hill is to spend a little time getting prepared now. So gather all your winter kit from its hibernation and think, is it all there? A bit of time now will ensure you can focus on the forecast, conditions and planning your day.'

Mountain Training oversees walking and climbing qualifications in the UK and Ireland. Mountain Training Scotland's executive officer, George McEwan, said: 'We develop leaders, instructors and coaches who are able to manage hazards, make decisions and facilitate the safe enjoyment of mountain activities for others. Our candidates are part of the mechanism of developing good safe practice and #ThinkWINTER is an opportunity to join with other organisations to share that good practice as far and wide as possible.'

For more information visit www.mountaineering.scot/activities/thinkwinter

LOCHABER AND LORN RAMBLERS

The walk leader is to be contacted beforehand for meet-up and start times. Car sharing usually possible and people can try before they buy. Further information at www.lochaberandlorn-ramblers.org.uk
Sunday December 15, Beinn Chapull, Scammerdale.
 Park at the end of the road in Bragleenmore at approximately NM909204.

Take the track then path on the E side of Allt Braglenmore. Turn E at the N side of Allt Dearg to Fineglen and ascend the SW spur of Beinn Chapull to the summit at 515m. Descend directly W to any point on the original track from Braglenmore or return via the same route.

Grade: M. Distance: 10Km. Height to climb: 500m. Map(s): LR49/55, EX360. Meet at: Ballachulish TIC 0900. Start of Walk 1000. Leader: Ann Jones 07770 434114.

Thursday December 19, Meall nan Damh and Glas Beinn, Glenfinnan.

Two fine hills giving splendid views all around.

Start from Callop CP NM923792. Follow track S passing Power station and Callop cottage.

Continue to end of track and a small dam. Cross the burn just below the dam. Ascend to a fence (rough grass) and follow fence uphill to join another fence. Cross this onto open hillside.

Climb broad ridge S to top 722m but continue E for 900m to reach summit (NM919745) 723m (no cairn).

Descend to cross Glas Bhealach before ascending again to reach Glas Bheinn 636m.

From the summit head NW for about 1km then W.

On reaching a fence either - climb over it and follow faint path from dam (NM925765) or follow S of fence to gate then head N on boggy track through forest with some tree trunks to climb over. Leave forest through gate and descend to bridge over Allt na Cruaiche to ascend on other side to rejoin outward track heading N to return to cars.

Head torches may be required
 Grade: S. Distance: 15km. Height to climb: 940m. Maps LR40 EX391.

Meet at: Fort William WM NN112742 at 0900. Start of walk at 0930. Leader: Trevor Jones 07831437454

NEVIS HILLWALKING CLUB

Full walk details at www.nevishillwalking.club. If anyone would like to go on a walk, contact club secretary Suzanne Theobald on 01397 701783 or email enquiries@nevishillwalking.club

Saturday December 14, A' Bhuidheanach Bheag and Carn na Caim, Dalwhinnie.

Two Munros with easy access and an elevated start at 390m alt. Ideal for a short winter's day.

Fence posts on the boundary line marked on the map may assist navigation.

Start from lay-by #88 just S of the snow gates on the E side of the A9, NN639823. Follow the A9 S for 200m and turn E on to a track. Climb SE up the track to a junction just before a summit, 902m.

This is the site of an old quarry, now filled in. Take the right fork and head S on the track to a large cairn surmounted by a slab at NN658792. Turn ESE and follow the line of two white cairns to regain the track, which by-passes the summit of A' Bhuidheanach, 879m. Continue to the end of the track at NN658788, on a watershed.

Alternatively, head directly over A' Bhuidheanach to reach the same point. Climb the slope S on a faint path to the summit of A' Bhuidheanach Bheag, 936m. Retrace steps all the way back to the junction at the quarry site.

Take the right fork and follow the track NNE, over a summit at 914m, to its end at another summit, 914m, NN668816.

Turn NE and head for the summit of Carn na Caim, 941m. Head back to the nearby 914m summit, turning W down steep slopes, across the Allt Coire Uilleum, back to the A9.

*An easier but slightly longer descent retraces steps to the junction at the quarry site and follows the outward route down to the A9.

18km, 803m ascent.
 *19km, 833m ascent.
 Suggested by Jane Ollerenshaw.
 Coordinated by Alan Petrie.

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LEISURE & ENTERTAINMENT

YOUR GUIDE TO WHAT'S ON IN ARGYLL AND LOCHABER

Panto Camelot offers a great 'knight' out

by Kathie Griffiths
kgriffiths@obantimes.co.uk



Who needs a hot water bottle to keep those winter blues at bay when you have a tip-top panto cast in town?

Spotlight Musical Theatre Group's latest panto offering Camelot proved to be the perfect winter warmer when its cast of many took to Oban's Corran Halls stage last week.

With all the traditional ingredients of a pantomime, this production was not to be booted at – except when the baddies loomed large.

Colourful costumes and imaginative backdrops set the scene for this magical

family-friendly show setting sparks flying – quite literally.

The song and dance routines were well-rehearsed, pitch and foot perfect, with the choreography in particular tight and well-timed. Smiles were wide, slapstick comedy and cheesy jokes did not disappoint.

To put on five full-on shows

As always, the cast put on a first-class panto and the large family audiences had a fantastic time.

bringing laughter and merriment for so many people of all ages over four days shows tremendous commitment from this energetic band of troubadours and deserves a huge round of applause.

Roll on next year's panto, I'm looking forward to it already – oh yes, I am!





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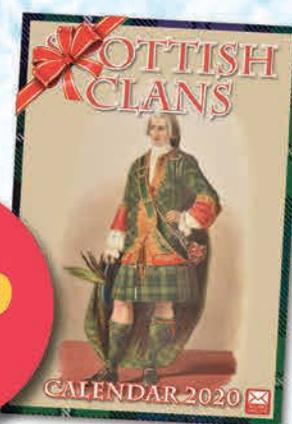
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M'ALBA

MY ALBA

DIARDAOIN 12th An Dùbhlachd THURSDAY 12th December

17:00 Prògraman Chloinne – Children's programming
 19:00 Fuine/Cooking-Bread (rpt)
 19:30 Speaking Our Language (rpt)
 19:55 Earrann Eachdraidh (rpt)
 20:00 An Là – News
 20:30 ÙR/NEW: Eorpa/European Current Affairs
 21:00 Air Toir Manachainn Dheir (The Lost Monastery of Deer) (rpt)
 22:00 ÙR/NEW: An Sgrudaire
 22:20 Luinean Lannsaireachd (rpt)
 23:05 Astrid – The Quay Sessions (rpt)
 23:30 Func (rpt)

DIHAOINE 13 An t-Samhain FRIDAY 13th December

17:00 Programan Chloinne – Children's Programming
 18:35 Machair (rpt)
 19:00 ÙR/NEW: An Taghadh 2019
 21:00 DIY le Donnie (rpt)
 21:45 An Sgrudaire (rpt)
 22:00 Trapped (S2) (rpt)
 22:50 Astrid: The Quay Sessions (rpt)
 23:15 Belladrum 2019 (Highlights) (rpt)

DISATHAIRNE 14 An t-Samhain SATURDAY 14th December

16:00 Programan Chloinne – Children's Programming
 17:45 An Là – News
 18:00 ÙR/NEW: Scottish Premiership – Aberdeen v Hamilton
 20:00 Machair (rpt)
 20:25 Fraochy Bay (rpt)
 20:30 Reiteach (rpt)
 21:00 Folk Prom (rpt)
 22:00 Mischa@Blas (rpt)
 22:15 Luinean Lannsaireachd (rpt)

22:55 Scottish Premiership – Aberdeen v Hamilton (rpt)

DIDÒMHAICH 15 An Dùbhlachd SUNDAY 15 December

16:00 Programan Chloinne – Children's Programming
 18:15 An Là – News
 18:30 Seachd Là – News Review
 19:30 ÙR/NEW: Alleluia! (rpt)
 20:00 Eorpa/European Current Affairs (rpt)
 20:30 Stoidhle/ The Dressing Up Box (rpt)
 21:00 Tearmann/ Home from Home (rpt)
 22:00 Folk Prom (rpt)
 23:05 Trapped (S2)
 22:15 Piobairean Bhoirnis/ Pipers of Bornish (rpt)
 23:10 Trapped S2 (rpt)

DILUAIN 16 An Dùbhlachd MONDAY 16 December

17:00 Programan 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 Dealbhan Fraoich (rpt)
 21:00 Trusadh – Falt? (Hair?) (rpt)
 22:00 Skipinnish@Blas (rpt)
 22:35 Opry le Daniel (rpt)
 23:25 An Sgrudaire (rpt)
 23:45 Belladrum 2016: Cridhe Tartan – Bwani Junction (rpt)

DIMÀIRT 17 An Dùbhlachd TUESDAY 17 December

17:00 Prògraman Chloinne – Children's programming
 19:00 Fuine/Cooking-Something Different (rpt)

19:30 Speaking our Language (rpt)
 19:55 Earrann Eachdraidh (rpt)
 20:00 An Là – News
 20:30 Stoidhle/ The Dressing Up Box (rpt)
 21:00 Ceum Air Cheum/First Steps (rpt)
 22:00 Trusadh – Falt? (Hair?) (rpt)
 23:00 Ceolmhor@Piping Live (rpt)
 23:30 Alleuia! (rpt)

DICIADAIN 18 An Dùbhlachd WEDNESDAY 18th December

17:00 Prògraman Chloinne – Children's programming
 19:00 Vets: Gach Creutair Beo (rpt)
 19:30 Speaking Our Language (rpt)
 20:00 An Là – News
 20:30 ÙR/NEW: Dreach Ur Na Nollag
 21:00 ÙR/NEW: Opry le Daniel
 21:50 Dhan Uisge (rpt)
 22:00 Func (rpt)
 22:25 ÙR/NEW: Belladrum 2019 (Highlights)
 23:00 Air Toir Manachainn Dheir (The Lost Monastery of Deer) (rpt)

DIARDAOIN 19th An Dùbhlachd THURSDAY 19th December

17:00 Programan Chloinne – Children's programming
 19:00 Fuine/Cooking-Classics (rpt)
 19:30 Speaking Our Language (rpt)
 19:55 Earrann Eachdraidh (rpt)
 20:00 An Là – News
 20:30 ÙR/NEW: Eorpa/European Current Affairs
 21:00 Colin Macleod – When it Kicks In (rpt)
 22:00 Luinean Lannsaireachd/Surgery Ships (rpt)
 22:45 Dhan Uisge (rpt)
 22:55 Skipinnish@Blas (rpt)
 23:30 Func (rpt)



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Glasgow Letter

ROBERT ROBERTSON

robert.d.robertson@hotmail.co.uk

Glasgow Skye concert success

On Saturday night, I headed along to the Glasgow University Union for the annual gathering concert of the Glasgow Skye Association.

The weather was absolutely atrocious which affected the turnout but, nevertheless, a fairly decent audience enjoyed a tremendous concert – with all the performers in good form.

Unfortunately, I arrived slightly late so only caught the end of the guest of honour's speech but could immediately tell the audience had thoroughly enjoyed David Ross's stories of the island and of Sorley MacLean, in particular.

Wilma Kennedy was the first singer up on stage. She was the only singer on the night who sang all her songs without accompaniment – starting with the beautiful Òganaich an Òir Fhuillt Bhuidhe. Her final song hadn't initially been on the programme but she justified this by saying her mother (Kenna Campbell, who was in



Saturday's performers at the Glasgow Skye Gathering.

the audience) had requested it – and nobody was going to argue with that!

Arthur Cormack then sang a couple of Skye songs: utilising, for the second, the superb accompaniment of Alan Kitchen.

One reason I always love the Skye concerts is the chance to listen to Alan's piano playing which, to my mind, for Gaelic songs, is among the best in the business.

Robert Nairn then appeared with his box and gave us a couple of 2/4s followed by Skye waltzes such as Rubha Bhatairnis, Soraidh Leis an Àit, and Morag of Dunvegan. You can imagine how well the audience sang along with these classics.

Rachel Walker was next

and she performed Maraiche nan Cuantan and Thoir Mo Shoraidh beautifully in the first half and teamed up with Robert Nairn for a great rendition of a good Lochaber song (Braith' Loch Iall) in the second half.

James Graham had everyone laughing with a mention of the 'unspeakable' things Calum Ross had taught him at the RSAMD, and everyone singing with Skye song, Tiugainn Leam Thar Saille.

The second half was every bit as good as the first and George MacDonald's vote of thanks to all the artists was heartfelt.

Well done to the committee of the Glasgow Skye for hosting such a good night and particularly to Fiona Ross,

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2020 Tiree Music Festival sells out in record time

who kept the concert going flawlessly by introducing each act to the stage.

Vatersay Boys rock Barrowland

Last weekend was one I had been looking forward to for quite some time – and I certainly wasn't the only one.

The Vatersay Boys on Friday evening did not disappoint.

Gaels from every corner of the Highlands and Islands gathered in the 'teuchter triangle' throughout the day before heading east to the Barrowland Ballroom for one of the most eagerly anticipated events of the year.

The Vatersay Boys (and their numerous friends from young Highland dancers to not-so-young pipers!) put on an amazing show and, let me tell you, the dressing room backstage was just as much of a party as the dance floor.

Throughout the night, the band reminded everyone why their recent induction into the Barrowland Hall of Fame (a unique club) is so well deserved.

Tiree Music Festival (TMF) has sold out for the 11th year in a row, a record seven months ahead of the event, with 2,100 tickets snapped up in a matter of weeks.

Hot on the heels of early bird tickets selling out in just 40 minutes, all remaining tickets have sold out before Christmas for the first time.

There has been an amazing demand and response from returning and new visitors, with this year's much anticipated line-up set to be announced in early 2020.

Festival-goers from all over the world, including the USA, Germany, New Zealand and the United Arab Emirates, have jumped at the chance to experience the festival on Tiree, taking place on July 10-12, 2020, which is known for the picture-perfect white sands, sunshine, fantastic line-up of folk, trad and pop acts, family activities and spotless campsites.

Daniel Gillespie, artistic director for Tiree Music Festival, said: 'It's unbelievable to see demand for the festival continue to grow each year. With every year that passes, people are moving

faster to secure their place among the family-friendly party on Tiree. We can't wait to share more information about next year's festival with everyone in the new year.'

Stewart MacLennan, festival director for Tiree Music Fest, added: 'It's incredible to have sold out tickets for TMF2020 already and it just goes to show the popularity of this special island event which shows off Tiree and all it has to offer.

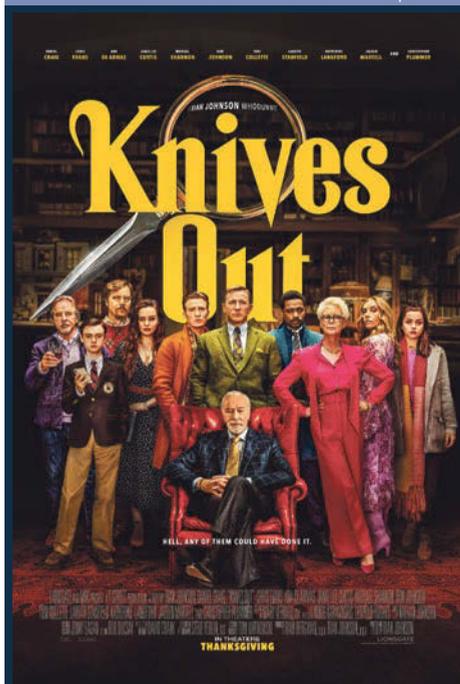
'More and more people are discovering the unique island adventure that can be experienced at Tiree Music Festival. We would encourage anyone who missed out to sign up to our mailing list and be one of the first to get a ticket for 2021.'

As Scotland celebrates the Year of Coasts and Waters in 2020, TMF2020 will celebrate Tiree's place among Scotland's unrivalled coastline with next year's tagline, 'Where the music meets the ocean.'

Anyone who missed out on tickets can join the mailing list at www.tireemusicfestival.co.uk for details of the 2021 festival.

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FRIDAY 13TH DECEMBER

Frozen 2 | U 17:00
Knives Out | 12A 17:00/19:30
Last Christmas | 12A 20:00

SATURDAY 14TH DECEMBER

Frozen 2 | U 10:30 ★/13:30/15:30
Kids Club: Elf | PG 11:30 ★
Stardog & Turbocat | U 13:00/15:45
Knives Out | 12A 18:00/20:30
Last Christmas | 12A 18:00/20:45

SUNDAY 15TH DECEMBER

Stardog & Turbocat | U 11:59/16:15
Frozen 2 | U 12:30/15:00
Last Christmas | 12A 17:30
Knives Out | 12A 18:30/20:00



Top 10 REASONS TO SHOP LOCAL

- 01 STRENGTHEN YOUR LOCAL ECONOMY
- 02 REDUCE CLIMATE CHANGE IMPACTS
- 03 SUPPORT COMMUNITY GROUPS
- 04 KEEP OUR COMMUNITY UNIQUE
- 05 CREATE MORE QUALITY JOBS
- 06 GET BETTER SERVICE
- 07 INVEST IN YOUR COMMUNITY
- 08 ENCOURAGE LOCAL PROSPERITY
- 09 PUT YOUR TAXES TO GOOD USE
- 10 BUY WHAT YOU NEED. DON'T BUY THE HYPE!



FREE COMMUNITY SCREENING CHRISTMAS EVE AT 5PM IT'S A WONDERFUL LIFE

Oban Phoenix presents this Free Event. This Christmas we would like to thank all of our loyal customers with a special Christmas Eve screening of the beautiful classic film 'It's a Wonderful Life'. Hollywood's best-loved star teams up with America's favourite director to create one of the world's most popular films. 'It's a Wonderful Life' is the ultimate seasonal feel-good film. Starring the unforgettable James Stewart as George Bailey, the man who receives the greatest Christmas gift of all, and a superb ensemble cast including Donna Reed and Lionel Barrymore, this high-spirited Christmas tale is directed by the immortal Frank Capra and ranks as an all-time favourite of fans and critics alike.

MONDAY 16TH DECEMBER

Frozen 2 | U 16:30
Last Christmas | 12A 17:00/19:00
Knives Out | 12A 19:30

TUESDAY 17TH DECEMBER

Frozen 2 | U 16:30
Knives Out | 12A 17:00/19:00
Last Christmas | 12A 20:00

WEDNESDAY 18TH DECEMBER

Frozen 2 | U 16:30
Last Christmas | 12A 17:00/19:00
Knives Out | 12A 19:30
Star Wars: The Rise of Skywalker | 12A 23:59 **MIDNIGHT SCREENING** ARRIVE EARLY!

THURSDAY 19TH NOVEMBER

Star Wars: The Rise of Skywalker | 12A 16:30/20:00
The Good Liar | 15 14:30 ★
Last Christmas | 12A 17:00
Knives Out | 12A 19:15

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Skerryvore ready to rock Inveraray Castle next June

by Kathie Griffiths
kgriffiths@obantimes.co.uk



Scottish supergroup Skerryvore are partying at Inveraray Castle next year.

The band, just home from a world tour, will celebrate their 15th anniversary with a one-day festival at the castle on Saturday June 6.

This week 5,000 tickets went on sale, with loyal fans getting first grabs a day early before Tuesday's (December 10) general release. There will also be a limited number of VIP tickets giving guests an exclusive tour of the castle and early entry to a reception hosted by the band.

Skerryvore have branded the exclusive gig 'XV' and to match the number of years notched up, will be welcoming 15 special guests and acts who they have worked with over the past decade-and-a-



half. Co-founding member Daniel Gillespie said the fairytale castle was the best fit for their grand occasion.

'It had to be somewhere very special and very grand to fit the celebration. Inveraray Castle fits that bill,' he said,

adding: 'We're really excited about bringing so many friends and bands onto the stage with us and we

Skerryvore reveal Inveraray Castle as the location of their XV 15th anniversary gig in June.

can't wait for everyone to experience what we promise will be our most spectacular show to date.'

Fans have been waiting for months for the big reveal after the band dropped a 'Save The Date' earlier this year.

Even before Inveraray Castle was announced, flights from America and Europe were being booked to Edinburgh and Glasgow.

'On tour we've been telling everyone to come to Scotland for June 6. We said if they got to Glasgow or Edinburgh, they wouldn't be too far away,' added band member Alec Dalgligh.

Two lucky American fans even got their air fares paid for by the band as a competi-

tion prize to get them to the unmissable party. To make it easy for everyone else to get there, event organisers have also partnered with EventConnect to provide a special XV Express bus service to take revellers from Glasgow, Oban, Dunoon and Lochgilphead directly to the festival site and back again at the end of the night.

For those wanting to stay over, there will also be room in the castle grounds for tents and campervans.

Tickets for camping and the buses can be bought when buying event tickets from xv.skerryvore.com

Excitement is also building in the castle itself, the Duchess of Argyll said: 'To have one of Scotland's most loved and respected bands at Inveraray Castle is a huge privilege for us and we are looking forward to welcoming them.'

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Ingredients

• Low calorie cooking spray

For the pastry:

• 225g plain flour • pinch of salt

• 110g low-fat spread or butter

• Cold water, for mixing

For the filling:

• 16 level tbsp mincemeat

• 1 level tbsp icing sugar for dusting



Method

1. Preheat the oven to 190°C/170°C Fan/Gas Mark 5. Lightly spray some bun trays with low calorie cooking spray.
2. Make the pastry. Sift the flour and salt into a mixing bowl. Add the fat, cut up into little pieces. Gently rub it in with your fingertips. Add sufficient cold water to mix to a ball that leaves the sides of the bowl clean. Rest in the refrigerator for 30 minutes.
3. Roll out the pastry thinly on a lightly floured surface. Cut out 32 rounds with a 7½cm fluted cutter. Use to line the prepared bun tins.
4. Divide the mincemeat between the pastry cases. Roll out the remaining pastry trimmings and make some little stars with a small star cutter. Use to decorate the tops of the tarts.
5. Bake in the preheated oven for about 15 minutes, until the pastry is crisp and lightly coloured. Cool on a wire rack and dust lightly with sifted icing sugar.

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Winners announced for MG ALBA Scot Trad music awards

Oban High School Pipe Band had the time of their lives on Saturday (December 7) opening this year's MG ALBA Scots Trad Music Awards on stage with Skerryvore.

The event took place in Aberdeen Music Hall in a live broadcast ceremony honouring the year's traditional musical talent.

Hosted by world-renowned Gaelic singer Mary Ann Kennedy and award-winning musician Kim Carnie, guests enjoyed stellar live performances by trad music heroes including Skerryvore, Session A9, Benedict Morris, Heisk and Sian during the sold-out ceremony.

The biggest award, The Belhaven Bursary for Innovation in Scottish Music, in association with Showcase Scotland Expo, supports the winner to progress unique ideas and empower creation. Financially matched only by the Mercury Prize, the pres-

tigious fund of £25,000 was awarded to Kinnaris Quintet, making them the first all-female band to win the prize.

Breabach were presented with the Album of the Year Award for their sixth album, *Frenzy of the Meeting*.

Presenter on the night Mary Ann Kennedy scooped Gaelic Singer of the Year, sponsored by The Highland Society of London.

Adding to her list of Trad Award accolades, Jenna Reid won Composer of the Year. Jenna's group Blazin' Fiddles were also awarded Folk Band of the Year. In 2005, Jenna won best up-and-coming artist and two years later she was nominated for best instrumentalist.

Following 10 consecutive sell-outs, Tìree Music Festival picked up the award for Event of the Year. The popular and deserving winner has contributed £6.4 million to the small island economy.



Praised by Rolling Stone for 'forward-thinking folk music', Man of the Minch took home The Up and Coming Artist of the Year award, which recognises fresh and promising talent.

After a whirlwind year of wowing crowds at Belladrum and preparing to kick off 2020 with sold-out shows across the UK, trio PEAT & DIESEL picked up the award for Live Act of the Year.

Club of the Year went to

Sutherland Sessions, a newly formed organisation that provides opportunities for young local musicians to play live music and bring local, national and international musicians to Sutherland.

The sought-after City Finlayson Scots Singer of the Year, sponsored by Traditional Music and Song Association, went to Steve Byrne.

Event founder and promoter Simon Thoumire, said: 'It has

been another fabulous year at the MG ALBA Scots Trad Music Awards. Another great set of winners which include all the new Scots Trad Music Industry Award winners as well! Our scene is in good shape!'

Alan Morrison, head of music, Creative Scotland said: 'Yet again Na Trads prove that Scotland has an age-old music which lives and breathes in the 21st century. This year's winners include

grassroots heroes and international stars, acts who have blazed a trail for decades and others who are just starting out on a promising career. Congratulations to them all.'

Gordon Muir, marketing controller at Belhaven Brewery, said: 'We are thrilled to award this year's Belhaven Bursary for Innovation in Scottish Music to Kinnaris Quintet. Their musical range, innovative arrangements and vibrant stage presence stood out among an amazingly talented shortlist. Since coming together in 2017, Kinnaris Quintet have brought a fresh energy to the trad scene and we look forward to the Bursary helping them spring to the next level.'

