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Troubled Ballet West calls in liquidators

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Back-to-school bugs put pressure on Covid units

by Fiona Scott
fscott@obantimes.co.uk



A mum of four from Oban is demanding answers from elected government officials after spending almost six hours trying to organise Covid-19 testing for herself and her family after her 10-year-old daughter developed symptoms.

Aisling Clark, a teacher at Oban High School, has written a strongly worded letter to Argyll and Bute representatives Michael Russell MSP and Brendan O'Hara MP after finding herself in a situation that, in her words, 'beggars belief'.

She told The Oban Times this week: 'What I have discovered is that there is a significant problem across the NHS Highland area and that we seem to be being subjected to a rural postcode lottery for testing,' she added.

Having woken up on Saturday morning with a 'nasty cough', Ms Clark's daughter further developed a temperature of 38.1C the following day.

Although the responsible mum was fairly sure her child had picked up a cold while attending school the previous week, she promptly attempted to follow the guidelines and book a test for her daughter and the rest of the family.

'As a key worker it was my understanding that myself and my

'This has proven to be one of the most difficult things I have ever tried to access.'

family were entitled to testing. However, this has proven to be one of the most difficult things I have ever tried to access,' she said.

After going through the government's Covid testing page, Ms Clark was offered an appointment in Portree, 151 miles from her house (the maximum mileage recommended by the Scottish Government being 90). She then phoned her

GP surgery and was directed to another page which then took her back to the government site.

'I phoned the helpline twice to be told they actually can't help in any way,' she added. 'I then tried to book postal tests only to be told there was none available.'

Taking advice from a colleague, Ms Clark then got in touch with NHS 24 and after queuing for over an hour and a quarter managed to book a test for her daughter only at Oban's Lorn and Islands Hospital.

'Current advice is that the whole family of the key worker should be tested. I would like someone to explain to me how after eight months since Covid-19 appeared that we cannot be tested nearer our homes,' she said.

Ms Clark's experience last weekend has been reflected nationwide as children return to school and come into contact with other cold and flu-like viruses. Something she feels the

Continued on page two.

Fab four: tired but triumphant



From left, Ryan Grant, Ruaridh Jackson, Andrew Easson and Richie Vernon ended the first day of their Tries2Trials charity challenge of cycling the Caledonian Way in Oban on Friday. Find out how they got on by turning to page five.



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OT

Island with six residents sees masterplan backed

by Ellis Butcher
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An island with just six residents has had its new masterplan endorsed.

Argyll and Bute councillors have backed the new Social and Economic Development Community Masterplan for Ulva, off the Isle of Mull.

The island, around 12km long by 4km wide and inhabited for over 7,000 years, has seen its population decline since the 1800s, but was bought by the community in 2018.

It now plans sustainable repopulation and regeneration projects in the years to come – not least improving its infrastructure and realising its tourism potential with 2019 seeing around 7,000 visitors.

The 44-page masterplan identifies the refurbishment of six existing properties on the island – three of which are empty and would be leased out

at affordable market rent. It also identifies potential plots for new-build housing with the formal endorsement of the masterplan helping to speed-up the planning process.

Wendy Reid, appointed as Ulva development manager by the North West Mull

'It is great to see what is planned and I totally support these.'

Community Woodland Company last year, said prior to the buy-out there was no planning designation for the island. She said: 'This takes all the aspirations which were expressed during the buy-out process and summarises them in one planning framework. The significance for us is that this sets out the broad framework for the direction of travel for the next five to 10 years and

gives broad brush approval to our development aspirations making it easier in the future to do things for Ulva.'

The plans received a positive response at the council's planning, protective services and licensing (PPSL) committee. They were approved in line with a council planning officer's recommendation.

Councillor Robin Currie said: 'I feel this is a tremendous and exciting proposal. It is great to see what is being planned and I totally support these plans.'

Councillor Lorna Douglas added: 'I have been to Ulva a couple of times and this was a great report to read. I look forward to seeing this development rolled out in due course.'

In addition to supporting the plans, councillor Graham Hardie asked for information on timescales.

Planning officer Andrew Barrie said: 'We hope to start some opportunities this year,

but there is no set phasing plan. 'We would hope to get developments carried out in the next few years and expect some planning applications to follow in due course.'

Fergus Murray, the council's head of economic development, added: 'We are trying to work with the community to try to deliver their aspirations. Each proposal will be considered on its merits.'

Councillor George Freeman said: 'It is good to see a community taking control of its own area, and I am more than happy to support this plan.'

The island was subject to a successful community buyout on June 21, 2018 under the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003 by North West Mull Community Woodland Company, with the aim 'to bring about the social and economic development of Ulva for the benefit of the community and a key objective is the repopulation of the island.'

Back-to-school bugs put pressure on Covid units

Continued from page one.
government should have been better prepared for.

'As a teacher, it is clear to me that the likelihood of a school closing in Argyll and Bute will not be because of a Covid outbreak but because staff will have to self isolate and cannot access testing,' she added.

Among many other concerns being raised by members of the community are how children access toilet facilities when being asked to travel for testing and how do people who don't drive or can't afford the petrol manage?

'This system is clearly not fit for purpose and is, in fact, ensuring that rural areas are again being discriminated against,' concluded Ms Clark.

In response to the latest concerns Argyll and Bute MP Brendan O'Hara said: 'It appears that there were 'technical glitches' in the UK-wide booking system last weekend, almost certainly brought about by a spike in demand due to the return of schools.'

'The exceptional demand for testing resulted in people being offered appointments



Ms Clark says the government should have been better prepared.

many miles from their home. I understand that Oban is not alone to what the First Minister described as 'possible technical issues' and I'm pleased to hear that the Scottish Government is working to ensure that these issues are resolved as quickly as possible.

'Of course we'd all rather that the system was sufficiently robust to cope with whatever demands were placed on it, but I suppose if weakness are there, it is better they are discovered and repaired now rather than at the height of winter when cases could be on the rise and travel far more difficult.'

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Ballet West forced to close as liquidators appointed

Oban Sheriff Court has approved the appointment of a provisional liquidator to Ballet West Ltd, a statement from the board of trustees has revealed, writes Ellis Butcher.

It formally starts the process of winding up Ballet West Ltd, which will mean the closure of the school at Taynuilt, the statement said.

The trustees added: 'Due to events over the last two weeks, Ballet West Ltd, a registered Scottish charity, has been driven to the point of insolvency and the trustees had a legal duty to inform the charity regulator and take appropriate action in these circumstances.'

'The board was required to make an application for a liquidator to be appointed.'

'The immediate impact of this is that Ballet West's affairs will now be dealt with by the liquidator, French Duncan.'

Eileen Blackburn, of French Duncan LLP, has



been appointed by the court as provisional liquidator. The statement added: 'This means that from today Ballet West's financial affairs and operational responsibility will be managed by the provisional liquidator, and all business activities including residential and outreach activities will cease or be wound-down immediately.'

'The trustees of the charity were required to make an ap-

plication at Oban Sheriff Court due to the recent decisions of some key customers and partner organisations, as the business was no longer financially viable. The charity regulator has also been informed.'

Any enquiries or notification of claims should now be made by email to BalletWest@frenchduncan.co.uk

The statement said that student accommodation at Ballet West was provided under a

separate contract with separate entities not included in the liquidation.

'We have been informed that requests for refunds for pre-paid accommodation costs should be made directly to the landlords via bartonaccommodation@gmail.com

'Aware of the recent allegations in the press about individuals and activities at Ballet West, the liquidator will, of course, assist and make available any information to both Police Scotland and any other regulatory bodies.'

Further updates will be available at: www.frenchduncan.co.uk/balletwest/

The statement added: 'This is the consequence of a catastrophic sequence of events and we could not prevent this from happening. The allegations broadcast by ITN regarding the vice-principal on Thursday August 13 were shocking. Immediate action was required

in response and he resigned. The board launched an internal inquiry, committed to an external inquiry and informed Police Scotland. We hoped the board's prompt action would allay fears in terms of student safety going forward.'

'However, on Friday August 14, we were informed that Bath Spa University was terminating its relationship with Ballet West with immediate effect. Bath Spa students accounted for nearly 70 per cent of the student intake. Further to this, the Royal Academy of Dance withdrew their accreditation and on Thursday August 20, we were informed that the Scottish Qualification Authority had given us notice of termination for the HNC/HND courses at the school. In short, these developments rendered the business of Ballet West unviable.'

'Every option was explored to secure funding or alternative partners. These were in vain

and the board was legally bound to inform the charity regulator that Ballet West was on the brink of insolvency.'

'In addition to our own internal inquiries, we agreed to instruct an independent QC to conduct an external investigation. Due to the liquidation, the funding is not now available for that to proceed and that is a matter of deep regret. We have told Police Scotland that we will make all possible information available to them.'

'We are deeply sorry that any student should have felt the school failed them, and we urge anyone who has a complaint to report this to Police Scotland.'

'The reputation for ballet excellence that Ballet West enjoyed was built on the talent and commitment of students and staff. We can only hope that those who see their future in ballet and the performing arts can find a route to realise their hopes and ambitions.'

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Traditional Oban Skiff is oarsome

by Ellis Butcher
ebutcher@obantimes.co.uk



A celebration of what was once a common sight on the West Highland lochs of the 19th and 20th centuries takes place next month.

Four traditional Oban Skiffs will be joining a number of other West Highland wooden sailing boats at Tarbert, Loch Fyne, on September 4-5.

Spectators will be able to step back in time to the days when they were used on lochs along the West Coast for fishing, transport and ferrying people.

Traditional wooden boat builder Adam Way, originally from Mull, runs a yacht builders and restorers A & R Way Ltd at Lochgilphead, alongside wife Rosalind.

His firm has recreated traditional Skiffs having found drawings for the 'Oban-type' Skiff in the National Maritime Museum. Adam has now made



Four traditional Oban Skiffs will be joining a number of other West Highland wooden sailing boats at Tarbert on September 4-5.

four beautiful full-sized replicas from local larch and oak and constructed Loch Fyne Skiffs too.

Two of the latest Oban-style boats were launched recently and the new owners will meet with the other two to make a fleet of four Oban skiffs joining the other West Highland wooden sailing boats at Tarbert. The boats are regarded as a significant part of the cultural heritage of the Gaelic

west of Scotland, having now been almost entirely replaced by factory-produced glass fibre boats.

Adam has described the Oban Skiff as an 'outstanding and eye-catching boat'.

'She is based on a boat built in Oban in the 1880's but is similar to other fishing boat types which were common on the whole of the west of Scotland,' he wrote.

Stan Reeves, a skiff owner

based in Edinburgh, sails in his regularly and has carried out extensive research into their origins.

He said the Oban skiff – 'Gylen' – was an 18.4ft West Highland skiff typical of the area and built in 1886 by the MacDonald's, formerly of Kilcheran, Lismore.

The family was forced off the island in 1850 amidst the potato crop failure and eventually established a boatyard at the top of Port Beag, adjoining the Manor House, where the lifeboat is now stationed.

'The design had been perfected over many incarnations to best suit the conditions in the Firth of Lorne,' wrote Mr Reeves in a potted history.

'The MacDonalds will have brought tools, measurements and perhaps moulds from Lismore, but mostly they will have brought the design in their heads, passed on down the generations.'

'Virtual hearings' set to remain council norm

Public hearings are to take place on a virtual basis in Argyll and Bute.

At a virtual meeting of the council's planning, protective services and licensing (PPSL) committee, members voted 10-2 to hold public hearings via video link in view of the ongoing pandemic.

Usually, the committee hears significant planning applications in public, especially when a large number of public representations have been received. But a report warned that attendance at public hearings could run to at least 43 people, including councillors and officers, and many venues remain closed. Therefore a decision had to be made on the immediate future of meetings.

It means two key applications – one for a distillery in Port Ellen and one for a waste water works treatment on the Isle of Seil – will now proceed via video link or 'virtually' – unless restrictions are eased before then or officers recommend a hearing in person.

Councillors Robin Currie,

George Freeman and Alastair Redman opposed the move, with Councillor Currie calling for hearings to be held in public to give local objectors and supporters an opportunity to express their views and for councillors to hear them.

Technical issues during the virtual meeting resulted in one item on the agenda having to go before the committee twice. Councillor Freeman said it showed that the technology was not up to the job.

Other councillors did not share the trio's views, with Councillor Rory Colville saying nobody knew how long the pandemic could last: 'In five years' time we could still be hoping for a vaccine. We cannot postpone hearings any longer. Let's stop arguing and accept the conclusions and get virtual meetings as soon as possible.'

Councillor Lorna Douglas said she supported virtual meetings: 'Every action we take has to be a responsible one, and how we are seen to behave and what signals we give out are vital.'

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Rugby stars reach The Sneck tyred but triumphant

by Fiona Scott
fscott@obantimes.co.uk



Retired rugby internationals Ruaridh Jackson, Ryan Grant, Andrew Easson and Richie Vernon made it to Inverness on Saturday night to complete their Tries2Trials charity challenge of cycling the Caledonian Way in 36 hours.

In fact, the quartet completed the 234 mile route in 34 hours. Starting from Campbeltown at 8am on Saturday morning and arriving in Inverness around 6pm on Saturday night. The group had an overnight stop at the Corran House Hostel in Oban on Friday night.

Speaking to the Oban Times on Sunday, Jackson said: 'We made really good time on Saturday which was a surprise for us and there was a huge relief getting over the line as we were all running on empty. I think a couple of sections on day two took us to some of our



darkest moments. Firstly the stretch between Fort William and Fort Augustus, the terrain was really challenging on the road bikes as it seemed more suitable for a mountain bike and then the climb out of Fort Augustus was so punishing after 200 miles of cycling.

I would say everyone managed to keep spirits high and

there was a lot of laughter and enjoyment amongst the tough times. The beers went down great after and we were humbled by everyone's support throughout, from donations, to locals coming out and cheering us. It was amazing to see.'

At the time of writing the Tries2Trials team had

exceeded their £5,000 target by £2,260, the total of which will be split between the My Name's 5 Daddie Foundation and Unite Against Cancer.

The funding page remains open, to donate go to the Cycling the Caledonian Way gofundme page.

Visit @Tries2Trials
#CaleyWayBikeRide

From left, Ryan Grant, Ruaridh Jackson, Andrew Easson and Richie Vernon ended their first day's cycling in Oban.

Final collection for Betty's Pots RNLi appeal

Oban RNLi Lifeboat fundraisers are arranging a final collection for Betty's Pots as the appeal tops £2,000, writes Fiona Scott.



The 5p collections raised more than £2,000 in the first 12 months with every penny raised going towards keeping the Oban Lifeboat 'Mora Edith MacDonald' afloat.

The appeal has been a successful fundraising campaign for Oban lifeboat, however it is currently suspended, owing to the ongoing Covid-19 situation.

Although 5p collectors can no longer drop off their pots at the collection points around Oban, Oban lifeboat's fundraisers have arranged one final collection, in a bid to raise some much needed funds for the lifesaving charity.

Mike Robertson, Oban Lifeboat's chairman said: 'The voluntary service provided by your local lifeboat needs not just volunteer crew giving their time; but there are actual run-

ning costs too. A trip to the outer edges of the Oban 'patch' can require no less than 800 litres of diesel to refuel ready for the next call out.

'Whether it is Betty's Pots or another fundraising event, our local contributions are a very real help in making our boat available the next time it is needed.'

On Saturday August 29 and Sunday August 30, a drop off point will be set up on the North Pier in Oban. RNLi fundraisers will be on hand to collect any 5p pots between 10am and 2pm on the Saturday, and 1pm and 3pm on the Sunday.

Phil Hamerton, pictured above, Oban Lifeboat's Fundraising chairman added: 'If you've been holding on to your 5p pots, now is your chance to drop them off and make a difference to your local lifeboat station. We'll look forward to seeing you there.'

Anyone attending will be asked to sanitise their hands and maintain 2m social distancing.



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OT

Baby steps but childcare plan for Islay moves closer

by Fiona Scott
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A group of mums on Islay have moved a step closer to their goal of opening a non-profit, community-owned childcare facility.

The island has had no childcare facility since 2017, when Little Angels Childcare closed, and only two independent childminders to accommodate the high demand for the service.

Following three years of consultations, set backs and sheer determination, however, the group, now known as Sonas Childcare, are a step nearer their goal and are appealing to Argyll and Bute Council to back their project.

'With an island community it is vitally important that this lifeline facility is in place, not just for the people who are currently struggling with childcare, but also those who may be deciding whether to stay



Young islanders Belle and Porter Armstrong are optimistic about the nursery.

The collaboration between SID and Sonas continued for months with positive progress being made, until earlier this year when funders rejected the first proposal for the redevelopment.

All was not lost, however, and a suggested alternative location by SID, the old Port Ellen School House has now moved into Stage 2 of the Scottish Land Fund application process, which they will receive feedback on in November this year.

'It is ideal in terms of its proximity and close connection with a village school and pre-5 unit, as well as providing outdoor space,' added Katherine.

'It is now, more than ever, that this project and the island community get the backing and support of Argyll and Bute Council.'

on the island to have a family, or even essential workers such as teachers or NHS staff who would be put off moving here if their children cannot be cared for,' said Sonas spokesperson Katherine Wells.

With all efforts to find a suitable central location exhausted without success in their first two years, Sonas were approached by the

Port Ellen-based South Islay Development (SID) who had a project in mind to redevelop the Port Ellen Playing Fields and thought a nursery would sit well within those plans.

With help from Islay Energy Trust's Community Benefit Fund, a business plan was drawn up and a further feasibility study, assisted by Community Links Scotland, was carried out.

Around Oban

KAY MCDONALD

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It's definitely starting to feel autumnal with many of the trees starting to go golden. It feels too early though, it feels as if it should only be May and heading into the summer, but that's the weird year we're having.

Luckily I love autumn and I'm eyeing up the brambles as I'm out walking looking for the best crops, and it looks as if it's going to be a good year for jam makers.

I'm also looking forward to a few new shops opening in the town - Harris Tweed filling the old Nancy Black's shop in Argyll Square is enough to make your mouth water, the colours are amazing, as are the coats I've seen so far in Oban Wool and

Needlecraft centre, I can't wait for a proper browse round.

Further up George Street I'm intrigued to see a shop called Retrophenia taking shape. Its Facebook page just ramps up the anticipation, I can't wait for them to open. We've also had the new Regatta shop open at that end of town recently, which is fantastic, with lovely friendly staff, and with Anglers Corner moving into bigger premises at the top of the street things are definitely looking up.

It's so good to see places in Oban thriving despite the circumstances at the moment, but we should remember that they will need our continuing support to keep them going throughout the year, shopping locally is the way to go!

WHERE IS THIS?

Last week's photograph was of the flags at the Seafood Shack on the Railway Pier. If you know the name of the dog on the beach in this week's, you get extra kudos.



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Winter Festival put on ice due to coronavirus

by Fiona Scott
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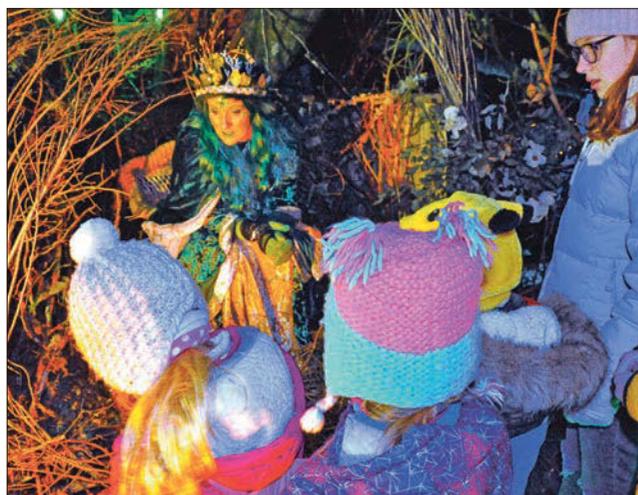


Oban Winter Festival committee has confirmed that the 2020 event will not go ahead as planned due to Covid-19 restrictions.

The popular 10-day event, which usually takes place at the end of November, would have been celebrating its 10th anniversary this year but has been put on ice because of the uncertainty surrounding the current pandemic.

A statement sent out recently confirmed: 'The committee feels that planning events and engaging user groups cannot be done at this time as both are vulnerable to unknown risk levels.'

'We sincerely hope to be able to mark the festival dates in some creative format as 2020 would have been our 10th year celebrations, so watch this space. We would like to thank everyone for their great sup-



These youngsters enjoy an audience with the Fairy Queen at Glencruitten, always a popular venue during the Winter Festival.

port and input over the years.'

Speaking on behalf of Oban Winter Festival Committee, Louis Barrow said: 'I'm sure the whole Oban community will be disappointed that we've had to cancel almost all our Winter Festival events.'

'Without knowing about risk levels it would be negligent to press ahead with the funding

and organising of venues and groups.'

As the Winter Festival has grown, so has the reputation of its markets for showcasing the best produce in Argyll and the West Highlands, while children in the area also enjoy getting involved. Bearing that in mind, the committee are looking to work with as many

parties as possible to ensure there is something to look forward to during the winter months.

'We are especially keen to support Oban and Lorn's local producers and creators and we'll endeavour, along with other Oban organisations to help with marketing and awareness of our area's home-grown products and services,' added Louis.

'As we expect schools to be open as normal, we're hoping to run our art competitions and hopefully create other limited activities based around outdoor or window displays.'

'Should the risks subside we'd hope to catch up with some live events next spring and hope for a full return to

normal, for what will now be our 10th Oban Winter Festival in November 2021. Please watch this space for updated info and hopefully some kind of creative outdoor-based celebration towards the end of November. Who knows!

'We'd like to thank all the wonderful creators, charities, shopkeepers and the excellent venues who have helped to build our Winter Festival over the last nine years - and rest-assured the committee will strive to upgrade the festival's resilience to secure events for next year.'

Bid4Oban have also confirmed that the 2020 Reindeer Parade, taking place within the Winter Festival, will no longer take place.

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Appin to Ballachulish road closures

Four different sections of the A828 between Appin and Ballachulish will close overnight for up to four weeks.

The resurfacing, which started on Monday, August 24, covers four stretches of the A-road where it skirts Loch Linnhe, with road closures in place between 8pm and 5am.

Amnesties will follow in the weeks to come as the works progress beyond the initial stage. No works will be carried out on Friday or Saturday nights and the project is due to be completed by 5am on Thursday September 17.

Due to the narrow carriageway widths, the works require a full road closure. The programme is as follows:

- A828 South Kentallen – August 24 to Sunday August 30 (five nights)
- A828 Appin North – Monday August 31 to Sunday September 6 (five nights)
- A828 North of Kentallen – Monday September 7 to Wednesday 9 (three nights)
- A828 Ballachulish Hotel – Thursday September 10 to Wednesday 16 (five nights).

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OT

Argyll built Sula III launched

by Fiona Scott
fscott@obantimes.co.uk



Alutec Marine Ltd, a local company building aluminium boats at Creran, launched their latest new-build on Saturday morning.

Commissioned by North Berwick-based Sula Boat Trips at the end of 2018, Sula III was scheduled for delivery at the start of this year but due to the Covid-19 pandemic her journey hasn't all been plain sailing.

Established in 1970 the Sula company set out running passenger boat trips (Sula I) around the Bass Rock, while Sula II started her life as a fishing vessel in Norfolk before returning to the east coast of Scotland to also run as a tour vessel.

In 2011 Duncan, cousin of the Oban-based Mathesons Furniture family, and Claire MacRae bought the company and Sula II continued sailings until 2018 when due to more stringent Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA)



The new boat is launched to the skirl of the pipes; and left, Edwin Payne is all smiles as Sula III is sent on her way.

to carry passengers out of North Berwick. She was sold and now operates from Lulworth Cove in Dorset.

To preserve the Sula business for the future a new vessel was needed and at the end of 2018 Sula III was commissioned. Designed by Argyll-based Murray

Cormack Naval Architects and built by Alutec Marine in Balcargine her majestic presence will ensure that Sula boat trips can continue as North Berwick's premier boat operators long into the future.

A sizeable crowd turned out to watch Karen Payne,

who runs the business along with husband Edwin, launch the new vessel on Saturday in the traditional 'champagne' manner.

'Watching her slide down into the water was a really proud moment for everyone,' she told us. 'It hasn't been an easy road, with the pandemic stopping work for months, but the team here at Creran have been amazing and it's credit to everyone involved that we now have such a beautiful boat.'

Alutec Marine are based at Creran Marine's facility north of Oban. It is a small company employing local people to construct and fit out aluminium hulls to a high standard. This is the sixth passenger vessel the company has built using a proven hullform, the first being built in 1998 for use in the exposed waters at Barra in the Outer Hebrides.

Karen said: 'We were hit by a few problems nearer the end of this build but with a great effort from our team

and understanding from our customer meant we got there eventually.

'It's definitely something to be celebrated at the end of what has been a very difficult time for everyone.'

The 13m long boat was designed by Murray Cormack Associates to carry 63 passengers and has been built to meet the E C Directive regulations inspected by the MCA.

Day trips will include going around the Bass Rock to view the gannets and other seabirds.

The boat is designed for bow and side boarding at different levels and is fitted with a gyro-stabiliser unit to minimise rolling and enhance passenger comfort especially when making a passage across the Forth to Anstruther or out to the Isle of May.

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Tobermory lifeboat volunteers go extra mile

by Fiona Scott
fscott@obantimes.co.uk



Tobermory RNLI's volunteers have gone the extra mile for their virtual lifeboat week – 2,184 to be precise, raising over £3,500 for the charity which saves lives at sea.

The annual Lifeboat Day had been scheduled for August 16, but the station's volunteers realised early on that the event would not be possible due to Covid-19. So instead they decided to move the event online and have a Virtual Lifeboat Week instead.

The key event was the '17-39 Challenge' inspired by the number of Tobermory's all-weather lifeboat, Elizabeth Fairlie Ramsey – its number is 17-39 because it is 17 metres in length and was the 39th Severn class lifeboat to be built.

Tobermory's volunteers undertook to walk, run, swim, cycle or row a total of 1,739 miles between August 1 and 16. The volunteers not only reached the target three days early but went on to complete 2,184 miles in total – the equivalent of travelling from Tobermory to Newfoundland.

Seven volunteers joined the 17-39 100 Club by completing more than 100 miles each: coxswain David McHaffie, navigator Mick Stirling, crew member Iain 'Ogg' Mackenzie, fundraising chairperson Carolyn McHaffie, shop volunteers Allison Spillane and Maggie Robson, and lifeboat operations Manager Sam Jones. Carolyn walked the equivalent of five marathons and Ogg had the highest individual total, cycling 326.82 miles – more than the vertical height of the International Space Station. The highest one day total was 169 miles on August 12 which is more than the distance between Tobermory and Edinburgh.

The miles were covered through a variety of activities. Coxswain David and volunteers Rose Skelton and Seonaid McHaffie swam, Ogg, Rose, Alec Brown and David all cycled, crew member Alexander 'Wee Jock' Anderson rowed a

dinghy, mechanic Paul 'Gunny' Gunn rowed on a machine and navigator Mick ran on a treadmill.

The challenge reached as far afield as Stroud in Gloucestershire where Tobermory RNLI 11-year-old 'super-supporter' Ben Sellwood has been undertaking his own 17-39 challenge. Ben has completed 17.39 km on a bike and has also run 17.39 km. The final element of his challenge is to read 1,739 pages of several books by the end of August. Ben has already raised nearly £300, beating his target of £174.

Other activities during the week included the popular shop window quiz, a Facebook 'lucky dip' to win a bag of RNLI shop goodies and an online display of old photographs dating back to when the station reopened in 1990. Accomplished Scottish artist, G. Scott Grier also donated a beautiful landscape painting which raised more than £500 in a silent auction.

Fundraising chairperson Carolyn McHaffie said: 'We are overwhelmed by the generous support which we have received from locals and visitors, particularly in these difficult times. Thank you to all of our supporters who have donated. We also extremely grateful to Scott Grier for donating such a beautiful painting to boost our fundraising.'

Lifeboat operations manager Dr Sam Jones added: 'The 17-39 challenge was a real team effort not only by our crew but our fundraisers, shop volunteers and other station volunteers.'

'It shows that we really are 'one crew' at the station. We're hugely grateful to everyone who has supported us as Covid-19 has severely impacted the RNLI's fundraising this year and as a charity we are dependent on the generous donations from the public, so thank you very much.'

'We are also very grateful to Ben Sellwood for his epic challenge and we look forward to welcoming him to the station as a VIP visitor next year.'

You can still donate at www.justgiving.com/fundraising/tobermorylifeboatday



Coxswain David McHaffie and his wife Seonaid with his mother, Carolyn McHaffie; and far left, 11-year-old super-supporter, Ben Sellwood of Stroud.

Photographs: RNLI

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OT

Cameron hopes shows return 'better than ever' next year

Highlands and Islands MSP Donald Cameron has said the cancellation of the Argyllshire Gathering, due to take place this week, and other Highland Games and agricultural shows, has been a significant loss for local communities, but expressed his confidence that they will come back 'better than ever'.

Mr Cameron said: 'The Gathering has been, for generations, a very significant event in the calendar of many local people and it will be sorely missed this year.'

'Lots of other events have had to cancel, such as the Glenfinnan Games and the Lochaber Agricultural Show, however, I know many are already thinking about 2021 and coming back bigger and better than ever. That is something we can all look forward to.'



MSPs tangle over Covid care home transfers

by Ellis Butcher
ebutcher@obantimes.co.uk



The transfer of hospital patients with coronavirus into Scottish care homes was an 'appalling' mistake which 'possibly' cost lives, an MSP has told parliament.

Highlands and Islands MSP Donald Cameron, the newly-appointed opposition health spokesman, hit out during questions with government health minister Jeane Freeman at Holyrood.

It follows a newspaper investigation which found that at least 37 hospital patients which had tested positive for Covid-19 were discharged by Scottish health boards into care homes between March 1 and April 21.

NHS Highland, which covers Argyll and Bute, has so far neither confirmed nor denied whether it was among them.



Shadow health secretary Donald Cameron MSP.

It did not answer a Freedom of Information request in time and this week it explained that the information requested had taken 'longer than anticipated'.

A spokesperson told The Oban Times that it was compiling its response and plans

to share it 'as soon as possible'.

Jeane Freeman, MSP for Carrick, Cumnock and Doon Valley, told the debate that it was 'entirely wrong' to suggest that sending covid patients into care homes was a government decision.

Such decisions were made by clinicians with risk assessments followed and conversations and co-operation with care homes, she explained.

Since the start of the pandemic, guidance on the discharge and admission to care homes had also 'evolved,' she added. The current guidance tried to ensure that patients who are at risk are not transferred 'inappropriately,' she said.

Ms Freeman added: 'Any individual who is being placed in a care home must be subject to an appropriate risk assessment and be isolated for 14 days.'

Ms Freeman has now asked Public Health Scotland to

work with health boards to produce 'validated statistics and analysis' on the number of patients who tested positive for Covid-19 and were subsequently admitted to care homes.

'That includes examining how many were assessed as being discharged when they were considered to be infectious, and the rationales that were in place for such a discharge, for example in the case of palliative care concerns,' said Ms Freeman.

Mr Cameron said it had 'taken months' for parliament and the Scottish public to learn the news which had never been addressed by the First Minister in daily briefings.

Mr Cameron said: 'We heard about those appalling mistakes - mistakes that possibly cost lives - only because of a newspaper investigation, which did not even include responses

from every health board in Scotland. I am afraid that the cabinet secretary's answers are wholly unacceptable. Nearly 2,000 people have died in care homes in Scotland from coronavirus - every single one of them an unspeakable tragedy.'

Ms Freeman said the Crown Office was looking at deaths in care homes and would investigate where appropriate.

She said: 'There can be no doubt that I and this Government take very seriously the situation in our care homes, but I hope that, equally, there is no doubt that we have, at all times, acted with the best of intention and based on the information that was available at the time.'

Officially, 46 per cent of all Scotland's confirmed coronavirus deaths occurred in care homes, while there have been 3,833 of confirmed cases among care home residents.

BEHIND THE SCENES AT ATLANTIS

At last, we're allowed to reopen our centre, writes Nick Wesley.

Our businesses, families and communities have all responded differently to Covid-19 and the stringent measures imposed by lockdown. As Atlantis continues through our phased reopening with the return of the gym on August 31, we wanted to give you a more detailed update on what's been happening at the centre.

Centre Life: 'maintaining a balance'

Closing Atlantis is not as easy as turning the key and returning in six months' time. The centre is a large and complex system that even when closed requires rigorous ongoing care and maintenance.

The volunteer board has ensured that a balance has been struck between ongoing maintenance and planned projects that are necessary to prevent the further deterioration of the facility.

In the light of this, we've tried to view the centre's closure positively as it has allowed the completion of projects that would have been disruptive otherwise. In addition, social distancing measures have added to an already long work list.

We've completely reconfigured our reception area to help keep staff and customers safe,



and invested in advanced sanitisation treatment that sterilises equipment and surfaces.

Enhancing our online booking systems has been another significant piece of work necessary for our reopening.

The swimming pool requires the most amount of care and monitoring of all our facilities.

Problems come when an area that is normally wet and humid dries out. As a result we have had to renew the walls and shower fittings of our wet-side changing and have started essential flooring works. The works are an important step towards us being able to honour the community fundraising raised over recent years.

It's an involved project that uncovers additional complications as it progresses - one example is the ceramic tiling around our small pool requires comprehensive repair and renewal which will delay the full reopening of our pool further. These particular works can only be undertaken by specialist pool contractors whose staff availability have been just as affected by furlough and lockdown as our own.

Staff Team - 'team update'

Atlantis isn't just empty of customers. The majority of our staff team have been on furlough since the start of lockdown. In the light of having to significantly reduce our customer capacity in line with government guidelines, the board have had to make some very difficult decisions that are necessary for our continued existence. This has resulted in a number of redundancies of staff members who most recently joined us. These decisions were not taken lightly and have only come after examining whether there was any alternative course of action.

We're so grateful for the continued support of our customers and community as you stick by us while we all figure out how to return.

Reopening the gym is a huge step for us in that. It will reopen in our Sports Hall alongside two badminton courts from August 31.

The gym and badminton join tennis and the outdoor play-parks while all other facilities remain closed until further notice - we will, of course, keep you updated as things change.

We're so looking forward to safely welcoming you back to Atlantis from August 31.

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Pippa Milne.

running. Pippa said: 'We also set up new services – a helpline supporting people with what they needed to do to self-isolate at home and shield. We established a food delivery network service to get vital food parcels out within a couple of weeks.'

What's more, the council also became the epicentre for thousands of applications and inquiries from local businesses. To head off a wave of collapses, the Scottish and UK Governments dug deep and set

up funds for councils to distribute. While it could easily have resulted in a bureaucratic nightmare, Argyll and Bute Council helped distribute £37 million to thousands of businesses in a matter of weeks.

As Pippa explained: 'Our focus was to get those out as soon as possible and to maximise the number of successful applications.'

She praised the strong links Argyll and Bute Council has with Scotland's 'Local

Government family' and the Scottish Government. The mutual 'support and co-operation' they provided, all helped, she said. The feedback from the community has inspired her.

'The councillors have been incredibly supportive during this time and have worked exceptionally hard to engage with their communities.'

High on her list of praise, too, is the third sector – the community and volunteer groups – who donned invisible capes,

along with supportive agencies including the police, fire service and coastguard. 'We couldn't have provided the support to those that needed it, without them,' she said.

'This year proved that we can work and deliver change at a real pace, although I don't think I would ever ask my team to try and work at quite that pace again, but we are certainly looking at what different ways of working we can hold on to as we go forward.'

A year like no other

by Ellis Butcher
ebutcher@obantimes.co.uk



A new report has suggested that the coronavirus pandemic is set to cost Argyll and Bute Council up to £12 million – from lost income from harbours and parking fees to unexpected costs such as accommodating homeless people, and ongoing outlays to become Covid-secure. There are hopes the shortfall can be reduced to around £4 million.

When she stepped up to become chief executive of Argyll and Bute Council in January 2020, little did Pippa Milne know what was coming.

No amount of 'business continuity or resilience planning' could have prepared for the first quarter of this new decade. A killer bug running riot across the globe. A UK-ordered lockdown and a multi-billion pound economy screeching to a halt – virtually overnight.

Aged 49, and with nearly three decades of UK-wide local government experience on her CV, Pippa admits: 'We all have plans and guidance in place for things like a flu pandemic but how it will run and what form it will take, we cannot predict. It's fair to say none of us have been through anything like this before.'

Yet speaking to me from her home in Crinan, Pippa, drily concedes that the first eight months in the top job have been 'interesting'.

'It's easy to forget now, just how frenetic that time was,' she said as I ask her to cast her mind back to dark days at the end of March, days sometimes marked by 12 hours of back-to-back video meetings as the coronavirus goalposts kept

moving. Employing a workforce of nearly 5,000 people and providing essential services to 41,500 households, Argyll and Bute Council is the second largest local authority area in the whole of Scotland and its fourth most sparsely-populated. That makes delivering services and managing budgets 'challenging' at the best of times.

Headquartered in Kilmory, Lochgilphead, its responsibilities extend from relatively 'urban' Helensburgh and Dunoon to 23 island communities, among others. It is the 'go-to' organisation for everything from social care to schools and refuse collection, and came under immense pressure as an ever-changing and bewildering mix of guidance and advice was handed down to local councils from on high – sometimes hourly.

Pippa explained: 'The council didn't have a lockdown in the same way as others because things kept running as we tried to support communities and businesses. The vast majority of council staff continued to work all the way through to keep essential services running and re-establish services and to meet the requirements of the new normal.'

She praised the 'energy, ingenuity and positivity' she has witnessed this year. She recalled the speed at which the IT department adjusted. 'In about a week,' the authority went from around 150 employees being equipped to work from home to more than 1,500, she said.

Staff made the transition 'seamlessly' too. At a time when the phones, emails and internet inquiries were red hot – customer services hit the ground

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OT

Don't let Covid stop your Coffee Morning

A leading cancer charity is urging people across Argyll not to let anything stop them taking part in the 30th anniversary of its biggest fundraising event.

In September 1990 Maggie Thatcher was still running the UK, Maria McKee was top of the charts, Scotland beat England at rugby and the first Macmillan Cancer Support Coffee Morning was held.

Since then, every year thousands of people have tucked into cakes and enjoyed a cuppa with pals, neighbours and strangers, raising millions of pounds to fund support services for people with cancer.

This year Covid-19 may mean people cannot pack into houses, village halls or community centres in the same way they have before, but Macmillan is urging people not to let that stop them taking part either virtually or through socially distanced events.

Macmillan's fundraising manager, Angela McCormack, said: 'We had big plans for the 30th anniversary and while we've had to adapt, we're determined that nothing will

stop the Macmillan Coffee Morning going ahead.

'Many people with cancer are more in need of help than ever before as they try to cope with not just cancer, but the additional stresses coronavirus has caused. Macmillan has been doing everything we can to support people but while demand for our services is greater than ever, due to coronavirus we are facing a significant drop in our income.

'While lots of face-to-face fundraising events have had to be cancelled, the strength of Coffee Morning is that there's no set way of taking part.

'This year why not do it online, or challenge each other to a week-long sponsored baking competition?

The official Macmillan Coffee Morning is on Friday September 25 but supporters are encouraged to hold their Coffee Morning whenever suits them, being sure to do it safely.

People can also support the charity by buying a limited edition selection of Macmillan products in M&S food halls.

Killin pays tribute to fallen on VJ Day

On Saturday, August 15, villagers in Killin paid tribute to those who fell in the Far Eastern campaign, writes Susan Windram.

The Killin War Memorial Committee asked local man Willie Dunn to lay a wreath and say a few words at the memorial to commemorate VJ Day - Victory over Japan Day.

He told The Oban Times: 'It was an honour and a privilege to do so. Killin War Memorial has been sensitively refurbished and looks magnificent in its superb setting on the approach to our village.

'I feel it is important to commemorate and remember those who fought and died in all theatres of The Far Eastern campaign. Whilst people back home in Blighty were still celebrating the end of the European war, the fighting was still going on in the Far East and was



Pictured at Killin War Memorial are a number of military personnel who served past and present. Photograph: Ron Allner

no less intense and bloody. Soldiers from all parts of the Commonwealth fought in the extreme conditions of jungle warfare and their heroic exploits are well documented, as

are the sacrifices of The British Pacific Fleet and their brave airmen.

'Thank you to the people of Killin for taking the time on Saturday to pay their respects.

'I have a personal interest as my father served in HMS Indefatigable as an aircraft armourer and he witnessed first-hand the first Kamikaze hit on a British carrier.'



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Around the markets

United Auctions, Oban, Tuesday August 18: sold 5183 Lambs & Sheep of all classes. Lambs (4818) averaged £60.36 (+£7.90).

Lambs - SuffX - £77.00, 16 Eoligarry, Barra; £74.50, 3 Killean; £73.00, Achnacree; £72.50, Dunmor; £72.00, Mid Farm; £69.50, Achnacree Beag; £68.00, Frackersaig; £67.00, Ardencaple; £65.50, Balnagown Croft; £65.00, 3 Killean; £65.00, Annat; £65.00, Callart. BeltX - £72.00, Acharonich; £69.00, Achnacree Beag; £68.50, £68.00, Tyree; £68.00, Croft2 Fanmore. TexX - £75.00, Poltalloch; £75.00, Balnagown; £74.50, Keilbeg; £74.00, Fiaraidh Grazings, Barra; £74.00, 123 Craigston, Barra; £73.50, Balligarve; £73.00, Kengharair; £73.00, Blackcroft; £71.00, Creagnich; £70.00, Blackcroft; £69.00, Balnagown; £68.50, Poltalloch; £67.50, Kengharair; £67.50, 123 Craigston Barra; £67.50, Keilbeg; £67.00, Bailuacraich; £66.00, 3 Baligrundle. Chev - £74.00, Glenmore; £70.00, Barndromin; £67.00, Slaterich; £65.50, Glenmore; £64.50, Torloisk; £63.00, Barndromin. Cross - £70.50, Laggan; £68.50, Glenstrae Farmers; £65.50, Pennygown; £63.00, 17 St Brendan Rd. Barra. Mule - £65.00, Fiart; £64.50, South Achinduin; £63.00, Tyree; £60.50, Poltalloch. Chev Mule - £65.00, Tyree. BF - £54.00, 17 St Brendan Rd. Barra; £47.50, Dunach Estate; £44.00, Kengharair. Ewes - TexX - £98.00, £94.00, Croft 2 Fanmore; £73.00,

Tyree. Chev - £64.00, Cad-dleton Farms. Cross - £54.50, Glenmore. Mule - £61.50, Poltalloch.

United Auctions, Islay, Friday August 21: sold 4249 sheep of all classes. Lambs (3328) averaged £70.99 per head (+£9.48) and 190.89p/kg (+ 30.89p/kg). An excellent offering of top quality lambs which included many ready for slaughter sold to a good following of buyers. They entry of lambs comprised a tremendous selection of Suffolk Cross Lambs which sold readily.

Leading prices per head
Lambs - SuffX - £100, £95.00, Coull; £94.00, Duich; £90.00, Octofad; £88.50, Ardnave; £88.00, Octofad; £86.50, Octofad; £86.00, Cladville; £85.00, Islay Estates; £84.50, Ardbeg; £84.00, Paicr A Chlassan; £82.00, Ardnave; £81.50, Islay Estates; £80.00, Octofad; £80.00, Islay Estates. BeltX - £96.00, £91.00, Blackrock; £82.00, Blackrock; £81.50, Laggan Estate; £80.00, Starchmill. TexX - £100, Coull; £93.00, Islay Estates; £86.50, Ardbeg; £86.00, Laggan Estate; £85.00, Ardtalla Estate; £84.00, Blackrock; £82.50, Bayview; £82.00, Coull; £81.50, Ardnave; £81.00, £80.00, Balaclava; £80.00, Laggan Estate. Chev - £79.00, Duich; £74.00, Carrabus; £71.50, Duich; £68.00, Coillabus. Cross - £90.00, Ardnave; £80.00, Duich; £79.00, Balaclava; £79.00, Daill Cottage. CharX - £70.00, Starchmill. Zwa - £65.00, Balaclava; Mule - £80.50, Bola

Na Traigh; £71.00, Ballachlaven; £69.00, Starchmill; £69.00, Islay Estates. BF - £67.00, Carrabus; £59.50, Cnoc Na Faire; £57.00, Aoradh; £56.00, Carrabus. Ewes - TexX - £109, Bayview; £79.00, Carrabus; £74.50, Ardbeg; £70.00, Bayview. Chev - £64.00, Coillabus. Cross - £95.00, Tallant; £72.00, Bayview. Mule - £54.00, Ardtalla Estates. BF - £61.00, Coillabus; £57.00, Aoradh; £57.00, Coillabus.