'Belhaven Brewery are proud of our links with this wonderful scene with which we see so much in common - inspired by our traditions and roots, which we use to spur our imagination to create new beers and new music that bring people together for great times. We are very excited about working with Kinnaris Quintet in 2020 and can't wait to see where the journey takes us.'

The evening was broadcast live on BBC ALBA with unseen footage to be shown on a special highlights show on December 27 at 9pm.



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WHAT'S ON

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THURSDAY 12TH DECEMBER

Oban Men's Shed

Salvation Army Hall
9:00am - 12:00pm

Oban Health Walks

Oban Congregational Church
10:00am - 12:00pm

Recovery Cafe

New Hope Kitchen. 12.30pm

Slimming World Fort William

Salvation Army Hall
3:00pm, 5:00pm & 7:00pm
Tel; Gillian 07796 040803

Live Music & Entertainment @

Markie Dans

FREE JUKEBOX EVERY THURSDAY

FRIDAY 13TH DECEMBER

Lorn Agricultural & Historical Society

Oban Fire Station
12pm

Mid-Day Matters

Oban Library
12pm-1.30pm

Hope Kitchen Music Group

Salvation Army Hall. 1pm-4pm

Parsley's Cat Cafe

New Hope Kitchen. 2pm

Live Music & Entertainment @

Markie Dans

A'Hooligan. Open till 2:00am

SATURDAY 14TH DECEMBER

Hill Walk

Arrochar. All day

Parkrun

Ganavan Sands. 9.30am

Soup Lunch

The Band Hall, Oban. 12pm -2pm

Mid-Day Matters

Oban Library. 12pm-1.30pm

Community Cafe

Salvation Army Hall

12:00pm - 2:00pm

Live Music & Entertainment @

Markie Dans

Jono

Open till 2:00am

SUNDAY 15TH DECEMBER

Morning Service - Refreshments follow

Salvation Army Hall

11:00am - 12:00pm

Annual Charity Carol Concert

Corran Halls, Oban. 3pm

Live Music & Entertainment @

Markie Dans

QUIZ NIGHT at 9:30pm

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MONDAY 16TH DECEMBER

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

Slimming World, Lochgilphead

Union Street/Argyll Street

5:30pm & 7:30pm

Tel; Rhona 07880 878906

Martyn's Monday Club

New Hope Kitchen. 7pm-9pm

TUESDAY 17TH DECEMBER

Hill Walk

Corroul. All day

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

WEDNESDAY 18TH DECEMBER

Oban Men's Shed

Salvation Army Hall

9:00am - 12:00pm

Slimming World, Oban

Glencruittin Church Hall

9:30am, 11:30am, 5:30pm & 7:30pm

Tel; Gillian 07796 040803

Open Day

Greenshoots Garden

10.30am-3.30pm

Hope Kitchen Beach clean

(meet opposite the View)

10.30am

Knitting Group

New Hope Kitchen. 2pm

Colonsay Book Festival announce 2020 line-up

The Colonsay Book Festival is delighted to announce the line-up for its 2020 festival.

The award-winning writers and authors appearing at this 'wee gem of a festival on a jewel of an island', which takes place on April 25 and 26, are confirmed as Catherine Brown, John D Burns, Karen Campbell, Martin Edwards, Andrew O'Hagan and Robin Robertson.

Now in its ninth year, this annual Hebridean literary celebration has carved a unique niche in Scotland's ever-expanding book festival calendar since its launch in 2012.

The two-day event – dubbed a 'literary lock-in' – is conceived and produced entirely by the island's residents and has previously featured such distinguished writers, poets and authors as Val McDermid, Andrew Greig, Mhairi Hedderwick, AL Kennedy, Jackie Kay, Janice Galloway, Ian Rankin, Alexander McCall Smith and Liz Lochhead, to name but a few.

Further details of the 2020 programme will be released in late January, but tickets for what promises to be an engaging and thought-provoking weekend are now on sale.

Richard Irvine, co-director of the event, said: 'As one of – if not the – most remote book festivals in the world, we're delighted this year to have been able to attract such a strong and diverse line-up of authors.'

'Colonsay is such an unspoilt, special place, it's the perfect setting to meet and mingle with some of the country's leading writers and hear and talk about life and literature. Whether at the event itself, in the pub afterwards, or walking on one of its unspoiled beaches. It's a hugely enjoyable event for visitors, authors and locals.'

'Tickets are on sale now, with a special early bird rate available until the end of January 2020. You can keep up to date with all our news on our website – www.colonsaybookfestival.org.uk – and via Twitter and Facebook.'

Robin Skies

Organisers for the 2020 Hebridean Dark Skies Festival have announced several new programme highlights.

First up is Robin Ince, the multiple award-winning comedian best known for co-hosting the international smash hit, *Rose D'Or* and Sony Award-winning BBC Radio 4 and podcast series, *The Infinite Monkey Cage*, with Professor Brian Cox, and the acclaimed *Book Shambles* podcast with Josie Long.

Robin will be bringing his *Chaos of Delight*, 'a celebration of the human mind, from Bohemians to Black Holes, Dali to DNA' to the festival on Thursday February 13.

The festival will also bring g-Astronomy to Lewis, in which astrophysicist Roberto Trotta will join forces with chefs at An Lanntair and Uig Sands restaurant to present a special interactive culinary experience that translates

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

WIN £200 WORTH OF SHOPPING

TROLLEY

DASH

COURTESY OF TESCO OBAN



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.

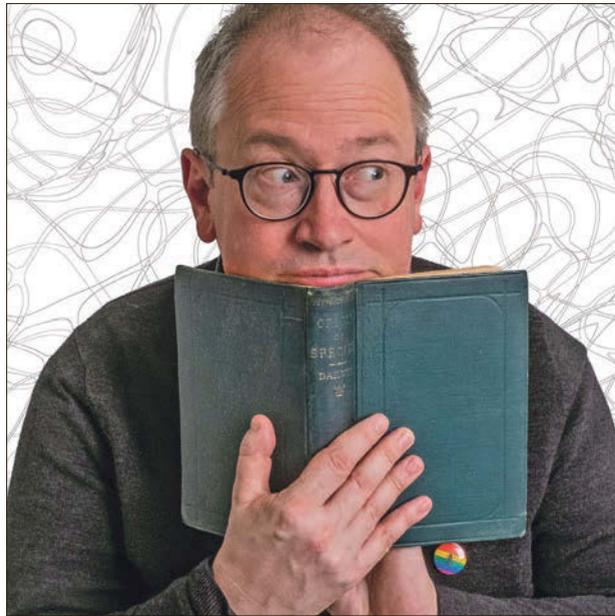
We all spend far too much money over Christmas and New Year, so how great would it be able to fill your shopping trolley COMPLETELY FREE OF CHARGE in January?!

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 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.

Ince joins Dark Skies Festival programme



Robin Ince will bring his Chaos of Delight to the festival on Thursday February 13.

joining forces with Immerse Hebrides for a night swim on Wednesday February 12. The ticket price includes head torches, adventure lights, safety tow floats and a guided swim around a loch or easily accessible beach.

These events are the latest addition to a long list of Hebridean Festival highlights, including a new show by Karine Polwart, Sky at Night presenter Chris Lintott teaming up with jazz musician Steve Pretty, arts and astronomy project Creativity and Curiosity, while Dark Skies film programme will bring together four science fiction films – Solaris, Contact, Interstellar and Ad Astra – that explore human connections across the

cosmos. Now in its second year, the Hebridean Dark Skies Festival – led by An Lanntair in partnership with Stornoway Astronomical Society, Calanais Visitor Centre, Gallan Head Community Trust, Lews Castle College and new partners including Uig Sands – will bring two weeks of arts and astronomy events to the Isle of Lewis.

The 2020 festival will run from February 7-22, with an ambitious and exciting programme spanning theatre, live music, film, visual art, food, astronomy talks, and stargazing.

Festival programmer Andrew Eaton-Lewis said: 'We're delighted to be adding Robin Ince and Roberto Trotta to an already packed programme, providing all the more reason to spend some time on the Isle of Lewis in February.'

complex astrophysics into an edible and educational experience for everybody, over the course of a delicious and sociable evening meal.

g-Astronomy will be open for bookings very soon – keep an eye on An Lanntair's website for updates. Finally, the festival is

Your local radio listings

Tune in to 103.3Fm or listen live at www.obanfm.com or on the Tuneln app. For requests, competitions or questions please call us on 01631 570057 or

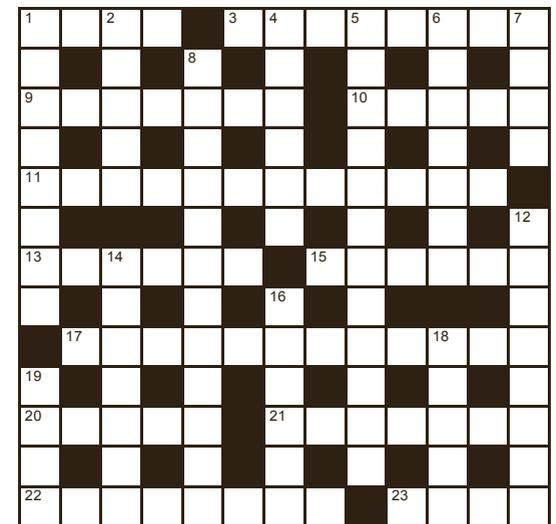
email: studio@obanfm.org.uk

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.
THURSDAY: 08.00 - 11.00 Breakfast with Andy and Sarah, 11.00 Molly's Mix with Molly Black, 15.00 Drivetime with Stephen McPhee, 19.00



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

Crossword



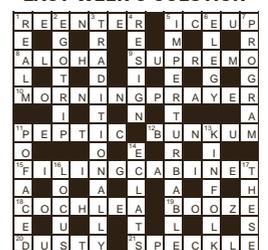
Across

- 1 Portend (4)
- 3 Close contact made (8)
- 9 School subject (7)
- 10 Trick (5)
- 11 Covered in protective layer (6-6)
- 13 Leave quickly (6)
- 15 Not square (6)
- 17 Stop slowly (5,2,1,4)
- 20 Forger (5)
- 21 Cry from horse (5-2)
- 22 Evasion (8)
- 23 Theories (4)

Down

- 1 Crane-related birds (8)
- 2 A belief in God (5)
- 4 Treeless tract (6)
- 5 Selfish (12)
- 6 Performer (7)
- 7 Sound rebound (4)
- 8 Competitive advantage (3-9)
- 12 Publications (8)
- 14 Related to the heart (7)
- 16 Prestige (6)
- 18 Vast chasm (5)
- 19 Sea-bound land (4)

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION



COMMUNITY NOTICEBOARD

An Comunn Gàidhealach – Meur Chruachain
TAYNUILT CHRISTMAS CEILIDH
 Audrey Paterson
 Children from the Mod Academy Plus Full Supporting Programme
 Taynuilt Village Hall
 Saturday 21st December
 *7pm
 *(Please note change of time)
 Supper and Hamper Raffle
 Adults - £4 - Children £2

Oban Pipe Band
 is hosting a
Soup Lunch
 in aid of
 Rheumatoid Arthritis
 The Band Hall
 Shore Street
 Saturday 14th December 2019
 From 12 noon - 2.00pm
 Admission : £3.00
 Scottish Charity No SC004610

The Rotary Club of Oban
Annual Charity Carol Concert
 Sunday 15th December 2019
 At 3pm
 Corran Halls, Oban
 Various school and adult choirs
 Oban Bach Orchestra
 Oban & Lorn Strathspey & Reel Society
 Entry by donation – proceeds to local charities

Treat someone special this Christmas
The perfect gift

* 12 ISSUES OF **SCOTTISH FIELD FOR £45** plus receive a **FREE Scottish Field mini calendar worth £7.99.**

* 6 ISSUES OF **SCOTTISH FIELD FOR £25 (no calendar).**

To tick someone off your Christmas list.
Simply...

Call **01778 392014** and quote **CHRISTMAS GIFT** or go online and enter <http://bit.ly/30ZdTcc> to purchase your gift subscription.

Inveraray to the rescue

Challenge 4000, the journey to Gambia

Adventurers about to leave Inveraray for The Gambia delivering a convoy of emergency vehicles are hoping for a good send-off this Sunday.

The team behind Challenge 4000 is inviting people to come and find out more about the project before wishing them Bon Voyage.

The vehicles, along with a fifth leaving from Braemar and rendezvousing with the rest of the convoy in Penrith, are heading for use by the Gambian Fire Rescue Service.

It has taken two years to organise Challenge 4000 and on December 15, the team will be outside Inveraray Jail at 11am for people to ask questions, find out more about the special mission and take photographs of the vehicles before they set off and look out for the jail escapee.

Inveraray Jail and The George Hotel are the two main sponsors backing the epic adventure.

One of the vehicles destined for Gambia is a road rescue unit, fully kitted out with emergency trauma kit, to respond to the huge number of road traffic accidents and fatalities experienced out there.

Another vehicle making the journey will be a large passenger-carrying van that will be used as community transport known as a gilli gilli, available for outings, carrying football teams as well as transporting medical emergencies to hospital.

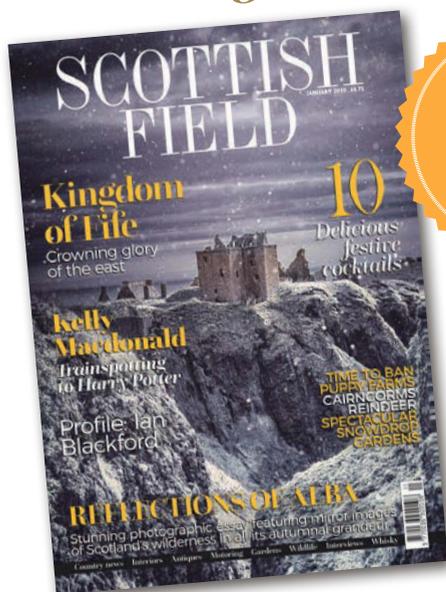
The plan is to drive the vehicles down to Portsmouth before setting sail and finally arriving in the Gambia at the start of January.

The route will pass through France, Spain, Morocco, Mauritania, Senegal before reaching its final destination. To find out more visit challenge4000.co.uk



SCOTTISH FIELD

January issue



OUT NOW

Cairngorms reindeer... Trainspotting actor Kelly Macdonald... Ian Blackford under the spotlight... The Kingdom of Fife... Glorious winter snowdrops... The Lauderdale Hunt... Christmas cocktails for every party

OFFERS & competitions

WIN

A HALF DAY COOKING EXPERIENCE FOR TWO WITH NICK NAIRN



Scottish Field are offering one lucky reader the opportunity to win a Just You & Nick half day cooking experience for you and a companion, worth £795. You could have Nick Nairn and his award-winning Cook School in Port of Menteith, which is celebrating its 20th anniversary in 2020, all to yourselves for half a day.

The prize begins with a telephone consultation with Nick. Based on your personal consultation, Nick will create your own bespoke menu featuring what you'd like to eat, cook, learn and drink on a day of your choosing.

Nick's TV career spans four decades and includes Ready, Steady Cook, Saturday Kitchen, The Great British Menu, Landward and Paul & Nick's Big Food Trip - so whether you're a serial toast burner or know your way around a kitchen, you will enjoy an utterly fabulous, totally entertaining, never-to-be-forgotten cooking experience, created by Nick Nairn, just for you.

If you'd like a chance to win this amazing prize, answer the following question.
Which anniversary is the Nick Nairn Cook School celebrating in 2020?

The prize is for one person and a partner of their choice to attend a Just You & Nick half day cooking experience at the Nick Nairn Cook School, in Port of Menteith, near Stirling. The prize is to be taken before 31st December 2020 and does not include transport. The date and time of the prize is to be agreed beforehand. There is no cash alternative.

WIN

£500 TOWARDS A SAILING ADVENTURE IN THE HEBRIDES ABOARD A CLASSIC SHIP



Sail Scotland on one of the last remaining traditional trading ketches around the Hebrides, Bessie Ellen's voyages are immensely popular, with some of the best cruising grounds, stunning scenery and bucket-list wildlife sightings. Explore the islands by boat and on foot, enjoy the first-rate food on deck and savour the taste of proper Scotch whisky on a visit to traditional distilleries. Get as hands on as you like with the sailing of this classic tall ship, or simply sit back and enjoy the skill that goes into handling it, all while watching Scotland's breath-taking scenery slide past. No sailing experience needed to climb aboard!

VentureSail Holidays are offering a £500 gift voucher to one lucky Scottish Field reader to go towards any of Bessie Ellen's sailing adventures in 2020.

If you'd like a chance to win this amazing prize, answer the following question.
What sort of sailing vessel is Bessie Ellen?

Please refer to the Scottish Field website for full terms and conditions for entering this competition.
www.scottishfield.co.uk/competitions/win-500-towards-a-scottish-sailing-adventure

To enter, send separate entries (in the same envelope) with your name, address, telephone number and email address to **Scottish Field Competitions, Fettes Park, 496 Ferry Road, Edinburgh EH5 2DL** or enter at www.scottishfield.co.uk. Closing date, unless otherwise stated, is 31 January 2020. **Winners drawn from all competitions also enter a prize to win a bottle of Whitetail Gin.**

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

Chill out this Christmas



Christmas is a time when you relax and enjoy your home and your family and if not, then you seriously need to reconsider what you are doing and cut out all the pressure.

So here is a quick guide for how to stop getting all hot and bothered.

Shop locally

OK, we would say that wouldn't we? We are your local newspaper.

That makes us well-placed to tell you we should celebrate Argyll's excellent mix of nationally-known chains and private-

ly-owned shops and services. These local businesses continue to thrive because they know their customer base and have a well-curated mix of goods that will appeal to their customers.

Instantly lift a huge weight off your shoulders by shopping locally and avoiding long journeys, queues on the motorway and in and out of car parks. You will also avoid big crowds - another stress maker. If you need to return something you are only popping down the road!

Take your time

Shopping locally means more of your time can be spent shopping. This means you can stop for coffee or afternoon tea or lunch and really make a day's Christmas shopping a memorable event.

Keep it simple

When they are grown, with kids of their own, your children will remember few of the toys they were bought but they will remember their experiences. When it comes to present buying remember to buy memories too like going to the panto or cinema

or to try a new experience like a trip to a spa for a manicure, a smart haircut, trying a new sport for the first time like riding or sailing lessons.

Let someone else do the food

Either decide to go out for your Christmas dinner or remember to divide by three: cook in advance, cook on the day and buy in.

We have some fantastic local artisan food and drink producers - they are your secret weapon!

Enjoy!

Ballet West Scotland
Swan Lake

Corran Halls
Saturday 25th January, 2.30 & 7.30pm
Tickets £15
Reserved Seating
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Menu available
www.regenthoteloban.co.uk

www.regenthoteloban.co.uk



Season's

Your personal Christmas messages

Buffy & Catherine Donaldson

Wish all relatives & friends a Merry Christmas & a Happy New Year

SEASONS GREETINGS

All at Eadar Glinn Home wish families and friends a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year

Merry Christmas & a Happy New Year

To all our relatives, friends & neighbours from Nigel & Hazel Evans

ALEX FLETCHER, BUNESSAN

Would like to wish all his relatives, friends and neighbours a Merry Christmas

Sending best wishes to all friends & family at Christmas time
Thanks for all your kind thoughts and help from Jeanne Lowe

Merry Christmas & a Happy New Year

to my relatives, friends and neighbours from Peggy MacCuish, Oban

Merry Christmas & a Happy New Year

To all my relatives, friends & neighbours Wishing you all the best for the coming year. from Harry Hickford, Ruarigan, Tobermory

Merry Christmas & a Happy New Year

To all my relatives friends & neighbours from Iain MacDonald & family, 14 Millpark Place, Oban.

Merry Christmas & a Happy New Year

To all my relatives & friends from Margaret Kilcullen, Milngavie Manor, Craigton Road, Milngavie, G62 7JG

Merry Christmas & a Happy New Year

From Lord MacLean of Bentalla

Maureen & Andrew (Jnr) MacIntyre

Would like to wish family, friends, and neighbours a Merry Christmas & a Happy New Year
X X

A Merry Christmas & a happy & healthy New Year

to all my friends & neighbours from Margaret MacKinnon, Torloisk, Isle of Mull

Merry Christmas & a Happy New Year

To all my relatives, friends & neighbours from Hamish MacMillan, Appin

Merry Christmas & a Happy New Year

To all my relatives friends & neighbours from Seamus McNeill, Glencruitten Drive

SEASONS GREETINGS

to all our readers from all at The Oban Times

Merry Christmas & a Happy New Year

To all my relatives, friends and neighbours from Penny MacPhail, Oban

Merry Christmas & a Happy New Year

To all my friends and neighbours From John MacVean, 15 Lynn Court, Oban.

Jean MacVicar

Would like to wish all her neighbours, friends, past & present carers a very Merry Christmas & a happy & healthy 2020

Merry Christmas & a Happy New Year

To all family, friends & neighbours from Mark & Elizabeth Mason, Oban

CHRISTINE MCKILLOP

Would like to wish all her relatives, friends and neighbours a Merry Christmas & a Happy New Year.

Merry Christmas & a Happy New Year

To all our relatives, friends & neighbours Wilson & Susan, 7 Breadalbane Mews, Oban

Merry Christmas & a Happy New Year

To all my relatives, neighbours & friends From Kathleen McLennan, Bridge of Orchy,

Merry Christmas & a Happy New Year

To all our relatives, friends and neighbours from Mima and John McNab, Lochaline.

SEASONS GREETINGS

Thank you for all cards, wishes, flowers & thoughts recently. It warms my heart. Love to you all. God bless, Rena

greetings

to friends and family, near and far



Season's Greetings & love

To all our friends in Oban & Mull
From Pearl & Colin, Buckie

Eric and Vera Shaw

Would like to wish their friends and neighbours a Merry Christmas & a Happy New Year

Merry Christmas & a Happy New Year

To all our friends and neighbours
From Rod and Joan Dingwall

Merry Christmas & a Happy New Year

To all my relatives, friends & neighbours
from Margaret Cameron, Taynuilt

Merry Christmas & a Happy New Year

To all my relatives, friends & neighbours
from Mary Carroll, Fishers Row, Inveraray

Merry Christmas & a Happy New Year

To all my relatives and friends
Best wishes
From Flora Adair, Glasgow

Merry Christmas & a Happy New Year

To all my relatives, friends and neighbours
From Isobel Binnie, Dunmar Court

Season's Greetings

To all our friends
Henry & Etive Black, Oban

Season's Greetings

To all my relatives, friends & neighbours
from Greta Cameron

Merry Christmas & a Happy New Year

To all my relatives, friends & neighbours
from Mary Friel, Oban.

Ian and Moira MacInnes,
Gleninnes, Croft Road, Oban, will not be sending Christmas Cards this year but would like to wish all relatives, friends and neighbours a very Merry Christmas and a Healthy Happy New Year.

SACH & ANN

Would like to wish all their relatives, friends and neighbours a very merry Christmas and a happy New Year

Don't miss your chance to wish your friends and relatives a Merry Christmas

We are giving our readers another chance to wish their friends and family a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. We have extended the deadline for personal Christmas greetings to Monday December 16 and your message will appear in The Oban Times dated Thursday December 19.

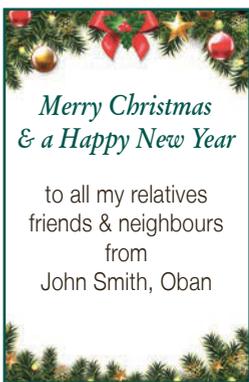
See the advert below for full details on how to book your space and help spread some festive cheer and good wishes this year.

CHRISTMAS GREETINGS

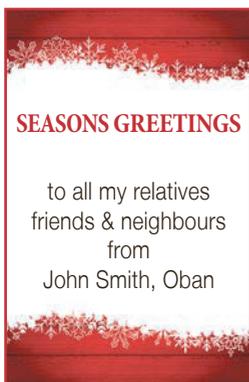
Published on 19th December

SEND A SPECIAL CHRISTMAS MESSAGE TO FRIENDS FOR JUST £20

A



B



C



Simply fill in the coupon below with your special festive message and send or hand in to:-

OBAN TIMES, LOCHAVULLIN IND EST, OBAN TEL: 01631 568000
OBAN TIMES, 22 HIGH STREET, FORT WILLIAM TEL: 01397 703003

ONLY £20 (inc. VAT.) OPTIONS A,B OR C.

PAY BY CHEQUE / PO or Phone in your message quoting your Master Card/Visa Number
Deadline Monday 16th December. To appear Thursday 19th December

MESSAGE 20 words maximum

*NAME.....

ADDRESS.....

.....

..... Tel.....

20 words maximum PRIVATE ADVERTISERS ONLY

A **B** **C**

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 Agent of The National Farmers Union Mutual Insurance Society Limited.