Leading prices per Kilo
Lambs - SuffX - 231p, 218p, 214p, Islay Estates; 213p, Ardtalla Estate; 212p, 209p, Smaladh; BeltX - 237p, 236p, 218p, Blackrock; 217p, Starchmill. TexX - 224p, Islay Estates; 217p, Blackrock; 217p, Coull; 215p, Balaclava; 209p, Coull; 207p, Islay Estates; 205p, Ardtalla Estate; 205p, Islay Estate. Chev - 206p, 181p, Foreland No2; 178p, Cruach (E & J Brown); 176p, Carrabus. Cross - 198p, Ardnave; 197p, Balaclava; 192p, Glenegedale; 188p, Kilchiaran; 186p, Foreland No2; 184p, Kilchiaran. Mule - 184p, Islay Estates; 177p, Claggan; 177p, Bola Na Traigh; 176p, Ballachlaven; 175p, Smaladh; 175p, 174p, Islay Estates; 174p, Starchmill. BF - 182p, Mid Cragabus; 170p, Carrabus; 167p, Cnoc Na Faire; 162p, Foreland No2.

United Auctions, Dalmally, Saturday August 22: sold 4266 sheep of all classes. Lambs (3780) averaged £61.27 per head (+ £7.94) and 203.13p/kg (+33p/kg). A good entry of

longer keeping type lambs sold a full ringside of buyers. Lambs were shown in good bloom.

Leading prices per head
Lambs - SuffX - £79.00, Kiloran Farmers; £75.00, 56 Tangasdale, Barra; £74.00, Kiloran Farmers; £70.50, 56 Tangasdale; £70.00, Ben Sgoltaire, Colonsay. BeltX - £70.00, Ichrachan. TexX - £86.50, 83 Borve, Barra; £85.50, 75 Borve, Barra; £84.00, 83 Borve; £83.50, Ardbeg; £79.00, Tullich Farmers; £78.50, 83 Borve; £77.50, 83 Borve; £77.50, Stonefield Farms; £77.00, Craig Farm; £77.00, Couston Farm; £77.00, Ichrachan. Chev - £76.50, Cour Lodge; £70.50, 83 Borve, Barra; £70.00, Duncroisk. Cross - £64.50, RSPB Oransay; £57.50, Maam; £56.00, RSPB Oransay. Mule - £65.50, Ormsary Farmers; £64.00, 83 Borve, Barra; £62.00, Maam; £61.50, Balnahard, Colonsay; £61.00, Garraron. Chev Mule - £72.00, £63.00, Cladich. BF - £80.50, Dall Farm; £66.00, Craig Farm; £59.50, 83 Borve, Barra; £53.00, Keppoch Farms; £50.00, Castles Estate; £49.50, Blarmafoldach; £48.00, Couston Farm.

Ewes - Lley - £53.00, 1 Stronaba. TexX - £73.00, Homefield Croft; £62.00, Ben Sgoltaire; £58.00, Ichrachan; £53.00, Couston Farm. Chev - £56.00, £52.00, Cladich. Cross - £64.00, Garrogie Estates; £58.00, Blarmaoldach. Mule - £44.00, Blarmaoldach. BF - £56.00, Alistair Annies Croft; £55.00, Castles Estate.

Leading prices per Kilo
Lambs - SuffX - 220p, 219p, 56 Tangasdale, Barra; 219p, Kiloran Farmers; 217p, Ardsheal Farm. BeltX - 219p, Ichrachan; 206p, Boorach Beag. TexX - 248p, 6 Leanish; 241p, Blarmafoldach; 239p, Ichrachan; 236p, Milroy; 231p, Garrogie Estate; 230p, Blarmaoldach; 229p, Ichrachan; 229p, Tullochcan; 227p, 225p, Curacao; 223p, High Balantyre; 220p, 83 Borve, Barra. Cross - 250p, Maam; 248p, 223p, 5 Stronaba. Mule - 215p, Garraron. Chev Mule - 217p, Cladach. BF - 190p, Homefield Croft; 184p, Couston Farm; 183p, Craig Farm; 182p, Keppoch Farms; 180p, Tullochcan; 179p, Castles Estate; 175p, Dall Farm; 172p, Blarmafoldach; 171p, Drimnin Estate; 170p, 83 Borve.

United Auctions, Islay, Friday August 21: sold 111 store cattle. Bulls averaged £976.23 (+£142.23) per head and sold to £1150 for two Luings weighing 638g, from Islay Estates. Heifers averaged £869.67 (+ £144.67) per head and sold to £1030 for a LimX, weighing 385kg, from Mr D McCormick, Blackrock. Bulls averaged 232p/kg (+ 20.7p/kg), to 266p/kg for two 334kg, LimX from Mr N McLellan, Kilchiaran. Heifers averaged 231.35p/kg (+37.35p/kg) to 268p/kg for a 309kg, Limx from Mr C McMillan, Ardbeg. A

small show of Suckled Calves sold well and to a strong force of buyers.

Leading prices per head
Bullocks - AAx - £965, Tallant; £945(2), Balimartin; £915(3), Eskinish. BRBx - £1040, £1010(2), £920, Blackrock. CHARx - £965(2), Tallant. LIMx - £1140, Ardbeg; £1125, Ballimartin; £1070(5), Ardbeg; £1040(3), Lossit; £1040(3), Blackrock; £1040, Kilchiaran; £1040(6), Ardbeg; £1040, Kilchiaran; £1030, Blackrock; £1025(4), Ardbeg; £1010, Blackrock. Luing - £1150(2), £1090(2), Islay Estates. Heifers - AAx - £955, Balemartin. LimX - £1030, Garraron. Chev Mule - 217p, Cladach. BF - 190p, Homefield Croft; 184p, Couston Farm; 183p, Craig Farm; 182p, Keppoch Farms; 180p, Tullochcan; 179p, Castles Estate; 175p, Dall Farm; 172p, Blarmafoldach; 171p, Drimnin Estate; 170p, 83 Borve.

Leading prices per Kilo
Bullocks - AAx - 240p, Tallant. BRBx - 238p, 235p, Blackrock. CHARx - 237p, Tallant. LIMx - 266p(2), Kilchiaran; 264p, Blackrock; 263p(4), 261p(6), Ardbeg; 258p, Kilchiaran; 256p(3), Lossit; 254p(5), Ardbeg; 254p, Kilchiaran; 241p, Ardbeg; 238p(2), Blackrock; 237p, Carrabus; 235p(3), Blackrock; 234p, Lossit; 232p(2), Ardbeg; 230p, Lossit. Heifers - AAx - 226p(3), Tallant. LimX - 268p, Ardbeg; 267p, Blackrock; 264p(2), Kilchiaran; 260p(2), Ardbeg; 251p, Lossit; 250p(6), Ardbeg; 246p, Lossit; 242p(4), Ardbeg; 237p(2), Balimartin; 234p, Lossit.

74%

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Source: YouGov 2018

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OT

LETTERS

Write to us: send your letters to editor@obantimes.co.uk
or The Editor, PO Box 1, Oban, Argyll PA34 4HB**Urgent action needed on Covid testing fiasco**

We can completely sympathise with Oban mum Aisling Clark who was furious this week after spending almost six hours trying to organise Covid-19 testing for herself and her family after her 10-year-old daughter developed symptoms.

The fact that Ms Clark is a teacher at Oban High School and a key worker should have meant that the family were entitled to be tested in Oban without question. However she found herself passed from pillar to post, only to be offered an appointment in Portree on the Isle of Skye, and then, after queuing for more than an hour with the NHS 24 helpline, she finally got a test in Oban for her daughter only.

We understand that we are in unprecedented times and that there is a lot of pressure on the government, but surely they should have been prepared for families catching colds after youngsters returned to the classroom.

After all, it happens every year.

With the collapse of the Covid test booking system due to 'glitches', and the furore it caused across Argyll as families tried, and failed, to book Covid tests, the problem must be resolved urgently, otherwise our schools and hospitals may end up being locked down, not from Covid itself, but from common colds due to a lack of Covid testing.

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 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.

The views expressed on our letters page are those of the contributors and do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of The Oban Times.

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**New approach needed at Rest**

Soil creep or debris flow at The Rest and Be Thankful will continue until the mountain is cleared of all loose material. Geotechnical engineers cannot stop such massive forces of nature with protective bunds or channels, and canopies would eventually be drowned with debris. An elevated approach road in the valley leading to a short tunnel at the top would permanently solve the problem and commuted cost calculations would show long-term financial benefits.

Mike Rayworth, Invercreran.

Motorhomers easy to blame

I have just read Kathie Griffiths' article on campervans and wild camping on Mull.

Firstly, I and many others in the campervans/motorhome community (at least 250,000) are extremely saddened at the bad behaviour of a few.

One point I'd like to put to the councillors is: where do I put a pallet in my campervan or motorhome to go burn in the woods?

Most of us are over 50 years of age, with money to spend in your communities, all we need is somewhere fill with water and dump our waste. It works in Hawick, go check their attitude.

Most camp sites want minimum of four night stay, which is fine for caravan owners, but the very nature of motorhome/campervan is that we are more mobile and will only stay in one place for one or two nights.

Have a look at the CAMBRA website as well, speak to one of the organisers and publish our side of the story.

Once again, there is no excuse for dumping any kind of waste and I'm sorry if it was a genuine motorhome/campervan user but we are too easily targeted and I wouldn't be surprised if it came from other sources.

Trevor Skinnis, by email.

Ardconnell school trip

In 1985 a group of children from Ardconnell school went on a trip to York with headteacher Donald Beckett and his wife Anne and the late Helen Harold, school psychologist and local historian. The five children were Lissa Beckett, Stewart MacIntyre, Karen Buchanan, Eilidh McNicol and Donald Mackay.

Does anyone know of their whereabouts? I am Helen's sister and have some pictures of the trip that I'd like to pass on to them or their families.

Teresa Watson, teresandrew@yahoo.com

Working from home pitfalls

I noticed your article about councillors considering council staff working from home.

One of the problems with this is home workers

Beachd Ailein

ALLAN CAMPBELL

editor@obantimes.co.uk



Chan e rud ùr sam bith a th' ann am mèirle, agus a dh'aindeoin linntean de leasachadh eòlais agus shìobhaltachd tha goid fhathast cho bitheanta 's a bha riamh, agus mòran de na tha ris a' faotainn dheth leis a' chron. Tha gnìomhachas an fhearainn air aon raon coimhearsnachd a tha a' fulang gu mòr eadar stoc a bhith ga thogail air falbh, agus uidheam chosgail ga shìolpachd far thuathan is chroitean feadh na dùthcha. Gu mì-fhortanach cuideachd mar as motha tha teicneòlas ga leasachadh 's ann as motha tha mèirle a' fàs, agus tha a-nise an uidheamachd stiùiridh saideil anns na tractaran as ùire ga ghoid asta agus sin a' cur maille agus cosgais air obair thuathanaich thall 's a-bhos. Carson nach eil na h-eòlaichean innleachdail a tha a' cruthachadh leithid seo de ghòireasan gan dìon gus nach biodh iad gu feum sam bith ann an inneal eile. Shaoileadh tu gun cuireadh sin stad air a' mhèirle agus a' chosgais mhòr de gach seòrsa a tha na cois.

Theagamh gun can feadhainn gum bheil cuid a sheòrsa mèirle nas miosa na chèile ach aig ceann cùise tha mèirle a' ciallachadh gum bheil cuideigin a' toirt rud air falbh bho neach eile aig am bheil còir air. Faodaidh sin tachairt fiù 's ged nach biodh an neach a tha a' dèanamh an eucoir a' faotainn buannachd sam bith bho gnìomh a tha a' tighinn à ana-caitheamh air cumhachd, neo 's dòcha droch cho-dhùnadh feallsanach-

who want to move home will have Capital Gains Tax issues to contend with. While a Capital Tax Gain would not usually arise when you sell your main home it will be a whole different ball game if you use any part of your home just for business.

Working from home tax will soon be the new normal for everyone but the administration of ABC, so were not all in it together - again.

Angus Files, sent by email.

Formaldehyde petition

The comments around Corin Smith's petition about the use of formaldehyde in freshwater lochs in last week's edition do not begin to do justice to the problems of chemical use in Scottish waters by the aquaculture industry.

Our seas are treated like a huge, uncontrolled chemical and biological experiment, supervised only in local pockets by SEPA. The attitude that a chemical breaks down quickly neglects the questions of what it breaks down into and how these products and it react in a complex environment.

dail. Phuair mìltean de mo ghinealach fhìn cothrom air foghlam àrd-ìre ri linn thabhartasan fialaidh ionmhais, ged 's dòcha nach robh sinn mothachail aig an àm air cho fortanach 's a bha sinn. Ginealach air adhart agus bha iomadach oileanach a' crìochnachadh an cuid foghlaim le fiachan nan uallach a' leantainn riutha fad bhliadhnaichean. Ach thar nan ginealaichean sin cha deach bacadh sam bith air na cothroman aig duine againn ri linn cò sinn neo cò sgoil às an tàinig sinn, bha cothroman co-ionann a rèir spàirn agus dealas an oileanaich.

'S iomadh duine a nochd a' bheachd gur e droch rud a bh' ann a bhith a' cruthachadh clàr èifeachdais sgoiltean feadh na dùthcha, gu h-àraid leis nach robh co-ionannachd shòisealach neo eaconamach anns na coimhearsnachdan a bha iad a' frithealadh. Cha robh sin idir a' ciallachadh nach fhaodadh comasan oileanaich a bhith pailt cho adhartach ann an sgìrean bochda! A dh'aindeoin a' chronachaidh lean an rangachadh air sgoiltean chun na h-ìre gun toinns a dh'fhàg cothroman foghlaim àrd-ìre òigridh feadh na rioghachd gan goid bhuapa le co-dhùnaidhean eòlaichean a bha, agus a tha fhathast, cho ceàrr 's a ghabhas a bhith! 'S math gu dearbh gun deach an latha leis na h-oileanaich an turas seo, agus gur math a thèid leotha uile.

Allan Campbell, ailean@obantimes.co.uk

There should equally be concern about the vast uncontrolled use of hydrogen peroxide at open sea farms, about the effect of medicines on the environment outside of the immediate area of a farm and the impact of both excrement and unused fish food on water quality and ecosystems more widely. The likely outcomes of this great scientific experiment are largely unknown.

Regulatory authorities take little or no interest in the relation between salmon farms and toxic algal blooms, dismissed as 'complex natural phenomena', or their part in shellfish toxins which are common in the region.

The stubborn refusal of the government, on economic grounds, to take an appropriately precautionary approach to aquaculture will ultimately have a huge negative impact, including economically, on all of us and our descendants. The parallels with global government attitudes to fossil fuels for the past century or so are striking. It's just about water instead of air.

Dennis Archer, co-convenor, Argyll & Bute Branch, Scottish Green Party, Oban.

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DISTRICT NEWS



Gillian Stewart, left, hands over the cheque to Lucy Hunt, Oban Hospice Community Service Coordinator.

Raffle effort receives in good spirit

Two local charities are raising a glass to Oban Hospice volunteer Gillian Stewart who raised over £1,000 by raffling a bottle of fine malt whisky. The amount of £1,170 is being split equally between the Oban Hospice Dove Centre, to help fund the purchase of a machine to help individuals

with lymphoedema, and the Pink Ladies Day that supports ladies with breast cancer. 'In these different times it's not easy to organise raffles and similar events, so Oban Hospice would like to thank Gillian for all her efforts and all those who purchased tickets,' said Lucy

Hunt, Oban Hospice Community Services Coordinator. 'All money donated and raised for Oban Hospice is spent locally supporting local people.' The raffle was for a 4.5ltr of Monkey Shoulder Whisky with display stand which was worth £300.

Kilmelford holiday let plans are approved

Plans for a holiday let cottage in Kilmelford have been unanimously approved.

The proposal by Alison Sinclair for the facility in the garden ground of Otter Bay were given the green light by Argyll and Bute Council's planning, protective services and licensing (PPSL) committee last week.

Oban North and Lorn councillor Andrew Vennard, who is not a member of the PPSL committee, had submitted one of 17 objections to the plans, citing concerns over the water supply around the site.

But the committee members did not share his doubts and unanimously agreed with a council planning officer's recommendation to grant planning permission.

A report on the application stated: 'In terms of the adopted 'Argyll and Bute Local Development Plan' (LDP) 2015, the application site is located within the minor settlement of Kames where Policy LDP DM 1 gives encouragement to small scale development on appropriate sites subject to compliance with other relevant policies and supplementary guidance.

'Policy LDP 5 and SG LDP TOUR 1 give support to new businesses and tourist facilities which help deliver sustainable economic growth throughout the area.

'[This is] subject to a number of criteria being met, including respecting the landscape character and amenity of the area; being reasonably accessible by public transport and being well related to the existing settlement pattern of development.



'The determining factors in the assessment of this application are whether or not the scale and design of the proposed development is acceptable for its site and surroundings, including its impact upon the character and amenity of the area. It is also necessary to address access, infrastructure and servicing concerns.

'It is considered that the site represents a suitable opportunity for small scale tourism development with the proposed holiday letting unit within the garden ground of the existing dwellinghouse consistent with the relevant provisions of the Development Plan and benefitting the local economy in accordance with one of the central challenges for Argyll and Bute; that of delivering sustainable economic growth.

'It is recommended that planning permission be granted.'

No questions were asked by councillors during the PPSL committee meeting, and as a result, the committee chairman, Councillor David Kinniburgh, moved the officer's recommendation.

Oban Health Walks make welcome return



Oban Health Walks has resumed and is celebrating 10 years as a walking group. Traditionally it has met at the Congregational Hall in Oban but has temporarily relocated to the Altantis Leisure Centre. Anyone who would like to join them for a short walk of no more than one hour, followed by socially distanced tea or coffee and a chat, will be welcome. Further information, call Fiona on 07719 921341 or email: fionacapper@hotmail.com

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The Oban Times and St Kilda

Morvern Lines

IAIN THORNER

ian.thorner@btinternet.com



This week we continue Iain Thornber's extracts from the *Oban Times* 1930, throwing new light on St Kilda before and after it was abandoned. This extract is taken from a forthcoming book on the subject.

July 1930, Editorial: It is rumoured that 10,000 acres of the Ardtornish Estate on the western shores of Loch Aline, Morvern, Argyllshire, have been acquired by the Forestry Commission for afforestation purposes. Another rumour is to the effect that it is intended to place the people of St Kilda on part of the land. The Ardtornish Estate was recently purchased by Mr Owen Hugh Smith, London, from the trustees of the late Mr Gerard Craig Sellar.

Letter to the editor, July 1930 - from Morvern: Sir, With mingled feelings I have read the correspondence appearing in your paper anent the removal of the people of St Kilda to the mainland. So far as my limited knowledge goes, it appears to me to be a most unnecessary and unfortunate undertaking.

The St Kildans are a people apart. To a large extent they are unacquainted with the conventions of modern life, and it is not at all likely that an adult population can possibly adapt itself to the new and strange circumstances in which it may soon find itself. The people are practically foreigners in language, customs and manners. Thrice a year, for a few brief hours, they come in contact with visitors and the open-handed generosity extended to them is calculated to give them an entirely false idea of the reception they are likely to receive on the mainland.

They will naturally conclude, in their childlike simplicity, that the same benevolence awaits them. It is to be hoped that those who have their confidence will warn them against this delusion. There is something ludicrous in the idea of converting cragsmen into foresters - men who have no skill of tools or implements, and perhaps have never seen a horse or a tree. It cannot be expected that such people can earn a living wage or adapt themselves suddenly to regular hours of labour, and the strong probability is that they will in a short time become chargeable to the State.

What is wrong with St Kilda? St Kilda sup-



ported a much larger population in the past. Reading between the lines, I infer that the burden of supporting the whole community has fallen on the shoulders of a few, and that the last straw has been added. It is largely a question of meal and potatoes. If these necessities were assured to the natives, evacuation is the last thing they would think of. It would not be too much to expect of a Government that send an abundant supplies to the islanders of the South Atlantic that they should be equally solicitous for the welfare of the few inhabitants of St Kilda. To remove them will only be a case of shifting them from the frying pan into the fire; being unfitted to earn a livelihood on the mainland, they will only fall into dire poverty and be

haunted by an irretrievable and life-long regret. Apart altogether from the sorrow and suffering that the evacuation of St Kilda must necessarily involve, there remains a loss to the Gaelic language. Possibly it is the only place in existence today where Gaelic is the exclusive language of the people. We are all painfully aware of the countless influences that are at work, rendering the position of Gaelic almost untenable. St Kilda was the last outpost of our tongue. I am etc., Mo Naire.

St Kilda on the eve of evacuation - August 1930; 'Where Men Wait and Women Weep', by our special correspondent: When I stepped onboard the SS Dunara Castle at Leverburgh, Harris, on the morning of July fifteenth, for the

last fifty-mile lap to St Kilda, the sea was like a mirror, with a slight wind from the north-east. After this splendid crossing, I stepped ashore on the rocks of Parson's Bay five hours later, to begin a week's investigation of the conditions obtaining on the island on the eve of evacuation, and also to discover the sentiments of the old people about leaving 'Eilean mo graidh.'

Without exception the young folk are all anxious to turn their backs on Hirta. The hill track to Gleann Mor where, in summer, the cattle go to graze, and the lassies must go to the milking, has grown too steep and dreary. To the young men the cliffs have lost their charm. The water of 'Tobar nam buidh' tastes bitter. For years their comrades have been deserting them, trekking

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Tide tables for Oban during the week from **Thursday August 27, 2020** are listed below with differences for major ports listed underneath. All times are GMT (add one hour BST)

Thur	***	**	06.27	1.6
	13.03	2.9	18.47	1.6
Fri	01.50	2.8	07.57	1.6
	14.42	3.0	20.16	1.6
Sat	03.48	2.9	09.19	1.5
	15.49	3.3	21.45	1.5
Sun	04.39	3.1	10.14	1.3
	16.28	3.5	22.40	1.3
Mon	05.04	3.3	10.57	1.1
	16.59	3.7	23.21	1.2
Tues	05.24	3.5	11.34	0.9
	17.31	3.9	23.56	1.0
Wed	05.51	3.7	12.09	0.8
	18.04	4.1	***	**

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

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

WEATHER

THURSDAY

Light rain showers and a gentle breeze
Temperatures 11°C to 17°C.

FRIDAY

Sunny intervals and a moderate breeze
Temperatures 8°C to 16°C.

WEEKEND OUTLOOK

Saturday

Sunny and a moderate breeze
Temperatures 8°C to 15°C.

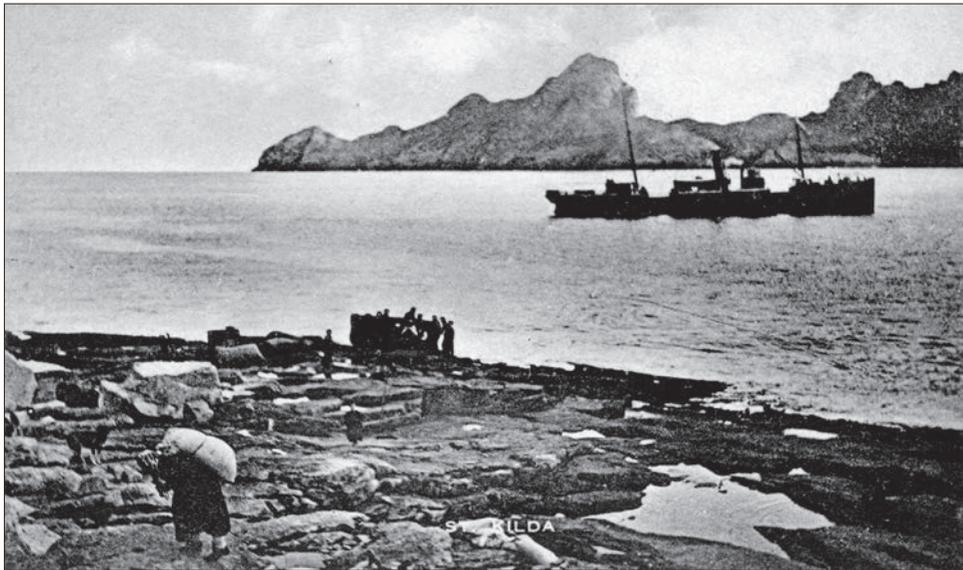
Sunday

Sunny intervals / gentle breeze
Temperatures 9°C to 15°C.

FRIDAY FORECAST

HIGH 16 LOW 8 12 MPH

Clearance: part 4



Left, forty years after the St Kildans left their island home food was being dropped in nets by aeroplane for the military personnel. One day a netful of frozen food, on hitting the ground, burst open and a chicken flew out breaking the collarbone of the commanding officer who had come to watch. Photograph The Oban Times; and above, provisions landed from the SS Dunara Castle being carried up to the houses in Village Bay, St Kilda. Photograph supplied by Iain Thornber

one by one to the mainland in search of that elusive thing called happiness. But we cannot blame the young men and women of Hirta, any more than we can the youth of the mainland whose idea of happiness is largely governed by excitement.

There was considerable excitement amongst the thirty-seven inhabitants when, on the morning following my arrival, it was made known to them by Nurse Barclay, that the Government document, containing the terms for their removal of the sheep, required their signatures. In every case the mark is different and so the shepherds of Hirta know their own flock. The Government's terms provide for the dispatch of a vessel to the island with two shepherds with dogs and nets - the latter for enclosing the flock for the purpose of identification. All the islemen, save Findlay MacQueen and Findlay Gillies, are to assist the shepherds, for which the fee of one pound (£1) will be paid, provided Nurse Barclay, who is acting on behalf of the Government, approves of their services. The approximate number of sheep to be dealt with are as follows: Hirta, 960; Boreray, 210.

And how are the old people taking it all? It is

sad for them; for the old folk Hirta is an island of memories - memories pleasant and sad. Mainlanders can be certain of this, for nights before the deportation vessel bears them off for ever, their pillows will be wet. Hirta is dear home to them - a home more gripping, more endearing, more satisfying, even its solitude and empty dwellings.

Old Findlay MacQueen showed me, with tears in his eyes, the large case of partly-stuffed birds - the shearwater, fulmar, guillemot, razorbill, puffin, gannet, great black gull, and all the other varieties that he so intimately knew well-nigh three score years, and which he is bearing off with him to adorn the interior of his new home. Findlay was the island's greatest cliffman in his day and the friend of many eminent naturalists like Seton Gordon and Cherry Kearton. Findlay is taking it perhaps hardest of all. They cannot remain alone, those old folk who have known no other home and whose philosophy is still the philosophy that bred our simple, God-fearing forefathers.

May God keep them unswayed and unspoiled in their new surroundings!

To be continued.

DOWN MEMORY LANE

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



We think this photograph was taken around August 1996 and looks like it was a linked to junior shinty. But that is all the information we have. Do you recognise yourself or any of the youngsters or adult in the photograph. If you do, we'd love to hear from you to find out who everyone was and what was the event. Email us at editor@obantimes.co.uk



We do love a school photograph, but this looks quite unusual! It appears to be Rockfield Primary School in Oban, but which year? If you see yourself or friends in the photo, we'd love to hear from you to find out what the occasion was. You can email us at editor@obantimes.co.uk

Last week's photograph of Oban Sailing Club prompted Eric Chapman to email us to tell us: 'The photograph published this week is of the trophy winners at the annual dinner dance and prize-giving, probably from the early to mid-1980s. From the left, the members are - Roger Parry, unknown, Ursula Parry, Billy Forteith, Sheila Preston, Duncan MacDonald, David Robertson, Alasdair Carswell, Archie Gillespie, David Graham, Colin Wilson, Jane Isaac, Hamish Isaac and David Preston.'

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Tobermory Gin celebrates birthday with global award

Tobermory Hebridean Gin is marking its first birthday in the best way possible – by picking up a bronze accolade at the coveted International Spirits Challenge 2020 awards, writes Ellis Butcher.



The distillery's first gin was recognised for its delicious taste profile by a panel of 50 international judges within the gin category, each taking part in a blind taste test and selecting Tobermory Gin in their overall top three.

The gin is distilled on the island with a rich palate of hand-selected botanicals, including juniper, tea, heather, elderflower, sweet orange peel and a splash of spirit from the famous whisky stills.

First unveiled to the market in September 2019, the gin was named 'Best' in the Classic Gin category at the 2020 World Gin Awards, as well as winning silver at the 2019 Harpers Design Awards for its vibrant bottle design.

Amy Burns, global marketing manager at Tobermory Distillery said: 'It's incredible to be endorsed by such an acclaimed awards body for all the hard work and creativity which goes into making this beautiful gin. 'We've crafted a truly distinct taste profile, showcasing our colourful island and its vibrant landscapes in the process. To receive this global recognition one year after we launched is the best birthday present we could ever have hoped for.'

Now in its 25th year, the ISC is the premier event in promoting outstanding quality spirits from across the world. It receives more than 1,700 entries from nearly 70 countries worldwide, showcasing high calibre spirits as a global standard for quality and excellence.

Iconic Islay distillery Ardbeg unveils its new manager

by Ellis Butcher
ebutcher@obantimes.co.uk



In October, Mickey Heads, manager of Ardbeg Distillery on Islay, will retire after 13 years at the helm – leaving big boots (as well as casks) to fill.

This week Ardbeg announced Mickey's successor – Colin Gordon – who is joining as distillery production manager, reporting to Pete Nelson, the distillery's operations director.

Colin brings a wealth of whisky industry experience from his eight years with Diageo, said Ardbeg.

His substantial knowledge of distillery production includes a stint as site operations manager at the Port Ellen Maltings, which provides barley to eight of the 10 Islay distilleries. More recently, Colin was based at the Lagavulin Distillery, Islay, as distillery manager.

Colin joins on October 1 but Mickey Heads has agreed to continue as chairman of the Ardbeg committee, described as the 'worldwide army' of Ardbeg fans.

Pete Nelson, operations director, said: 'We're delighted Colin is joining to lead the team at the Ardbeg Distillery. His knowledge will help take Ardbeg forward and shape the future of the dis-

tillery. We have lots of exciting new expressions in the pipeline and Colin will play a major role in crafting those.'

Mickey added: 'I've known Colin for a long time and I can't think of a more worthy successor. He's joining a brilliant team whom I know will welcome him warmly and make him feel at home.'

'As I continue as chair of the committee – and indeed, as just one of a legion of Ardbeg fans – I look forward to enjoying the fruits of his labours for years to come.'

Colin said: 'Ardbeg is an iconic name in whisky with an immense reputation. I'm absolutely delighted to be joining an experienced team producing such an exceptional dram.'

'Ardbeg has built a reputation for producing amazing whiskies with Mickey Heads at the helm. He is a huge name in the industry and will be a very hard act to follow. It's a privilege to be chosen to take over the reins from him.'

'Islay has been our home for five years and to be given the honour of overseeing the running of Ardbeg is very special indeed.'

'I will do my very best to protect and enhance the reputation of the distillery and ensure it keeps producing the world class spirit of Ardbeg.'



Colin Gordon joins as distillery production manager at Ardbeg.

Cruachan Power Station set for £1M upgrade

Drax Group's iconic Cruachan Power Station, a hydroelectric pumped storage plant built inside the Hollow Mountain, is to undergo a £1million upgrade to modernise its turbine control system.

The upgrade will see the station's current programmable logic controller (PLC) computer system replaced with a new design to put the station at the cutting edge of energy technology to improve Cruachan's efficiency. World-leading control system builders ITI will undertake the design, installation and commissioning of the

upgrade across the station's four units.

Cruachan plays a critical role in stabilising the country's electricity system throughout the Covid-19 pandemic due to its flexibility. The plant can generate power in less than a minute when needed and can also store excess electricity from the grid like a giant battery, a service which was called upon when the low electricity demand during the lockdown coincided with periods of high wind power in Scotland.

In July, Cruachan became the first power station in Britain to provide critical system support services to the National Grid, aimed at reducing the threat of blackouts.

Ian Kinnaird, Drax Group's Head of Hydro, said: 'As the country continues to decarbonise, the station's flexibility has never been more important. This upgrade will ensure the Hollow Mountain can deliver the fast, flexible power that hundreds of thousands of homes and businesses rely on for many decades to come.'

Bryn Thomas, Sales Director for Power and Infrastructure at ITI said: 'We've been working at Cruachan Power Station for over 30 years and it is these strong relationships that enable us to work with them on developing solutions that enhance their operations, improve safety and support sustainable green energy production.'



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LEISURE & ENTERTAINMENT

YOUR GUIDE TO WHAT'S ON IN ARGYLL AND LOCHABER

Funding is music to ears for Tunes in the Hoose

by Fiona Scott
fscott@obantimes.co.uk



Five months and 400 productions later, Tunes in the Hoose - launched on Facebook by Capercaillie founder Martin MacLeod, originally from Oban, and his son, also Martin - has been awarded funding from Creative Scotland to develop over the next year.

The 12-month development plan has two core aims: To enhance the appeal of Scottish music to the world market, and to allow all collaborators to gain and maintain extensive promotion of themselves and their craft, pending and beyond the worldwide exit from Covid-19.

'Although the project will continue to be part-volunteered, the funding support



Martin MacLeod junior and senior are delighted about the funding.

and family friend of the MacLeods, Peter Wood, who was posting videos of himself playing tunes in his home during self-isolation back in March.

Having seen the footage, Martin senior called his filmmaker son to ask if he had the technology and know-how to put a video together of him playing along to Peter's video. The rest is history. To date there have been 411 productions and counting, 2.5 million views worldwide, 10,000 followers from 75 countries, and 800 traditional Scottish musician members.

'We now have our own website (www.tunesinthehoose.com)

com) which hosts all of our content, news and will act as a directory for musicians, bands and tutors to promote their talents and services for free - which will also be shared/promoted through our social media on a weekly basis,' added Martin.

'Our Season One Tunebook is almost ready, hopefully the first in a collection of books that will coincide with our productions, allowing learners to play along with the existing videos and for pro/am musicians to play for dancing as the tunes are organised into sets.'

The productions will continue over the 12 months so long as there are willing musicians to share their talents, with competitions and virtual events planned for the near future.

'One side-project that I am personally very excited about is Tunes TV, an online documentary series that is in development (self-funded),' said Martin.

'My hope is that we can produce a contemporary, cinematic and engaging series that captures fresh perspectives and turns the spotlight on Scotland's hidden musical talents, all whilst introducing the world of Scottish traditional music to a new generation.'

'By the end of the 12-month development period, we hope to achieve all of our goals, whilst setting the foundations to create our very own Tunes in the Hoose Festival, so that the platform can be self-sustained and continue to grow.'

Visit www.facebook.com/TunesInTheHoose

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Robert in lockdown!

ROBERT ROBERTSON

robert.d.robertson@hotmail.co.uk



There was a significant moment for the live music industry last week when Nicola Sturgeon set out plans for indoor live music events to be allowed to take place from September 14.

In truth, however, it will be much longer than that before the majority of live performances as we know them can go ahead.

Venues across the country (from arenas such as the 14,300 capacity SSE Hydro to intimate stages such as the 300 capacity King Tuts Wah Wah Hut on St Vincent Street, both Glasgow) rely on being able to pack in the punters – and social distancing will make it very difficult for most venues to open their doors. The overheads and costs shared by venues, bands, and promoters are usually pretty hefty before one ticket is even sold. They include PA, sound engineers, lighting, lighting engineers, floor technicians, general venue staff on the door and behind the bar.

So you can see why a venue (no matter the size) needs to have the ability to sell at full capacity, and social distancing rules, meaning far less ticket



Ben Lomond from Loch Lomond Golf Course.

sales, are clearly not conducive to that. As for outdoor socially distanced gigs in Scotland through the winter – good luck with that in a howling gale in December!

Ultimately, it is positive that the government have set some kind of date for the next step in the long route back; but don't think the live music industry is out of the woods yet by any means. I am afraid our next opportunity to take to the stage still feels like a long way off.

On a brighter note, some readers have noticed that I haven't included any tales of my golf recently.

The sport has become my main hobby while I have time on my hands that would previously have been spent gigging

but, after initially writing about it most weeks, I haven't been wanting to bore you all too much with my golfing woes.

This week, however, I must say a massive thank you to Ken and Sheila MacLeod and their son, John, who invited me for a round at none other than Loch Lomond Golf Club a fortnight ago. What an incredible experience playing such a beautiful course and in such glorious weather conditions. Getting to see round Rossdhu House and the locker room with legendary names on the lockers such as Colin Montgomerie, Ernie Els, and Retief Goosen was quite something.

Only days later, in the slightly less salubrious but nevertheless excellent facilities of Milngavie Golf Club, my pal John Robertson won his first ever golf competition – posting a tremendous score of net 61. He started by slicing his drive off the first; duffing his second shot; coming up short of the green with his third; then pitching right into the hole for his par. I couldn't believe my eyes. Golf really is the most mind boggling game!

OBAN PHOENIX CINEMA What's On This Week

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Friday 28th August

Away | U 16:40
Tenet | 12A 19:00

Saturday 29th August

Dreambuilders | U 11:00
Away | U 13:30
Tenet | 12A 16:15/20:00

Sunday 30th August

Away | U 13:00
Tenet | 12A 15:30/19:30

Monday 31st August

Away | U 16:30
Tenet | 12A 19:00

Tuesday 1st September

Away | U 16:30
Tenet | 12A 19:00

Wednesday 2nd September

Away | U 16:30
Tenet | 12A 19:00

Thursday 3rd September

Away | U 16:30
Tenet | 12A 19:00



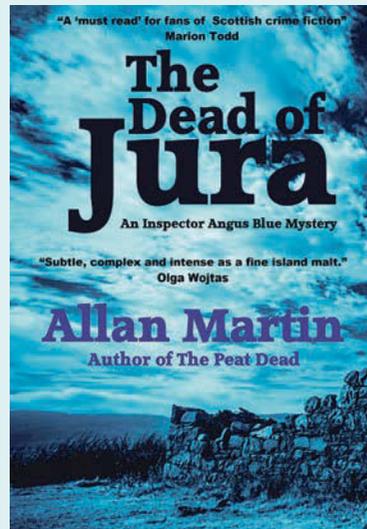
AWAY is about a boy travelling across an island on a motorcycle, trying to escape a dark spirit and get back home. Along the way he makes a series of connections with different animals and reflects on the possible ways he ended up on the island. Part dream, part reality, **AWAY** explores our common, universal need to find a connection. The multiple award-winning film took the prestigious Contrechamp Award at Annecy International Animation Film Festival 2019. Director and animator Gints Zilbalodis worked on the film for three and a half years, writing the fascinating story, creating the beautifully animated landscapes and characters, and composing and recording the enchanting music to a stunning dialogue-free film.



DREAMBUILDERS - KIDS CLUB THIS SATURDAY!
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Please be advised, all films and showtimes are subject to change/availability with little or no notice. Booking is always recommended to avoid disappointment. Please check www.bbf.co.uk for more information about film certificates.



Allan Martin's second book is a crime novel that comments on the inequalities in society.

An island murder with political overtones

The Dead of Jura, a crime novel threaded with a political mystery that comments on the inequalities within society, will be published on September 27.

This is the second crime novel from retired teacher and university lecturer Allan Martin, which exposes the sense of entitlement, and the privilege, that the rich and powerful exploit for their own ends.

Martin's debut novel, The Peat Dead, shortlisted for the McIlvanney/Bloody Scotland Debut Scottish Crime Award, skilfully captured the essence

of Islay life and evocatively conveyed a remarkable sense of place that drew in the reader.

The Dead of Jura does the same, this time on Islay's near neighbour. The former will also be enjoyed internationally in 2021 with translations rights having been sold to Estonian publisher Eesti Ramaat.

Allan told The Oban Times: 'Scotland is no stranger to being used as a playground by the rich and famous, who believe its wide open spaces can hide a multitude of sins.

'In The Dead of Jura I have

woven a story that, whilst fictional, in all likelihood could have played out in a glen, or big house, somewhere in Scotland.'

Seonaid Francis, editorial director at ThunderPoint Publishing, said: 'Allan Martin excelled himself with The Peat Dead and has followed it up in style with The Dead of Jura.

'He has written another gripping novel, which this time draws on the scandals and arrogance of those who think they are better than the rest of us. He is an author to follow.'



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Oban Fm – Morning, Noon, and Night

The Week	8-11am	12-3pm	4-7pm	8-11pm
Monday	Stephen	Bob	Marcus	Rosemary 8-9pm
Tuesday	Stephen 10am	Archie 11-1 then Macky 1-3pm*	Bob	Mer
Wednesday	Karen	Doug	Campbell	Gordon
Thursday	Andy & Sarah	Archie	Stephen	Margo
Friday	Stephen	Allan (the One)	Margo	Peter
The Weekend				
Saturday	Stephen until 10am	Linda 11-2pm	Kenny's Jukebox Jamboree	Archies Scottish Show 7pm-9pm Dave Hobbs 60's Hits 10pm-Midnight
Sunday	Breege	Archie/Stephen	Sunday Praise 5pm-6pm	Dave and Murdo 7pm-9pm Graham Scott's Drum and Bass 10pm-Midnight

Artistic duo land islands residency

Award winning partnership Dr Saskia Coulson and Colin Tennant have been appointed artists in residence for South West Mull and Iona Development and North Harris Trust by Community Land Scotland.

The duo are among three new commissions for artists to work with community land owners across Scotland to tell their story.

The artists were chosen from a competitive pitch – and their work over the next four months will explore the impact of community land ownership on the community. Their residencies will be interpreted as appropriate during Covid-19 restrictions and elements of it may be virtual.

Working in partnership with The Stove Network at Mid Steeple Quarter Dumfries, Community Landowners aims to raise awareness of community landownership both to communities and to Scotland by taking new approaches to telling the stories of post purchase community landowners, and the wider story of community ownership across Scotland.

This project will explore what happens when a community takes ownership of an estate, woodland or urban farm and how that affects the community itself and its relationship the land.

‘We are bringing artists and community landowners together to work collaboratively



Dr Saskia Coulson and Colin Tennant’s work over the next four months will explore the impact of community land ownership on the community.

over a period of four months finding creative and active ways to hear, learn and share their stories,’ says Lindsay Chalmers, development manager at Community Land Scotland.

‘The relationship between people and the land inspired Scottish artists and musicians for hundreds of years, but the story of modern community landownership is yet to be fully explored.

‘We have had a terrific response from a wide variety of artists across Scotland working in very different mediums, and it has been a privilege to read their proposals and very hard to select the final successful three.

‘We hope the project will ultimately culmi-

nate in an exhibition of their works for everyone to see.’

The ‘Stories of Radical Landownership’ commission will focus on the journeys of four communities, Isle of Eigg Heritage Trust, North Harris Trust, South West Mull and Iona Development and Bridgend Farmhouse in Edinburgh.

Winning artist partnership Dr Saskia Coulson and Colin Tennant, who develop projects through the lens of a camera, both film and still photography were delighted to have been selected.

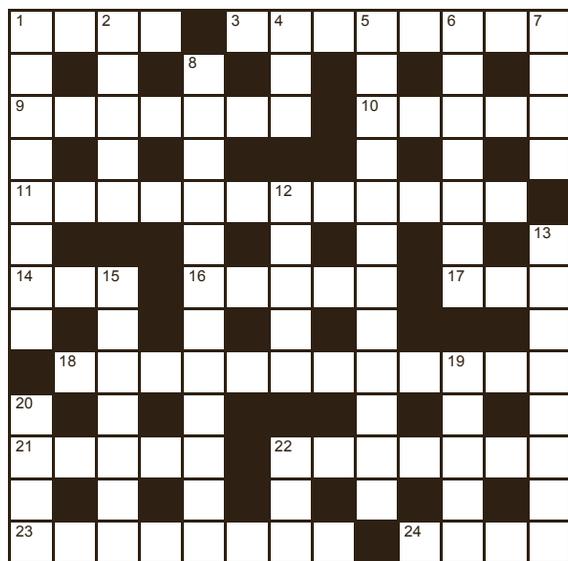
‘This project means a lot to us both with regards to telling the wider story of community landownership in Scotland today and collaborating with individual Community Trusts

to highlight their individual journeys.

‘We are excited to be working on a project of such significance in Scotland and one which we hope can have a real impact in the ongoing developments of community buy out initiatives across the country.’

Environmental artist and creative educator Richard Bracken from Drumnadrochit, has been appointed to work directly with the community landowners and tell the story of Abriachan Forest Trust by Loch Ness while Sculptor and printmaker Virginia Hutchison from Lewis will work with Urras Oighreachd Ghabhsainn (Galson Estate Trust) on the Isle of Lewis.

Crossword



- | | |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Across | Down |
| 1 Chewed stimulant (4) | 1 Allure (8) |
| 3 Enthusiastic feeling (8) | 2 Celestial body (5) |
| 9 One who distributes charity (7) | 4 Possessively she (3) |
| 10 Red complexion (5) | 5 Fireworks (12) |
| 11 Now and then (12) | 6 Rank (7) |
| 14 Vessel (3) | 7 Toy that does tricks (2-2) |
| 16 Something to talk about (5) | 8 Meek (12) |
| 17 Shelter (3) | 12 Urge forward (5) |
| 18 Catastrophic touch down (5,7) | 13 Police rank (8) |
| 21 Dialect of Arabic (5) | 15 Tinsel (7) |
| 22 Spiral in the ear (7) | 19 Dental work (5) |
| 23 Poor (8) | 20 Record player (2-2) |
| 24 Skin lump (4) | 22 Trick (3) |

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION



Funding first for Gaelic audio book

Glasgow-based Belle Media have been awarded money to produce a 10-part radio series of their Captain Bobo children's books.