Around the markets

Oban – United Auctions on Tuesday December 3 held their annual Christmas show and sale when they sold 794 suckled calves and store cattle at Oban Livestock Centre. Prior to the sale, the judging was in the capable hands of Mr Gareth Scott, Meikle Ittington, Ardrrossan when he awarded the Champion prize and The Cameron Livestock Quach to D W Semple and Son, Dippen Farm, Campbeltown for their 358kg, LimX heifer which later realised £2900 (centre record) to J Pirrie, Blarnavaid Farm, Drymen. Bullocks sold to £1080 for a 662kg, SaIX from Drumaglea Ltd, Tiree to average £667.23 (+£59.63). Heifers averaged £628.71 (+£90.99). Bullocks sold to 308p/kg for a 292kg CharX from D W Semple and Son to average 224p/kg (+13p/kg) and heifers averaged 225p/kg (+30p/kg), selling to 810p/kg for the Champion. A large following of buyers were in attendance from throughout Scotland and England which ensured all stock being cleared at highly satisfactory rates to seller's advantage.



Champion calf at Oban on Tuesday from D W Semple & Son, Dippen Farm.

Mainland bullock: 1. E and L MacGillivray, Barcaldine Home Farm 2. D W Semple and Son, Dippen Farm 3. A and B A Campbell, Achnacree Beag, North Connel
 Mainland heifer: 1. D W Semple and Son, Dippen Farm 2. T Hamilton, Kilwhipnash, Campbeltown 3. D MacDonald, Tyree, Benderloch
 Island bullock: 1. A and I MacInnes, Ruai, Tiree 2. R Cuninghame, Neriby, Islay 3. RSPB Aoradh Farm, Islay
 Island heifer: 1. A and I MacInnes, Ruai, Tiree 2. RSPB Aoradh, Islay 3. R Cuninghame, Neriby, Islay
 Champion and The Cameron Livestock Quach: D W Semple and Son, Dippen Farm – LIMx Heifer.
 Reserve champion: A and I MacInnes, Ruai, Tiree – LIMx Bullock.
 Leading prices per head
 BLKS (512) – AAX - £1005, 11 Eoligarry, Barra; £795(2), Dalrannoch, Connel; £730, 2 Cleat,

Barra; £720(5), Ashfield, Achnamara. BSx - £760(2), £750, £735(4), Fiart. BRBx - £1010, Barcaldine Home Farm; £920, Tyree; £915, Low Dunashery; £905, Keil Crofts. CHARx - £965, Drumaglea Ltd; £960, Neriby; £945(5), Ballochgar; £940, £900, Dippen. LIMx - £1040, Barcaldine Home Farm; £1000, Achnacree Beag; £960, Ruai, Tiree; £960, Achnacree Beag; £960, Taychreggan; £950, Tyree; £925, Achnacree Bay; £920, Ardachy; £910, Tyree; £900, Achnacree Bay; £900(2), Tyree. LUING - £640(2), Cliad, Coll. SALx - £1080, £995(5), £890(4), Drumaglea Ltd. SIMx - £915, Kilvaree Farm; £890, Kiloran Farmers, Colonsay; £785(3), Ballard, Coll. HFRS (278) – AAX - £610, Dalrannoch, Connel. BSHx - £755, Fiart. BRBx - £1650, £1180, £800, Tyree. CHARx - £920, Neriby; £830, Dippen; £820, Aoradh, Islay. LIMx - £2900, Dippen; £1700, Ruai, Tiree; £1400, Dippen; £1220, Kilwhipnash; £970, Achnacree Beag; £960, Tyree; £900(5), Ardachy; £900, Dallachulish. SALx - £780, Drumaglea Ltd. SIMx - £910(2), £840, Kiloran Farmers. Per kilo – BLKS – AAX – 246p(5), Lochnell

Home Farm; 243p(3), Ashfield Farm; 236p(4), Ballymeanach Farm; 235p, 232p, Ashfield. BSHx – 244p, East Hynish, Tiree; 243p(4), Fiart. BRBx – 263p, Tyree; 259p(3), Neriby; 255p, Ruai, Tiree; 249p, 245p, Tyree; 237p, Neriby. CHARx – 308p, 278p, Dippen Farm; 277p(4), 272p(2), 270p(5), Neriby; 257p(4), Kinnabus Farm, Islay; 256p, Aoradh, Islay; 252p(5), Kildalloig; 250p, 247p(4), 243p(4), Neriby. LIMx – 284p, Ruai, Tiree; 282p, Balligarve; 282p(2), 279p, 275p(4), Ardachy; 272p(10), Turnault; 271p, Ardachy; 269p, Tyree; 267p, Balligarve; 266p, Barcaldine Home Farm; 265p, Ruai, Tiree; 265p(4), Kilwhipnash; 264p, Barcaldine Home Farm; 259p(4), Ardachy; 258p, Dalvaie; 256p(8), Kilwhipnash. LUING – 232p(2), Cliad, Coll; 230p(2), Homefield Croft. SALx – 262p(8), 256p(6), Neriby. SIMx – 253p(7), 250p(3), Scammadale Farm; 245p(4), Arileod, Coll. HFRS – AAX – 240p, Dalvaie. BSHx – 229p(5), Tayvallich Estates. BRBx – 434p, 316p – Tyree; 247p, 241p(3), Neriby; 234p, Tyree. CHARx – 275p(2), 259p, Dippen; 254p(7), 246p, Neriby; 246p, Aoradh; 242p, Neriby. LIMx – 810p,



Champion bullock at Dalmally on Saturday from A & I MacInnes, Ruai, Tiree.

Dippen; 578p, Ruai; 424p, Dippen; 353p, Kilwhipnash; 322p, Tyree; 292p(5), 279p(4), Ardachy; 279p, Kilwhipnash; 264p(2), Ardlarach; 264p, Balnagown; 256p(2), Inion Farm; 252p(4), Tyree; 249p(3), Turnault. SALx – 247p(6), 245p(6), Neriby. SIMx – 239p, Ardencaple.

Dalmally – United Auctions on Saturday December 7 sold 523 suckled calves, store and breeding cattle at their annual Christmas show and sale. Bullocks averaged £641.13 (- £5.32) and sold to £1240 for the champion, a 536kg, CharX from A and I MacInnes, Ruai, Tiree to W Cameron, Keith. Heifers averaged £597.96 (+ £68.90) and sold to £1070 for, a 341kg, BRBx from FD and D McVicar, Lephinchapel. Bullocks averaged 223p/kg (+10p/kg) to 300p/kg for a 287kg, LimX from FD and D McVicar and heifers averaged 216p/kg (+22p/kg) to 333.3p/kg for 2, 195kg SHx from J and J MacPherson, Balliemeanoch Farm, Dalmally. Prior to the sale the judging was in the capable hands of D H Hunter, Broachrigg Farm, Rosewell, Edinburgh and his awards

were as follows:
 Autumn Born Bullock – A and I MacInnes, Ruai – Champion Spring Born Bullock Calves; 1. FD and D McVicar, Lephinchapel – Reserve Champion 2. FD and D McVicar, Lephinchapel Spring Born Heifer Calves; 1. FD and D McVicar, Lephinchapel 2. FD and D McVicar, Lephinchapel 3. J W Bennie and Sons, Merkins Farm, Alexandria
 A good following of buyers were in attendance and all classes of stock sold at similar rates to the earlier sale held at Oban Livestock Centre, resulting in sellers returning home satisfied with the their day's proceedings.
 Leading Prices per Head
 BLKS – AAX - £990, 10 Eoligarry, Barra; £960, Steall; £880, 10 Eoligarry. BSHx - £810, 10 Eoligarry; £800(2), Gartincaber. BRBx - £1190, £1150, £1100, Ruai, Tiree; £1060(2), £820, Lephinchapel. CHARx - £1240, Ruai; £800(2), Merkins. LIMx - £1030, Ruai; £860, Lephinchapel; £840, Craig Farm; £840(4), 10 Eoligarry. LUIx - £750(2), Luss Estate Co. SALx - £760, Otter Estate. SIMx - £1150, 10 Eoligarry; £1000, £960,

£870, 13 Eoligarry. HFRS – AAX - £610, Otter Estate. BSHx - £710(3), Gartincaber; £650(2), Stonefield Farms; £650(2), Gartincaber. BRBx - £1070, £990, £820, Lephinchapel. CHARx - £830, Gartincaber; £770, Braglenmore. LIMx - £880, £870, 13 Eoligarry; £860, 16 Carnoch; £810, 10 Eoligarry. LUIx - £750, Luss Estate Co. SIMx - £760(3), £730, Coustoun Farm; £730, Merkins Farm. SHx - £920(3), Cruachan, Killin.
 INCALF HEIFERS
 £1920, Dall Farm; £1850, £1720, £1700, £1620, Duncroisk.
 Leading Prices per Kilo BLKS – AAX – 240p, 10 Eoligarry; 235p(4), Steall. BSHx – 231p(2), Feorline. BRBx – 283p, Lephinchapel; 283p, Feorlin; 274p, 259p(2) Lephinchapel. CHARx – 263p(7), Ederline Estate; 261p, 257p, Musdale Farm; 248p(2), Merkins Farm; 244p(4), Coustoun Farm. LIMx – 300p(3), Lephinchapel; 279p, Cuiluaire; 276p, 274p, Lephinchapel; 273p, Stonefield Farms; 270p(2), 13 Eoligarry; 266p(6), Ellary Estate; 264p, 16 Eoligarry(Corncrake Cottage) 264p, 262p, Craigmores; 261p(5), 259p(4), 10 Eoligarry; 258p(8), Otter Estate; 257p, 13 Eoligarry; 252p(5), Ellary Farms; 250p(2), Keppoch Farm. SALx – 258p, Otter Estate. SIMx – 266p, Ellary Farms; 253p, Pitcastle Estate; 250p, 10 Eoligarry; HFRS – BSHx – 273p(2), Stonefield Farm; 244p(3), Gartincaber; 240p, Feorlin. BRBx – 332p, 313p, 244p, Lephinchapel; CHARx – 251p(2), Kildavaig; 249p(3), Merkins Farm; 247p(8), Kildavaig; 240p(9), Laggan Farms; 232p, Braglenmore. LIMx – 265p, Lephinchapel; 260p, 10 Eoligarry; 252p, Merkins Farm; 250p, 240p, 10 Eoligarry; 238p, Lephinchapel; 238p, 237p, 236p(2), 10 Eoligarry. SIMx – 259p(2), Kilvaree Farm; 240p(3), 234p, Coustoun Farm; 226p, Craigmores. SHx – 333p(2), 274p, 272p(2), Balliemeanoch.

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APPLICATION**

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0.082 ha – Amenity ground
102234

Written comments from any member of the crofting community within the locality of the croft and any expressions of demand for the croft (which may be made public), may be sent to the Crofting Commission by 10/01/20. Crofting Commission, Great Glen House, Leachkin Road, Inverness IV3 8NW – info@crofting.gov.scot

Our privacy notice is available at www.crofting.scotland.gov.uk/privacy-policy or on request.

DECROFTING DIRECTIONS ISSUED

J Cutlack
3 Fanmore, Kilninan & Kilmore
101018
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Condition – With fencing and use conditions.

MA Kingswood
SB Kingswood
Achnaskiach, Arisaig & Moidart
101084
0.230 ha
Reason – Existing house site
Condition – With fencing conditions

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

**THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL
(C1094 GLEN ETIVE)
(TEMPORARY ROAD CLOSURE) ORDER 2019**

Notice is hereby given that on the 29th November 2019 The Highland Council made an Order in terms of Section 14(1) (a) of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, as amended entitled as above. The Order has been requested by SSE to provide a safe working space for their contractors to carry out essential works on the road.

This Order shall come into operation at 2100hrs on Tuesday 17 December 2019 and will remain in effect until 0500hrs on Sunday 22 December 2019. Throughout that period, the use by vehicles of the length of road specified in the Schedule hereto except for use by emergency services is prohibited at the following times only: every night from 2100hrs until 0500hrs (ie 8 hours per night).

A copy of the Order can be inspected at the Service Point, Charles Kennedy Building, Achintore Road, Fort William, on weekdays during normal office hours.

3rd December 2019. Richard Porteous, Roads Operations Manager, Highland Council, Carr's Corner Industrial Estate, Fort William

SCHEDULE

**Road Affected
C1094 GLEN ETIVE**

Commencing at a point 760m south of A82T (Glasgow-Fort William-Inverness) Junction, extending in a southerly direction for 4 miles to Alltachorunn

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
19/05169/FUL	Land 65M NE Of Farmhouse, Kentallen	Erection of house

Time period for comments is 14 days
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PUBLIC NOTICES

Argyll and Bute Council

Councillor Jim Lynch (E.W. 4 Oban South and the Isles)
Councillor Lynch will be holding surgeries during the month of **December 2019** as follows:

Date	Venue	Time
Friday 13th December	Municipal Buildings, Albany Street, Oban	2.00pm - 4.00pm
Tuesday 17th December	Soroba Community Centre, A Scalpay Terrace, Soroba	6.00pm - 8.00pm

He can be contacted by email - Jim.Lynch@argyll-bute.gov.uk and by telephone 01631 567893

Councillor Kieron Green (E.W. 5 Oban North and Lorn)
Councillor Green will be holding a surgery on **Friday 20th December 2019** in the **Municipal Buildings, Albany Street, Oban** from **2.00pm - 4.00pm**.
He can be contacted by email - Kieron.Green@argyll-bute.gov.uk and by telephone 01631 562 444

Argyll and Bute Council

EDUCATION SERVICE
EDUCATION (SCOTLAND) ACT 1980 – CHOICE OF SCHOOL
It is customary for children to attend their local school; however, parents may make a written request to place their child in any school under the management of the education authority. Such a request is referred to as a placing request.
Information concerning the authority's schools and the procedures to be followed in making placing requests is available at every school and at the Education Offices, Argyll House, Alexandra Parade, Dunoon PA23 8AJ (Tel: 01369 704000). Information in relation to any particular school is available at that school.
Placing requests for session beginning August 2020 should be sent to the Executive Director, Education Service, Argyll House, Alexandra Parade, Dunoon PA23 8AJ (Tel: 01369 704000) by 13 March 2020 for primary and secondary schools.
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
Parents of children due to start school in August 2020, whether or not they wish to make a placing request, should proceed in accordance with the advertisement on registration of children which will be published week commencing 30 December 2019.
Anne Paterson/Louise Connor, Head of Service, Education Service
To find out more about living and working in Argyll & Bute visit us at:
www.argyll-bute.gov.uk
Comhairle Earra – Ghàidheal agus Bhòid



Muirshearlich Common Grazing.
Appointment of Grazing Committee.
District of Kilmallie.
The Muirshearlich Township and Sheep Stock Club AGM will be held at 7.30pm on 18th December 2019 at Oakwood, Muirshearlich, Banavie, Fort William PH33 7PD at which a new Grazing Committee will be elected.

MARINE (SCOTLAND) ACT 2010
REPAIRS TO AN OUTFALL PIPE
STRACHUR, CAIRNDOW, ARGYLL & BUTE

Notice is hereby given that Scottish Water has applied to the Scottish Ministers of the Scottish Government, under Part 4 of the Marine (Scotland) Act 2010, in respect of repairs to an outfall pipe at:

Cost	£28,132.54	
Location	Latitude	Longitude
Strachur	56 ° 09.840' N	05 ° 05.356' W
	56 ° 09.850' N	05 ° 05.204' W

(WGS84)

Plans showing the position of the works may be inspected at Strachur Post Office and Shop, The Bay, A886, Strachur, PA27 8DD.
Objections relating to safety of navigation or environmental issues in respect of the application should be made in writing to: Licensing Operations Team, Marine Scotland, Marine Laboratory, 375 Victoria Road, Aberdeen, AB11 9DB within 28 days of the date of this notice or by email to: MS.MarineLicensing@gov.scot, quoting reference: 07100 and Scottish Water.
Fair Processing Notice
The Scottish Government's Marine Scotland Licensing Operations Team (MS-LOT) determine applications for marine licences under the Marine (Scotland) Act 2010 and the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009. During the consultation process any person having an interest in the outcome of the application may make representation to MS-LOT. The representation may contain personal information, for example a name or address. This representation will only be used for the purpose of determining an application and will be stored securely in the Scottish Government's official corporate record. Representations will be shared with the applicant and/or agent acting on behalf of the applicant, any people or organisations that we consult in relation to the application and, where necessary, be published online, however personal information will be removed before sharing or publishing.
A full privacy notice can be found at: <http://www.gov.scot/Topics/marine/Licensing/marine/PrivacyNotice>. If you are unable to access this, or you have any queries or concerns about how your personal information will be handled, contact MS-LOT at: ms.marinelicensing@gov.scot or Marine Scotland - Licensing Operations Team, Marine Laboratory, 375 Victoria Road, Aberdeen, AB11 9DB.



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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
19/02466/PP	Change of use from office/meeting facility to form early years centre including external alterations	Willow View Community Care Centre, Oban, Argyll And Bute, PA34 4SB
19/02477/LIB	External and internal alterations and erection of extension to dwellinghouse	Duart Castle Cottage, Lochdon, Isle Of Mull, Argyll And Bute, PA64 6AP
19/02087/PP	Change of use from class 9 (houses) to class 7 (hotels and hostels)	Home Farm, Glencruitten, Oban, Argyll And Bute, PA34 4QB
19/01466/PP	Amendment to planning permission reference 18/00375/PP (Residential development comprising 300 dwellings, ground re-modelling, new roads, infrastructure, open space, landscaping, community woodland and area for community facilities). Change in height from two storey to three storey (Block C02 and C04) and installation of air source heat pump	Land West Of Dunstaffnage Mains Farm, Dunbeg, Argyll And Bute
19/02507/PP	Installation of replacement roof covering	Bishops House, Isle Of Iona, Argyll And Bute, PA76 6SJ
19/02386/PPP	Site for the erection of dwellinghouse	Garden Ground Of Beach Cottage, Kilnaughton Bay, The Oa, Isle Of Islay, Argyll And Bute

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

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FAX: 01631
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POST & IN PERSON: Lochavullin Industrial Estate, Crannog Lane, Oban, PA34 4HB
Office hours: Mon - Thurs 9- 5pm, Fri 9 - 4pm

E-MAIL: adverts@obantimes.co.uk
Please remember to give your name, address, postcode and phone number.

ANTIQUES AND COLLECTABLES

AA AUTOMOBILE BADGES - 1950'S, 1960'S original Automobile Association car grille badges. Restored and in very good condition. A Christmas stocking filler £20.00 each collected from Oban or £23.00 including postage Telephone 01631 564578

BUILDING / DIY

REPLACEMENT CHIMNEY POTS - for older houses, ornate Victorian/Edwardian pots in various sizes and colour, £40.00 Telephone 01631 564578

CARS AND CAR PARTS UNDER £250

BMW E46 3 SERIES COUPE SILL - Genuine BMW part and unused. £80.00 ono Telephone 01631 564578

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PANASONIC MICROWAVE - Clean and tidy. White colour, £20.00 Telephone 01852 200256

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GERMAN SHORT HAired POINTER PUPPIES - 6 dogs, born 16/09/19, ready now, KC Registered, micro chipped, worming up to date, first vaccination and vet checked, both parents can be seen, £1,000.00 Telephone 07787 687239 or 01387 740575

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BLACK DRESSAGE SADDLE - Reactor panel Avant Garde 16.5 inch black dressage sad-

dle, £1,500.00 Telephone 07834 806335

FURNITURE

PINE BEDHEAD - To fit double bed £20.00 Telephone 01852 200256
PINE BEDROOM CABINET - 3 drawer Pine cabinet H66cm W58cm D44cm, £25.00 Telephone 01852 200256

PINE CHEST OF DRAWERS - 3 deep + 2 small drawers. H80cm W84cm D39cm, £45.00 Telephone 01852 200256

2 x PINE BEDSIDE CABINETS - Each cabinet has 2 drawers. Approx. size H44cm, W45cm, D35cm, £30.00 Telephone 01852 200256

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DROP LEAF TABLE - Oak, double leaf, size 5 feet long open, closed 1 foot and 3 feet wide. Good condition. Collect Taynuilt, £40.00 Telephone 01866 822597

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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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VINTAGE CHIMNEY POTS - in various sizes and styles, make lovely garden planters. Prices from £40.00 Telephone 01631 564578

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FORMULA 1 BOARD GAME - Waddington's Vintage 1960's grand prix board game, £20.00 Telephone 01852 200256

HEATERS

DIMPLEX STORAGE HEATERS - in various sizes and in good condition. Each, £40.00 Telephone 01631 710862

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Grasmere" print 60cm x 48cm. Good condition. Website price £120, £60.00 Telephone 01852 200256

MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS

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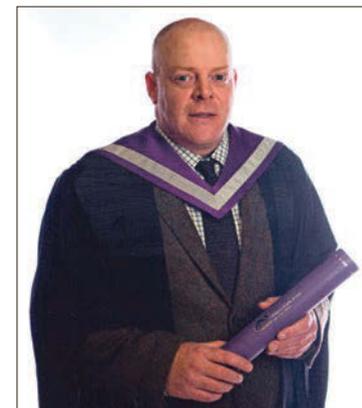
HOLLIE & STEVE CALDERHEAD



Boclair House, Bearsden on Saturday 6th July 2019.
Hollie - Daughter of Duncan & Irene Whyte & Steve - Son of Davy & Anne Calderhead.

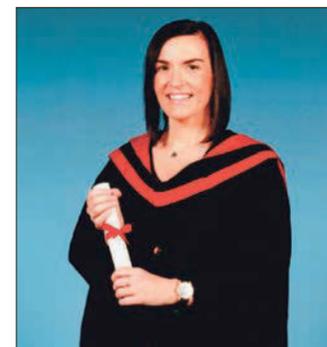
GRADUATION

DAVID SUTHERLAND



David Sutherland graduated from UHI West Highland College with Bachelor of Arts Applied Music. Son of Ian and the late Catherine Sutherland, Upper Inverroy, Roy Bridge.

TRUDI-RAE



Trudi-RAE graduated from the University of the West of Scotland with a Postgraduate Diploma in Specialist Community Public Health Nurse (Health Visitor). She is currently working as a Health Visitor in Oban's Children and Families Team. Daughter of Ray and Mary McIntosh and granddaughter of the late Hector and Janet MacKinnon, Tiree.

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action by the Publisher to recover payment from an advertiser, it is agreed that matters will be settled in the Oban, Argyll Sheriff Court or such other Court as the Publisher may choose.

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BIRTHS

MACINNES - Iain and Claire (née Kennedy) are delighted to announce the birth of their son John Alastair on November 13, 2019. A little brother for Amy and another grandson for both families, Tیره and Oban.

YOUNG - At Aberdeen Royal Infirmary on November 25, 2019 to Ross and Jennifer (née Rydings), a son Alfred (Alfie) Stuart.

DEATHS

ALLAN - Joyce. Peacefully in the loving care of Abbeyfield Care Home on December 4, 2019 aged 90 years. Funeral service will take place at Duncansburgh-MacIntosh Church, Fort William on Monday, December 16, 2019 at 1pm. Family flowers only please, donations welcome for Lochaber Deaf Care.

CAMERON - Peacefully at Etive House Care Home, Benderloch, surrounded by her loving family on

December 6, 2019 in her 99th year, Flora Cameron née MacInnes (retired school teacher), widow of Alasdair, loving mum of Gregor, Allan, Kirsty and the late Sandra, much loved grandmother and great-grandmother, dear sister of Maimie, Allan and the late Ina, Johnnie, Katie, Jessie and Anne. Funeral will take place at Oban Parish Church, Glencruitten Road, Oban on Tuesday, December 17 at 1.00 pm, thereafter to Pennyfuir Cemetery. Family flowers only please. Donations in lieu of flowers for Alzheimer's Scotland and Oban Lion's Club.

GALBRAITH - Suddenly on December 3, 2019, at the R.A.H. Paisley, Archie (Baldy) Galbraith in his 84th year, of 26 Dun Mor Avenue, Lochgilphead and formerly of Ormsary Estate. Beloved husband of Annie and much loved father of Christine and the late Finlay, cherished grandpa of Neil, Mhairi and Iain, much

respected father-in-law and dear brother, uncle and cousin to all the family. Funeral service was held in Lochgilphead Parish Church on Tuesday, December 10, 2019 followed by interment at Achabreac Cemetery. Sadly missed.

GALBRAITH - Peacefully, on December 10, 2019, at home with her family at her side, Valerie (Val), aged 80 years, beloved wife of the late Gal and loving mother of Sonny, Sandy, Jayne and Wendy and much loved Granny of Lisa and Abby. Funeral service will take place at Oban Parish Church, Glencruitten Road, Oban, on Thursday, December 19, 2019 at 1.00 p.m.; thereafter to Pennyfuir Cemetery. Family flowers only, retiral collection/donations will be taken for The Dove Centre, Oban.