The series will be broadcast this autumn on national children's radio station Fun Kids and a number of independent stations around the country. In a first for such programming, the series will be recorded in both English and Gaelic.

The production is being supported by the Audio Content Fund. It is the first time it has supported Gaelic

programming. The Gaelic version will be narrated by Uist-born Gillebride Macmillan, pictured, Gaelic and Celtic Studies Lecturer at The University of Glasgow and a well-known musician.

He appeared in Outlander as Gwyllyn the Bard. Gillebride will also translate the Captain Bobo books. The English-language version will be narrated by Largs-born actor John Sessions and both will be recorded later this month.

The Adventures of Captain Bobo series have been written by R. D. Dijkstra and Kay

Hutchison with illustrations by Matt Rowe. They are inspired by the iconic PS Waverley, the world's last seagoing passenger-carrying paddle steamer, and tales told by Kay's father, Captain Robin 'Hurricane Hutch' Hutchison, who was one of the youngest captains to serve on Scotland's famous Firth of Clyde, where he worked for more than 40 years.

The Audio Content Fund is financed by the UK Government to support the creation of original, public service content across UK commercial and community radio.

Kay Hutchison, founder of

Belle Media said: ‘This is an exciting time for us. We are really looking forward to being able to share Captain Bobo's stories with a wider audience. We are particularly pleased to be producing a Gaelic version as many of the crew my father sailed with were from the Western Isles. I know he would be delighted we are able to honour them in this way.’

Gillebride Macmillan, added: ‘The moment I heard about the series I wanted to be involved.’

‘The stories are funny and they also celebrate our proud sea-going heritage. The series will run for 10 weeks from September 24.

Help keep rural arts live

The Touring Network has launched a major new Crowdfunder campaign to Keep Rural Arts Live in the Highlands and Islands.

Live music, theatre, dance and art fans are being asked to donate anything from the price of an interval drink upwards to ensure live events can return to rural Scotland when it's safe to do so.

The Rockfield Centre is just one of The Touring Network's many members, which range from village hall committees and pub landlords to professional programmers and performers, and Fee Shaw, culture and creative officer at the Oban venue, said: 'We know how much our loyal audiences are missing the thrill of live performance and how much artists can't wait to get back on the stage.'

'By donating what you can to Keep Rural Arts Live, you are directly helping world-class live music, theatre, dance, comedy and more to return to the Highlands and Islands



Keep Rural Arts Live launched their Crowdfunding appeal last week. Photograph: Oceanallover.

when it's safe to do so.'

The Touring Network has just over 80 members across the Highlands and Islands including: Eilean Eisdeal/Easdale Island Hall; Isle of Luing Community Trust/Atlantic Islands Centre; Oban Communities Trust/Rockfield Centre; Friends of St Conan's Kirk SCIO; Islay Music & Culture (Islay); Islay Arts Association; Craignish Village

Hall Promoters; Tayvallich Village Hall; West Loch Gigs; The Walking Theatre Company (based in Cowal); Cove Burgh Hall; The Tower Digital Arts Centre; Argyll Arts Collective; Dunoon Burgh Hall Trust.

Donations can be made online at: www.crowdfunder.co.uk/keepruralartslive with the opportunity to receive some match funding from Creative Scotland.

Poster competition for youngsters draws awareness to BLM movement

Oban Black Lives Matter (BLM) has launched a competition, aimed at primary school children, to design an anti-racist poster.

The group are asking children from Pre school-P7 to design an A4 size poster showing their own ideas about anti-racism and to make it bright, bold and full of imagination.

Photographs of the posters should be emailed to edivers@me.com no later than Friday September 4 with the email clearly stating the name, age, school and year group of the

entrant along with a contact telephone number.

The winner in each category (pre-school; P1-3; P4-5; P6-7) will have their poster displayed in the window of Specsavers and Oban Youth Cafe throughout September, which is Black History Month. Each winner will also receive a book suitable for their age and an extra copy for their classroom library.

All entries will be posted on the Oban BLM Facebook page and winners will be decided by the highest number of likes they receive.



M'ALBA

MY ALBA

<p>DIARDAOIN 27 An Lunastal THURSDAY 27 August</p> <p>17.00 Prògraman Chloinne – Children's programming 19.00 Dileas/ Working Dogs (rpt) 19.30 Speaking Our Language (rpt) 19.55 Earrann Eachdraidh (rpt) 20.00 An Là – News 20.30 An Lot S3 (rpt) 21.00 Jim Baxter (rpt) 22.00 Seoid a' Chidsin – The Kitchen Coves (rpt) 22.30 Buffalo Bill (rpt) 23.20 Dhan Uisge (Loch Loyne) 23.30 Air an Rathad/On the road (rpt)</p> <p>DIHAOINE 28 Lunastal FRIDAY 28 August</p> <p>17.00 Prògraman Chloinne – Children's programming 18.35 Machair (rpt) 19.00 An Là – News 19.25 Fraochy Bay (rpt) 19.30 Bonn Comhraidh (rpt) 20.00 Ceolmhor@Piping Live! (rpt) 20.30 Dealbhan Fraoich (rpt) 21.00 Opry Dhoire (rpt) 22.00 UR/NEW: The Optimists 23.10 Manran aig Barrowland (rpt)</p> <p>DISATHAIRNE 29 An Lunastal SATURDAY 29 August</p> <p>16.00 Prògraman Chloinne – Children's programming 17.45 An Là – News 18.00 'San Fhuil/It's In the Blood (rpt) 19.00 Druthag na Hearadh/ A little drop of Harris (rpt) 19.30 Bonn Comhraidh (rpt) 20.00 Machair (rpt) 20.25 Fraochy Bay (rpt) 20.30 Puirt-adhair (highland airports) (rpt)</p>	<p>21.00 Van Morison – Up on Cyprus Avenue (rpt) 22.00 Buffalo Bill (rpt) 22.50 Dhan Uisge (Loch Loyne) (rpt) 23.00 UR/NEW: Scottish Premiership – St Johnstone v St Mirren 00.45 Belladrum – Cridhe Tartan (Highlights) (rpt)</p> <p>DIDÒMHNAICH 30 An Lunastal SUNDAY 30 August</p> <p>16.00 Prògraman Chloinne – Children's programming 18.15 An Là – News 18.30 Seachd La – News Review 19.30 Alleluia! (rpt) 20.00 An Lot S3 (rpt) 20.30 Vets: Gach Creutair beo (rpt) 21.00 Bannan (rpt) 21.30 Bannan (rpt) 22.00 The Sandyford Murder – Sgeulachd Jessie McLachlan (rpt) 22.45 The Optimists (rpt)</p> <p>DILUAIN 31 An Lunastal MONDAY 31 August</p> <p>17.00 Prògraman Chloinne – Children's programming 19.00 Tir is Teanga/Language and Landscape (rpt) 19.30 Speaking Our Language (rpt) 19.55 Earrann Eachdraidh (rpt) 20.00 An Là – News 20.15 Sgeul Seirbheis (rpt) 20.30 Dealbhan Fraoich (rpt) 21.00 Beairteas na Beairt - Trusadh (rpt) 22.00 Bannan S5 (rpt) 22.30 Van Morrison – Up on Cyprus Avenue (rpt) 23.30 Seoid a' Chidsin – The Kitchen Coves (rpt)</p> <p>DIMÀIRT 1 an t-Sultain TUESDAY 1 September</p> <p>17.00 Prògraman Chloinne – Children's programming 19.00 Dileas/Working Dogs (rpt)</p>	<p>19.30 Speaking Our Language (rpt) 19.55 Earrann Eachdraidh (rpt) 20.00 An Là – News 20.30 Vets: Gach Creutair Beo (rpt) 21.00 Macleod MP/Maclean KGB (rpt) 22.00 Beairteas na Beairt – Trusadh (rpt) 23.00 Ceolmhor@Piping Live (rpt) 23.30 Alleluia! (rpt)</p> <p>DICIADAIN 2 an t-Sultain WEDNESDAY 2 September</p> <p>17.00 Prògraman Chloinne – Children's programming 19.00 Tir is Teanga/Language and Landscape (rpt) 19.30 Speaking Our Language (rpt) 19.55 Earrann Eachdraidh (rpt) 20.00 An Là – News 20.30 Puirt-adhair (Highland Airports) (rpt) 21.00 Obair Ealain (Street Art) (rpt) 22.00 Bannan S5 (rpt) 22.30 Tradfest (rpt) 23.00 Jim Baxter (rpt)</p> <p>DIARDAOIN 3 an t-Sultain THURSDAY 3 September</p> <p>17.00 Prògraman Chloinne – Children's programming 19.00 Dileas/ Working Dogs (rpt) 19.30 Speaking Our Language (rpt) 19.55 Earrann Eachdraidh (rpt) 20.00 An Là – News 20.30 An Lot S3 (rpt) 21.00 Jimmy Johnstone (rpt) 22.30 Jesse James (rpt) 23.20 Dhan Uisge (Loch Loyne) 23.30 Air an Rathad/On the road (rpt)</p>
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Tel: 01631 567675 Graeme Bass mobile: 07872 131073

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Tel: 01631 562308 or email: law@macphee.co.uk

STEVENSON KENNEDY SOLICITORS
Tel: 01631 562317 or email: gordon@stevensonkennedy.co.uk

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Information correct at time of going to press. This page will run in the Oban Times every week for as long as necessary - printed information will be updated weekly but business are advised to get in touch if you have any questions or to add/change listings Tel: 01631 568000.

On the trail and lightening the load for over 40 years!



A Trail West bespoke trailer to support the work of MAF

Trail West have been supplying and repairing trailers for over 40 years and have built up an enviable reputation for carrying a vast stock of replacement parts for most makes of trailer, whether it be boat trailers, plant trailers, livestock trailers or general purpose domestic trailers.

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Many boat trailers in particular have been lying since last season and the extended dormant period has often resulted in breakdowns – Trail West have been very busy attending to the

needs of trailer owners all over the country simply because the parts were available off the shelf.

In addition, Trail West supply and fit tow-bars for most makes of vehicle and carry a range of towing accessories in stock.

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PUBLIC NOTICES



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TRANSPORT SCOTLAND

THE A830 TRUNK ROAD (MORAR) (TEMPORARY CLEARWAY) ORDER 2020
THE SCOTTISH MINISTERS give notice that they have made the above Order under sections 2(1) and 2, 4(1) and 14(1)(b) and (4) of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, which will have effect of imposing a restriction on stopping on that length of the A830 Fort William - Mallaig Trunk Road at Morar, from a point 978 metres or thereby south of its junction with the B8008 road to Camusdarach to a point 2.065 kilometres or thereby north of that junction, a distance of 3.043 kilometres or thereby. The Order, which is required for safety reasons will be in operation from 27th August 2020 until 30th September 2021 and will only have effect in relation to such part or parts of the length of road as is indicated by the appropriate traffic signs.

ALTERNATIVE ROUTES
An alternative route is not required. A copy of the Order and this Notice will be available on the Transport Scotland website at <https://www.transport.gov.scot/road-orders/?roadorderregion=1291> For information about roadworks on motorways and trunk roads visit www.trafficscotland.org

S R LEES
A member of the staff of the Scottish Ministers
Transport Scotland, Buchanan House, 58 Port Dundas Road, Glasgow G4 0HF



**MARINE (SCOTLAND) ACT 2010
SLIPWAY REPAIRS**

DAVAAR, HOLY ISLAND INNER AND FLADDA LIGHTHOUSES

Notice is hereby given that Northern Lighthouse Board has applied to the Scottish Ministers of the Scottish Government, under Part 4 of the Marine (Scotland) Act 2010, in respect of slipway repairs at:

Location	Cost Latitude	£ 250,000 Longitude
Davaar	55° 25.631' N	05° 32.797' W
Davaar	55° 25.633' N	05° 32.793' W
Davaar	55° 25.618' N	05° 32.775' W
Davaar	55° 25.620' N	05° 32.771' W
Holy Island Inner	55° 30.732' N	05° 04.227' W
Holy Island Inner	55° 30.730' N	05° 04.225' W
Holy Island Inner	55° 30.739' N	05° 04.204' W
Holy Island Inner	55° 30.737' N	05° 04.202' W
Fladda	56° 14.911' N	05° 40.849' W
Fladda	56° 14.911' N	05° 40.846' W
Fladda	56° 14.941' N	05° 40.851' W
Fladda	56° 14.945' N	05° 40.848' W
Fladda	56° 14.946' N	05° 40.850' W
Fladda	56° 14.941' N	05° 40.853' W

(WGS84)

Plans showing the position of the works may be inspected at <https://bit.ly/2QkcfYP>.

Objections relating to safety of navigation or environmental issues in respect of the application should be made by email to: MS.MarineLicensing@gov.scot, quoting reference: 00008859 and Northern Lighthouse Board.

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.

PROPOSED LET OF A CROFT

Bear Ellice Ltd is applying to let the tenancy of the crofts at No.1 and No.2 Garrygualach, Kilmoneveag to Simon Grey of Garry Gualach, Invergarry, Inverness-shire, PH34, 4HR. Written comments from those with a relevant interest (which may be made public) to: Crofting Commission, Leachkin Road, Inverness IV3 8NW, info@crofting.gov.scot within 28 days from the date of this advertisement.

PROPOSED LET OF A CROFT

Mrs Mary Cattanach and Mrs Sheila McKie are applying to the Crofting Commission for consent to let the tenancy of the croft at 12 Keil, Benderloch to Mrs Claire Hoey of Ben Bhan, Glenmore Road, Oban, Argyll, PA34 4ND.

If you are a crofter, shareholder or owner of a croft in the township or if the Commission consider that you have a direct interest in this application, you may submit comments on the proposal in writing or other permanent form to the Crofting Commission, Great Glen House, Leachkin Road, Inverness IV3 8NW (e-mail: info@crofting.scotland.gov.uk) within 28 days from the date of publication of this advert.

Please note that any comments you provide are part of an open process and will be made available to interested parties. Your comments would also be released under a Freedom of Information enquiry.

**BALLET WEST
(Company Number SC175325)**

Notice is hereby given that on 20th August 2020 a Petition was presented to the Sheriff of North Strathclyde at Oban craving the Court inter alia that the said Ballet West, a company limited by guarantee, Company Number SC175325 having its Registered Office at Ichrachan House, Ichrachan, Taynuilt, Argyll, PA35 1HP be wound up by the Court and that in the meantime Eileen Blackburn, Chartered Accountant, French Duncan, 56 Palmerston Place, Edinburgh, EH12 5AY be appointed Provisional Liquidator of the said company in which Petition the Sheriff at Oban by Interlocutor dated 20th August 2020 appointed all persons having an interest to lodge Answers in the hands of the Sheriff Clerk at Oban within 8 days after intimation, service or advertisement and appointed the said Eileen Blackburn to be Provisional Liquidator of the said company with powers contained in Part II of Schedule 4 to the Insolvency Act 1986, all of which notice is hereby given. Kenneth Balfour Lang, Solicitor. Messrs. Mellicks, Solicitors, 160 Hope Street, Glasgow, G2 2L.

FIRST REGISTRATION OF A CROFT

Mrs Deirdre Muriel MacFarlane has registered their croft 5 Bonawe, Bonawe, Glenorchy and Innishail on the Crofting Register held by the Registers of Scotland.

Any person who wishes to challenge the registration may apply to the Scottish Land Court by 14 May 2021.

Details of the registration can be found at www.crofts.gov.uk/register/home. The croft registration number is C7095.

AGM of Oban Hospice

will be held via Zoom on Monday 14th September 2020 at 7.30pm

Anyone interested in attending should email enquiries@obanhospice.org.uk by Wednesday 9 September and a link for the meeting will be provided



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>;

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
20/02233/FUL	30 Fassifern Road Fort William	Alteration and change of use of office building to form class 7 residential with minimum care facility
20/02857/FUL	Former Glenborrodale Primary School Glenborrodale, Acharacle	Change of use of land to garden grounds and erection of extensions to self-contained unit
20/02533/FUL	25M South Of Lochview Lochaline Morvern	change of use of part of the community building to incorporate a cafe of up to 16 covers and alterations
20/02884/PIP	Land To West Of Coirebreac Lower Inverroy, Roy Bridge	Erection of three houses (renewal of planning permission 17/01584/PIP)
20/03045/FUL	Land 25M South West Of Black Sheep Bunkhouse Hillside Estate, Fort William	Erection of house (renewal of planning permission 16/05378/FUL)

Time period for comments is 14 days

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

Argyll and Bute Council

DEVELOPMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES

ARGYLL AND BUTE COUNCIL (LOCH CRERAN LOOP ROAD) (TEMPORARY PROHIBITION OF TRAFFIC) ORDER 2020

On Monday 24th August 2020, Argyll and Bute Council made the above named Order under Section 14(1)(a) of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, as amended, which will make it unlawful for any person to drive or cause or permit to be driven any motor vehicle on that length of the Loch Creran Loop Road from its junction with the A828 Trunk Road at the South Creagan Roundabout extending in a northerly thence easterly direction to a point 20 metres or thereby west of its junction with the access road to Dallachulish Farm, a distance of 550 metres or thereby.

Exceptions will apply to a vehicle being used in an emergency for fire brigade, ambulance, police or coastguard purposes, a vehicle being used for carrying out the works or a vehicle being driven under the direction of a traffic management operative. The restrictions imposed by this Order which are required to allow essential works to be carried out on or near the road will be effective when indicated by signs from 0001 hours on Monday 31st August to 2359 hours on 20th September 2020, or until the works are complete, whichever is the earlier.

Roads & Infrastructure Services

1A Manse Brae, Lochgilhead PA31 8RD

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www.argyll-bute.gov.uk

Comhairle Earra - Ghàidheal agus Bhòid



Argyll and Bute Council

PLANNING

The applications listed below together with the plans and other documents submitted with them may be viewed electronically through Argyll and Bute Council website at www.argyll-bute.gov.uk. Having regard to Schedule 6, Part 3, s10 of the Coronavirus (Scotland) Act 2020, documents are only available to inspect electronically at this time. Customers requiring assistance can contact us by e-mail: planning.hq@argyll-bute.gov.uk or tel. 01546 605518.

**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
20/01376/PPP	Renewal of planning permission in principle reference 17/02710/PPP (Site for the erection of a dwellinghouse)	Plot 6 Carnduncan, Gruinart, Isle Of Islay, Argyll And Bute
20/01241/PP	Change of use of outbuilding to form facility for the rectification and bottling of gin on a small scale	Tayandock, Bridgend, Isle Of Islay, Argyll And Bute, PA44 7PX

Written comments can be submitted online <http://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/planning-and-environment/find-and-comment-planning-applications> or to Argyll and Bute Council, Development Management, Kilmory Castle, Lochgilhead, Argyll, PA31 8RT 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 on the Councils website. Customers are requested to use electronic communication where possible during the coronavirus pandemic as our ability to process postal mail is restricted.

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

www.argyll-bute.gov.uk

Comhairle Earra - Ghàidheal agus Bhòid



Notice is hereby given that Mallaig Harbour Authority intends to apply to Scottish Ministers for consent to construct extensions to the Ice Quay and Outer Breakwater Quay, to join the quays together and create additional laydown space in the Outer Harbour area.

Mallaig Harbour Authority will be holding a pre-application consultation event online via the video conferencing application 'Zoom'. The event will take place on Thursday 5th November 2020, starting at 7pm. The event will provide an opportunity for stakeholders to consider and comment upon the prospective application. Full details on how to join the event will be displayed at <https://www.mallaig-harbour.com/news/>, 10 days prior to the event. If you wish to be emailed event details, please contact: consultation@affriclimited.co.uk.

If you wish to make representations on the proposed development, please contact: Fiona Henderson, Affric Limited, Lochview Office, Loch Duntelchaig, Farr, IV2 6AW, consultation@affriclimited.co.uk by the 12th of November 2020.

Please note, representations made to Mallaig Harbour Authority or Affric Limited are not representations to the Scottish Ministers. Once the Marine Licence Application has been submitted there will be an opportunity for representations to be made to the Scottish Ministers on the application.

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Argyll and Bute Council require a qualified vehicle mechanic to join our team at The Plantyard, Bishopton Road, Lochgilphead. Permanent position. 37 hours. Salary £26,005 - £28,359. Please apply through myjobscotland.gov.uk Advert ref:- ARB06848



Argyll and Bute Council require a qualified vehicle mechanic to join our team at Jackson Quarry workshop, Millpark Road, Oban. Permanent position. 37 hours. Salary £26,005 - £28,359. Please apply through myjobscotland.gov.uk Advert ref:- ARB06852

Argyll and Bute Council require a qualified chargehand vehicle mechanic to join our team at Roding garage, Campbeltown. Permanent position. 37 hours. Salary £28,320 - £30,944. Please apply through myjobscotland.gov.uk Advert ref:- ARB06899

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DEATHS

BLACK - Peacefully at home in Kames, Tighnabruach on Wednesday, August 19, 2020, Charles, aged 79 years, beloved husband of Jean and a loving father to Sandy and Peter. Due to current restrictions, a private graveside service will take place.

CRAWFORD - Suddenly at home on August 11, 2020, aged 68 years, George (the post), much loved brother of Jimmie, brother-in-law of Lesley, uncle of Fiona, Craig, Grant and Andrew and great uncle of Caden, Callan, Rowan and Sophie. Due to funerals being restricted to a maximum of 20 mourners, George's funeral will be private. If you wish to pay your respects, while social distancing, the funeral cortege will leave Mossfield Drive on Tuesday September 1, at 12.15pm. It will process down Glencruitten Road (passing the Parish Church), along Combie Street, up Albany Street (passing the Post Office), down

Shore Street, along George Street then the Esplanade past the Corran Halls and out to Pennyfuir.

HUNTER - Peacefully, surrounded by love in his home at Ariundle, Spean Bridge on Wednesday, August 19, in his 90th year. Bill beloved and devoted husband of Moira and the late Winifred Anne. Deeply loved father of Mairi, Sheila, and Alison. A much loved and respected grandpa to Craig, Grant, Emma, Nicola and Lewis and loving great grandpa to Megan, Finlay, Ross, Skye, Charlotte and Maisie. Bill's funeral Service was held under current restrictions at Acharacle cemetery on Wednesday, August 26. He will be sadly and sorely missed by us all. Safe in the arms of Jesus.

KIRKHAM - Peacefully at North Argyll House Oban on Wednesday August 19, 2020, in her 87th year, Christina MacIntyre née Sharp, beloved wife of the late William Kirkham, much loved sister

to Thomas and the late Alex, a dear sister-in-law, auntie and much loved grannie to Suzanne. A special thank you to all the staff at North Argyll House. She will be sadly missed by all.

MACDOUGALL - Emma, 22 Dunmar Court, after a hard fight with cancer Emma was taken from us on August 24, 2020. She had a smile that lit up the room. She will be sadly missed by her family and everyone that had the pleasure of meeting her. Goodbye mum. God Bless

MACKAY (Banchory) - Peacefully at home with her loving family on Monday August 17, 2020, Alison Mary (nee Craig), deeply cherished wife of 60 years to her beloved husband Ronnie, adoring and adored mother to Marian, Craig and Rona, devoted and idolised granny to Robert, Laura, Kirsty, Duncan, Katie and Nina. Much loved by her extended family and friends. Funeral private due to current circumstances. Donations if

desired can be made to the Forget Me Not Club, Banchory who provided incredible support to Alison and the family.

McCORKINDALE - Mary (Shaw). Peacefully at Lorn and Isles Hospital on Tuesday August 25. Beloved wife of the late Hugh, Scammadale. Much loved mother, granny and great-granny. Will be truly missed by many.

McKECHNIE - Peacefully at St Brendan's Hospital, Isle of Barra, August 9, 2020. Roderick Leslie (formerly of Kilchoan) husband of Margaret, father to Marian, Fay and Tina. BAP to Kyle, Aiden and Breana.

QUINN - Sandra (nee Duncan) - Passed away peacefully on August 21, 2020 surrounded by her family. Beloved wife of Iain and much loved mother of Kirsteen & Briony and granny to Ruby. Sister of Billy, Aileen & Glenys and the late Thomas, Allan and Jean.

IN MEMORIAM

CAMPBELL - Everlasting memories of Susan, a loving wife, mother, mother-in-law and nan who died so suddenly on September 1, 2014.

God called your name so gently
That only you could hear
No-one heard the footsteps
Of the Angel drawing near
Softly from the shadows
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You closed your eyes and went to sleep

Andy quietly left us all
- Inserted by Kenny and family

CLARK - Mary. Precious memories of Mary Clark, beloved sister of the late Alasdair, Effie and Tom and aunt of Mary, who died on August 29, 2018.

'Loved and remembered always'
- Mary and Bobby

FORRESTER - Cherished memories of Jim, dearly beloved husband of Joan, father, father-in-law and grandfather, who died on

September 2, 2002.
Forever in our thoughts.
- Joan and family, Uddingston and High Wycombe

GOURLAY - In loving memory of Alison who passed away August 27, 2017, a cherished daughter, wife, mum, granny, sister, sister-in-law and auntie.

Those we love don't go away
They walk beside us every day
Very Sorely missed
- By all the family

MACLEOD - In loving memory of our dear dad, grandad and great-grandad Hugh, Sunnyville, Tiree, who died August 28, 2013. Also remembering our dear mum Lottie, who died March 9, 1993.

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- Rita, Johann, Morag and Ian and families.

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QUALITY CARE SINCE 1923

Obituary: John C. Gowie – distant water skipper and fishing journalist

John C. Gowie, the former technical editor of Scottish Fishing Weekly, sadly passed away recently.

A former fisherman from Aberdeen, his love of fishing and everything related to the industry always shone through, as did his compassion and wonderful sense of humour.

After retiring from sea, he became technical editor for Scottish Fishing Weekly, part of the Oban Times Group, in 1989. Based in Aberdeen, John covered a wide range within his work. As well as boat reviews and general reporting from the East Coast, he wrote the popular 'Gearbox' column, where he looked at technical issues facing the successful operation of a fishing vessel. He was especially interested in fishing gear and how to maximise catching performance under different sea conditions.

Keith Broomfield, who worked alongside John in the Aberdeen office of Scottish Fishing Weekly (SFW) said: 'John was in so many ways ahead of his time, being very aware of the importance of sustainability and conservation, and of finding ways to ensure that trawls released juvenile or unwanted fish species.



He cared about the industry and its sustainability.'

Born on 2 April 1937, John first went to sea as a deck hand aged 16 on fishing boats working the distant water grounds

towards the Arctic, serving on vessels such as Aberdeen Venturer, Japonica, Ben Brackie, and Ben Loyal. He was quickly recognised for his leadership potential and sound common-sense, and worked his way up to skipper boats for the Ben fishing fleet, becoming one of the top skippers of his time. He was particularly proud of serving on the Ben Asdale, which had developed a formidable reputation as a top fish catcher.

John loved fishing but he never talked much about his time at sea, despite the many adventures and experiences he must have faced in truly challenging conditions. Although, he once let slip in a private conversation that on one occasion he was washed overboard from his vessel in stormy and icy seas, only for the next wave to send him crashing back onto the deck again!

On retiring from sea in the late 1980s, he was the perfect choice to become its east coast correspondent and technical

editor for the then fledgling SFW, bringing fishing knowledge and experience to the small team of journalists working on the paper at the time.

Alison Chadwick, who also became the paper's editor, along with Finlay Oman and Keith Broomfield who were part of the editorial team, remember him as being generous and kind-hearted, and always with a mischievous twinkle in his eye. He was a formidable mentor, keen to offer advice and guidance, and quickly pointing out if he felt something was wrong or unfair.

Alison said: 'I was privileged to work with John on SFW for many years. He was a true Aberdonian – 'stoic throughout' – and a better colleague and friend you could not have wished to work alongside.

'John was the first Scottish correspondent based on the East Coast for SFW. From his office on the quayside in Aberdeen he would cast a sharp eye over the comings and goings of the fleet of fishing and commercial boats and many folk called-in to get his 'craic' and great sense of humour.'

John and his wife Sheila had five children, 16 grandchildren and 13 great grandchildren.

For the full tribute, visit obantimes.co.uk

THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK

It is said of some folk that they know the cost of everything and the value of nothing. This may be a bit sweeping, yet there is a kernel of truth to the saying. For example, take the value of the Gaelic language.

My great grandmother was a Beaton from Glenhinnisdal, Skye. She was a monolingual Gael. Her daughter, my grandmother was completely bi-lingual. My father was only taught to speak English. I have worked away at reading and singing in Gaelic. My eldest daughter has her Advanced Higher in Gaelic. Simply, the two most recent generations have valued the language, whereas just one generation, my grandmother's, thought there was no cost benefit in



'getting on in life' by passing it on. Similar stories are shared by countless families.

A striking example of the worth of the language is found in our weekly Zoom Gaelic Bible translation group. We delve into the language and thus into the faith. We question both the language and the meaning of a passage. Folk from Lochaber and Argyll are joined by others from Nova

Scotia, the Netherlands, Japan and India.

Another example of value has been evidenced in our Gaelic YouTube service. For a service put together by the congregation of Kilmore and Oban it has had approaching 400 views. This is four times our usual weekly service on YouTube (visit www.oban-church.com).

Have we made any money from Bible Study and the YouTube service? No. Have lives been touched through faith? Yes. As Jesus said in a parable, faith is like a precious pearl, so treasure it far more than wealth.

Reverend Dugald Cameron
(Kilmore and Oban)

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Club committee pitch in for training restart

Young rugby players have been enjoying being back on the field of play after Oban Lorne RFC opened their gates to mini rugby training at Glencruitten earlier this month, writes Fiona Scott.

A combined effort from the club's hard working committee and Scottish Rugby to make sure the correct Covid-19 procedures are in place meant the busy mini section could get back up and running.

Organised by mini's coach Walter Speirs and the club's newly instated Covid-19 safety officer, Darrel Williams, the first training session was well attended and a great success.

'This training session was very much a trial to see if everything was going to work with the restrictions we have put in place.

'I'm delighted to say it was a great success and the children, coaches and parents all did

a great job in following the guidelines in these challenging times.

'We want to wish all our P7s who moved up to the high school the best of luck and hopefully they will continue to play rugby when they are there.'

The club are asking all parents/players involved in the club to play their part in getting things going again.

To take part in training players are required to complete a free C-19 E-Learning Return to Rugby Course, which can be found on the Scottish Rugby website, and email Oban Lorne RFC's new Covid-19 officer Darrell Williams at darrell-williams@btinternet.com, detailing which team they are part of.

Anyone wishing to join the mini's training should email Walter Speirs at walter.speirs@btconnect.com



After a lot of hard work by the Oban Lorne committee and Scottish Rugby, the mini section at the club were delighted to get back to training.



John's heroic fighting spirit goes unrewarded at Styrian GP

After being in podium contention for the majority of the 23-lap Moto3 race at Red Bull Ring – Spielberg, John McPhee's hard work and impressive overtakes ultimately went unrewarded as the Oban rider crashed out on the penultimate lap at the Grand Prix of Styria.

After the race John said: 'I'm absolutely gutted. It was my mistake. I was on the inside line and trying to be a bit defensive, which I'd been doing all race, and that corner has been slippery because of the dust left over from clearing an oil spillage.'

'It seemed alright in the race but I lost the front there. I didn't really have any warning, it went quite rapidly and there was nothing I could do about it.'

'I just want to say sorry to the team because they worked really hard, especially after warm pp when they changed the engine, so it's a shame not to be able to reward their hard work with a good result.'

'I feel like we'd made a step forward with engine performance today, as I was able to hold my own in the race. We'll be back strong in Misano, to fight for the podium or even the win.'

There will now be two weekends with no racing before action resumes in Misano next month (September 11-13).

Bob blown of course in windswept Wales

There was no Friday feeling for Oban's Bob MacIntyre last weekend after the unwelcome arrival of Storm Ellen saw his chances blown away at the ISPS Handa Wales Open at Celtic Manor.

It had all started so promisingly on Thursday when, helped by an eagle at his second hole, Bob briefly held a share of the lead. His opening round 68 gave him an ideal platform to play himself into serious con-

centration for his maiden tour victory. However, no one reckoned with mother nature and with lashing rain and winds gusting to over 50mph, Storm Ellen wrecked many a scorecard, including unfortunately, Bob's. The Oban star eventually signed for a seven over par 78 in a round which included two double-bogeys as well as five bogeys.

With the cut-line fluctuating all day

Bob faced an anxious wait before it was confirmed that his +4 total made it through to the weekend. During his wait Bob took to Twitter to tweet a picture of a snail which rather cryptically suggested he was a wee bit unhappy with the pace of play during his round.

Scraping through on the cut line meant Bob had a couple of early morning starts over the weekend and

rounds of 72 and 70 saw him finish in a tie for 59th, 10 shots behind eventual winner Romain Langasque of France.

Next up for Scotland's number one ranked golfer is a trip to Spain in just over a week's time for the Andalucian Masters. Bob was due to tee up this week at the iconic Belfry course, but has opted out as part of his preparations for a busy September, which includes his debut in the US Open.

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MAKE THE SWITCH

Call for Lochaber to break from Highland Council

by Mark Entwistle
mentwistle@obantimes.co.uk

Highland Council is too big, too remote and too out of touch with the residents of Lochaber and the area should now have its own local authority.

So says Councillor Andrew Baxter, Fort William and Ardnamurchan, speaking after several months of heated conflict with the leadership of the Inverness-headquartered body.

The latest row came last week when Mr Baxter was publicly slapped down by budget leader Alister Mackinnon in extraordinary scenes at the meeting of the corporate resources committee, chaired by the latter and held virtually due to coronavirus lockdown restrictions.

Although Mr Baxter is not a member of that particular committee, he was allowed to speak.

Mr Baxter condemned proposals seeking agreement from councillors on the setting up of a budget committee that would only meet in private, to discuss

year-end accounts in private, along with current council expenditure and the local authority's capital programming and planning.

Mr Baxter told fellow councillors the report was possibly 'the most alarming report' he had ever seen come before a committee.

'I do think it is time to break up Highland Council.'

Mr Mackinnon attempted to exclude Mr Baxter from the remainder of the meeting after the latter went on to slam the proposal as 'a death warrant for openness, scrutiny, transparency and democracy'.

An angry Mr Mackinnon, defending his own record on openness and transparency, said the remarks were offensive and called on Mr Baxter to retract them.

Afterwards Mr Baxter claimed it was another 'blatant attempt' to stop those asking difficult questions from con-

tributing. Earlier this summer Mr Baxter was expelled from the Independent group in the ruling administration after he posted a video on the Independent group's Facebook page.

Compiled by Conservative group leader Councillor Andrew Jarvie, it attacked the administration leadership, but was alleged to contain factual errors on the local authority's financial position.

After this latest controversy, Mr Baxter said: 'In short, I do think it is time to break up the Highland Council.'

'A West Coast authority, maybe including northern Argyll and Mull with Skye?' he suggested. 'Our council has proven it is too big, too remote, too Inverness-centric, too out-of-touch with local needs to serve the people of Lochaber.'

Asked for his view, fellow Independent Ben Thompson, Caol and Mallaig, said: 'It's time for a City of Inverness Council. It is the biggest Scottish city without its own council.'

Continued on page two.

In the footsteps of a prince...



Members of the Jacobite organisation The Royal Oak Society of Scotland, clad in period Jacobite costume, visited the Glenfinnan Monument on Saturday to mark the 275th anniversary of the Jacobite Rising. Turn to pages 10 and 11 for more on the legacy of 'The 45'. Photograph: Mark Entwistle.

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LT

Pilgrimage reaches Ben summit despite heat

Call for Lochaber to break away

by Mark Entwistle
mentwistle@obantimes.co.uk

Despite one of the hottest days of the summer taking its toll, a group of 20 Dudley folk reached the summit of Ben Nevis to commemorate the 75th anniversary of VJ Day.

The seventh annual pilgrimage of Dudley's Bert Bissell Memorial Society looked to be in jeopardy two months ago with Covid restrictions and loss of coach transport.

Society chairman Councillor Steve Waltho MBE put out the message that the mission could only go ahead if Covid restrictions were accepted, accommodation was open and participants made their own travel arrangements.

The response was an amazing 23 people meeting in Fort William on the evening of August 13.

Twenty made it to the summit in strength-sapping



The triumphant team on the summit standing in front of Bert's peace cairn with the Black Country flag.

heat the following day to lay a wreath on the summit of Britain's highest peak.

Councillor Waltho said: 'However, it took its toll with one member having to be escorted off the mountain and another having to be half carried down with exhaustion.'

'My wife, Jayne, had her work cut out as base commander

but handled it all admirably and the camaraderie and support amongst the group was phenomenal.'

Ben Nevis has a significant link to Dudley through the late Mr Bissell, who climbed it 107 times.

'People joined the group for a variety of reasons and without doubt the most moving sight

individuals employed at Wetherspoons Oldbury, including my eldest son Jay. The spirit, courage and will-power shown by this group was exemplary with the final climb group spending nearly 12 hours on the mountain.'

Fellow Dudley councillor Simon Phipps also climbed the mountain, raising money for the Edwards Trust as did Coseley Scouts chair, Nick Gallagher, raising much-needed funds for his Scout group.

Finally, society vice-chair and Dudley's taxi chief Shaz Saleem was raising money for the Saleem Foundation. All three causes had links to the Covid crisis and are still receiving donations via their respective JustGiving sites.

On VJ Day, the team gathered again at Bert's grave in Glen Nevis Cemetery to pay their respects to the legendary Dudley figure. A minute's silence was also observed.

of all was five members of Jules Garratt-Payne's family, whom we raised funds for last year, including husband Darren, all making it to the summit to unfurl her banner after she tragically lost her fight for life last November.

'I'm also a proud member of the Gentleman Songsters Male Voice Choir for whom Bert was president for many years and fellow songster Andy Parker also made it to the summit with his partner Sue and two sons, only to courageously have to half carry Sue part way back down as she succumbed to exhaustion.'

'The other group saw five

Continued from page one. 'It is a case of when it happens, not if, because the population is increasing there and decreasing in the rest of the Highlands.'

'Preparation ought to be under way already - but it's a matter for the Scottish Government to take forward, not Highland Council.'

'Council policies that work for Inverness don't necessarily work outside Inverness. Because every senior council executive is based there, new developments always happen there first.'

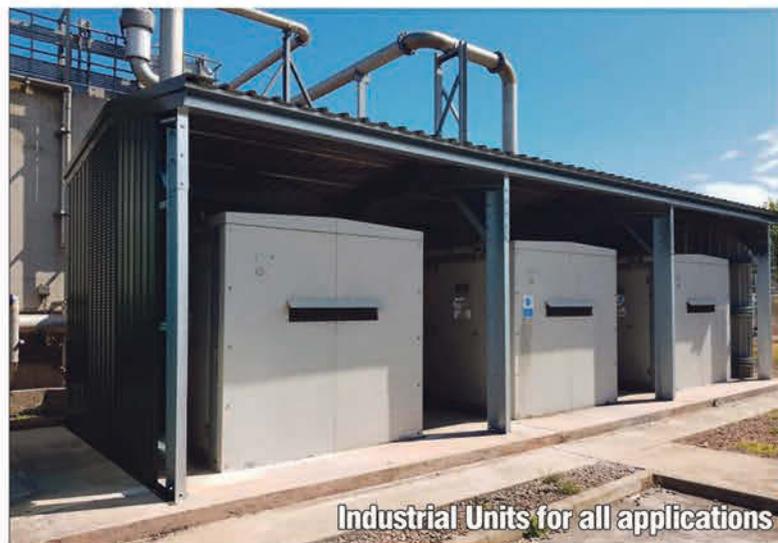
'A West Highland Council would seem to make most sense to me.'

Mr Thompson's fellow Caol and Mallaig member, Lib Dem Denis Rixson, added: 'Instead of devoting time and resources to a new structure I would prefer increased devolution of power, responsibility and resources within the existing structure - through area committees.'

'I think it would be quicker and more cost-effective.'

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Pressure builds to get new Belford Hospital

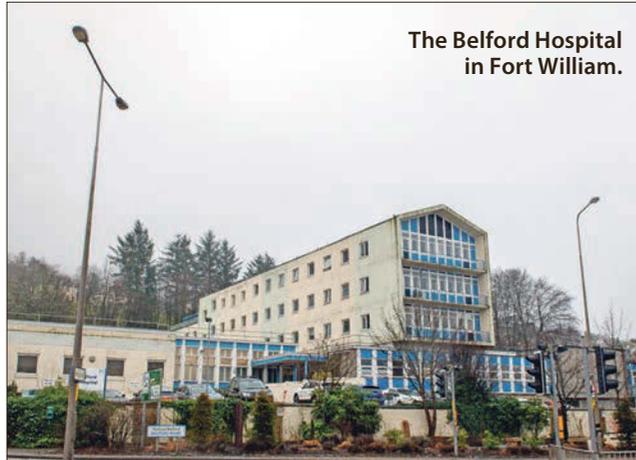
by Mark Entwistle
mentwistle@obantimes.co.uk

A Highlands and Islands MSP is adding his voice to those pressuring NHS Highland to build a new Fort William hospital.

The new Shadow Health Secretary Conservative MSP Donald Cameron says he will take up the issue of the long-running saga of the Belford Hospital replacement project with the new chief of NHS Highland as soon as she arrives in October.

Pam Dudek, who takes up her new job on October 5, joined the board of NHS Highland on secondment from NHS Grampian in April as interim deputy chief executive.

Last week the Lochaber Times reported that Skye, Lochaber and Badenoch SNP MSP Kate Forbes said plans for the new Belford Hospital had



The Belford Hospital in Fort William.

been moving at 'a snail's pace', despite land being acquired five years ago.

'Members and representatives have participated in good faith for years, and so I know the incredibly slow speed of progress is disappointing,' said Ms Forbes.

Katherine Sutton, NHS Highland's chief officer for

acute services, said: 'Much of our business-as-usual activity was paused during the Covid-19 lockdown period while our clinicians were redirected towards managing the response to the pandemic.'

'As we come out of lockdown project teams comprising many of our key clinical staff are being re-established to

support taking this work forward.

'These teams will be considering the delivery of services in the post-Covid world to meet the refreshed challenges in delivering high quality acute services as locally as possible.'

Mr Cameron said: 'The delay in delivering a fit-for-purpose local hospital for the people of Lochaber seems to be never-ending and is frankly unacceptable.'

'I will be taking this up with the new chief executive of NHS Highland as a matter of urgency.'

'Since I was elected over four years ago, I've been working with a range of medical experts and other politicians to move this on and it's bitterly disappointing we seem to be no further forward.'

'Ultimately, this is a matter for the Scottish Government. The community cannot wait forever and rightly expect to

see real progress in the months ahead.'

'Earlier this year, it took just weeks to put up temporary hospitals across the UK to prepare for a surge of coronavirus cases so, clearly, where there's a will there's a way.'

Members of Kilmallie Community Council, which held its August meeting virtually this week, agreed to write to NHS Highland for clarification of its plans to get the project back on track.

The community council also agreed to ask Fort William, Inverlochy and Torlundy Community Council to join it in reconvening the partnership of Fort William area community councils to strengthen community weight on the New Belford project.

HAVE YOUR SAY
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Face mask rules for high school pupils extended

Lochaber secondary school pupils will have to wear face coverings in corridors, communal areas and on school buses as from Monday.

The Scottish Government this week said the new rules apply to all secondary pupils – unless exempt – after the latest advice from the World Health Organisation (WHO). Face coverings also will be required on dedicated school transport by all children aged five and over but not in classrooms where there is social distancing. Councillor Ben Thompson, Caol and Mallaig, said: 'What's most important is safety but I also think it is important that the Scottish Government guidance is clear and effective.'

'In this case I welcome the announcement because I think it is actually an improvement both in safety and in making guidance clear.'

'Certainly parents have raised the lack of masks in secondary schools which they saw as inconsistent so I've no doubt that most or all will welcome this latest step.'

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LT

Ballet West to close doors

by Ellis Butcher
ebutcher@obantimes.co.uk



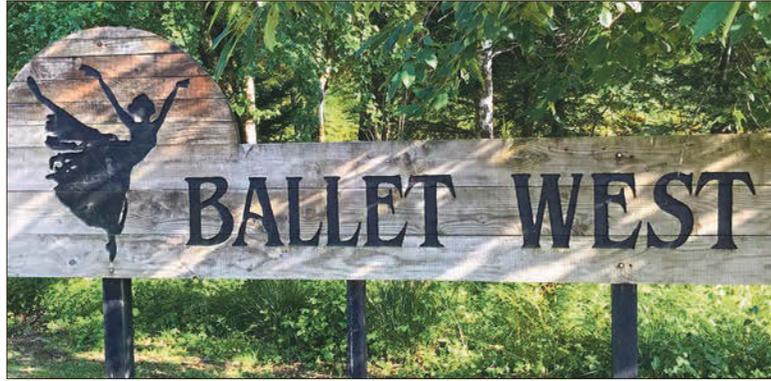
Oban Sheriff Court has approved the appointment of a provisional liquidator to Ballet West Ltd, a statement from the board of trustees has revealed.

It formally starts the process of winding up Ballet West Ltd, meaning the closure of the school at Taynuilt, the statement said.