LAIDLAW - Mary (née McDiarmid), (formerly Lochgilphead and Oban). Peacefully, on Tuesday, December 3, 2019, at

Strachan House Care Home, Edinburgh, Mary, beloved wife of the late Alec, dotting mum to Marion and Ally and adored and selfless granny of Jamie, Donnie, Robbie, Jennie, Nicky, Danny and Mollie. Also a treasured and respected mother-in-law, aunt, great-aunt and great-great aunt to her wonderful family. A popular friend to many. Funeral will take place at Mortonhall Crematorium, Main Chapel on Wednesday, December 18 at 12pm. All warmly invited. Donations on the day will be split equally between Chest, Heart and Stroke Scotland and Hope Kitchen, Oban. Sorely missed by all.

MACKAY - Peacefully, after a short illness, at Lorn and Islands Hospital, Oban, on December 8, 2019, Malcolm Duncan MacKay, in his 79th year, of 13 Chalmers Court, Inveraray, and previously of Electric Cottage, Inveraray, beloved husband of the late Liz, much loved father of Iain, Catherine and the late Calum, much respected father-in-law of Tracy and Stuart, dear brother of Jake and the late Duncan, and a dearly loved uncle and cousin to all the family. A good neighbour and great friend to many. Funeral service will be held in Inveraray Parish Church, on Saturday, December 14, 2019 at 11.00am, thereafter to Glen Shira Cemetery, Inveraray. Family flowers only please. Donations to Macmillan Nurses, Mid Argyll. All friends are respectfully invited to attend.

McEWAN - Helen Pullar Ash McEwan (née McAllister) of Etive Gardens, Oban. Died peacefully on December 7, 2019 in Moss Park Nursing Home, Fort William, aged 92. She was a wonderful and special wife to the late Bob, mum to Gavin and Fiona, mother-in-law, granny, great-granny, aunt and friend to many. Funeral will take place from St John's Cathedral, Oban on Friday, December 13 at 10am, thereafter to Perth Crematorium at 2pm. All friends are respectfully invited to attend. No flowers please. Donations in lieu of flowers for Alzheimer's Scotland.

MACKELLAR - The family of the late Jessie would like to thank everyone for their expressions of sympathy and support shown to them at this very sad time. For all the flowers, cards, phone calls and home baking and to all who visited Jessie at home and in hospital. Grateful thanks to Billy McClymont for his compassionate funeral arrangements. To the Rev Jenny Earl, Robert and Ross for the moving extra special service, to Iain and Gavin for piping, Marion MacKie and the girls who provided us all with excellent refreshments. Jessie would have been overwhelmed. The sum of £1,300 from donations will be equally divided between Macmillan Care and Mull and Iona community Hospital.

RAPLEY - William (Bill). On December 7, 2019 at Arran War Memorial Hospital, Lamlash, Isle of Arran. Husband of the late Barbara and dad to Sally, Clive and Mike, a much loved grandad and great grandad. Will be sadly missed by all.

RUSSELL - Anthony Walter (Tony), aged 82. Peacefully at Moss Park Care Home Fort William on Wednesday, December 4, 2019. Formerly of Tobermory. Beloved husband of Catherine, dear father to Randal and Kim. Grandad to Dylan. Now resting after a long journey.

WALKER - Invergarry. Passed away while enjoying a Mediterranean cruise with his friends, Peter Walker, Oak Villa, Invergarry, aged 81 years. Ex Forestry Commission and proprietor of the Well of the Seven Heads, Invergarry for over 40 years. Beloved husband of the late Catherine, much loved father of Carol, Peter and Norman, dear grandfather, great-grandfather and loyal friend of many. Funeral service on Wednesday, December 18, 2019 at 1.00pm in Invergarry Church, thereafter to Invergarry Cemetery. All friends respectfully invited. Family flowers only please. Donations for the Heart Foundation are welcome at the service or can be forwarded to William T Fraser and Son, Funeral Directors, Culduthel Road, Inverness.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

MACDONALD - The family of the late Effie would like to thank everyone for their sympathy and support shown to them after her passing. Grateful thanks to the medical staff and carers who attended to Effie over the years. Thanks to those who sent flowers, cards and all who visited. Special thanks to the Rev. Bruce Neill and the Rev. Alan Millar for a comforting service, Stuart MacDonald for his kind words, Joyce MacInnes for playing the organ and Iain Smith for playing Effie's favourite songs on the accordion. Thanks to all who came to pay their last respects and to the Co-op for their compassionate funeral care also the Lodge Hotel for the refreshments afterwards. Finally thanks to all who donated generously to the retiral collection which raised £305.92 for Scotland's Charity Air Ambulance.

MACKELLAR - The family of the late Jessie would like to thank everyone for their expressions of sympathy and support shown to them at this very sad time. For all the flowers, cards, phone calls and home baking and to all who visited Jessie at home and in hospital. Grateful thanks to Billy McClymont for his compassionate funeral arrangements. To the Rev Jenny Earl, Robert and Ross for the moving extra special service, to Iain and Gavin for piping, Marion MacKie and the girls who provided us all with excellent refreshments. Jessie would have been overwhelmed. The sum of £1,300 from donations will be equally divided between Macmillan Care and Mull and Iona community Hospital.

MACPHERSON - The family of the late John (Iain) Macpherson wish to thank all extended family, friends and neighbours for the kind expressions of sympathy and support extended to them by way of cards, letters, telephone calls and visits following their

recent sad loss of Iain, a dearly loved husband, father, papa, brother and father-in-law. Grateful thanks to the Rev John Sheddon for his kind and thoughtful service and to Russell Buchanan for his very special eulogy. Many thanks to the Dalmally Community Hall for the excellent purvey, and to Stan Lupton and his staff for completing all arrangements for the funeral service. Finally sincere thanks to all those who paid their last respects both at Dalmally and at Cardross, many travelling a great distance to attend, and who so generously donated £1852.78 to Macmillan Cancer Care and North Argyll Carers. Iain will be greatly missed.

MEMORIALS

BUCHANAN - In loving memory of my mum Chrissie, who died December 9, 2016. Loved and remembered every day.

- Michael.

CAMERON - Lachlan Cameron, Tیره. In memory of Lachlan Cameron who died on December 14, 1994. Also loved ones gone before and after.

It's twenty-five years since you left me

You always had a smile to share

Time to give and time to care
A loving nature kind and true
That is the way that I will remember you

- Inserted by his daughter, Margaret Cameron.

CLARK - In loving memory of a dear husband, father, grandfather and great-grandfather Alexander (Tom), who passed away December 26, 2012. Sadly missed by all the family.

GALBRAITH - In loving memory of my dear wife Katherine, who passed away December 17, 2013.

Will remember, love and miss you always.

- Your loving husband John and J.J., Paul and Katie.

HAY - Treasured memories of our brother and uncle Robert, tragically taken from us on December 13, 1998, aged 23.

Loved and remembered every day.

- Kate, Elaine and families.

MACQUARRIE - In loving memory of my dear mum Agnes, who died on December 14, 2008, also remembering my dear dad who died May 21,

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-Inserted by Ann, Erskine.

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- Mum, Dad, Aaron and Cameron.

SANDISON - In loving memory of our darling grandson Liam, who died December 10, 2006, age 4 years.

Memory is a lovely lane Where hearts are ever true We often travel down that lane When we think of you. - Love Granda and Granny, Claggan xx.

SANDISON - In loving memory of our dear grandson Liam who died December 10, 2006. No longer in our lives to share Liam

But in our hearts You're always there. - Gran, Granda and Jess. xxx

Obituary: John Milliken

- 24.08.35-15.11.19



John Milliken.

John Milliken was born in 1935 in Renfrew, the middle child of William and Mary Milliken. He was born prematurely and was not expected to live – but he survived and went on to live a very active and fulfilling life.

His childhood was a happy one, attending Moorpark Primary School and later Hutcheson's Boys School in Glasgow. His father William was a master hairdresser and owned a traditional gents' barber shop in Renfrew.

John's first job as a school-boy was as a 'soap-boy' in his father's shop, which he did not enjoy! Later John joined the BB and eventually became captain. He loved sport and as well as being a regular swimmer at Renfrew baths, he played football in the BB team.

In 1957, he married Morag Milne while training to be a chartered accountant. Shortly after the marriage, he was called up for National Service and served two years in the RAF, based mostly in the South of England. He sent postcards to Morag (where possible) every day for those two years.

John and Morag spent their honeymoon in Oban in 1957 and fell in love with the town and planned to return and set up home there. Tragedy was just around the corner when both John's parents

died suddenly and unexpectedly within five months of each other. This was followed shortly afterwards by his brother William dying in an accident aged just 22. (John's sister Anne had passed away from illness aged nine).

Despite these sad circumstances, John continued to work hard to build a life for himself, Morag and their three children.

He was able to make the move to Oban in 1961 with Morag and their first child when he was appointed as chartered accountant with McArthur, Stewart and Orr.

Later, and with two more children born in Oban, John was offered a partnership in the company, but to accept this he had to train as a solicitor.

He achieved this and was at that time one of only two people in Scotland to hold the posts of both chartered

accountant and solicitor. He spent almost his entire working life in McArthur, Stewart and later, thankfully, was able to enjoy many years of retirement.

Despite a busy working life he had very many outside interests which included singing, golf and climbing. He inherited a great joy of singing from his musical mother Mary and was a long-term member of both the parish church choir and Oban Bach Choir (becoming the first honorary member of the Bach choir).

The church was a big part of his life and he was Treasurer of Oban Parish church for many years. He also held the post of treasurer of the Bach Choir.

John also enjoyed being president of Oban Rotary Club, as well as secretary, treasurer and later president of Glencruitten Golf Club. Golf was a huge part of his life.

Due to a brief health scare, John decided to get fit and started running. At the age of 50, he completed his first Glasgow marathon (one of three) and over the years completed 16 half-marathons. Climbing was also a huge part of his life and he bagged 100 Munros over the years.

Six grandchildren between 1984 and 1999 brought great

joy to him and Morag. John loved to show them around Scotland and it would not be uncommon for grandchildren to find themselves at the top of Ben Nevis.

He and Morag enjoyed many cruises and holidays during his retirement and before ill health befell both of them around the same time in their early eighties.

Morag passed away in July 2017 after a short illness and just four weeks after they celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary surrounded by family.

Sadly, in 2017 John fell in Shore Street, fracturing his femur and required emergency surgery at the RAH, Paisley. During this admission, he suffered a stroke and never recovered. His health deteriorated slowly and he was lovingly cared for by compassionate staff at Lochside Care Home in Helensburgh.

He endured a long battle over more than two years before he died peacefully on November 15, 2019, and was able to be returned to his beloved Oban and be laid to rest at Pennyfuir Cemetery.

John is survived by daughters Kerry and Rona, son Gregor, six grandchildren and three great-grandchildren.

Kerry Crawford

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THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK

Decorations are lighting up the town, trees are appearing in windows, Advent calendar chocolates are being consumed, Christmas music is getting into swing and advertisements aim to help us decide our Christmas list.

The days leading up to Christmas engender a sense of anticipation and expectation. With everything that is happening around us – the fears of climate change, the deep darkness of violence and the divisions defining our politics – they are a very welcome diversion.

But these days can be leading to something which is so much more than simply a momentary relief. They can be the start of the change many truly seek.

In our churches, many



of us count down to Christmas with anticipation marked by ever-increasing light. Each week we add a new candle with a new prayer – for hope, for peace, for joy, for love: values that Christians believe are at the heart of the birth of Jesus, which, if placed at the heart of our care for each other and the environment, would eliminate all the darkness we face.

Values which, if outlived in our politics, would deliver something far more lasting than any election manifesto. Hope, peace, joy, love – let us pray these win over all else.

The Very Reverend Canon Margi Campbell, Provost of St John's Episcopal Cathedral, Oban

Oban Celtic upward trend

Oban Celtic boss Dougie MacIntyre and his assistant Les Kinvig took time to reflect on the progress made by their squad during the 2019 shinty season.

The pair replaced former boss Kenny Wotherspoon, who had overseen a period of continuous improvement during his three years in charge. Wotherspoon led Oban Celtic to the 2016 Mowi South Division 1 title in his maiden season as boss and followed that with a sixth place finish with ten points in the Mowi National Division a year after. The improvement continued as the squad climbed to fifth in shinty's second tier in 2018, this time amassing twelve points.

So while the challenge was clear for MacIntyre and Kinvig, to maintain the trend of continuous improvement, they were also aware that they would have to work through a period of transition following the loss of four first-team regulars.

The fact their eventual fifth placed finish amassed thirteen points, one more than the previous season, makes for a positive end of term report card.

Dougie MacIntyre thought back to these early days. 'We started off at pre-season with two nights' training each week as we wanted to get fitter. We also challenged the players to improve on discipline. It's difficult enough to deal with injuries and player unavailability without also having guys having to sit games out through suspension and we went on to achieve a better disciplinary record which was very pleasing.'

Les reflected on the pre-season preparation, adding: 'The weather affected our pre-season matches. Only two of the three games were played with the match against Taynuilt having to go ahead on the astro pitch. We won that one and although we lost in the friendly against Inveraray, there was nothing

in that match at Ganavan so we went into the season with confidence.'

Dougie added caution, saying: 'We first had to steady the ship though as we'd lost Daniel Madej, Andy Hunt, Fulton Ronald and Iain MacKechnie and they had to be replaced. We brought in some younger players who did well so I think we managed that situation without going off course.'

The start to the season was difficult as the inclement weather continued into March. Oban Celtic's opening league fixture against Bute started but was abandoned because of the conditions. 'We lost Neil Carmichael with a broken thumb that day,' said Les. 'That was a big blow.'

Next up was a defeat against an all-conquering Fort William side who would go on to win the division at a canter with a 100 per cent record. 'Even at that stage in the season, you could see that Fort William were a team on the way up and they went on to prove that over the season,' said Les Kinvig.

The home meeting with Beaully also fell foul of the weather before a depleted squad lost heavily at Glenurquhart, who were relegated from the Premiership at the end of the previous season.

Dougie and Les were the Oban side's only substitutes that day and the starting twelve included five second team players. 'We didn't dwell on that result too much,' said Les. 'The circumstances meant it was just too big a challenge for us with such a thin squad.'

'A second team should mainly be a mixture of young ones with a couple of older heads. That's how you keep the conveyor belt going and I think we have that.'

'However, we would prefer to introduce the younger players as and when they are ready rather than through necessity but we were forced into it that day as we were so



Oban Celtic Shinty Club.

short because of play unavailability.

'We introduced a number of younger players over the season and they didn't always play in their usual positions so these boys deserve great credit for the jobs they did.'

The rescheduled home fixture with Bute provided the opportunity to put the first points of the season on the board and Oban Celtic took that chance, winning 5-4 at Mossfield. Les said: 'We should have won that game by more but some defensive frailties, which were to haunt us at times during the season, made for a closer final score. Our second team defence was very young so we couldn't just chuck them in, although some of them were used for the seniors at times, but that was an area we knew we needed to work on as the season went on.'

A defeat to Skye followed which was closer than the 5-2 reverse suggested and the loss of Ross MacMillan to a red card came at a crucial stage in the game.

Three successive cup exits on successive Saturdays came next. Dougie wasn't too concerned about that though. He said: 'Our focus was always on the league, especially because of the change-over in the squad.'

New signings Lennon Campbell (former Lochside Rovers) and Peter Currie (former Kyles Athletic) came in to supplement the squad. Campbell's addition compensated for Ally McKerracher's limited availability. After being a key player during the first part of the season, a change of job meant McKerracher would hardly feature during the latter part of the campaign. Currie proved a valuable addition to the Celtic defence.

A good performance secured a 6-3 Tulloch Homes Camanachd Cup victory over Strathglass with some

younger players blooded during the tie when the scoreline allowed.

However, there was a lot of frustration following the 1-1 draw with Beaully. 'We lost an equaliser on 90 minutes,' rued Les. 'It was a day where we had so much pressure but couldn't score the vital second goal and we just lacked that bit of experience at the end of the match to see it out.'



Oban Celtic's best performance of the season arguably came on Skye when a sparkling display earned a 4-1 league victory over the islanders who were playing Premiership shinty only a season earlier. 'We took our chances that day,' said Les. 'The scoreline was perhaps a bit harsh on Skye but we showed what we could do. I know we lost to Skye in the Scottish the week after but, given the choice, we'd have taken the league points any day.'

A Camanachd Cup exit to Skye, again with a several absentees, and a league defeat at Beaully came next. Les said: 'There were times during the season where we felt we'd taken two steps forward followed by two steps back but whenever we didn't get the result we wanted, it was often down to player availability. It was games where we'd have had better outcomes had it not been for players being unavailable or out through injury.'

'The season also started to become

a bit stop-start as we hardly ever seemed to have two matches on the trot.'

MacIntyre and Kinvig are pleased that the Camanachd Association are planning to look at fixturing ahead of the 2020 season. Les said: 'The 2-3 week lay-offs are hard. If you come off the back of a defeat, you want to knuckle down at training and put it right the following week but it's then awkward when there is a delay before your next game. It's the same when you win - you don't want any delay so as to keep the momentum going but it is definitely more difficult if there is no match the following week after you've suffered a loss.'

Oban Celtic finished the Mowi National Division season strongly. Les agreed: 'We really felt we were on the right track after beating Bute 4-1 before more than earning a creditable 1-1 draw with Glasgow Mid Argyll who eventually claimed the division's second promotion spot.'

However, it would be a further three weeks before the meeting with Fort William and it showed as Oban Celtic lost three goals in the opening five minutes. 'We made such a sluggish start which is maybe understandable after not having a game for so long but we showed up better in the second half,' said Les. 'However, the damage was done by then.'

There was another gap before losing at Glasgow Mid Argyll but Oban Celtic went on to take five out of six points from their final three matches of the season. Home and away wins over Strathglass were followed by a 3-3 draw with Glenurquhart. Celtic actually led 3-0 midway through the first half in that match before two late goals earned the Glen a share of the spoils. However, it was a marked improvement to the heavy defeat suffered to the same opponents



Oban Celtic's assistant manager Les Kinvig, left, pictured with committee member David Hamilton and manager Dougie MacIntyre.

continues



the teas and coffees at matches do a great job whilst there is a strong committee in place behind the scenes and they make it all happen.

'And don't forget our sponsors. Running two teams and playing national shinty is expensive and we look forward to their continued support next year.

'They are all so important and they all know who they are.'

Boss Dougie MacIntyre had the final word: 'I'm looking forward to working with the boys again next season and we'll get back on the training field at the turn of the year and get a good pre-season in place so we're ready from the off.'

Five wins and three draws from sixteen matches earned thirteen points and a fifth placed finish. In next week's Oban Times, we'll look at what Oban Celtic need to do to improve on that and perhaps break into the top four in the Mowi National Division in 2020.

Sloss and Wotherspoon remain in charge following Oban Camanachd AGM

Manager Stephen Sloss and his assistant Kenny Wotherspoon will again lead the Oban Camanachd first team for the 2020 shinty season following the club's annual general meeting at the Rockfield School huts on Wednesday 4 December.

Sloss and Wotherspoon led the side to three cup finals in their inaugural season in charge, collecting a Scottish Sea Farms Glasgow Celtic Society Cup along the way as well as finishing runners-up in the Mowi Premiership, the club's best finish for a number of years.

Lochside Rovers lifted both the Highland Industrial Supplies Sutherland Cup and Bullough Cup as well as finishing third in Mowi South Division 1.

There was a good turnout for the AGM, including pretty much the whole first team squad, as Oban Camanachd and Lochside Rovers reflected on the 2019 shinty season. There were 38 people present, the highest attendance for some time, with a voting strength of 26 and manager Stephen Sloss had the support of the voting membership.

Pat Steeman steps in as Oban Camanachd's new president. Steeman, who fulfilled a role in relation to fundraising and sponsorship, succeeds club stalwart Chris Eccleston who takes a well-deserved break. Gareth Evans remains as vice-president whilst Katy Cameron continues as treasurer but the club is on the look-out for a club secretary.

More crucially, the Oban side are looking to fill the role of Lochside Rovers manager. Whilst Brian MacCallum stepped down towards the end of last season, George Easton and Andrew Pearson have

Continued on page 52

earlier in the season. Like most teams, Oban Celtic can also look to the points that got away. Les said: 'I think when you look back, the draws with Beaully, Glasgow Mid Argyll and Glenurquhart are games we could definitely have won. Late goals cost us in all three matches.

'We led Beaully 1-0 until the final minute whilst we had the majority of the match against GMA but, again, we just lacked that bit of experience to see it over the line and they equalised three minutes from time.

It was the same story against Glenurquhart with their second and third goals coming on 80 and 89 minutes so that's something we will work on.'

Representative recognition is something that is important to the club with Ross MacMillan top of the pile as he was again selected for the Scotland U21s for their shinty / hurling meeting with Ireland U21 in Dublin. Les Kinvig said: 'The whole club was delighted that Ross was included again. As a club, we expect all players to want to reach as high a level as they can and Ross is a great example of what can be achieved. Lewis McPhee is another who could definitely have made the step up to the Scotland U21s but he picked up an injury at an unfortunate time and I'm sure that affected his chances.

'This year we had players representing the South at U14, U17 and the U21 level and indeed the Scotland U21 trials. There are a lot of youth players at the club and we want to see them all follow that pathway. It's good for their development and it's good for the club.'

Les was also keen to highlight the unsung heroes and heroines who all play their part over the season. 'There are a lot of people behind the scenes who do so much work to run the club so well. The ladies who do

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The two entries who got nearest the ball and each receive £25 are:
A MacIntyre
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Continued from page 51

also intimated that they will no longer be involved.

The youths continue to be looked after by Alan MacKechnie at U17 level and Stephen Campbell and Andrew Pearson at U14 level.

Iain MacIntyre continues as club chieftain whilst Nigel Evans remains as honorary president.

Chris Eccleston's contribution was recognised as he was added to the list of honorary vice-presidents.

There is also a place for David MacLennan as super-ball convener, an important fund raiser for the club.

Malcolm Clark stays on as social media convener whilst Claire Jackson has stepped down from her role as child protection officer.

Oban Camanachd have also begun the process of putting together a list of pre-season friendly fixtures to take place in February 2020.



Stephen Sloss and Kenny Wotherspoon remain in charge of Oban Camanachd.

Lochaber look to bring back seconds

Lochaber are looking at the possibility of resurrecting their second team for the 2020 shinty season.

The Lochaber second team finished sixth in Mowi North Division 2 at the end of 2018 but a lack of numbers meant they were the only Premiership or National Division side not to have a second string in 2019.

However, following discussions at the club's annual general meeting at the Station Restaurant on Friday 6 December 2019, the Spean Bridge side hope to their reserves can make a quick reappearance next season.

The club has a first team, U17s, U14s and women's first and second teams and are looking to recruit new players at all levels.

Anyone wishing to get involved at senior level should contact Michael Delaney, who stays on as first team manager, on 07830 818261 and Aeleen Campbell on 07760 155313 in relation to joining the ladies or the youths.

Skye Camanachd Player of the Year awards

The 2019 Skye Camanachd player of the year awards were announced at an end of season awards night and dinner.

William MacKinnon was the recipient of the John the Caley Trophy for Skye Camanachd first team player of the year. As well as having a terrific season in the Skye Camanachd first team, MacKinnon was part of both the Scotland U17 and Scotland U21 squads which played in Ireland this year.

Skye second team skipper Sam MacPhee was given the second team player of the year accolade for his performances throughout the season.

Lorna MacRae was again a vital player for the Skye Camanachd Ladies during 2019 as the side won the Mowi Valerie Fraser Camanachd Cup and she once again represented Scotland against Irish opposition. Her efforts were recognised as she received the Lucille Nobile Trophy as overall ladies player of the year.

Martin Pringle collected the coveted Caman DR following a season during which he was a regular in the Skye Camanachd first team and was named in the Scotland U17 squad which beat Ireland U17 this year and the North U21 squad which defeated their South U21 opponents.

The Angus Murchison Trophy, presented to the

person who has done most for the club off the field of play, was awarded to Moreen Pringle. Organising the Skye Camanachd merchandise and the kitchen rota are only two of Moreen Pringle's tasks and she is also the Skye Camanachd Social Club chair.

Kinlochshiel hold prize night

Kinlochshiel handed out a number of prizes at their awards night took place at Dornie Hall.

'Shiel midfielder Donald Nixon's performances this season were recognised with a first call up to the Scotland senior squad and he was the evening's big winner as he took the Duncan MacRae Cup as first team players' player of the year.

The Kenny Wilson Cup for committee player of the year

was Duncan 'DA' MacRae who once again fulfilled a number of roles for the first team during the season.

The Tommy Mackenzie Cup for second team players' player of the year went to Corran Campbell who broke into the first team squad towards the end of the season.

Another promising youngster, Duncan 'WD' MacRae received the Ian 'Dubh' Memorial Shield as U21 player of the year after forcing his way into Johnston Gill's first team squad.

The 'Shiel ladies players' player of the year was Alaina MacLennan whilst the Ray Coghill Memorial Shield for the Ladies most improved player went to Amelia Sutherland.

The U17 player of the year winner was Callum Coghill.

It was a good season for Kinlochshiel U14 who won the MacMaster Cup and only lost out on the Mowi North Division 1 title to Beaully following a play-off. Archie MacRae was key during both campaigns and the Mowi national U14 player of the year also collected the CalMac Quaich as Kinlochshiel U14 player of the year.

The U14 most improved player prize went to Campbell Lamont. Fraser MacRae was the U12 player of the year whilst the U12 most improved player was Cameron Kennedy.

Bute awards dinner

Bute recently hosted their awards dinner at their clubhouse.

Craig Fisher was named first team players' player of the year whilst Scotland U21 cap Ryan James Craig collected first team manager John MacCallum's player of the year award

The second team players' player of the year prize went

to Robin McAlister and Bute second team boss James Craig selected Liam Ferguson as his second team player of the year.

Callum McMillan was Bute's young player of the year.

Bute ladies players' player of the year was Jillie McCabe whilst the manager's player of the year winner was Anna Stanczyk.

Maja Stanczyk was named young player of the year.

Beaully prizes

Beaully presented their player of the year awards at their annual club night at the club's awards dinner at the Priory Hotel.

Colin MacDonald collected the DJ Fraser Trophy as senior player of the year for the Mowi National Division side.

Colin MacDonald also picked up the Lymburn Trophy for players' player of the year prize.

James Morrison was awarded the Ken Ross Trophy as second team player of the year whilst the youth awards went to Finlay MacLennan as U17 player of the year and Euan MacCormack who was both the U17 players' player of the year and young player of the year, taking the Centenary Vase.

Louis Stewart

Inverness Shinty Club and the shinty community at large were saddened to hear of the passing of Louis Stewart, patron of the Camanachd Association and chieftain of Inverness Shinty Club, on Saturday 7 December.

In a club statement, Inverness said: 'Louis Stewart was well known, loved and respected not just in Inverness but across the whole shinty community and our thoughts are with Louis's wife Margaret and the family at this time.'

Orienteers put themselves on the map



Lucas Allen, seven, negotiated his dad Matt around the Yellow course.

Seventeen hardy souls took to Tralee on Sunday for the seventh event in the Loch Eck Orienteers (EckO) series.

Battling ferocious winds and torrential downpours, the group challenged themselves across three categories, depending on ability, across the dunes and through the woods to complete the final course of 2019.

Due to the weather, Sunday's event was down on numbers but membership at the Oban/Lorn-based club have been steadily rising over recent years as the sport enjoys a boost in popularity.

There are now almost 70 members, of which around 50 per cent are juniors, with

all ages and abilities enjoying this tactical sport which combines map reading and running/walking.

EckO chairman, coach and founder Ross Lilley told The Oban Times: 'Orienteering is a fantastic sport for anyone who wants to challenge themselves mentally as well as physically.'

'There are no age limits, although we recommend that children are accompanied by an adult until they are confident at reading the maps.'

'The idea of it is to find your way between checkpoints as quickly as possible. There is no set route between these points so participants have to decide which way to go, with

the help of a map and a compass, and find their way to the next checkpoint without getting lost.

'We also welcome newcomers to the sport.'

'The best place to get started is a local event and we have mapped courses at Kerrera, Dunollie, Ganavan, Barcaldine, Inveraray and Ballachulish as well as here at Tralee.'

Anyone interested in joining the Loch Eck Orienteers can find more information on their Facebook page or website <https://www.ecko.org.uk/> > <https://www.ecko.org.uk/>

Tralee results: Green 2.8km: 1, Andy Dale M50, 20:02; 2, Max



Seventeen-month-old Lucy Waddington gets ready to take on the Yellow course with her mum Emma.

Holloway M21, 21:18; 3, Jim Bacon, 23:18; 4=, Diane Mailer W50, 29:55; Jan Kersel W60, 29:55; 6, Logan Mailer M18, 29:57; 7, Julie Watson W50, 35:51; 8, Leigh Murray W55, 37:07; 9, Ed Daynes, Caroline Coe, 39:01; 10, Alison Stewart W55, 40:06; Ross Lilley M50; Finlo Cottier M45; Dave Bleazard M55.

Orange 1.925km: 1, Ruari Cottier M12 17:17.

ORIENTEERING

Yellow 1.325km: 1, Lucas Allen M10 23:19; 2, Lucy Waddington W10 27:58.

The club would like to thank Tralee Bay Holidays for allowing them the use of the area.

School pupils at Man City training academy

Pupils from Oban and Treen high schools were put through their paces last weekend when they visited Manchester City's training academy.

Staff from Oban High School took the 44 pupils, including five from Treen, to the Etihad training academy.

FOOTBALL COACHING



Inspire Sport ensured the visit ran smoothly and the young football fans had three training sessions at the academy, a tour of the stadium and the highlight of the trip was watching the derby match between Manchester City and Manchester United on Saturday evening.

Unfortunately, for the City fans on the trip, their team lost 2-1 to rivals United.

This is the fourth time the school has used Inspire; previous trips included Manchester, Valencia and Milan.

In order for trips like these to take place, Oban High School staff give up their spare time to chaperone the pupils and provide them with 'world class experiences'.



Oban and Treen pupils at the Manchester City training academy. Photographs: Oban High School



Kieran Griffin, 51, meets Manchester City manager Pep Guardiola, or does he?



Concentration is needed as the boys work hard on one of the coaching drills.



The boys are put through their paces by one of the Manchester City coaches.

MKM supplies Oban Squash Club with major tournament backing

Oban's newest building supplies business has thrown its weight behind a high profile squash competition to be held in Oban in the spring.

Elite players, referees and their supporters will travel to Atlantis Leisure on March 27, 28 and 29 next year where they will compete to gain ranking points for eventual seeding in the International Squash circuit.

This high profile Professional Squash Association (PSA) competition is creating excitement both nationally and locally and MKM Building Supplies, who opened their doors at the beginning of the month, are only too happy to help out.

Sandy Cameron, MKM branch director, said: 'It is important to us as a local business to support local events.'

'It will be great to see a competition of such high standards being played in Oban.'

Delighted

Mr Cameron presented a cheque for £500, to Jackie Kersley, squash convener and club secretary of Oban Tennis and Squash Club on Monday. 'We are delighted that MKM are supporting this

SQUASH

PSA competition and the club is looking forward to welcoming these elite squash players to the town.'

BID4Oban chief executive Andrew Spence has also said that they will provide core funding for this prestigious event and welcomes the opportunity to showcase Oban.



From left: Andrew Spence (BID4Oban), Sandy Cameron (MKM branch director), Jackie Kersley (Oban Squash Club) and Kenny Drummond (MKM).

Road to recovery for the Green Machine starts at Glencruitten

A one-point defeat at Stranraer last weekend was a bitter pill for Oban Lorne RFC to swallow.

This weekend, however, the Green Machine are looking to get back into top gear and work on their recovery after a recent run of defeats in West Division 2.

On Saturday, Andrew Johnston's men face Helensburgh at Glencruitten and are looking to reverse the defeat at Ardencaple earlier in the season.

'With some pretty miserable weather forecast, the game will be touch and go but we would be hopeful of winning,' said coach Johnston.

'A couple of key performers are coming back into squad - Daniel Broderick and Owen McDonald - after missing the past couple of weeks with work commitments, and

everyone is keen to get back to winning ways.'

Last weekend Oban made the long trip south to face Wigtownshire with a strong team.

Oban started the game well, playing with the wind in the first half, and a great defensive effort, along with the accurate boot of Vasil Borisov saw the

RUGBY

Green Machine get to half-time with a 9-0 lead.

A converted try within five minutes of the restart saw Wigtownshire right back in the game before a penalty shoot out ensued with the hosts slotting two to Oban's one for a 13-12 victory.



Owen McDonald will be back in action for the Green Machine this weekend.

OT

GOLF

Presentation to Bob



Bob MacIntyre is pictured with Alan Jamieson, David Finlayson and young members Andrew and Lewis MacMillan. Photograph: Kevin McGlynn

Members of Glencruitten Golf Club gathered at the clubhouse last Friday evening to attend a reception to acknowledge the tremendous season of Rookie of the Year Bob MacIntyre. Bob was presented with a bottle of whisky and a framed print by club captain Alan Jamieson and David Finlayson of Oban Rotary Club.

Photograph: Kevin McGlynn

Isle of Seil prizegiving



Some of the Isle of Seil Golf Club prizewinners at an end of season curry supper – Bill Clark, Mary Phillips, Mark McDougall, Brien Dickey, Gordon McKenzie and John Taylor.

SHOOTING

Tarbert winter shoot



Pictured above are shooters Darren Clark, George Williamson, Brian Baird, Stephen MacSporran and Adam Curr.

Tarbert Gun Club held its December competition of the winter league series on Sunday December 1.

Results: Class A: 1= John Weir and Ian Winnard; 3 Ronald Jenkins. Class B: 1 Bob McColl; 2 Steven Sloan; 3 Jack Campbell. Class C: 1 Roy Laird; 2= Michael Harvey and Craig Samborek. Class D: 1 John Winnard; 2 Ian McVicar; 3 Shaun Johnson. Class E: 1 George Williamson; 2 Duncan McLean; 3 Arron Robertson.

OBAN SAINTS YOUTHS

Sunday's fixtures

Oban Saints youth teams get back to action after last weekend's break with the following fixtures – Dunoon v Under 13s 0; Thorn Athletic v Under 14s. Under 15s v Helensburgh; Under 17s v St Patrick's.

Safe hands MacLe winning streak



Oban Saints	1
Blantyre RGM	0
Central Scottish 1B	

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

Central Scottish AFL - Division 1B

Teams	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
1 Oban Saints	11	11	0	0	39	5	33
2 Blantyre RGM	9	5	2	2	20	15	17
3 Lesmahagow	8	4	1	3	24	10	13
4 Cambusnethan Talbot	9	3	4	2	14	14	13
5 Stedfast K	10	4	1	5	16	21	13
6 Bridgewater	7	4	0	3	14	10	12
7 Garrowhill Thistle	8	2	2	4	13	20	8
8 Clydebank	10	2	2	6	13	28	8
9 Craigneuk	10	0	0	10	3	33	0

over Rothie Rovers and was replaced by Craig MacEwan.

Saints kicked off attacking the Dalintart end and Craig MacEwan tested the handling of Adam McKay in the first minute with a crisply struck shot from 18 yards which the Blantyre keeper did well to parry down and gather at the second attempt.

The value of having a man on the post at corner kicks was proven in the 15th minute when Scott Maitland blocked a Barry McLaughlan corner kick on the Saints goal-line before thumping clear.

The visitors were enjoying the better of the early exchanges, though chances for both sides were at a premium. David Beaton sent over a tempting 19th-minute cross from the right which Adam McKay did well to cut out ahead of Cammy Hill before

Blantyre central midfielder Kris Beggs broke forward but shot well wide of target.

In a better spell for Saints, Lewis Cameron wriggled into the Blantyre box on the left and sent a cutback from the byeline just behind Craig MacEwan whose improvised back heel flick looped gently into the arms of Adam McKay.

Rifled

Cammy Hill and Scott Maitland then linked up well on the left in the 29th minute for a Maitland cross which Conor O'Donnolly helped into the path of Myles McAuley who rifled a 25-yard shot inches over the crossbar.

Dene Cassells climbed well to get on the end of a 33rd-minute Lewis Cameron corner kick which was blocked three yards out. Blantyre couldn't fully clear the danger and Adam McKay



Craig MacEwan scored the only goal of the game.

Saints GG go second in the league

Oban Saints GG	3
Giffnock SC Reds	1
GG AFL Division Three	

Immediately following the first team's Central Scottish Amateur Football League Division 1B victory over nearest challengers Blantyre RGM and, in even further deteriorating weather conditions, Oban Saints Greater Glasgow Premier Amateur Football League side took the field for their third division clash with Giffnock Soccer Centre Amateur Reds.

In sheets of rain blowing in on the strengthening wind from the school end, after twice coming close to opening the scoring in the early stages through Rory Dowd and Martin Bonar, Saints fell behind to a swift counter attack goal.

Parity was restored when

Martin Bonar, still nursing a split head from a training ground accident, slid in bravely to knock home from close range.

The young visiting team enjoyed the better of the remainder of the first half and it was the hosts with Alex Craik, Keith Millar and Dean

Smith bringing valuable experience to the side who were the happier to reach the interval all square.

Saints were an altogether better proposition in the second half and deservedly got their noses in front when central striker Dean Smith raced through on the end



Rory Dowd in action at a rain-swept Oban community pitch last Saturday.

FOOTBALL

of a Daniel Croarkin pass to calmly slot past the advancing Giffnock keeper.

There were second-half run-outs for all four of Saints' youthful substitutes' bench when Craig Easton, Lewis Buchanan, Martin Rennie and Jamie Anderson replaced Martin Bonar, Fraser MacFarlane, Rory Dowd and Nathan Allan respectively.

After hitting the crossbar with a curling, dipping effort into the strong wind, Dean Smith made the points safe from the penalty spot after he had been upended in the box.

The win maintains Saints' unbeaten Greater Glasgow Premier Amateur Football League record and lifts them to second place in Division Three, one point behind leaders Kirkfield United but with three games in hand.

od helps preserve



Saints captain Dene Cassells sends another header over the bar. Match report and photographs: Derek Black

produced the save of the afternoon to acrobatically push Cameron's attempted lob from the right edge of the penalty box over his crossbar.

Lewis Cameron's set piece deliveries continued to trouble the Blantyre defence and Dene Cassells once again won the aerial duel from the corner flag in the 38th minute but sent his header just over the crossbar.

The Saints pressure eventually told and they broke the deadlock with three first half minutes remaining. Venturing a long way forward from his central defensive beat, captain Dene Cassells

were relieved to see Alex Hill slip at the vital moment and send his shot wide of target after he had intercepted a stray 65th minute pass from Graham Douglas.

After winning another corner kick on the right, Lewis Cameron tried to catch out Adam McKay under his crossbar with the keeper having to climb over the top of Barry McLaughlan at the front post to make his punch. The ball looped back across the face of goal where Dene Cassells was once again just off target with a header from three yards.

Saints co-manager Willie Gemmell made a change with 20 minutes remaining sending on Ross Maitland as a direct replacement for David Beaton on the right.

Dene Cassells once again popped up in an attacking role just being crowded out by David Cairney and Ross Burns after an adventurous 70th-minute run.

The Saints defence, pushing too far forward, left Graham Douglas hopelessly exposed in the 73rd minute and the Saints' number one raced out of his goal to concede a free-kick just outside of his box.

Despite the keeper's claims that the ball had hit him on the chest, referee O'Donnell, who had his customary steady game, correctly signalled a handball and issued Douglas with the inevitable red card.

Central defender Steven MacLeod took the gloves bringing to an end Cammy Hill's involvement as the big centre forward was sacrificed for the more defensive minded Kerr Newbigging. Saints' closest league

Hard-fought win in horrendous conditions keeps Saints on track for league title.

swung over a perfect cross from the right edge of the Blantyre box into that corridor of uncertainty between goalkeeper and defenders where Craig MacEwan sneaked in to plant a header beyond Adam McKay for what would prove to be the only goal of the game.

Saints remained on the front foot for the start of the second half with Cammy Hill forcing a corner kick on the left after just 60 seconds.

Dene Cassells was again a handful for the Blantyre defence but still couldn't find the target with a powerful header.

Saints were guilty of over elaborating at the back and



Graham Douglas can hardly get his gloves off to give to Steven MacLeod.

challengers looked to capitalise on their numerical advantage, causing nerves to jangle on the sidelines but Saints defended manfully from the front and stand-in keeper MacLeod remained relatively untroubled.

Changes

Further personnel changes followed when Craig MacEwan was withdrawn to make room for utility man Matt Rippon before Kerr Newbigging's troublesome hip forced him off to be replaced by Aaron McKay in the 90th minute.

With the hardy band of soaked-to-the-skin onlookers beginning to wonder if the referee's watch had stopped, Mr O'Donnell finally blew for full-time after six added minutes extending Saints' unbeaten run to 11 games and stretching their lead over second placed

FOOTBALL

Blantyre RGM to 16 points.

Saints have no fixture this coming weekend and, with Scottish amateur football now going into the festive break, will not return to competitive action until the Scottish Amateur Cup fifth round tie against Renfrew Town on Saturday January 11. The club does, however, hope to arrange a couple of friendly matches details of which are yet to be announced.

Oban Saints Football Club were saddened to hear of the recent death of Bobby McLuckie. Bobby was a founder member of the club.

His funeral took place on Wednesday at Oban Parish Church.



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WEATHER

Thursday
Light rain and a moderate breeze
Temperatures 4°C to 6°C.

Friday
Light rain showers and a moderate breeze
Temperatures 2°C to 7°C.

Weekend Outlook
Saturday
Light rain showers and a gentle breeze
Sunday
Light rain showers and a gentle breeze
Temperatures 3°C to 5°C.



TIDAL INFORMATION

Tide tables for Oban during the week from **Thursday December 12, 2019** are listed below with differences for major ports listed on the right. All times are GMT (add one hour BST)

	05.26	3.9	11.48	1.2
Thur	17.54	4.0	***	**
Fri	00.03	0.9	06.00	3.9
	12.27	1.1	18.28	4.0
Sat	00.41	0.9	06.36	4.0
	13.08	1.1	19.05	3.9
Sun	01.22	0.9	07.15	3.9
	13.52	1.2	19.45	3.7
Mon	02.05	1.0	07.58	3.8
	14.41	1.3	20.31	3.5
Tues	02.53	1.1	08.47	3.7
	15.38	1.4	21.24	3.3
Wed	03.47	1.2	09.44	3.5
	16.44	1.6	22.27	3.1

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

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

Ferry Crossings/Sea States

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

Chain, shackles and buoys all available to purchase.

Talented swimmers make a big splash on gala day

Oban Lorne look to stay on course for victory

Young Oban golfers will benefit from £500 donation

by David McPhee
dmcph@obantimes.co.uk



Junior golfers in Oban will benefit as a result of a £500 donation from a new business in the town.

Argyll Wealth Consultants gifted the sum to Glencruitten Junior Golf Club, which has benefited from a surge in

'Bob has made a difference in the number of juniors we have playing now. It has come on leaps and bounds since his success.'

youngsters picking up the sport following the success of Glencruitten's very own Robert 'Bob' MacIntyre.

Bob was crowned the 2019 European Tour Rookie of the Year after making seven top 10 finishes on his first tour season.

Russell Anderson and Bruce MacNab from the business

gifted the cheque to the club, which was accepted by Neil Armour and Bob.

Speaking to The Oban Times, Russell said: 'We thought it would be a good cause to support. When you see Glencruitten have produced Robert, we have to hope that maybe there might be one or two in the future as well.'

Bruce added: 'I am a keen golfer and we are keen to get involved in the community as we have just opened a new office in Oban.'

The Tarbert man, who has known Bob for some years, said he has helped rejuvenate golf throughout Argyll and Scotland.

Neil Armour, junior coach at Glencruitten Golf Club, said: 'Bob has made a difference in the number of juniors we have playing now. It has come on leaps and bounds since his success.'

Junior golfers at Glencruitten are supplied with clubs by the junior section, which also has to cover travel and other expenses. Neil added: 'Money like this helps with all that.'



Russell Anderson and Bruce MacNab from Argyll Wealth Consultants, with Neil Armour and Bob MacIntyre.

Photograph: Kevin McGlynn



Bob MacIntyre outside the Glencruitten clubhouse.



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Call for Brexit 'clarity' over alloy wheel plant

by Mark Entwistle
mentwistle@obantimes.co.uk

Uncertainties over Brexit's potential impact on the automotive industry has forced Lochaber smelter owner GFG Alliance to explore various possible uses for the liquid aluminium it produces in Fort William as an alternative to manufacturing alloy car wheels at a planned new £120 million plant on the site.

The news came as an event was held at the smelter on Tuesday, the UK's only remaining aluminium factory, to mark its 90th anniversary along with that of its Lochaber hydro-electric plant.

GFG Alliance subsidiary Liberty has invested nearly £5 million in preparatory work for a downstream manufacturing plant in Fort William, which includes the recruitment of an additional 40 employees.

The anniversary event was meant to be addressed by Sanjeev Gupta, executive chairman of the GFG

Alliance, but Tuesday's bad weather forced his plane to return to Prestwick Airport.

However, Dr Douglas Dawson, chief executive officer of GFG Alliance's subsidiary, Liberty Industries Group, which oversees the smelter operation, was present.

'The reality is we're not insulated from the world's economic pressures.'

Dr Dawson said the company's ambitions for downstream manufacturing were 'absolutely undiminished'.

He went on: 'We do wish, and will make, products from our superheated liquid aluminium that we make proudly here in Fort William.'

'The reality is we are not insulated from the world's economic pressures and environments.'

'And the geopolitical environment we have is probably

unprecedented in the UK. But, as I repeat, our ambitions are undiminished.'

And in an almost simultaneous official press statement issued on Tuesday, GFG Alliance stated: 'Options under consideration include an automotive wheels plant or, in view of a downturn in UK car production, alternative industrial uses for the liquid aluminium produced in the Lochaber smelter - such as industrial extrusions or water bottles.'

Speaking on BBC Radio's Good Morning Scotland programme, also on Tuesday, GFG Alliance's chief investment officer, Jay Hambro, explained that while the alloy wheels factory project was ready to start, the company needed to know car manufacturers would stay in the UK after Brexit.

He said GFG Alliance 'just needs a moment of clarity as to the future and then will push the button'.

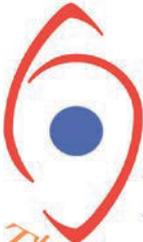
Pressed for further con-

Continued on page four

Muh-ha-ha! Panto antics delight



David Rounce, pictured, was in good form as the panto villain Rothbart, in Lochaber Showstoppers' production of The Swan Princess, which played to packed houses at Ballachulish Village Hall last week. For more photographs and a full review, turn to page three. Photograph: Iain Ferguson, alba.photos

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Lochaber Music School all set for festive concert

Lochaber Music School's Christmas concert will take place on Sunday December 15 at 3pm in St Margaret's Church, Roy Bridge.

The church is always beautifully decorated for this occasion and in a magical miscellany of seasonal music, the audience will once again be treated to choral, orchestral, ensemble and solo items performed by some of Lochaber's most talented young musicians.

Audience carols will be accompanied by the music school's string orchestra. Its choristers will be spreading the Christmas message in beautiful song and the music school's handbell ringers will be pealing out their angelic chimes.

Many parents have told the tutors that this is the one event that signifies for them the true start of the Christmas period.

It is indeed a lovely concert for the whole family. It will be followed soon after 4pm by home-baked seasonal refreshments and a fundraising raffle in the Roy Bridge Village Hall.

All monies raised will help fund classes for the music school's 150 pupils during the coming year.

Admission is £5 for adults, but free for school-aged children.

Forbes welcomes move to increase carers cash

by Mark Entwistle
mentwistle@obantimes.co.uk

Kate Forbes has welcomed the news that Highland Council has decided to increase its foster carer payments following her campaign for improvements earlier in the year.

At a meeting in Inverness on Monday, the council voted to increase its payments to foster carers by 20 per cent from January 1, 2020, and to move to a fee-per-child structure.

Under the previous fee-per-carer model, the local authority paid only one fee to foster carers, regardless of the number of children they looked after.

MSP for Skye, Lochaber and Badenoch, Ms Forbes has

consistently urged the local authority to do everything in its power to keep Highland children in the region, after her own investigation revealed that youngsters were being placed with carers hundreds of miles from their home.

She has also appealed to more Highlanders to consider becoming foster carers and thereby reduce the council's seven-figure out-of-area spend.

Earlier this year statistics showed that Highland Council paid the lowest allowance rate in Scotland for foster carers with children under 11 years old, sparking the MSP's calls to rethink support in order to boost numbers.

Ms Forbes told us: 'I am delighted that Highland Council has listened to the consistent calls of foster carers and are now going to implement some of the suggestions that were made earlier in the year. I hope these will in turn benefit some of the most vulnerable children in my constituency.'

'Money ... can make the difference to retaining carers.'

'Money does not attract foster carers to open their homes and lives to young people, but it can make the difference to retaining and supporting carers adequately.'

'It costs money to be a foster carer, not just to care for the child or young person, but also if a carer needs to be at home full-time and so cannot work. Reconsidering financial support could help to retain some carers who are struggling to make ends meet and care for young people.'

'Let's not forget that the Highland Council still has a considerable seven-figure out-of-area spend – so if more prospective foster carers come forward, we keep more kids in the Highlands and this sum reduces. That won't necessarily be the right result for everybody, as there can be exceptional reasons why some children are out-of-area, but it will certainly help some.'

'I hope that the general issue being in the public domain will encourage more people to consider whether they could become a foster carer in the Highlands.'

Highland Council says it currently has 112 children and young people in its foster care service and that the investment of £500,000 in foster care will help to increase the number of available placements in Highland by up to 20.

In the past year, 42 children have returned to Highland or been able to remain in area through the council programme, avoiding costs of more than £6million. Nine of these young people are now in family-based placements.