The trustees added: 'Due to events over the last two weeks, Ballet West Ltd, a registered Scottish charity, has been driven to the point of insolvency and the trustees had a legal duty to inform the charity regulator and take appropriate action in these circumstances.'

'The board was required to make an application for a liquidator to be appointed.'

'The immediate impact of this is that Ballet West's affairs will now be dealt with by the liquidator, French Duncan.'



Ballet West Ltd has called in liquidators following damaging allegations against the dance school's vice-principal.

and appalled that parents and students have been placed in such a terrible situation.

'This is the consequence of a catastrophic sequence of events and we could not prevent this from happening.'

'The allegations broadcast by ITN regarding the vice-principal on Thursday August 13 were shocking. Immediate action was required in response and he resigned.'

'The board launched an internal inquiry, committed to an external inquiry and informed Police Scotland.'

'However, on Friday August 14, we were informed that Bath Spa University was terminating its relationship with Ballet West with immediate effect.'

'This was devastating news for students and the ballet school as Bath Spa students accounted for nearly 70 per cent of the student intake.'

The Royal Academy of Dance withdrew its accreditation and on Thursday August 20, and the Scottish

Qualification Authority gave notice of termination for the HNC/HND courses at the school.

These developments rendered the business of Ballet West unviable, said the trustees.

'This is the consequence of a catastrophic sequence of events and we could not prevent this from happening'

They added that every funding option was explored and they were 'immensely grateful' for the support of students, former students, parents and staff, 'but we were dealt one blow after another'.

'The reputation for ballet excellence that Ballet West enjoyed was built on the talent and commitment of students and staff.'

For the full statement see www.obantimes.co.uk

Eileen Blackburn, of French Duncan LLP, has been appointed by the court as provisional liquidator.

The statement added: 'This means that from today Ballet West's financial affairs and operational responsibility will be managed by the provisional liquidator, and all business activities including residential and outreach activities will cease or be wound-down immediately.'

'The trustees of the charity were required to make an application at Oban Sheriff Court due to the recent deci-

sions of some key customers and partner organisations, as the business was no longer financially viable. The charity regulator has also been informed.'

Any enquiries or notification of claims should now be made by email to BalletWest@frenchduncan.co.uk

The statement said that student accommodation at Ballet West was provided under a separate contract with separate entities not included in the liquidation.

'We have been informed that requests for refunds for

pre-paid accommodation costs should be made directly to the landlords via bartonaccommodation@gmail.com

'Aware of the recent allegations in the press about individuals and activities at Ballet West, the liquidator will, of course, assist and make available any information to both Police Scotland and any other regulatory bodies.'

Further updates will be available at: www.frenchduncan.co.uk/balletwest/

The statement added: 'The board of trustees is deeply saddened by this outcome

FERN COMMUNITY FUNDS

The Beinneun Windfarm Community Benefit Fund has been established to support community groups, social enterprises & charitable organisations in the community council areas of Fort Augustus & Glenmoriston and Glengarry.

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Details of the application process and fund criteria can be found at <https://ferncommunityfunds.com/beinneun-community-fund/>

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Support to help island youngsters into work

A new Scottish benefit that will help 16-to-24-year-olds into work if they have been unemployed for more than six months has been welcomed by Na h-Eileanan an Iar SNP MSP Alasdair Allan.

The SNP Scottish Government's Job Start Payment is a one-off grant of £250 to help with the costs of starting a new job. The upper age limit rises to 25 for care leavers and the payment rises to £400 if the person has a child.

Alasdair Allan MSP said: 'The job prospects of young people have been hit hard by the Covid-19 pandemic, and so this announcement of extra support to help our young people into work really couldn't come at a better time.'

'This payment will help local people with the extra expenses that are often attached to a starting a new job, such as travel costs, new work clothes or even childcare.'

'I'd encourage anyone in the Western Isles who thinks they may be eligible to apply online.'

HC-One in talks over NHS takeover at Skye care home

by Mark Entwistle
mentwistle@obantimes.co.uk

Care home operator HC-One has confirmed it is in advanced talks with the NHS over transferring responsibility for the running of its home in Portree on Skye where 10 elderly residents died after an outbreak of coronavirus.

The confirmation follows news that the Care Inspectorate has dropped its court action to have HC-One's registration cancelled as the operator of Home Farm nursing home.

A spokesperson for the Care Inspectorate last week said: 'The Care Inspectorate initiated court proceedings seeking the cancellation of the registration of the care provider at Home Farm care home at Portree in May. We did this following an inspection which



Home Farm Care Home at Portree. Photograph: BBC Scotland

raised serious concerns.

'We have monitored the home carefully and we are satisfied there has been considerable improvement in the quality of care experienced by residents and the issues that were putting them at serious risk have been addressed.'

'In light of this we have decided to no longer pursue the cancellation of the service's registration through the courts.'

Ten residents who tested positive for Covid-19 died after the outbreak of the virus at the end of April.

On reports it was in talks with NHS Highland about transferring responsibility for the running of the home to the health board permanently, a spokesperson for HC-One said: 'We have said consistently that we would improve standards and provide quality of life for residents at Home Farm.'

'We have committed considerable resources to this, and substantial improvements have been confirmed through regular inspections by the Care Inspectorate and other regulatory bodies.'

'We have worked constructively in a formal voluntary partnership with NHS Highland to make these improvements, and we are grate-

ful for its support in doing so during this time.'

'It is of the utmost importance that these improvements are sustained so that residents at Home Farm receive the service they expect and deserve for the long term.'

'We are in advanced discussions with NHS Highland as we believe that a transfer of responsibility for Home Farm will be in the best and most sustainable interests of residents and colleagues at the home.'

Constituency MSP Kate Forbes told the Lochaber Times: 'The last few months have been unimaginably stressful for relatives and residents of Home Farm.'

'On top of the devastating Covid outbreak, there has been an investigation and then a court case about the standard of care at Home Farm.'

'During this time, I know that NHS Highland has been providing extensive support to ensure the standard of care improved. It is good to hear that the Care Inspectorate is now satisfied with the quality of care, and has been regularly monitoring the care home.'

'The two priorities now are to maintain that high level of care and to determine the future ownership and management of Home Farm. I know relatives and residents have been through the most testing of times and it is important that they are given assurance and clarity.'

And on the possibility NHS Highland could take over Home Farm, Ms Forbes added: 'I will be speaking to NHS Highland about this latest development and what it means for the future of the home.'



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LT

Menopause poster in Gaelic is a world first

KnowYourMenopause is a UK-wide effort by campaign group, Pausitivity, to get menopause information posters in every GP office in the country so everyone knows the symptoms.

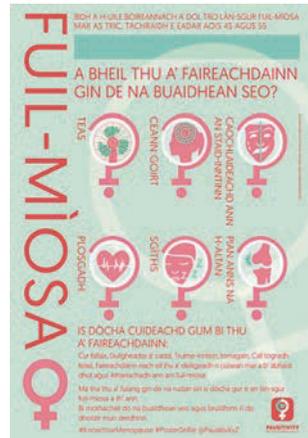
And now the campaign has launched the world's first menopause poster in Gaelic, which was unveiled at a Red Tent event with Angus Council last week.

Campaigners, including Elizabeth Carr-Ellis, worked with Christina McKelvie MSP on it at the beginning of lockdown, while Allyson Shields of Shields Design in Glasgow created it.

'This now brings our posters up to four: English, Welsh, Urdu and Scottish Gaelic. Now there is no reason why anyone in the UK shouldn't KnowYourMenopause,' said Ms Carr-Ellis.

'Many women feel lost and confused during this time so being able to discuss menopause in the language that is most comfortable to you is vital.'

'A Gaelic poster means the women in Lochaber have the



Gaelic menopause poster.

words they need to describe how they're feeling. When menopause has you feeling as if your world is no longer the same, it's that little bit of normality to reassure you. We hope every GP in Lochaber will have this on display.'

The new poster got the seal of approval from well-known Gaelic singer/songwriter, Mary Ann Kennedy, who tweeted: 'I am so impressed! It means a great deal for stuff to be normal in my own language.'

'Dirty tourists' mar Luskentyre beach

by Mark Entwistle
mentwistle@obantimes.co.uk

Organisers of regular daily clean-ups of rubbish and plastic from the iconic beach at Luskentyre on Harris in the Outer Hebrides, say they have had enough.

Yet another weekend saw human excrement scattered in the machair along with burnt fence posts, discarded disposable barbecues and stolen traffic cones.

Luskentyre is known for its famous long golden sands washed by white-topped Atlantic rollers.

Dan and Ann Parry administer the Luskentyre Beach page on Facebook where they document the piles of refuse collected on their daily dog walks, which originally started as a way of removing plastic waste and discarded bits of fishing gear that the Atlantic washed up.



Luskentyre beach on Harris where more rubbish is being left behind by visitors.

'It's not so much the 'wild camping' that annoys people, it's the lack of respect for communities – leaving trash, stealing fence posts, parking and camping close to houses, blocking access, verbal abuse. The list goes on.'

'I certainly wouldn't want to see access rights diminished – they generally work fine – but this year everyone seems to have lost any sense of what is right and wrong.'

'We always pick up plastic debris washed in on the tides, but the last two months it has been a cesspit of tourist waste and excrement.'

'The sad thing is that everyone on social media condemns the action of the idiots, but I still never see anyone else picking up rubbish when they see it.'

In the last few months, the problem has not been confined to what the sea brings ashore.

'We're no longer going to be cleaning up the beach every day as we have had enough.'

'The dirty tourists can wallow in their own crap like the pigs they are,' an angry Mr Parry commented on the page this week.

Asked by the Lochaber Times how bad the situation actually was, Mr Parry explained: 'I really despair for the state of some factions of humanity. No respect for anyone.'

'We used to live in Glencoe, so fully appreciate the state of the honeypot sites over there up around Arisaig, Glencoe, Glen Etive, Glen Nevis etc.'

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MPS visits Lochaber Leisure as staff get ready for reopening

MSP Kate Forbes recently dropped into Lochaber Leisure Centre in Fort William to meet High Life Highland staff and hear about plans to reopen the building safely.

From Monday, gyms and swimming pools can reopen – and the Belford Road facility will welcome back users that day.

The Lochaber MSP heard from High Life Highland staff, including chief executive Steve Walsh, about some of the changes in how the centre



Lochaber Leisure Centre reopens on August 31.

will operate. She said: 'I know many people rely on the gym for their physical and mental health. As such, it has been very difficult to see gyms still

closed, as part of lockdown. I spoke to High Life Highland about the steps they are taking to embed guidance in the Lochaber Leisure Centre, so that people can have confidence that they will be safe when the gym reopens on Monday.

'I spoke to some of the staff who had been furloughed about their experience and desire to see the gym reopen.

'We all want to move into the next phase of the route map to ease out of lockdown, but it is

important to do so when it is safe.' Mr Walsh added: 'We have had to make changes to the way we operate at all our locations, including Lochaber Leisure Centre, to accommodate enhanced cleaning, one-way systems, social distancing measures and booking systems to ensure our members and customers can return to our locations safely and in line with the Scottish Government's guidelines.

'But I can assure everyone that local teams are most

certainly ready-to-go. The feedback about our reopening received from members and customers has been extremely positive and it is clear many people are looking forward to getting back to their local facilities.

'We will be communicating directly with our customers throughout the course of this week, offering advice on how to access services and what they can expect when they arrive back at the local leisure centres from next Monday.'

Skye earthquake rattles windows

A number of residents on Skye reported windows rattling and house beams creaking during a small earthquake that struck the island on Friday.

The British Geological Survey (BGS), which monitors earthquakes and seismic activity around the world, recorded the event as a 2.6 magnitude quake at a depth of 7km at about 5.40pm, a few miles north east of Isleornsay.

The 'quake was felt by residents in Isleornsay, Teangue, Kyleakin, Kylea, Breakish, and Camuscross – all on Skye – as well as in Glenelg, Scallasaig, Ratagan, Bernera, Saraig and Inverie.

More than 30 reports came from within 20km of the earthquake location.

Typical reports including descriptions such as 'walls and floor shook', 'windows rattled', 'beams in the house creaked', 'sounded like a door banging', 'sounded like an explosion' and 'it was like thunder followed by a rumbling'.

READMORE
www.lochabertimes.co.uk

Injured Lewis-born white-tailed sea eagle may have hit wind turbine on the island, says SSPCA

The Scottish SPCA says an injured sea eagle it was called out to rescue on Lewis recently may have collided with a wind turbine on the island.

Scotland's animal welfare charity was alerted to the injured eagle, also known as a white-tailed eagle and which is the largest bird of prey in the

UK, on August 10 at around 6.20pm.

Scottish SPCA auxiliary inspector Maggie Adkins said it was clear the eagle had a serious head injury and was also being eaten alive by midges.

'It was found in a remote part of the island close to a large wind turbine so this is likely



A sea eagle

to have been the cause of its injuries,' she added.

'I immediately took the bird

to the Old Mill Vet Practice, where it was given pain relief and medication.

'After an x-ray, thankfully no breakages were found but the bird had severe bruising to the body as well as head trauma.

'As the eagle had an RSPB leg ring and tracker attached to its body, I contacted the local

RSPB representative, Robin Reid. He was able to confirm that the bird had been born in June 2009 on the island.'

At present, the eagle is healing from its injuries and eating well. The Scottish SPCA hopes it will soon be recovered enough to be released back in to the wild.

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LT

Podcast examines '45 rising fallout

It was the Stuart dynasty's last throw of the dice, a desperate gamble to reclaim the British throne.

Two hundred and seventy-five years later, the Jacobite uprising of 1745 and how it helped to shape the world is examined in a new podcast, released by the National Trust for Scotland.

August 19 was the 275th anniversary of the raising of the Royal Standard at Glenfinnan by Prince Charles Edward Stuart and the start of the last Jacobite rising.

In the latest episode of the National Trust for Scotland's For the Love of Scotland podcast, Professor Murray Pittock, Scottish historian and trustee and history advisor to the trust, talks about how this moment in history continues to resonate today.

'Without the Jacobite rising of 1745, Great Britain would not have developed as it did and the British Empire would not have developed as it did,' he said.

'Without Glenfinnan and the standard being successfully raised and the coming in of the Camerons (Clan Cameron), the rising would have never taken place.'

Work starts on car park

by Mark Entwistle
mentwistle@obantimes.co.uk

With visitor numbers rocketing by a massive 147 per cent in just five years to more than 460,000 in 2019, the National Trust for Scotland site at Glenfinnan has become the charity's most visited property.

This means the current car park at Glenfinnan is experiencing more than 2,000 visitors a day, according to the NTS.

Glenfinnan is already a popular destination for its historic associations with Bonnie Prince Charlie and the Jacobite rising of 1745, with large numbers visiting the National Trust for Scotland (NTS) Visitor Centre and the Jacobite Monument.

However, it is the Jacobite steam train crossing the nearby viaduct as the Hogwarts Express in the Harry Potter series of films along with the Outlander books and associated television series that

have boosted visitor numbers to unsustainable levels and causing major congestion and safety issues on the A830 trunk road which splits both sites.

But residents of the tiny hamlet on the shore of Loch Shiel are hoping the new community car park, which saw construction work start this week, will ease these growing traffic problems.

Two years ago, The Highland Council in partnership with Glenfinnan Community Facilities SCIO secured £269,906 from the first round of the Scottish Government's Rural Tourism Infrastructure Fund managed by VisitScotland.

The project is matched by £115,674 in LEADER grant which is part of the Scottish Rural Development Programme (SRDP).

The fund aimed at promoting economic and community development within rural areas.

The 10-week project started on Monday and is being man-



Construction of the new community car park at Glenfinnan got under way at the start of this week. Photograph: Mark Entwistle.

aged by the council's Project Design Unit and the principal contractor is Wills Bros Civil Engineering Ltd.

Chairwoman of Glenfinnan Community Facilities SCIO Fiona Gibson said: 'Glenfinnan community is very excited that practical work on building this much-needed car park is going ahead.'

'We would like to

thank Highland Council, VisitScotland, Scottish Government and LEADER for their support and we look forward to providing visitors with a suitable place to leave their vehicles whilst visiting the area.'

Councillor Allan Henderson, commented on behalf of himself and the area's other elected members, Ben Thompson and Denis

Rixson, said the trio were delighted that the work was due to commence.

'This has been a monumental effort from a small community, overrun with problem parking, delivered by a small, focused facilities group, in conjunction with the local landowner, who turned adversity into an opportunity to improve the visitor experience through the Rural Tourism Infrastructure Fund,' he said.

The Highland Council in partnership with Glenfinnan Community Facilities SCIO also secured additional funding of £53,704 from round two of the Rural Tourism Infrastructure Fund with a successful Crowd Funder to match, organised by the community for the final phase of the Glenfinnan Viaduct project.

This will soon see a new footbridge and path link the new car park to the existing path to the viaduct, preventing visitors having to walk on the main trunk road.

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Adopt an exhibit at Glencoe



Curator Catriona Davidson with Glencoe Folk Museum's 'Hamish', who is up for adoption.

Glencoe Folk Museum has launched two new initiatives, three weeks after reopening following the relaxation of coronavirus lockdown restrictions.

Museum curator Catriona Davidson said: 'We made a lot of exciting changes over winter – for example installing our Coffin Boat – so we are thrilled to finally be welcoming visitors back to the museum to see these new exhibitions for themselves.'

'We've been quite busy since we opened at the start of the month, but everyone has been very respectful of the new rules.'

'I think it's great that people are doing their bit for Highland tourism by visiting museums like ours.'

The museum is also appealing for anyone who would like to be involved in shaping the charity's future to think about becoming a trustee.

No previous experience is necessary, just a passion for preserving local history and culture and a willingness to get involved with the Highland community.

Kirsteen Paterson, chairwoman of the museum, said: 'We are a small volunteer museum which attracts visitors from all over the world and

are poised to redevelop and create a truly modern visitor attraction.

'To achieve this we welcome new trustees to join our friendly international team to provide strong governance and clear direction for the organisation.'

'We think this might appeal to people who have become used to working remotely during lockdown – our meetings mostly take place remotely already so it's a great opportunity to get involved without leaving your home.'

See the website www.glen-coemuseum.com for more.

Fundraising for the museum's redevelopment has been on a hiatus owing to Covid-19.

Most of the major funders approached, such as the National Lottery Heritage Fund, have redirected most of their reserves towards the pandemic response, but the museum anticipates applying again by the end of the year.

Meantime the museum is offering a quirky 'adopt an object' fundraising scheme where several of the prize artefacts, from the nameplate from a 'Clan' class steam locomotive right down to 'Hamish our Heilan Hunk' tartan model which can be 'adopted' for two years – the perfect gift.

Work starts on Staffin construction project

Construction work is under way on a £1.6million housing, health and economic project on Skye.

The eagerly-awaited site start in Stenscholl, Staffin by island-based James MacQueen Builders comes 21 years after the last affordable housing development opened in the north-east Skye community.

Six three-bedroom homes, a

health centre and two business premises will be built in the next 12 months – a welcome boost for Skye's economy following the impact of Covid-19.

Staffin Community Trust (SCT) has developed the project for six years after concerns about the lack of available accommodation for young people and families, the falling roll at Bun Sgoil Stafainn and

the declining population.

It will be SCT's biggest capital project, with significant Scottish Government support.

The common grazing land was previously owned by Scottish Ministers and tenanted by the Stenscholl Township.

Donald MacDonald, a founding member of SCT, was delighted at works starting, but was frustrated it had taken six

years to build only six houses.

'This community has seen a decline in population due to existing policies and planning regulations which deter development. Surely, in these challenging times, it is time to relax the rules and the public purse to allow communities to thrive and for people to have confidence in their ability to deliver,' he said.

clearyourhead.scot'. Below this bar are four logos: the Healthier Scotland logo (a heart with a white 'X' inside), the NHS Scotland logo, the Scottish Government logo, and the Breathing Space logo (a square with the words 'BREATHING SPACE' inside)."/>

LT

VIEW FROM THE CHAMBER

Be proud of your all that
you have contributed

This strange time we find ourselves in has given us all an opportunity to reflect on how we live, what we do and how we do it.

Our usual work patterns and environments may still look quite different and the way we think about our work and what we do could be going through some changes too.

Are you proud of what you do and where you work? You might find your answer to that very revealing.

Many of us are so used to getting on with the job and achieving the goals in front of us, that we don't take time to think about how we feel about our work and the contribution we're making to the bigger picture.

Have you ever been guilty of answering the question of what you do with a 'I'm just a ...'? Hopefully not, as there is no such thing as a 'just a' role.

Every role contributes to the success of a business and thinking about your role

differently can make a big difference to how you feel about the work you do.

By the same token, employers should make sure that ALL employees feel valued for the contributions they make and are supported to do the best job they can. These are tough times but let's be proud – and help each other to be proud – of the work we're doing.

So, what key steps can an employer take to encourage employees to have a sense of pride in their work and create the kind of company that people are proud to work for?

Here are five suggestions to inspire and motivate your team to be proud of what they do:

■ Show employees that their work is important – link their roles to the success of the business as a whole.

■ Encourage (and reward) your team to take more responsibility – delegate from the earliest possible level in your company.

■ Set goals – then let people find their own ways to achieve them, even if it's different to the way you'd do it.

■ Give your team a real sense of ownership – let everyone have the opportunity to experience different aspects of the business beyond their direct role.

■ If you're the boss – don't make all the decisions yourself.

If you'd like to learn more about great ways to inspire your colleagues, instil pride and create great teams, why not find out more about our 'One Lochaber' leadership course? It's specially designed to give you the practical understanding and management skills to help us all work better together.

Go to www.lochaberchamber.co.uk for details.

YOURSTORY

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Memories of 1
the centuries

by Mark Entwistle
mentwistle@obantimes.co.uk

It may be almost three centuries since Prince Charles Edward Stuart watched his father's royal standard rise into the August breeze at Glenfinnan, on the shore of Loch Shiel, but the impact of that momentous day still lingers on in Lochaber.

Few in Moidart and the wider Lochaber area are as well versed in the history and lore of the Jacobite Rising of 1745 as Glenfinnan resident Tearlach (Charlie) MacFarlane. He is probably the most well-known and eminent specialist on Moidart genealogy.

What sets him apart as a historian is his deep knowledge of the links that flow from the '45 still to this day in this part of the Highlands.

Just when it seems that all the stories about Bonnie Prince Charlie and the rising have been told, Tearlach always manages to surprise the listener with a startling new nugget of information.

Speaking to the Lochaber Times at his home on the edge of Loch Shiel, he told how the area's famous monument to the clansmen, who rose for the Jacobite cause, was officially opened in 1815.

'When the monument opened in 1815 it is said there were old men in attendance who remembered, as boys, witnessing the actual event of the prince raising the standard. Even if they were only 10 years old in 1745, that would have made them 80 in 1815,' he explained.