Lochaber's Holly highly commended at RSPB Nature of Scotland Awards

Lochaber climate activist Holly Gillibrand narrowly missed out on being crowned Political Advocate of the Year at this month's RSPB Nature of Scotland Awards, co-sponsored by Scottish Natural Heritage.

The 14-year-old Lochaber High School pupil, who writes a regular column for the Lochaber Times on environmental matters, was shortlisted along with MSPs Roseanna Cunningham, the eventual

winner, Andy Wightman and Gail Ross.

However, Holly was highly commended, after being originally nominated by WWF Scotland.

The awards dinner was held on December 4 at Edinburgh's Sheraton Grand Hotel and was hosted by wildlife film-maker Gordon Buchanan and radio broadcaster Euan McIlwraith.

Holly tweeted afterwards: 'I'm truly grateful for being

awarded highly commended Political Advocate of the Year at @NatureofScot.'

'I hope that soon I can stop being a political advocate and go back to being a normal wild-life-mad teenager. But until that day, I will never stop fighting for Scotland's nature.'

Holly pictured with wildlife film-maker and host of the awards, Gordon Buchanan.



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Swan Princess is panto triumph

Yet another spectacular Showstopper production proves that pantomime is alive and well and currently living in Ballachulish.

Traditional panto values, tastefully brought up-to-date by modern technology, resulted in a show which, throughout, had something to sustain the interest of all ages, from children to old fogies like me.

The script was written by ex-Showstopper Ryan Laskey, (adapted by Sheena Coull and Paul Hornby-Batrick) and was well constructed to include the usual panto content from local and/or corny gags, goodies and baddies, and a traditional love story.

I thought the plot in the second act got a wee bit lost and hurried, but apart from that was most commendable.

The sets and scenery by Brian Dickie were for the most part simple but effective and pleasing on the eye. They were capably handled by Kathryn McDonald and her stage crew.

A special mention must go to the ladies in the costume/hair/make-up team, led by Sue Hood. Their combined efforts successfully met the requirements of a key panto ingredient. The costumes were just wonderful and added greatly to the overall spectacle.

A good, strong supporting cast/chorus (too numerous to mention individually) were enthusiastically involved throughout the show as (variously) villagers, cygnets etc and always looked totally involved in the action.

Kelly Follan as Druzella, and Shona Bell as Anastasia both performed well, and I particularly liked Holly



The Queen and King hatch a plan to marry off their daughter; and below, the Swan Princess meets with Prince Derek; below right, three suitors line up.

Photographs: Iain Ferguson, alba. photos



Baldwin (Splat) and Stuart MacMillan as Silly Billy. James Ross was suitably and commendably henpecked as the King (and who wouldn't be, in the face of Aileen Hornby's wonderfully imperious portrayal of the Queen?).

Alan Gray is a great dame in the best panto tradition, interacting (not to mention overacting) wonderfully well with all ages in the audience, and greatly adding to the enjoyment of all.

Equally in the best tradition, and equally adding to the enjoyment, was David Rounce as the villainous Baron. Roundly and justifiably boo-ed by the audience on his every appearance, he was just great.

Emma Smith (on Friday eve) performed really well as Derek, maintaining a high level portrayal throughout the show. A special mention to Aimee Campbell as the heroine, Odette. She worked hard to evoke suitable empathy from the audience, and coped really well with some difficult singing parts. Well done, Aimee.

The choreography was

in the very capable hands of Victoria Horn, and the spectacular onstage result was obviously the result of much painstaking rehearsal, particularly in the big production numbers.

Adding hugely to the overall success were the musical direction, sound direction and lighting. All of this was flawless throughout the show, and a tremendous credit to the talented Paul Hornby-Batrick and his equally talented crew.

Bringing all of the above together to create a great show was in the most capable hands of director Sheena Coull.

Sheena has a wonderful sense of the musical, the dramatic, the spectacular, and even the downright ridiculous, all of which are essential requirements of a successful panto – which this most certainly turned out to be. Well done to everyone concerned.

N McA



Left, every panto needs a dame and 'Aunt Sally' is played loudly and colourfully by Alan Gray; The Swan Princess, Odette (Aimee Campbell) has her first encounter with the villainous wizard, Rothbart (David Rounce).

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Some of the supporters picking up their certificates.

Legion thank those who made bench a reality

Fort William and District Branch of Royal British Legion Scotland held a special ceremony on Sunday to present certificates to everyone involved in the WW1 And WW2 Memorial Bench Project.

Following the AGM and prior to making the presentations, Lt Col Kevin F Lane MBE, the branch president, said it was very much a community project and, although headed by the Fort William and District Branch, Royal British Legion Scotland, it could not be achieved without the aid of those who supported it.

He said he was humbled by people's generosity and

willingness to participate in such an important project. He then presented those attending with their certificates. They were: The Highland Council; The Inverness Grand Lodge of the Freemasons; Morrison's Plumbers; Paula McGaskill; Danny and Margaret Munro; Mowi; Fort William Town Team; Fion Construction and John McLellan Undertakers.

Those not able to attend were: Lochaber Building Supplies (LBS); Moidart Trust (Angus MacDonald); Jake Porter; Libby Porter; Anne Whitehead; B Wilson; D MacGilvary; the Lochy Bar; D Calder and the Co-op (Caol).

Generous Lochaber residents donate blankets for refugees

by Mark Entwistle
mentwistle@obantimes.co.uk

The generosity of Lochaber residents has enabled a local volunteers group to help fill a 40ft shipping container with winter clothing and blankets for hundreds of refugees and migrants stuck on Greece's Chios island in the northern Aegean Sea.

Lochaber Supports Refugees (LSR) filled the container this week at Camaghael ahead of it leaving from Muir of Ord on Saturday with other donations from other groups including the Highlands Support Refugees organisation.

LSR's Lorraine Wheelan



Volunteers from Lochaber Supports Refugees pictured filling the shipping container this week with donations of blankets and warm clothing for winter.

Photograph: Iain Ferguson, alba.photos

commented: 'The response was huge, we were absolutely inundated with donations and are totally amazed by the kindness and generosity of people from all over Lochaber, the rest of the Highlands, Argyll and further afield.'

The appeal for the blankets and clothing was issued four weeks ago and donations streamed in with eight unpaid volunteers working every week to deal with it.

The items will be handed over to the Chios Eastern Shore Response Team (CESRT), which is a locally organised unit of international volunteers dedicated to providing both immediate and long-term support for refugees on the island as well as local people.

CESRT is one of the last groups remaining on Chios providing vital aid for refugees – even welcoming them as they arrive on the beach

and in camps where they can be stuck for long periods.

The island lies just four miles from the Turkish coast and has been taking in boatloads of refugees since 2015.

Lorraine explained: 'CESRT is the organisation we always deal with now and this year they request donations of blankets if possible and so we are absolutely delighted with the response from Lochaber.'

Call for Brexit 'clarity' over Lochaber alloy wheel plant

Continued from page one
firmation on the situation by the Lochaber Times, a GFG Alliance spokesman in London confirmed Mr Hambro's comments saying: 'As Jay said in the interview, we're "waiting to press the button" on the project but awaiting clarity over Brexit and its impact on the automotive industry.'

'We're still continuing preparations for the plant with a team on site.'

The smelter was acquired by the GFG Alliance for £330 million three years ago and produces up to 50,000 tonnes of aluminium annually, powered by renewable energy from fresh water running off the slopes of nearby Ben Nevis.

Employees past and present gathered for the anniversary celebrations and were joined by guests, including Ian



Dr Douglas Dawson, CEO of Liberty Industries Group.

Photograph: Iain Ferguson

Blackford, who were treated to commemorative bottles of whisky from the local Ben Nevis distillery, while a retrospective exhibition detailed the Lochaber plant's colourful history.

Coinciding with the event, the GFG Alliance published its first Scottish report detailing industrial investment of £500m in six aluminium,

steel and energy sites across the country, the creation or safeguarding of more than 400 jobs and spending of nearly £22m with local suppliers.

In a statement, Mr Gupta said he was very proud that GFG Alliance is not only keeping that tradition of smelting going in Lochaber but is investing in staff, capacity and in downstream manufacturing.

'This is a very special place and it's a privilege to be a part of its history.'

'As we drive this project forward, we have added 40 people to our Fort William team,' he said.

'The model we see here – of renewable energy powering heavy industry – is at the very heart of GFG's vision for the renewal and revival of foundation industries not just in Scotland but internationally.'

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Lochaber Air Training Corps honours 75 years of service

Members of 1730 (Lochaber) Squadron, Air Training Corps (ATC) and representatives of the Highland Wing came together last month to celebrate the exceptional commitment of Alan Lamb, who has spent 75 years serving the organisation.

Mr Lamb, who was also minister of Arisaig Parish Church, first joined the ATC in 1944 when he became a cadet in Wembley.

In 1968, he took on the role of padre of 16F Squadron (Middlesex Wing), assuming the same role in Lochaber in 1995. Two years later, he stepped up to become padre to the Highland Wing. In more recent times, Mr Lamb has been a valuable member of the Lochaber Squadron Committee, a role from which he is now stepping down.

Addressing Mr Lamb, his wife Helen and the assembled guests, present commanding officer, Sgt James Liddell, said: 'I remember when I first met Alan who, as padre, enrolled me as a cadet. It has been my



Alan Lamb and his wife Helen with guests at his farewell afternoon tea in Ben Nevis Distillery. Photograph: Iain Ferguson

honour to be able to work alongside him, not just as a cadet but also as an adult member of the squadron staff. Alan has played a big role in helping cadets from when they were just starting out and through their journey.

'He was always on hand to give help to anyone and had time to sit down and listen before offering advice. It was a shock to hear he was stepping down from the committee and

I would like to say on behalf of everyone in the squadron, thank you for your years of service and commitment.'

Guests at Ben Nevis Distillery included Highland Wing's Wing Commander Christine Copsey; committee members Craig Murray and David Ogg; ex-padre Donald MacCorkindale; staff members/civilian instructors, Ailsa and Stevie McAleer and Siobhan Sharkey and ex-staffer Glen Liddell.

Eight years' jail for Fort sex attacks

A sex attacker who raped a sleeping teenager and assaulted a second victim when she was under the influence of drink was jailed for eight years last week.

The jailing of Thomas Findlay was greeted by applause from one woman onlooker at the High Court in Edinburgh.

Findlay, 22, of Glasgow Road, Dumbarton, committed a string of sex crimes in the Fort William area between April 2015 and December 2017.

A judge told him: 'I am conscious at the time of these offences you were a young man and indeed remain so.'

But Michael O'Grady QC said the evidence revealed he was one who 'systematically preyed' on young females.

The judge said: 'The report before me would suggest that even now you show little empathy or remorse, and essentially accept no responsibility.'

He said Findlay's disturbing behaviour was bound to attract a prison sentence.

The judge also ordered that he should be kept under supervision for a further period of three years.

Findlay was earlier convicted by a jury of having underage sex with two girls and raping one of them and assaulting and raping a third victim.

He had illegal intercourse with one 15-year-old at an address in Fort William and at a nearby village, but also raped her on occasions when she fell asleep.

Findlay also had sex with a second underage girl in Fort William and attacked a third victim at a house in the town and raped her when she was incapable of giving or withholding consent as she was under the influence of alcohol.

Findlay was acquitted of a further rape charge which the Crown had alleged had taken place in a vehicle in Fort William on January 2 last year. He had denied all the rape charges.

Defence counsel Graham Robertson said Findlay recognised the judge had 'very little option other than to impose a custodial sentence'.

Findlay was placed on the sex offenders' register.

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Businesses 'disappointed' by approval of visitor levy

by Richard Mason
rmason@obantimes.co.uk

Highland Council has approved the findings of the transient visitor levy consultation charge but businesses are not happy.

The decision was made at a full meeting of the council in Inverness on Monday, with councillors agreeing further work was necessary to properly implement the survey that saw 6,640 responses from residents, businesses and visitors.

The report on the consultation was described as one of the best to have come before the council, with the motion to approve the recommendations garnering 44 votes. There were just four against, with seven abstentions.

The report showed 65 per cent of all respondents, 76 per cent of residents, 52 per cent of visitors and 47 per cent of businesses were in favour of

the levy in principle. Business groups have been critical of the implications of the tax, with Federation of Small Businesses' Highlands and Islands development manager David Richardson calling the news 'very disappointing' but 'not surprising'.

He said: 'Having led the opposition in the Highlands, we know from our own FSB surveys, and from countless meetings and discussions with members and other business organisations, that the local industry is resolutely opposed to the council taxing its customers, seeing it as damaging to both businesses and their communities.'

Mr Richardson mentioned that businesses would incur costs from collecting the levy and suggested council should reimburse this.

This was echoed by Lochaber Chamber of Commerce CEO Frazer Coupland.

He said: 'Now that Highland Council must present a business case for how the collection and distribution of the levy will work, further engagement with the industry, business groups and sectoral associations will be vital.'

Lochaber councillor Allan Henderson told the meeting paying a tax to the area is becoming the norm worldwide.

He said: 'You go to Australia and you pay a tax, even the Australians do. You feel good because you are helping keep the Barrier Reef in a pristine form so other people can enjoy it. That's what we would be doing with a levy like this: allowing the Highland visitor to contribute to keeping it pristine.'

One of the recommendations was that the levy should be more than just a bed tax.

Councillor Ben Thompson suggested the model works well in cities but will not in

smaller communities where people might want to create a 'micro-business'.

He said: 'The taxman has a pretty notorious reputation in Highland history. I do not want a council employee to go out spying on crofters who have got a couple of folk camping.'

More than two thirds of respondents wanted to see visitors coming from cruise ships pay the levy, but charges already apply to ships.

The Fort William Marina and Shoreline Company has brought 29 cruise ships to Lochaber since 2016. Company secretary Sarah Kennedy said: 'We would not wish to have any extra cost for cruise ships coming to Fort William. The Highland Council already gets income from the cruise ships based on their gross tonnage and have earned around £78,000 since we installed the pontoons.'

VIEW FROM THE CHAMBER

Well, today's the big day – the first UK General Election held in December since 1923. Let's hope the weather is kind to us and we can all get out to take part in the democratic process to make our voices heard.

Some might say 'uncertainty' has been the business watchword of 2019 and it's well known that uncertainty is one of the hardest things for businesses to deal with. All businesses have been affected by the political situation, but how can you make your views heard by those in power? That's where being part of a strong business network can make all the difference.

As part of Lochaber Chamber of Commerce, you become part of the Scottish Chambers of Commerce network, the umbrella organisation for 26 Chambers of Commerce – representing more than 50 per cent of private sector jobs in Scotland. The Scottish Chambers of Commerce plays a key role in consistently speaking up for the needs of the business community.

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business organisation of 11,000 companies, with access to an unrivalled range of services, support and advice to aid your development as a thriving member of the business community and help you deal with uncertain times.

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With its affiliation to Scottish Chambers of Commerce, Lochaber Chamber is part of 'the ultimate business network', contributing views on a variety of issues affecting business and industry in this country. Scottish Chambers of Commerce has built a reputation as Scotland's premier voice for business at national and international level.

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Lochaber Pride appeal for help to hold summer event

With 21 Pride events throughout Scotland in 2019, it was a big year for LGBTQIA+ communities and Lochaber is looking to join in next year, writes Richard Mason.

Lochaber Pride is hosting a volunteer information evening and get together next Monday evening (December 16) at The Wildcat cafe.

The group was set up in October by partners Ryan Laskey and Tom Slay, who met in Sydney and moved to Fort William recently, where Ryan grew up.

Ryan said: 'The first pride event was a protest in response to the events in 1969 New York where police raids targeted the Stonewall Inn and arrested gay people back when it was illegal.'

'It has now evolved quite beautifully into a community event, but still with that element of protest to campaign for equality.'

'We want everyone, no matter how they identify, to feel welcome and will use the event to help educate about things people want



to know more about such as terms like non-binary and help people to become more informed.'

The group ideally wants to hold an event in summer 2020, hosted at the Nevis Centre with a space for performances, crafts stalls, and an information area where people can speak about things like mental health, HIV and other queer issues.

The term 'queer' is now used by LGBTQI people to refer to themselves as a group and is no longer thought of as derogatory.

'There is a big queer community in Lochaber,' continued Mr Laskey, 'bigger than some people might think. Some trans people

I have spoken to moved to Lochaber because people generally have a relaxed attitude, they feel safe and can become part of the community.'

'While it's great that people can feel safe here, homosexuality is still illegal in 72 countries and is punishable by death in 12.'

'Some of those countries are popular holiday destinations, often visited by people in the UK.'

The A in LGBTQIA stands for 'ally' – a term that denotes those who are allied to the cause of equality for queer people.

It means everyone is welcome to the volunteer event at The Wildcat cafe in Fort William to engage in ways to make a Lochaber Pride event a reality.

Details of the volunteer event on Monday can be found through the Lochaber Pride Facebook page.

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Go ahead for controversial zip wire in Kinlochleven

by Mark Entwistle
mentwistle@obantimes.co.uk

A proposed zip wire designed to boost tourism on land owned by Jahama Highland Estates at Kinlochleven has been given the green light by Highland Council.

The plans, which include two pairs of zip wires over Loch Leven, were put forward by local resident Stephen Connelly in conjunction with Jahama Highland Estates, part of the GFG Alliance, which owns the Lochaber smelter at Fort William and hydro plant.

One of the zip wires, at 1,470m in length, will be the longest in Scotland, while the shorter zip wire, which will measure 1,050m, will be the steepest in the UK.

'We feel the zip wire attraction is a carefully-balanced proposition that will give local tourism a valuable boost while



An artist's impression of the zip wire.

preserving the integrity of the surrounding natural landscape,' said Jahama Highland Estates, manager Dimitri Harrison.

In addition to the zip wires and platforms, the plans also comprise a container-style reception building, two floating jetties and a proposal to use part of the former smelter site as a car park for visitors.

The aim is to launch the zip

wire next summer. However the project has not been without controversy and caused a serious rift in the community – a fact acknowledged by councillor Andrew Baxter.

He told the committee: 'Members will be aware this is a proposal that has sparked strong opinions both in favour and vehemently against the development.

'Unfortunately, that has led

to comments on both sides of the argument that I feel are unacceptable – things like "incomers are not entitled to have an opinion".

'In my opinion, it doesn't matter if you have lived in the village one day, 10 years or 70 years – you are entitled to your opinion. Just as those who don't live in the village who have objected or have signed the petition, they have valid arguments that must be considered by this committee.

'The flip side is I've heard those who are supportive as being labelled as anti-nature or anti-environment and don't care about the future and, worst of all, that they can only be providing support because they are going to financially benefit. That sort of debate has debased the discussion on both sides.'

Mr Baxter went on to say that as a resident as well as

area council member, he realised that whatever he decided was going to upset someone, and he said if he had chosen to find a way to avoid taking part or being absent that would have been a 'cowardly' course of action.

Mr Baxter said the issue revolved round a number of distinct matters – including traffic, the environment and visual amenity.

On the issue of increased traffic, Mr Baxter said there were many activities which could result in significant increase in traffic from other developments or from the village promoted as being on a national scenic route which it already is. Key to dealing with this, he said, would be the traffic management plan.

On the environment, he said: 'Personally, I would rather see a return to the period before man created

a largely sterile landscape around Kinlochleven, but I take a pragmatic approach.

'I very carefully read the ecological reports and note there is no concern expressed by Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH).'

On the impact on amenity from the amount of noise generated by zip wire users, Mr Baxter was of the view that if there is a noise management plan to mitigate any noise issues, he did not see the need to restrict operating hours as proposed.

And, lastly, on the potential impact on visual amenity, Mr Baxter said SNH had decided not to comment because it felt the project would not result in significant visual intrusion. And he concluded: 'Therefore I am drawn to the assessment of planners and the lack of objection from SNH and I do support approval.'

One resident claims zip wires approval sets a 'shameful' planning precedent

By Debbie O'Hara, resident and a member of the Kinlochleven Zip Wire Opposition Group.

'I was wrong to trust that officials would listen to the significant number of voices objecting to these non-essential, artificial installations proposing to operate daily, all year, over Loch Leven, around Kinlochleven and much of the area.

Eighty-four people formally objected, on material grounds, and 1,633 (presently) have petitioned, opposing with valid reasons and wanting to protect the area from inappropriate development. Residents, diaspora and concerned tourists cannot believe that this is happening here.

So troubling that business speculation on our heritage should trump this imposed risk to drivers, pedestrians, utilities and wildlife; increased traffic and CO2, landscape damage, protected species, ancient woodland, privacy of residents and tourists, impact on mental health and disability access, noise and visibility, waste management, infrastructure, unsubstantiated job promises.

The numerous stringent

conditions that planning has imposed on both applications are welcome but why not just have the courage to say no?

Unbelievably, the committee chose to reject Environmental Health officers' recommendations for reduced operational hours, showing an unprecedented disregard for the community and our visitors.

'Years ago our community was properly consulted on development options'

Opposers requested a site visit to emphasise the enormity to the decision-makers; this did not happen.

Years ago, our community was properly consulted on development options, following the closure of the factory.

We have always supported a balance of developments and feel that by now arts, crafts, heritage, education on conservation, the restoration or development of Mamore Lodge are things that need to be considered rather than more pseudo-sport activity.

We have the iconic environment itself and resources such as the Ice Factor, visiting events and activities to provide ample options for real and pseudo sports enthusiasts.

Why not be creative and democratic and do no harm to what makes this area a magnet for tourists from around the world?

Traditional tourists state this will end their return here. As an opposer, the most damaging aspect of this personally is the unwelcome division it has created in our community.

Whether you have lived here for generations, decades or a day, if you oppose you will individually or collectively be ridiculed and undermined by a small aggressive group of people in favour.

Developers and officials should listen to the many voices of opposition now; to progress such development shows how out of step you are with so many on this matter.

Setting this shameful planning precedent will encourage iconic landscapes be targeted for corporate exploitation across Scotland.

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Nursery has new indoor 'yurty' space

by Richard Mason
rmason@obantimes.co.uk

A new 'yurty' has been built on the Stramash Outdoor Nursery site with the help of volunteers and generous donations from parents and businesses.

The yurty is a combination of a traditional yurt and a marquee thanks to the domed top that lets in a tremendous amount of natural light.

The nursery now only needs to attach a solar panel and wind turbine, similar to those already in place for the office Portakabin, to get it properly up and running with LED lights.

The yurty replaces the pre-



vious 'castle' structure that burned down in January.

The nursery's team leader, Cameron Sprague, wants the area to be a 'home away from home' for the children so they

are all be comfortable and cosy when using it.

He said: 'After the fire, we had an amazing community clean up day where more than 100 people came to help



Team leader Cameron Sprague, centre, with practitioner Lyndsay Boyd, left, and 'super-volunteer' Steve Gannon with some of the children who will soon be using the space, left.

us. We have an incredible set of parents who really believe in what we're doing and have stuck with us in the after-effects of the fire.

'They were supportive of us being a bit nomadic and moving around a lot.

'We had two parents who said they could build what they called a yurty and that took a little bit longer but we had a lot of input into the design of it.

'I knew I wanted to make this porch area off it so the kids can get their wet gear off and go through to the yurty, which is basically a home away from home.

'It's not a traditional early years room. It feels like a

home with couches and chairs and a family dining room table and a big fire. There was a real moment for me when I walked in and staff were playing a game with kids at the table and another reading with a child on her lap. That was exactly what it was set up for.'

The structure looks very humble from the outside but has a tremendous amount of space and the transitional porch has room for lots of children of different ages.

They hope to have lights and everything else finished by January and want to have a ceremony for everyone who helped create the space.

Mr Sprague thanked every-

one who pitched in to help with their time to clean up following the fire, build the new structure and donated materials.

He continued: 'We had a Justgiving campaign that helped to pay for materials, but also people pitching into help construct the yurty. BSW Timber donated so much, all I had to do was email them to ask and they sent it straight away.'

Many other businesses pulled together after the fire to raise money, donate facilities such as their Portakabin, and stone being dug up to build the Highland Soap Co factory will be used to build a road into the field.

Caol man sentenced to 11 months in prison following 'downward spiral'

A man originally from Caol has been sentenced to 11 months in prison after committing multiple assaults, as well as breach of bail orders and community service.

Reece MacIsaac, 22, who abused drugs and alcohol to the point of being kicked out of both his mother's and grandmother's homes, was sentenced at Fort William Sheriff Court last Thursday.

The court heard that MacIsaac, who pleaded guilty to the charges, assaulted his sister at his mother's home while drunk, assaulted his partner on two occasions while on bail, threatened an ex-partner while under orders from the court not to contact her, and breached a commu-

nity payback order originally issued in Stornoway.

Defence solicitor Hamish Melrose was quite frank in his summing up of the facts. He said: 'It has been very much a downward spiral for Mr MacIsaac. He ran out of addresses in Fort William and moved to Inverness where he has been living in various homeless shelters. He has gone off the rails since September with drink and drugs being a major factor.'

It was revealed that MacIsaac's mother was willing to accept him back into the family home only if he is sober and that she was a much more stable influence in his life now.

Sheriff Eilidh MacDonald

was very clear and concise with her ruling, sentencing MacIsaac to five months for the assault on his sister.

She continued: 'In the case of approaching [a former partner] while on a court interdict not to, I impose a sentence of two months. For the assault of your partner you will serve a four-month sentence; for the breach of your community payback order originally imposed in Stornoway, a sentence of six months will be imposed.'

Sentences were reduced due to his guilty pleas.

As the sentences are concurrent, MacIsaac will serve 11 months in total, backdated from when he was held in custody on November 13.



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Resipole couple swapped big city life for perfect rural Highland idyll

by Nic Goddard
fort@obantimes.co.uk

Amid concerns of limited available houses being snapped up as second homes and people cashing in on the need for holiday accommodation in Lochaber, leaving communities filled with holiday cottages but no actual residents, Resipole's Steven Marshall is finding ways to give back and boost the local economy.

Five years ago, Steven and his wife Lynne were regular visitors to the Highlands seeking respite from busy city lives and high-powered careers.

Steven worked as a freelance management consultant after a career with Scottish Power, taking charge of high profile projects. He explained: 'We both travelled all over the place for our work so on days off and holidays the last thing we wanted to do was get on a

plane. Instead, we would head north and visit remote places in the Highlands and Islands. We'd been to Ardnamurchan twice and loved it here.'

Like so many city dwellers with two incomes and no children, the Marshalls had an ambition of a second home here in the Highlands and were on the look-out for the perfect property.

However, as they both worked from home, they realised that they could just base themselves up here full-time. Steven explained: 'We chose to look out on Loch Sunart rather than an old railway line in Paisley from our home office.'

While initially commuting regularly down to Glasgow after first moving up, it was not long before the lure of the bright lights and big cities began to wane completely.

'The more time I spent here, the less inclined I grew to leave.



Steven Marshall finds plenty to photograph around Resipole Photograph: Steven Marshall.

There is something about this place that just gets under your skin,' continued Steven.

What began as a hobby soon became the reason to stay put here all the time and now if Steven is not in his photography studio he is out walking with his dog, Fergus, across the landscapes he loves to capture on camera.

'I'd always taken photographs and often shared them on social media but I was getting more and more inquiries about buying prints of my photos, or requests to run courses and teach people about photography.

'I also got involved in the tourist association for the area. Along with the apartment [the

Marshalls have a self-catering holiday-let apartment next door to their house and plan to open two B&B rooms in their house eventually], I found I had more than enough to keep me busy here.'

Sitting in the purpose-built studio at Resipole where Steven displays his photography as prints, postcards, mugs, calendars and gifts along with working on his processing, it is clear to see he has found his happy place.

He said: 'This is a perfect lifestyle. We have three or four things bringing in money, all of which we enjoy, instead of one all-consuming high pressure job. I also have time to give something back and volunteer with the tourist association.

'As vice-chairman of Sunart, Moidart, Morvern, Ardnamurchan and Ardgour Tourist Association, I am able to give

my time and use those skills from my old life of communications, project management and, of course, my photography to work with other local tourism businesses in the area.

'And offering accommodation, holiday souvenirs of photographs and courses on photography means I am now in the business of helping make other people's holidays in the area I used to take my own.

'Joining the tourist association and helping to support the other small businesses in the area all helps to make sure the services supporting these areas and the people who live here are able to carry on making these places the amazing locations that mean folk want to come here in the first place – on holiday, as a second home, or indeed like myself and Lynne a full-time place to be.'

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David Ross joined the business in 2017, after having worked for R A Clement Associates in Oban for 14 years, and joined up again with his old colleague, Marcus. Initially, David headed up the Dingwall office of Mackay and Co but has now moved to the recently-opened Oban office.

'Oban is where I'm from originally and I've spent much of my working life here. So when Marcus and I talked about opening an office here, I was delighted by the idea. I was pleased to be back in the area, which I am very familiar with in terms of the kind of businesses you

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keeping track of paperwork and daily administration, it is useful to be able to stand back periodically and consider where the business is heading – what you want to achieve.'

David has experience in many sectors across industry and has particular expertise in the voluntary sector. 'I have been, and am currently, treasurer for several local charities, which helps immensely when talking to clients as you have seen what it's like from their point of view, which gives a much better understanding of the issues they face. The same issues are often transferable to other types of business.'

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Lochaber High School pupils Tamzin, Faye and Laura, centre, won the money for Care Lochaber.



Youth cash boost for Care Lochaber

Last month saw the team representing Care Lochaber win the Youth Philanthropy Initiative (YIP) competition at Lochaber High School.

The win will give Care Lochaber, which provides community transport in the area, a donation of £3,000.

The YPI is an active citizenship programme that empowers young people to make a difference in their local communities while learning new skills.

Every year, each participating school is responsible for providing a £3,000 donation to a local charity through a unique programme of teamwork, research and competition.

The initiative currently

takes place in 275 Scottish secondary schools and was introduced to Scotland by The Wood Foundation in 2008. Since then, around £4 million has been channelled into community-based charities championed by young people.

Care Lochaber's Community Car Scheme provides a door-to-door driving service for people who cannot access public transport.

The aim is to enable people who are older, disabled, experiencing ill health, have mobility difficulties or who feel isolated, to maintain their independence, health and wellbeing.

The charity particularly wants to help those without extended family support and

to fill the gaps where no other services exist.

Charity manager Lara Van de Peer said: 'We are absolutely delighted that the YPI team representing Care Lochaber was successful in its recent presentation at Lochaber High School.'

'Tamzin, Faye and Laura did an amazing job and presented confidently about what the charity does and how it will benefit from the money.'

'We are very grateful to the team, and to The Wood Foundation, for the £3,000 contribution - the money will go towards volunteer training and expenses.'

To find out more about how the car scheme can help you, call 01397 701222.

Kinlochleven man guilty of assault

In a case where many facts could not be clearly ascertained, Andrew Carvill, 35, of Garbhein Crescent, Kinlochleven, was found guilty of assaulting his former partner due to the seriousness of injuries inflicted.

Carvill originally pleaded not guilty at Fort William Sheriff Court, with a special defence of self-defence to assaulting his then partner.

On August 20, the couple had finished dinner and drinks with a friend at Carvill's partner's home in Lochaline. Carvill continued drinking and his demeanour changed.

At about 11.30pm, the woman suggested they go to bed, to which she got no response. He still had a glass of whisky in his hand and she tried to remove it. She told the court: 'As I touched the top of the glass to take it away, he smashed it while it was still in his hand. It was after that everything

happened but it felt like an out of body experience, like it was happening to someone else.'

Carvill remembered events differently, saying she straddled him and squeezed his hand around the glass to cause it to break.

Carvill pulled out a clump of her hair, which was shown in evidence, as well as causing bruising on her shins, knees and ribs. Carvill maintained he pulled her hair in an attempt to get her off him.

Police were later contacted and Carvill was taken into custody, charged and placed on bail, with conditions not to contact his former partner. He contacted her a number of times through a third party, but it was also heard that the complainant contacted him.

Procurator Fiscal Depute Martina Eastwood said: 'Credibility and reliability are at the core of this case. The corroboration between the

complainant and the police evidence, as well as the level of force required to remove such a substantial clump of hair, displaces the defence of self-defence.'

Defence agent Hamish Melrose agreed credibility and reliability were central, and said: 'The glass breaking caused blood to fall onto the floor which Mr Carvill said he cleaned up and [complainant] said she cleaned up the next day. Police saw no evidence of blood when they were there for 45-50 minutes which supports Mr Carvill's version of events.'

While Sheriff Eilidh MacDonald appreciated the inconsistencies, she said: 'I believe [the complainant]. It takes serious force to pull hair to that extent. I find you guilty of the charges as libelled.'

Carvill was cleared of the breach of bail charge, and sentence for the assault was deferred until January.

Santa visits 6th Lochaber Scouts



Santa took up an invitation from 6th Lochaber (the Braes) Scouts and joined them in a fundraising grotto at Spean Bridge Woollen Mill. The group also set up a table of small hand-made Christmas presents, using as little plastic as possible and children's art table.

Photographs: Iain Ferguson, alba.photos

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Banavie celebrates St Andrew's Day

Banavie Primary School pupils and staff welcomed around 80 parents to their St Andrew's Day celebrations. Each class sang a song and some individual pupils performed on the bagpipes and clarsach. Afterwards, parents enjoyed tea and palm oil-free shortbread.



Ledingham Chalmers partner Kirk Tudhope and solicitor Alanah Mills.



Employment law masterclass for Kinlochleven High pupils

Students at Kinlochleven High School discovered more about diversity, equal opportunities and discrimination in the workplace at a special workshop held last week.

Employment law experts from full-service law firm Ledingham Chalmers visited the school for a session with fourth-, fifth- and sixth-year pupils, organised by DYW West Highland, to discuss how people, by law, ought to be treated in the workplace. They also offered advice on

how to spot and deal with unfair and discriminatory conduct.

Head of employment law and partner Kirk Tudhope said: 'With only a short while to go before they start their careers, it's crucial the students have a clear understanding of how people should be treated in the workplace, the challenging judgment calls they may face and how to approach things if something's not right. I was thoroughly impressed

by their attitude, their knowledge and their appreciation that, when it comes down to it, the only thing that should matter is a person's ability, attitude and potential.'

The visit came after the team spoke to delegates at a Lochaber Chamber of Commerce business briefing on the latest developments in employment law.

Ledingham Chalmers has offices in Aberdeen, Inverness, Stirling and Edinburgh.

NHS Highland chairman position is confirmed

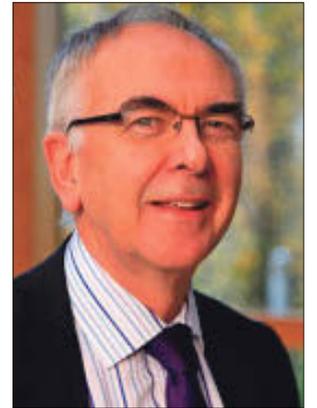
Professor Boyd Robertson has been confirmed in the position of chairman of NHS Highland on a permanent basis.

Announcing the appointment, Health Secretary Jeane Freeman said: 'I am very pleased to announce that after being appointed interim chairman of NHS Highland nine months ago, Professor Robertson will now take up the position on a permanent basis.'

'This is a critical leadership role and Professor Robertson has extensive experience in Scotland's public life, including senior leadership roles.'

'Professor Robertson and the board were tasked specifically with responding to the Sturrock Review's substantive recommendations. This includes the need to take forward a more compassionate and person-centred approach to leadership and governance.'

'This work is well under way and we continue to provide direct support to NHS Highland and to scrutinise



Professor Boyd Robertson.

progress against its action plan.

'The priority, as always across NHS Scotland, is safe and effective patient care, and I am confident that under Professor Robertson's leadership, people across the Highlands will receive the excellent level of service they deserve.'

Professor Robertson is a former principal of Sabhal Mòr Ostaig college, the National Centre for Gaelic Language.



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Lochaline distillery launches £1M crowdfunding campaign

by Mark Entwistle
mentwistle@obantimes.co.uk

Morvern's Nc'nean Distillery, near Lochaline, has launched a £1,000,000 crowdfunding campaign on investment platform Seedrs to help accelerate its current growth plans.

The investment target of £1 million will support the launch of its first whisky next year, the continued growth of its innovative botanical spirit, as well as buy bottling equipment and support further portfolio expansion.

Nc'nean is a young, independent, organic and sustainable whisky distillery that was founded by Annabel Thomas and Derek Lewis in 2013.

Ms Thomas, who is also CEO, commented: 'We're set to establish Nc'nean as a leader in experimental spirits and a pioneer in sustainable production.'

'We've seen a real consumer demand for authentic and



Nc'nean founder and CEO Annabel Thomas and the distillery near Lochaline, which has launched a major crowdfunding appeal.



sustainable brands and we believe the Scotch category has yet to tap into a new audience base by attracting them with innovative products, which is where we're looking to build further on our success to date.

'Our community, both near and far, is at the heart of everything we do, and I'm really excited that crowdfunding will allow that group to be part of our future success.'

The brand has seen the launch of two products over the past two years, the botanical spirit followed by the aged botanical spirit, which has helped raise Nc'nean's profile as its whisky comes of age in 2020.

The botanical spirit, which has been described as a mix between whisky and gin, has seen Nc'nean innovate in the spirits category and tap into a

new consumer demographic for the whisky industry.

Originally produced in a limited run, the distillery is now looking to continue the production of its botanical spirit, which was awarded a silver medal in the International Spirits Challenge 2019 and voted 'Top 10 Most Innovative New Spirits' in 2018 by the Spirits Business.

MSP says island delivery costs are 'unjustifiable'

Alasdair Allan, MSP for Na h-Eileanan an Iar, has hit out during a debate in the Scottish Parliament at the unjustifiable delivery charges islanders face

Dr Allan pointed out to parliament on Wednesday last week that many islanders often have little option other than to rely on online shopping.

The power to regulate parcel delivery surcharging is reserved to the UK Government. However, despite these limits on its own powers, the Scottish Government last year launched its own 'Fairer parcel deliveries: action plan'.

This will develop an interactive data hub to measure the fairness of delivery pricing, improve transparency, celebrate best practice by delivery companies and make it easier for consumers to know and exercise their rights.

Dr Allan said: 'Islanders rely on being able to purchase items online that we cannot easily pick up locally. However, the Western Isles continues to be one of the worst places affected by retailers setting arbitrary and unjustifiable delivery



Alasdair Allan MSP.

surcharges. Island consumers have this year paid an extra £1.5 million in delivery charges. More has to be done to stop islanders being ripped off.

'While the Scottish Government's recent action plan was a welcome step forward in the campaign against unfair delivery charges, the powers are reserved to the UK Government and they must step up to ensure that companies stop discriminating. The UK government should ensure these companies use the Royal Mail for sending out smaller items.'

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Finnie demands action over AirBnB on Skye

At First Minister's Questions in the Scottish Parliament in Edinburgh last week, Highlands and Islands MSP John Finnie, right, asked the First Minister to take action on the number of properties used as short-term lets on Skye.

In response to consultation on short-term lets, Highland Council recently reported more than 8,000 people currently in need of housing.

The Scottish Government's own research shows 20,000 homes on Skye are used for short-term lets.



It had previously committed to release its response to the consultation on short-term lets by the end of the year.

But with only nine sitting days left before the Christmas recess, the First Minister was unable to give a firm date of publication or specific details as to what regulations are being considered.

Following First Minister's Questions, Mr Finnie said: 'Companies like AirBnB, and

the short-term letting industry more broadly, are in urgent need of regulation.'

'No one is suggesting tourists should not be able to come and enjoy the beauty of Skye, as they have for many years, but we must not lose sight of the fact that this is a living, breathing community.'

'It cannot be allowed to become a theme park, while people struggle to survive without a permanent home. Other countries across the world are already taking action to tackle unregulated short-term letting and the Scottish Government needs to catch up with them quickly.'

£2m Barra business investment on course

With regard to the former Co-op building in Castlebay, on Barra, the proposed demolition of the property was included in the comhairle's successful South Uist and Barra Regeneration Programme bid to the Scottish Government's Regeneration Capital Grant Fund in 2013, reflecting the wishes of the community.

The successful bid delivered investment of up to £2 million in Barra with two new business units in Castlebay, the regeneration of the Vatersay Hall, and included

the demolition of the former Co-op store, together with funding for environmental improvements, the nature of these to be agreed by the community in due course.

Bùth Bharraigh was made aware of the comhairle's intention to demolish the building prior to the comhairle facilitating its temporary occupancy of the building in late 2013 and this occupation was always intended to be of a temporary nature.

Castlebay Community Council confirmed the deci-

sion in 2016 that the old Co-op building be demolished as part of the South Uist and Barra Regeneration Programme.

The comhairle has continued to support Bùth Bharraigh with alternative premises including specialist advisory support and continues to make significant investments to support a range of business and community projects in Barra, recognising the contribution which Bùth Bharraigh and other community enterprises make to the local economy.

Piping Society recital has top international guest

by Richard Mason
rmason@obantimes.co.uk

Details for the second recital of the Lewis and Harris Piping Society's winter programme have been released as the first was hailed a great success.

Canadian piper Glenn Brown, who won the pìobaireachd competition at the prestigious Glenfiddich solo piping competition in October, will play in the Caladh Hotel in Stornoway on Saturday January 18, 2020, at 7.30pm.

During that day, Mr Brown will be taking workshops with a focus on helping youngsters from the Lewis and Harris Youth Pipe Band.

The previous recital, on November 9, featured 2018 overall runner-up at the Glenfiddich competition, Callum Beaumont.



Callum, centre, with tutors, young pipers and Dr John Smith, chairman of the Lewis and Harris Piping Society, far right.

Photograph: Katie Laing

The chairman of the society, Dr John Smith, said Mr Beaumont's workshop and recital went very well and they look forward to welcoming Glenn Brown to Stornoway.

Speaking of the first recital, Dr Smith said: 'The day was very successful. The children thoroughly enjoyed the morning session with Callum, who of course is used to teaching youngsters, and

in the afternoon about half a dozen of the pipers from the band were taken through new tunes with his skilled assistance and they were very pleased with that as well.

'There were between 40

and 50 people present and I was quite pleased with that turnout to our first recital of the current season.

'Glenn Brown is in his mid-30s and has been playing since the age of nine. Piping is

in his blood as he was taught by his mother, Gail Brown, whom he still lists as one of his favourite pipers.'

A very generous donation to the society from a private individual has meant that a programme of recitals is now possible again after being absent from the calendar for a decade. They are hoping to have four in this winter programme.

Tickets will be £10, with £8 concessions, and under-16s get in free. There will be two workshops during the day, from 10am-1pm and 2-5pm.



The 2019 winners, Joanne Laing and Marion MacCorquodale from Sgoil Lionacleit.

Sgoil Lionacleit win National Debate 2019

The final of the 2019 National Gaelic Schools Debate took place at the Scottish Parliament on Thursday, with Benbecula's Sgoil Lionacleit emerging victorious.

A very lively debate was heard with Joanne Laing and Marion MacCorquodale from Sgoil

Lionacleit going up against Raonaid Campbell and Hamish Scott from Sgoil Sir E Scott on Harris.

Sgoil Lionacleit eventually came out the victors, while Raonaid Campbell from Sir E Scott was presented with the best debater award.

The organisations who helped to fund and support

this year's debate included the Scottish Government, Loganair, The SQA, Bòrd na Gàidhlig, Skills Development Scotland, Comhairle nan Eilean Siar, Highland Council, Glasgow City Council, Comunn na Gàidhlig, Radio nan Gàidheal and Education Scotland.

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LETTERS

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Make sure your vote counts in crucial General Election

This is a momentous day in the United Kingdom, as the country goes to the polls for a General Election.

The national news media have debated in depth all the issues identified by the various parties, with very obvious attention being focused on a couple of controversial concerns namely Brexit and climate change.

There are, of course, other major subjects for debate not the least of which here in Scotland is the desire or otherwise for a second referendum on independence – either within or outwith the European Union.

Here in Ross, Skye and Lochaber, there is a seven-horse race between the SNP, Conservatives, Labour, Lib Dems, Brexit Party, Scottish Christian Party ('Proclaiming Christ's Lordship') and the Scottish Family Party – Putting Families First. We do not presume to advise you for whom to vote but we would urge everyone who is entitled to vote to ensure they do so. It is a right and privilege that has been hard won.

ATC long service is a fantastic achievement

It is a pleasure to be able to report this week on the recognition afforded to Alan Lamb for his astonishing 75 years of service to the Air Training Corps (ATC).

Mr Lamb, who first joined the ATC in 1944, has selflessly served the organisation in a number of units around the country, including, of course, the 1730 (Lochaber) Squadron.

It was only right and proper that members of the Lochaber Squadron celebrated Mr Lamb's dedication. The former minister at Arisaig Parish Church deserves the community's thanks.

Middle-aged men in West are in no position to lecture

Professor Colin Davidson epitomises the views of many middle-aged men who got us into the climate and ecological crisis in the first place.

According to him, greenhouse gas emissions are directly related to the world's growing population. This is simply not true. Even though the human population's rapid expansion is an important issue that needs to be addressed, it is excessive consumption by privileged people in the west that is the overarching driver of greenhouse gas emissions. The richest 10 per cent of the world's population produce 50 per cent of global emissions.

I have made personal changes to reduce my own carbon footprint, but this will not solve the problem. Individual changes are important, but we can't think of them as substitutes for the systemic change that is needed.

With respect to the professor's point that striking from school will not achieve anything, staying in school didn't prevent previous generations from messing up the planet. I don't think older people are in any position to lecture us about our efforts to do something to tackle the climate and nature emergencies.

**Holly Gillibrand, 14,
Youth climate striker, Fort William.**

Fish farms research and new boat are not enough

How kind of Scottish Sea Farms to invest in research and a new boat to enable better 'treatment for gill health issues' (The Oban Times, December 5). If only they didn't put the poor fish in conditions which create these serious problems in the first place.

So before you cheer too loudly, think about where all these medicines end up – in our seas or on your dinner plate?

It's true 'fish welfare and survival' needs to improve. Fellow farmers *Mowi lost 737,000 salmon – that's 2,600 tonnes – from local farms in a three-month period recently, due to algal blooms and fish health problems.

Scottish Sea Farms themselves reported 47 instances of fish deaths, totalling 356,082 fish during 2017, but by no means all of these were from gill health issues. There are other concerns.

'Water quality' may be 'monitored daily', but then it surely needs to be with so many treatment chemicals, waste fish food and

YOUR PICTURES



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

obantimes.co.uk, post it to The Editor, PO Box 1, Oban, PA34 4HB. Alternatively, hand it in to our offices in Crannog Lane, Lochavullin Industrial Estate, Oban, or to our office in

fish excrement going from the farms to the sea. There wasn't really a problem until the farms produced one. Admittedly, the more dangerous substances are restricted, but not 'harmless' ones like hydrogen peroxide (that's bleach, to you and me), which is unregulated and can be used in large quantities.

Other countries (Denmark and Canada for instance) are taking serious action over these problems, such as phasing out open cage farms. Maybe we should examine why they

are doing this. *(Mowi data quoted from Ian Roberts, director of communications for Mowi Scotland; Scottish Sea Farms data from FOI to Scottish Government via Marine Scotland).

Dennis Archer, Gallanach Road, Oban.

Lismore ferry service should be funded and saved

I found the letter from Ian Reid about the Lismore Ferry quite extraordinary as he



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High Street, Fort William. This week's photograph was by Maurice Wilkins, who said: 'Taken with my Nikon D7000 on a breezy day with such wonderful light against a dark sky.'

appeared to have no direct links with Lismore but felt qualified to pronounce on an island community's future.

I, too, do not live on Lismore and am therefore not one of the 190 people who must vacate the island daily, but as the GP for the Appin Lismore practice for 30 years, I used the Port Appin-Lismore ferry four times a week routinely and many more times in urgent or even emergency situations. There were times when weather was extreme but the ferry man

never hesitated and there were times when life threatening situations were significantly reduced. On the ferry, I often met the vet, social worker, police officer, minister or various administrators, as well as the 50,000 visitors enjoying the unique heritage of Lismore with its cathedral church and wonderful heritage centre, Comman Eachdraidh.

A recent house fire on Lismore was massively contained for neighbouring properties because the Appin fire brigade were able to access the island rapidly; they can also provide cutting equipment rapidly.

Beyond this, the ferry allows a host of people to live on the island and work on the mainland in a variety of jobs, including the Pier House and the Appin Community Cooperative.

Should the ferry perish – not as a whim of prosperity as Mr Reid suggests but as a fixture of centuries of lifeline services – this unique island would be endangered, while millions of public money are poured into trying to establish a viable community on Ulva, laudable as that is. Lismore is a totally viable and cherished traditional community which must be supported by the proper funding of all Hebridean ferry services and not leaving Argyll and Bute alone to fund.

The Barnett Formula gives 25 per cent extra funding to Scotland to fund the geographical problems of the west of Scotland and not to fund Edinburgh trams etc.

(Dr) Iain McNicol, Port Appin.

Saddened to read of Jock Turner's unfair treatment

I read with interest the report in your shinty news about Jock Turner standing down as chieftain and note with some sadness that Jock retires as the first chieftain in my memory never to present the Camanachd Cup to the winning captain if they served for two years.

I missed very few finals from 1956 until I stopped playing in the late 1970s and it was always the chieftain who presented the cup and medals.

With MacDonald and Muir's sponsorship, it was decided to alternate the sponsor one year and chieftain the next. That carried on until after 2000 or until Jock became chief. I would have thought this would have been recognised at meetings and he would not depart with this dubious distinction. I hope John MacKenzie is not treated as unfairly.

John Paterson, ex-Kyles Athletic, Kirn, Dunoon.

Beachd Ailein

ALLAN CAMPBELL

editor@obantimes.co.uk



Saoil an robh rianadairean NATO a' smaoinichadh air teachdaireachd sith na Nollaige nuair a chuir iad air dòigh coinneachadh aig toiseach An Dùbhlachd ann an Lunnainn? Bha iad a' comharrachadh seachdadh bliadhna bhon a chaidh a' bhuidheann a stèidheachadh an dèidh uabhasan dà chogadh mòr fhulang taobh a-staigh trithead bliadhna.

Ann an 1949, le mothachadh cràiteach air na milleanan a chailleadh agus an ùine mhòr leigheis a bha roimh gach dùthaich air an tug na blàir sin buaidh, chuir NATO sith mhaireann dha na dùthchannan a tha an nàbachd chinn a-tuath a' Chuain Shiar roimhe mar amas.

Ged nach deach aig a' chaidreachas air sin a' choileanadh gu buileach chaidh aig na buill air mòran eas-aonta eadar-nàiseanta a chothromachadh le gleustachd deasbaid thar nam bliadhnaichean. Cha b' iongnadh mar sin gum bithte a' sùileachadh gum biodh ceannardan nan dùthchannan fa leth a' tighinn gu coinneamh Lunnainn le rùn còrdadh agus co-rèiteachadh mar a bhiodh feum. Tha an t-sith phriseil

ann an suidheachadh cugal-lach, le armachd niuchlasach a' bagairt sgrìos nas miosa na dad a chunnacas riamh.

Ach an àite leithid sin de lèirsinn chunnacas cuid de cheannardan le àrdan agus ladarnas a' cur euchdan NATO ann an suarachas, agus a' call sealladh air na dleastanasan eadar-nàiseanta a th' orra fhèin mar stàitirean. 'S minig a tha mi air faclan mo sheanar a thogail an seo roimhe, gun dèan amadan sam bith blàr ach gur e duine glic a ni sith! Dhealaich iad fo sglèò nach eil a' toirt cus misneachd air co-obrachadh dealasach airson math an t-saoghail, agus is bochd sin is còmhraidhean air a bhith a' dol aig an aon àm san Spàinnt air suidheachadh àrainneachd an t-saoghail agus agairt èiginneach làidir ga dhèanamh gun co-obrachadh dùthchannan an t-saoghail còmhla gus a' phlanaid a ghleidheadh.

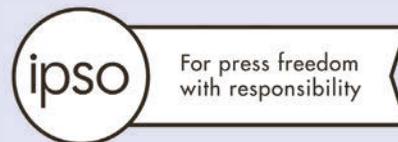
Gu mì-fhortanach, aig an ìre seo co-dhiù, saoilidh mise nach eil cus misneachaidh ann am modh-giùlain chuid de na ceannardan as cumhachdaiche, agus tha olc eile cuideachd a' nochdadh às ùr a tha na dhragh mòr.

Tha casaidean gràin-cinnidh air a bhith gan cur às leth caochladh phàrtaidhean phoilitigeach san dùthaich seo, agus ma ghabhar ri giùllan luchd-leantainn spòrs mar sgàthan air coimhearsnachdan tha e follaiseach gum bheil gràin-cinnidh agus faisisteachd a' fàs am measg luchd-taice ball-coise gu h-eadar-nàiseanta. 'S e teachdaireachd gu math dubhach a th' aig ceannard UEFA is e ag ràdh gum bheil an trioblaid aingidh seo a' sior dhol am meud.

Nuair a smaoinicheas sinn air ais air an dàrna cogadh cha b' iongnadh am fiosrachadh seo a bhith na adhbhar dragha, agus tha e tur ceart dhuinn a bhith a' sùileachadh ghluasadan làidir agus toiniseil bho cheannardan NATO agus eile gus an t-sith, agus an àrainneachd, a dhion.

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

Allan Campbell is president of An Comunn Gaidhealach and a member of Bòrd na Gàidhlig.



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LT

DISTRICT NEWS

FORT WILLIAM

It appears the Fort William branch of the TSB is safe for now after the bank announced a list of closures without the town's High Street premises being among them.

TSB last week said it intends shutting 17 branches across Scotland, with the only Highland branch affected being Tain, which will shut in July 2020.

Age Scotland, Scotland's national charity for older people, has criticised the TSB's decision, saying it will hit older and more vulnerable customers the hardest.

TSB announced on Monday that it plans to close 82 branches across the UK as a whole as part of a £100million cost-saving programme.

KILMALLIE

At the recent initial meeting of the new Kilmallie Community Council, Colin Wood was appointed as chairman. Russell Leaper was appointed secretary, Gwyn Moses as treasurer and John Hutchison as vice-chairman.

A number of issues were still ongoing from the previous community council, and which will be taken up at future meetings.

These included: repairs to Corpach Noticeboard; Duiskey smells; Corpach port noise and light pollution; removal of stile leading to canal towpath at Muirshearlich; speed limits (A830 Banavie and Corpach, and 20mph limits in Corpach); FW2040 and comments on various projects; Blar Mor developments; changes to the community council scheme with respect to insurance; youth membership and participation.

Gwyn Moses will represent the council on the Transport Forum, while John Hutchison will attend Loch Linnhe Stakeholders meetings. Russell Leaper will attend the Banavie Quarry Liaison Group.

Colin Wood will also join the Kilmallie Community Company as a director and community council representative.



Children of local Liberty employees (pictured above) were very excited about meeting Santa and receiving presents at their Christmas party which was held in the Moorings Hotel at Banavie on Tuesday evening. Photograph: Iain Ferguson, alba.photos

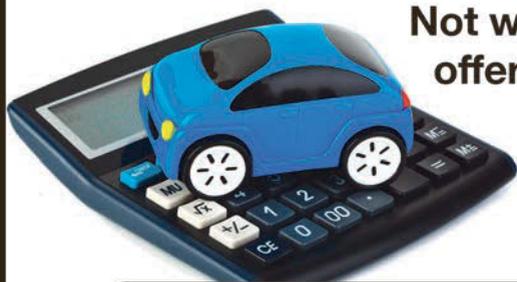


LOCHABER

Maggie Ellis, pictured on the left, one of Lochaber Sensory Care's longest serving volunteers, has stepped down after 10 years. She was presented with gifts and a card from everyone at the charity during a recent afternoon tea in her honour at Brown's Restaurant. Maggie is a well-known face to many as she served as district nurse and midwife for more than 20 years throughout Lochaber. Her amazing caring personality continued through her work at LSC and everyone will miss her great sense of humour and infectious smile.

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Retro Roamer

fort@obantimes.co.uk

More Roamerisms from the early 1990s

Only the atmosphere was electric along the Road to the Isles last Wednesday. And the villagers and local business folk in Mallaig, Morar and Arisaig were the ones who remained highly charged after Hydro-Electric shut down their supply for the entire day. The result was that shops, hotels, petrol stations and the area's 1,500 population were totally powerless from 9am till 5pm. 'The upgrading of existing facilities' was planned. But it was panned by Mallaig and District Chamber of Commerce.

Incidentally, have you experienced the dreadful radio reception around Banavie? Just an airwave or two away from the relay station. The car radio goes completely wonky between the ScotRail Nerve Centre and Banavie Bridge Mission Control. I reckon the nerve centre must have caused it. I know mission control jams the bridge occasionally – but surely it can't jam the wireless as well?

Patsy fancied a bet on the TV racing. She keeps a pile of betting slips in the house, and Donald was despatched to Ladbrokes to put on her wager. Later, as Patsy settled down to watch the races she noticed that her original filled-in slip was still on the sideboard. It transpired that Donald had picked up a similar sized piece of blank paper – on which was written 'Bottle of Gaviscon' and had then headed off to the bookie's, where he got some blank looks.

Who coined the name 'Lochaber Opportunities Centre'? Particularly when the current planning application names it - eminently sensibly and descriptively – 'Training and Further Education Centre'. I asked the question at the Lochaber Limited press conference, but nobody accepted responsibility for calling the £1.4 million establishment 'Lochaber Opportunities Centre'. Ach, well,

what's in a name? As long as it 'delivers' (that's the in-word) training and further education. After the press conference the divisional planning committee sat down to rule on the eventual location on An Aird for the LOC. Three out of the seven elected members were present, causing a colleague to ask for her 'disappointment at the lack of councillor interest' to be recorded.

Us yins in the local meejah were intrigued to read in the minutes of a recent council sub-committee meeting that the leisure services co-ordinator was to investigate whether a particular applicant represents – and I quote – 'a bonified charitable organisation'. Aye, that descriptive term has come a long way since the days we used to sign our names as, for example, Andy Capp, Yuri Gagarin and Willie Bauld in the visitors' books in Lochaber hotels so we could get a drink on a Sunday ... as bona fide travellers!

The continuing postponement of what was supposed to be an urgent liaison committee meeting has been riling a lot of councillors. I gather that an explanation – by fax – from the district council that several alternative dates are being considered was met by a one word response from a regional councillor. 'Crap!' he wrote. To which the district council reply was: 'Bearing in mind your espousing of Gaelic, should not your comment have been 'Cac'?

In the tourist office, a visiting American had a right rant about the lack of a dedicated bus depot in Fort William. 'I got off the bus from Glasgow (he emphasised the 'Gow' as if pronouncing that well-known Caol surname) and was faced with a plastic shack. Fort William? They had better facilities in Fort Apache!'

It's an upside down world when you're from Oz and domiciled in

Caol. And so it was that 'Aussie Betty' managed to get lost in Caol, well in advance of any seasonal celebrations.

A few 'one/two liners' now from the 'pre-Roamer' columns of bygone days. (1) 1961 Fort William Reading and Recreation Club had its lease terminated in August, 1961, having occupied its Monzie Square premises – provided by the Fairfax Lucy family 60 years previously. (2) 1964. Sheriff Patrick was addressed in court in Fort William as 'Your Worship'. The sheriff replied: 'If you promise not to call me Your Worship, you may say what you like, because that wording is totally inappropriate in a Scottish court.' (3) 1966, The average height for men in Scotland is five feet, eight inches, but in Fort William the average is five feet ten. (4) 1970. Father John Morrison made local golfing history at Spean Bridge when he holed his tee shot at the seventh. Meanwhile, in that same year, Fort William Curling Club celebrated its centenary.

Fort William's very own Ceremony of the Keys occurred in town at the weekend. Message bag in one hand and door key poised in the other, the bearer skited on the icy pavement and executed a rear-end spin – with tuck. In sympathy, her bunch of keys went into an arc, and plopped down the Middle Street drain. Thankfully, help was at hand. A worthy grasped the brander and, after executing an arms length 'gunge plunge', succeeded in extricating the keys.

What caused Alistair's cat to change colour? The three-foot-long replacement Arrowslim lighting tube for the kitchen which he bought after its predecessor packed in. 'But when I switched it on it turned out to be an ultra violet disco light.' Alistair complained. 'And the cat looked positively fluorescent.'



A big crowd attended the show in the Shielbridge Hall.

Acharacle art exhibition attracts large numbers

A display of more than 60 paintings by David Mitchell drew a large crowd to Shielbridge Hall, Acharacle, on the afternoon of Sunday November 24.

About half the paintings were unframed canvases which had been stored in his studio, while others were on loan from galleries and 11 belonged to private collections.

Together they made a striking display of one man's love of the Highland scenery, with particular attention to the amazing skies which one sees in this region. Sumptuous teas were served by volunteers during the show.

David was born in Surrey in 1936 and work with an oil company took him to most corners of the world until he became the company's CEO.

In 1990, he retired to Salen, Ardnamurchan, with his late wife Joan and it was at this time that he took up painting in acrylics.

Sadly, due to ill health, David is no longer able to paint and this one-day, solo exhibition was a celebration of David's unique talent and generous spirit.

As usual, David's favourite charities will benefit from donations and sales of his work.



St Bride's Nursery School at North Ballachulish has been presented with a cheque for £500 by the local Co-op store. The money was raised through a book stall at the Co-op. Staff members Neil Cameron and Morag Sime visited the school to present a cheque to head teacher Ainsley Burns, pictured kneeling at front, and the children.

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LT

FOOTBALL

Weather anything but kind for Kinlochleven and Mallaig friendly

Kinlochleven	4
Mallaig	2
Friendly match	



The revitalised Kinlochleven FC, under the stewardship of Matthew Prosser and John Trew, took on a youthful Mallaig AFC side mainly made up of under-18s in Kinlochleven last week.

In atrocious weather, Mallaig did well to travel at all, bolstering their squad with veterans Angus Kennedy and Jamie MacGregor.

Kinlochleven took advantage early with Ross Maclean busy up front playing an excellent through ball to allow Sam Moffat to score with the most delicate of touches.

As the half moved on, Kinlochleven were awarded a corner and Ali Bain made the move up from the back. He made no mistake in planting his finish with aplomb.

The home side were moving the ball about well and both sides were doing their best to play attractive football despite the monsoon conditions.

Left back Gordon McCredie made several important interceptions and carried the ball out well, teaming up with Andy Heron on the left to fashion several decent opportunities.

Up front for Mallaig, the youthful pairing of Ewan and Ruairidh were linking well with Andrew Sneddon at the head of their midfield but David Wilson in the Kinloch goal showed safe hands and was never overly troubled.

The third goal came courtesy of Mikey Maclean,

the midfielder taking aim with cold-eyed calm to end the half 3-0 to the hosts.

As the second half kicked off, the visitors began to make their presence felt. First they pressured Kinlochleven and then they reduced the deficit with a smartly taken finish.

The next half saw the youngsters playing some smart football which meant that Bain especially had to be stout in defence.

Finally, Ross Maclean got the goal that his industry deserved as he surged into the box, collected a through ball from Maclean and lifted a finish past the the visitors' keeper.

A final consolation goal for Mallaig left the score 4-2 in a well contested friendly played in the right spirit, against the odds.

Kinlochleven player/manager Matthew Prosser said it was a good performance in only his side's second game.

'The organisation was better than before and we played some lovely football going forward.

'We're really grateful to Mallaig for even going ahead with the game in this weather and we're looking forward to a return leg in January,' said Prosser.

LOTTERY NUMBERS

Lochaber club lotteries

Ballachulish Shinty Lottery - This week's (8/12) numbers were 7, 16 and 20. No winners, so a £600 draw next week.

Caol Regeneration Lotto - This week's (5/12) numbers were 5, 10 and 18. Winners wee B Garrick and N Bowie who shared the £1,300 jackpot. Next draw 12/12 and £100 jackpot.

Fort William Golf Club Lotto - This week's (5/12) numbers were 2, 7 and 20. One winner of £300. Jackpot of £100 available for draw on 12/12. Please note the final draw of the year will be 19/12 and draw will recommence on 9/1/20.

Marking 30 years of adventure at Nevis Range



Hundreds of locals and visitors are expected to flock to the Nevis Range Mountain Experience, near Fort William, later this month to help celebrate its 30th anniversary celebrations.

During the day - Saturday, December 21 - all visitors can ski or snowboard, or take a gondola, for the same price as it was three decades ago in 1989.

The fun-packed celebrations will continue from 5pm until midnight with an action-filled programme of free

entertainment in a heated marquee next to the gondola base station.

The celebrations will include Celtic fire dancers, PyroCeltica, inspirational and informative talks from Nevis Range legends, a ceilidh with A'hooligan and The Gary Innes Band, local food and drink and loads of fantastic prizes and unique Nevis Range giveaways.

Running all day and night there will be a competition for the best dressed person wearing ski kit and / or apres



The Queen visits Nevis Range in 1991.

ski kit from 1989, with the prize of a much-coveted 10-year snowsports season pass for Nevis Range.

Chris O'Brien, CEO of Nevis Range, commented: 'To be celebrating 30 years of the Nevis Range Mountain Experience is an incredible feeling, especially considering that this anniversary comes at such an exciting time.

'On the night. Ian "Spike" Sykes and Ian "Suds" Sutherland will be telling us all about the early days and history of Nevis Range, while Mike Jardine and Lesley Beck will give us the fascinating

SKIING

story of the UCI MTB World Cup.

'There'll be plenty more guests, surprises and giveaways on the night as well as bands and even the fire dancers from PyroCeltica.

'I hope we'll see a huge turnout to join us all in a 30th birthday to remember!'

Nevis Range will be laying on a free shuttle bus service from Fort William and Corpach to transport party goers to and from the venue where celebrations will resume from 5pm to midnight.



Construction of the gondola towers.

Fort in miserable trip to Lossiemouth

Lossiemouth	2
Fort William	0
Highland League	

The miserable weather that forced Fort William's game on Saturday to be switched to Lossiemouth was not the end of the misery for the Claggan Park side, coming away from the long trip with a 2-0 defeat.

The Highland League game had been scheduled for Claggan Park but a waterlogged pitch saw it switched to Lossiemouth's Grant Park.

But the game started well for the visitors and in the first 20 minutes Fort were all over their hosts and, it has to be said, dominated for long spells throughout the game.

Both sides had their chances in the first half but the interval was reached with the scoreboard still showing 0-0.

But it was the home side which broke the deadlock

after the restart when, just two minutes played, they pulled ahead with a goal from Brodie Allen.

But Fort stuck to their task and it was not until the 70th minute that Lossiemouth netted their second through Ryan Sewell.

Fort manager Russell MacMorran told us: 'Saturday's result was extremely disappointing. We set ourselves out from the start to control and manage the game.

'We completely dominated the first half, however we were unable to capitalise on the opportunities we created. We should have killed the game off in the first half, but unfortunately that is football.

'A quick start from Lossiemouth in the second half saw a great strike break the deadlock, but again a preventable goal from our point of view.

'Again we dominated the game in the second half, but again we didn't capitalise on our possession and lost a second goal against the run of play.

'The game went into a bit of disarray with some terrible refereeing decisions that I still can't quite figure out. I'm sure by now everyone has seen on social media the outrageous tackle on Jordan Andrew, where there was absolutely no intention to win the ball.

'If that wasn't a straight red card, then I don't know what is, especially in full view of the referee and his assistant.

'Did the best team win? Well the team that scored the most goals won and therefore credit goes to Lossiemouth for taking the chances they had.

'Looking forward to Strathspey's visit to Claggan this Saturday - we have to go into the game positively, but

FOOTBALL

we need to improve in certain areas of our game if we are looking to make the most of our games in hand.

'Taking positive points from Lossiemouth game, goalkeeper Martin Mackinnon was back from injury and commanded his goal and back line and wasn't at fault for any of the goals.

'New signing Rafal Mendyk made his debut and proved to be a difference in our side and young Jordan Andrew has played well and created chances when he came off the bench to stake his claim for a start against Strathspey.

'Myself and the lads are under no illusion what is required from that game and I'll not be accepting anything less than three points.'

Fort take on Strathspey Thistle, at Claggan Park, Saturday, kick-off 3pm.



A jubilant Lochaber RFC celebrate winning the West Regional Bowl. Photographs: Abrightside Photography

Lochaber win West Regional Bowl

Continued from page 56
and the Medics had a scrum in the last play of the game deep in their own half.

But a knock-on when picking up the wet ball from the scrum saw referee Willie Malone from Oban reach for his whistle to call full-time as Lochaber players, coaches and supporters all celebrated.

Speaking after the game, the referee commented on how

well disciplined both teams were and how penalties had been few and far between allowing the game to flow well. Lochaber head coach Gary Hendrie told the Lochaber Times everyone at the Banavie club was delighted to lift some silverware.

'It was a very tight game, nip and tuck all the way through and we're delighted to have secured the win in what were

pretty awful weather conditions,' Hendrie said.

'I think the conditions suited us more than Medics, but what really made the difference was the improvement in our tackling from two weeks ago. Medics are a very dangerous side with the ability to score from anywhere on the pitch but this time everyone was up tackling first time.

'It was a great result to help

RUGBY

mark the club's 50th anniversary year as well, so that made it extra special.'

Lochaber are back in action this Saturday when they travel to Scotstoun Stadium to take on Hyndland. Kick off TBC as the Glasgow Warriors take on La Rochelle in the Heineken Champions Cup that evening.



Lochaber's victorious captain Callum MacDonald with, from left, the coaching team of Ali MacKinnon, Gary Hendrie and Stewart Sandison.



Joy for Lochaber at the final whistle.



Two penalties from the boot of Jonathan McCook secured victory for Lochaber.

Alleycats stay top of 10-pin league

After week five of the Lochaber Building Supplies 10-pin bowling leagues at the Nevis Centre in Fort William, Alleycats still remain the only team with the maximum points in the scratch division and lead with 25 points followed by British Legion Fort William on 20 points and Peaky Bowlers on 17 points. The handicap division is

very close at the top where Peaky Bowlers and British Legion Fort William are now on top with 17 points followed by Team With A Bowling Problem and Alleycats next both on 16 points whilst fifth place Council are in close attendance on 14 points.

Individually this week, the top performances all came from Billy McLeod (British

Legion Fort William) with a scratch game of 192, two-game scratch series of 356, handicap game of 252 and handicap two-game series of 476.

The best team scores this week all came from British Legion Fort William with the top scratch game of 590, the top two game scratch series of 1140, the top handicap game

TEN PIN BOWLING

of 854, and the top two-game handicap series of 1668.

The top scratch averages are currently held by Pam Weller (Alleycats) with 165 followed by Steve Day (Team With A Bowling Problem) on 151 and Tony Whitelocke on (Alleycats) on 145.



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WEATHER

Thursday
Light rain and a moderate breeze
Temperatures 4°C to 6°C.

Friday
Light rain showers and a moderate breeze
Temperatures 2°C to 7°C.

Weekend Outlook
Saturday
Light rain showers and a gentle breeze
Sunday
Light rain showers and a gentle breeze
Temperatures 3°C to 5°C.



TIDAL INFORMATION

Tide tables for Oban during the week from Thursday December 12, 2019 are listed below with differences for major ports listed on the right. All times are GMT (add one hour BST)

Thur	05.26	3.9	11.48	1.2
	17.54	4.0	***	**
Fri	00.03	0.9	06.00	3.9
	12.27	1.1	18.28	4.0
Sat	00.41	0.9	06.36	4.0
	13.08	1.1	19.05	3.9
Sun	01.22	0.9	07.15	3.9
	13.52	1.2	19.45	3.7
Mon	02.05	1.0	07.58	3.8
	14.41	1.3	20.31	3.5
Tues	02.53	1.1	08.47	3.7
	15.38	1.4	21.24	3.3
Wed	03.47	1.2	09.44	3.5
	16.44	1.6	22.27	3.1

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

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

Ferry Crossings/Sea States

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

Chain, shackles and buoys all available to purchase.

Marking 30 years
of adventure at
Nevis Range

Fort in
miserable trip
to Lossiemouth

Lochaber find antidote to Medics to win bowl

Lochaber	6
Glasgow Uni Medics	3
West Regional Bowl final	

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.

But what really prevented a repeat prescription of the nightmare 75-5 drubbing at the hands of Medics just a fortnight previously in Glasgow, Lochaber had never beaten the Medics and the Medics were looking to win the bowl for the second year running.

The omens for Saturday's game were not good – the Medics were fielding the same team as they had in Glasgow, Lochaber had never beaten the Medics and the Medics were looking to win the bowl for the second year running.

There was doubt the game would even go ahead on the Thursday before hand with the pitch severely waterlogged but come Saturday morning it was playable at the game went ahead.

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.

Lochaber had the first chance of the game after winning a penalty they kicked deep into the corner but, with the wet conditions, the ball



Lochaber captain Callum MacDonald lifts the trophy amid scenes of jubilation at a wet but happy Banavie on Saturday.

Photograph: Abrightside Photography.

was lost at the lineout and the Medics cleared their lines.

Nine minutes in and the Medics took the lead after kicking a penalty to make it 0-3. The game was being played in the middle of the park with neither team really being able to break down the other's defence.

Lochaber on occasions would break the line of

'It was a great result to help mark the club's 50th anniversary year as well, so that made it extra special.'

defence through Taylor, McCook and Diack and others, but the Medics' defence always managed to scramble back.

In the second half, the Medics were on occasion able to stretch Lochaber's defence to create the overlap but the hosts always managed to get over and shut down any attack quickly.

With a strong wind now at their backs, Lochaber had the advantage of being able to kick deep to get territory and a few dropped catches from the Medics' fullback gave Lochaber some great territory.

Lochaber levelled things up through the boot of Jonathan McCook with a superb 45m penalty to make it 3-3 after

FOOTBALL

60 minutes. Lochaber started to grow in confidence and were starting to wear down the Medics' defence, with Alasdair Davidson in particular mounting a few big runs and breaking through tackles.

Lochaber were able to apply sustained pressure on the Medics' try line and came very close to crossing the line through captain Callum MacDonald, Conor Taylor, Koni Johnson and a few others.

Unfortunately, they never quite managed to cross the line. The Medics were able to keep clearing their lines but couldn't get out of their own half and Lochaber would keep coming again and again.

Lochaber were eventually rewarded with a penalty for their efforts just five metres out and right in front of the posts with only seven minutes to go.

McCook slotted the ball between the posts to make it 6-3 and Lochaber took the lead for the first time.

Lochaber didn't take their foot of the gas and worked their way back down into the Medics' 22. Time was now up

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