'So if there had been a few boys aged 10 at the opening in 1815, by the time they were 80 it would be 1885.

'And then some 10-year-old boy speaking to one of these men in 1885 would be 80 in 1955 which is not that long ago. You're only talking about going back a little more than three generations to someone who was actually present on that day in 1745.

'When I was young, people still talked about it as if it had just happened.'

Tearlach, who was born beside Loch Leven, opposite Glencoe, but grew up in Fort Augustus, added: 'There was an abbot at Fort Augustus, who I vaguely recall, and he



Tearlach MacFarlane making the opening speech as chieftain of the 2017 Glenfinnan Gathering. Photograph:

Abrightside Photography.

said to my father that he could remember sitting on his granny's knee when he was very small and her telling him how she remembered seeing Prince Charlie in Rome as an old man, on his way to church, with his daughter on his arm.

'That would have been around the late 1790s. So if the abbot was in his 80s, he would have been speaking in about 1935. The time gap just spans three generations. It's not that long ago.'

Tearlach moved back to Lochaber in the 1960s and has never been away from the area much since.

'Even when I came here to Glenfinnan in 1971, the prince was referred to frequently as somebody quite recent. It had such a massive impact on the Highlands as a whole, and especially around here. It was very much imprinted onto people's memories.'

'I once knew an old centenarian lady, back in 1972 or 73 in Arisaig, and she remembered her great-grandmother talking about giving a mug of milk to the prince when he was on the run after Culloden. That was remembered down through her family.'

Historians record the fact that many Highlanders, clan chiefs and clansmen alike, were reluctant to join the rising. Asked if that was how they felt, why did they still join, Tearlach explained: 'It was

said that in Moidart, and this probably applies in other places in the Highlands, a lot of people didn't want to know, the ordinary clansmen I'm talking about here.

'But their fathers and grandfathers had fought in the '15 and at Killicrankie and they had to honour their forebears. Of course, there was also allegiance to their chief, but they were mainly doing it for their families as much as anything. I wouldn't like to have been living then, as it would've been very difficult making that choice.

'And if the chief joined, the clan followed. It was that simple. Same with the Reformation.

'They couldn't be certain it would fail. It so happens they could've succeeded but spies gave them false information that they were outnumbered and about to be encircled and that was why they retreated. But it wasn't true at all and if they had continued I think they could've taken London.

'It wasn't impossible for it to work. There are so many 'ifs' in history.'

After the prince and his army were defeated at Culloden in 1746, the British government launched what was tantamount to a process of ethnic cleansing in the Highlands.

The Act of Proscription (1747) was aimed at destroying the military power of the clans

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1745 rising linger on down in Moidart and beyond



The 1745 portrait of Prince Charles Edward Stuart by the artist Allan Ramsay. Photograph courtesy of the Scottish National Portrait Gallery.

and saw the banning of traditional Highland dress and the possession of arms.

'I was thinking about the Act of Proscription earlier. The British Empire saw some terrible things done to indigenous peoples but there is no record of anywhere else where the people were forbidden to wear their own clothes,' said Tearlach.

'People were stitching pleats of their kilts together to make it qualify as pair of shorts or trousers. It was a terrible, terrible thing.'

While the power of the clans and their chiefs had been on the wane for some time before the 1745 rising, the aftermath of Culloden and the Clearances sped up the disintegration of Highland culture.

'After Culloden, the laws were seen as a way of breaking the bonds of clanship. It took away the law of jurisdiction of the chiefs and those that were left in control of their lands were mostly bankrupt,' said Tearlach.

'Change had been happening in the Highlands prior to the '45, but very slowly. Since then there have been a great many changes. The culture and language is only just hanging on. As someone once put it,

trying to keep Gaelic culture alive is like being in bed with an elephant!'

One of the most important changes that gathered pace after Culloden was the severing of the bond Highlanders felt with the land.

'The bond with the land was something that was very strong in the Highlands and goes back before the feudal system came to Scotland and the Highlands.

'But from the Middle Ages onwards, it started to affect chiefs and chieftains who suddenly find themselves, made official on parchment, the owners of ground. Before that nobody owned ground, the ground owned the people. There was a feeling that people belonged to the ground, not the other way around.

'And when people emigrated or were cleared off the land in the Clearances, it was not just about leaving relatives and friends, it was leaving the land they had been part of for generations and that is not always understood.

Tearlach said the '45 rising 'remains important, not just because of the loss of life involved, but because of the loss of a whole culture and way of life.'

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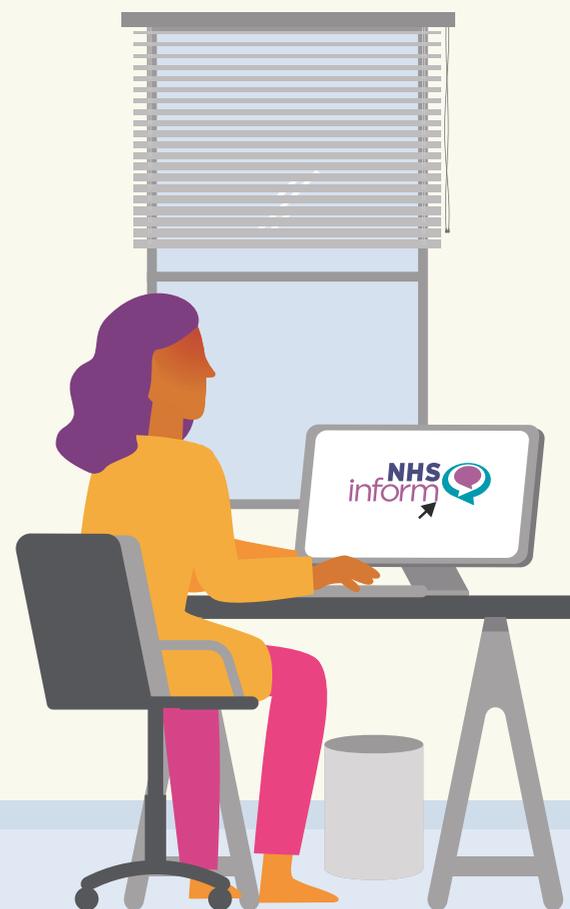
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Month of road works on A828

More than half-a-million pounds of surfacing work by Transport Scotland has started at parts of the A828 where it skirts Loch Linnhe.

The work covers a three kilometre (1.8-mile) stretch between Ballachulish and Appin.

Closures started on Monday, August 24, between 8pm and 5am. Amnesties – to allow escorted traffic through at certain times – will follow in the weeks to come.

No works will be carried out on Friday or Saturday nights and the project is due to be completed by 5am on Thursday September 17, said BEAR Scotland.

The programme is:

■ A828 South Kentallen – from Monday August 24 to Sunday 30 (five nights)

■ A828 Appin North – Monday August 31 to Sunday September 6 (five nights)

■ A828 North of Kentallen – Monday September 7 to Wednesday 9 (three nights)

■ A828 Ballachulish Hotel – Thursday September 10 to

Wednesday 16 (five nights) 'At each location, amnesties will be provided at 10pm, 12am, 2am and 4am. During these times vehicles will be safely escorted through the site under a 10mph convoy traffic management system,' said the spokesperson.

Emergency services will have access at all times.

The A828 will remain open during the day to keep disruption to a minimum, it said, but with a speed restriction of 30mph as traffic runs on a temporary surface.

Eddie Ross, north west representative for BEAR Scotland, said: 'These surfacing projects across these four locations on the A828 will help address any defects and greatly improve the road surface for motorists.'

'We need to close the road overnight to ensure both our teams as well as road users are kept safe during the project, however, we've arranged for the project to take place overnight and are avoiding working at weekends to minimise disruption.'

Benbecula dancers win US titles

by Mark Entwistle
mentwistle@obantimes.co.uk

Two talented young Western Isles dancers have bagged the titles of US Open Champions to add to their already impressive string of honours.

Carly MacKay is the Under-14 US Open Preliminary Champion from a field of hundreds of international dancers, and Naomi Menzies is the Under-11 US Beginners Champion – brilliant achievements for both.

They are members of the Benbecula-based Laird Dance Academy (LDA), which specialises in Irish dancing tuition.

LDA and its dancers secured 45 medals, eight gold, 13 silver and seven bronze, from the US Open championships, which were staged virtually at Lake Erie, to add to those won at the recent Australasian championships.



Carly MacKay, right, and Naomi Menzies are now both US champions.

Academy teacher Lorna Laird told the Lochaber Times: 'We're absolutely delighted at what the school has achieved.'

'The Laird Dance Academy has now taken medals at world, European, national and international levels, a phenomenal achievement for a small school based

in Benbecula. Carly is the current European silver medallist having competed in Maastricht against a huge field of international dancers in April 2019, although unfortunately this year's event fell foul of the pandemic.

'She's also a world gold medallist, again, won in Maastricht and has won countless medals

at Scottish and British levels. She's never taken part in the US Open before now, so to win it at the first attempt is something extremely special.'

Since lockdown the dance school has been practising in virtual classes run by Lorna from the kitchen in her home.

'I felt it was important to try and keep the classes going for the children to help them through the lockdown since they couldn't even meet with their friends and were confined to their homes,' she said.

'They were fantastic and thoroughly enjoyed taking part in the online classes allowing them at least a bit of normality.'

'They competed in the virtual Australasian Open a month ago, securing 10 gold medals, 17 silver medals, 24 bronze medals and placed in 97 different competitions in total which was an amazing result for them all.'

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LETTERS

It's time to break away

Calls for Lochaber to have its own local authority are not new, but given the months of heated conflict between Highland Council and local councillor Andrew Baxter in particular, enough is enough.

Whatever the leadership of the authority thinks of Councillor Baxter, he is the elected representative for Fort William and Ardnamurchan – a no small section of the local population – and the latest reprimand is beyond farcical.

The latest row came about when Mr Baxter was publicly slapped down by budget leader Alistair Mackinnon after Mr Baxter was given permission to speak. Mr Baxter condemned proposals seeking agreement from councillors to set up of a budget committee that would only meet in private.

We happen to agree with Mr Baxter that the proposal would seriously undermine openness, scrutiny, transparency and democracy.

It is hard enough ensuring Lochaber is not sidelined by the Inverness-based Highland Council. If our councillors end up being excluded from meetings because they are not on a committee, unable to challenge decisions that are not in their constituents' favour, how can that be seen as democratic? It's time Lochaber had a council that really is working for the people of Lochaber.

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 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. **The views expressed on our letters page are those of the contributors and do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of The Oban Times.** At the Oban Times we endeavour to ensure that all our reports are fair and accurate and comply with the Editors' Code of Practice set by the Independent Press Standards Organisation (IPSO). We realise, however, that mistakes happen from time to time. If we have published anything that is factually incorrect, please email: editor@obantimes.co.uk; telephone on 01631 568000; or email editor@obantimes.co.uk We will attempt to resolve your issue in a timely, reasonable and amicable manner. However, if you are unsatisfied with our response, you can contact IPSO by email: inquiries@ipso.co.uk. We will abide by the decision of IPSO.



New approach needed at Rest

Soil creep or debris flow at The Rest and Be Thankful will continue until the mountain is cleared of all loose material. Geotechnical engineers cannot stop such massive forces of nature with protective bunds or channels, and canopies would eventually be drowned with debris. An elevated approach road in the valley leading to a short tunnel at the top would permanently solve the problem and commuted cost calculations would show long-term financial benefits.

Mike Rayworth, Invercreran.

Motorhomers easy to blame

I have just read Kathie Griffiths' article on campervans and wild camping on Mull.

Firstly, I and many others in the campervans/motorhome community (at least 250,000) are extremely saddened at the bad behaviour of a few.

Most of us are over 50 years of age, with money to spend in your communities, all we need is somewhere fill with water and dump our waste. It works in Hawick, go check their attitude.

Most campsites want minimum of four night stay, which is fine for caravan owners, but the very nature of motorhome/campervans is that we are more mobile and will only stay in one place for one or two nights. Have a look at the CAMBRA website as well, speak to one of the organisers and publish our side of the story.

Once again, there is no excuse for dumping any kind of waste and I'm sorry if it was a genuine motorhome/campervan user but we are too easily targeted and I wouldn't be surprised if it came from other sources.

Trevor Skinns, by email.

Ardconnell school trip

In 1985 a group of children from Ardconnell school went on a trip to York with headteacher Donald Beckitt and his wife Anne and the late Helen Harold, school psychologist and local historian. The five children were Lissa Beckitt, Stewart MacIntyre, Karen Buchanan, Eilidh McNicol and Donald Mackay.

Does anyone know of their whereabouts?

I am Helen's sister and have some pictures of the trip that I'd like to pass on to them or their families.

Teresa Watson, teresandrew@yahoo.com

Working from home pitfalls

I noticed your article about councillors considering council staff working from home.

One of the problems with this is home workers who want to move home will have Capital Gains Tax issues to contend with.

Beachd Ailein

ALLAN CAMPBELL

editor@obantimes.co.uk



Chan e rud ùr sam bith a th' ann am mèirle, agus a dh'aindeoin linnnean de leasachadh eòlais agus shìobhaltachd tha goid fhathast cho bitheanta 's a bha riamh, agus mòran de na tha ris a' faotainn dheth leis a' chron. Tha gnìomhachas an fhearainn air aon raon coimhearsnachd a tha a' fulang gu mòr eadar stoc a bhith ga thogail air falbh, agus uidheam chosgail ga shìolpadh far thuathan is chroitean feadh na dùthcha. Gu mì-fhortanach cuideachd mar as motha tha teicneòlas ga leasachadh 's ann as motha tha mèirle a' fàs, agus tha a-nise an uidheamachd stiùiridh saideil anns na tractaran as ùire ga ghoid asta agus sin a' cur maille agus cosgais air obair thuathanaich thall 's a-bhos. Carson nach eil na h-eòlaichean innleachdail a tha a' cruthachadh leithid seo de ghoireasan gan dìon gus nach biodh iad gu feum sam bith ann an inneal eile. Shaoileadh tu gun cuireadh sin stad air a' mhèirle agus a' chosgais mhòr de gach seòrsa a tha na cois.

Theagamh gun can feadhainn gum bheil cuid a sheòrsa mèirle nas miosa na chèile ach aig ceann cùise tha mèirle a' ciallachadh gum bheil cuideigin a' toirt rud air falbh bho neach eile aig am bheil còir air. Faodaidh sin tachairt fiù 's ged nach biodh an neach a tha a' dèanamh an eucoir a' faotainn buannachd sam bith bho gnìomh a tha a' tighinn à ana-caitheamh air cumhachd, neo 's dòcha droch cho-dhùnadh feallsanach-

While a Capital Tax Gain would not usually arise when you sell your main home it will be a whole different ball game if you use any part of your home just for business.

Working from home tax will soon be the new normal for everyone but the administration of ABC, so were not all in it together – again.

Angus Files, sent by email.

Formaldehyde petition

The comments around Corin Smith's petition about the use of formaldehyde in freshwater lochs in last week's edition do not begin to do justice to the problems of chemical use in Scottish waters by the aquaculture industry.

Our seas are treated like a huge, uncontrolled chemical and biological experiment, supervised only in local pockets by SEPA. The attitude that a chemical breaks down quickly neglects the questions of what it breaks down into and how these products and it react in a complex environment.

There should equally be concern about the vast

dail. Fhuair miltean de mo ghinealach fhìn cothrom air foghlam àrd-ìre ri linn thabhartasan fialaidh ionmhais, ged 's dòcha nach robh sinn mothachail aig an àm air cho fortanach 's a bha sinn. Ginealach air adhart agus bha iomadach oileanach a' crìochnachadh an cuid foghlaim le fiachan nan uallach a' leantainn riutha fad bhliadhnaichean. Ach thar nan ginealaichean sin cha deach bacadh sam bith air na cothroman aig duine againn ri linn cò sinn neo cò sgoil às an tàinig sinn, bha cothroman co-ionann a rèir spàirn agus dealas an oileanaich.

'S iomadh duine a nochd a' bheachd gur e droch rud a bh' ann a bhith a' cruthachadh clàr èifeachdais sgoiltean feadh na dùthcha, gu h-àraid leis nach robh co-ionannachd shòisealach neo eaconamach anns na coimhearsnachdan a bha iad a' frithealadh. Cha robh sin idir a' ciallachadh nach fhaodadh comasan oileanaich a bhith pailt cho adhartach ann an sgìrean bochda! A dh'aindeoin a' chronachaidh lean an rangachadh air sgoiltean chun na h-ìre gun toinns a dh'fhàg cothroman foghlaim àrd-ìre òigridh feadh na rìoghachd gan goid bhuapa le co-dhùnaidhean eòlaichean a bha, agus a tha fhathast, cho càrr 's a ghabhas a bhith! 'S math gu dearbh gun deach an latha leis na h-oileanaich an turas seo, agus gur math a thèid leotha uile.

Allan Campbell, ailean@obantimes.co.uk

uncontrolled use of hydrogen peroxide at open sea farms, about the effect of medicines on the environment outside of the immediate area of a farm and the impact of both excrement and unused fish food on water quality and ecosystems more widely. The likely outcomes of this great scientific experiment are largely unknown.

Regulatory authorities take little or no interest in the relation between salmon farms and toxic algal blooms, dismissed as 'complex natural phenomena', or their part in shellfish toxins which are common in the region.

The stubborn refusal of the government, on economic grounds, to take an appropriately precautionary approach to aquaculture will ultimately have a huge negative impact, including economically, on all of us and our descendants. The parallels with global government attitudes to fossil fuels for the past century or so are striking. It's just about water instead of air.

Dennis Archer, co-convenor, Argyll & Bute Branch, Scottish Green Party, Oban.

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School successes celebrated despite lockdown restriction

Ardnamurchan High School's annual celebration of success was held virtually on July 2 from the more relaxed environment of head teacher Christopher Millar-Craig's home.

He thanked everyone for pulling together and supporting each other, during the recent challenging times - parents for helping children stay on task and engage with the work; young people for quickly getting on board with working on line through the G-suite; and staff, who worked so hard to change the way of doing things and deliver all aspects of learning and teaching on-line through Google Classroom.

Mr Miller-Craig added: 'Everyone has played their part to make, I believe, the last three months as successful as they could be.'

He highlighted a moving piece of work by Mrs White in the English department and head girl Janie Patterson, where pupils' voices were heard as they reflected on lockdown.

He also mentioned Alistair Tait's

success in the United Kingdom Maths Challenge; the school's two awards in the annual Film G competition, and the consequent invitation to the international film competition in Italy (cancelled due to Covid 19); the notable success of Helen Jones in the young chef competitions, where she won through to be invited to London for the final (again cancelled due to Covid 19); the excellent Youth Philanthropy initiative final this year, where S3 excelled themselves and made the school proud of them.

As a result £3,000 was awarded to the charity West Lochaber Hospital Transport project and the school's Digital Leaders, who supported other pupils, parents and staff through the year and worked together to gain the school its first prestigious Digital Schools Award.

The life and challenge and successes of the school before lockdown were also shared in the annual presentation 'that was the year that was', narrated by school captains Janie Patterson and Ian Kammerath.



The major award winners were:
Overall nominations for the school: Beth Jackson (S1)
Sgeulachd Trophy For Enterprise: Mya Carmichael (S2)
Rural Excellence Award: Nathan Fleming (S5)

Community Partnership Award: Mrs Jillian Campbell and Mrs Lyndsay Bradley
Rotary Club of Lochaber Prize for Endeavour Alistair Tait (S6)
Ewen Gillespie Memorial Trophy: Janie Patterson (S6)

From left are prize winners for CoS, Beth Jackson (S1), Nathan Fleming (S5), Mya Carmichael (S2), Alistair Tait (S6), Janie Patterson (S6).



The cyclists at the Maggie's Centre.

Plockton/Duirinish cyclists raise a whopping £18k

On August 15 Kenneth MacRae, Douglas Cameron and Alan Hendry from Plockton, with Michael Matheson from Duirinish, cycled 164 miles from Duirinish to Inverness and back to raise funds for Maggie's Centre in Inverness, which provides help for families affected by cancer.

They left Duirinish at 6am and reached Maggie's Centre at noon. They returned to Duirinish, Croft Cafe, which had sponsored the team, at 8pm to a great welcome from a large crowd. Support driver Iain Dobson was helped by Annan Dryburgh and Charlie G MacRae.

The cyclists hoped to raise £1,500 but the total is likely to reach more than £18,000.

Plockton and Lochalsh

A Plockton and district community trust, covering the same area as the Plockton and District Community Council, is seeking new members.

The trust will focus on sustainable development; arts, heritage and culture; recreation and the environment.

■ Kyle and Lochalsh Community Trust has secured funding of £350,000 to set up a community shed and make alterations to the toll office at The Plock.

■ Every year Johanna Maclean grows and sells plants in aid of Blythswood Care and this year she raised a record £1,232.

■ Recent deaths with Lochalsh connections have included - Robert Burr, ex-Plockton High School headmaster (1972-76); Rachel Matheson, Achmore; Marina Finlayson, Erbusaig; Elizabeth Hogg, Plockton; Helen Hay, Kyle; Dwayne Mackeay, Dornie.

Western Isles pools reopening but capacity limited

The announcement last week that gyms and swimming pools can reopen, following national guidance, from August 31 has been welcomed in the Western Isles.

A Comhairle nan Eilean Siar spokesperson said it was a positive step forward.

'In the Outer Hebrides, we face particular challenges with five of our six sports facilities being based in schools and our largest building, Ionad Spòrs Leòdhais serving the Nicolson

Institute during the school day. Our priority ... is getting our young people back to school and normalising their education as quickly as possible. This will mean for the first period of reopening up until the October school holidays, there will be limited access to all our facilities during the school day, to maximise their potential use by school pupils.

'This will be reviewed every three weeks and should schools not require to use these spaces

for education purposes, then we will increase access as promptly as we can.'

Pool and gym sessions will be booked in advance, with a 'pay as you go' system in place until it is possible to fully reinstate the 'Slàinte Mhath' scheme.

'There will also be very limited capacity to meet social distancing and other national guidelines, added the spokesman. 'We are grateful for your understanding in these uncertain times.'



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South Lochaber Thistle return to training

This week saw South Lochaber Thistle return to training as the Scottish Government continues the easing of Covid lockdown restrictions.

The Kinlochleven-based club had returned to outdoor, socially-distanced fitness training at Kilmallie Shinty Club earlier in the month, however, infringements of the lockdown regulations by footballers from Celtic and Aberdeen saw the SNP administration retighten restrictions.

However, as of August 24, adults

were permitted to return to contact training albeit with certain conditions in place.

Indoor facilities remain closed. Small-sided games are now allowed outdoors, with group sizes and coach numbers mandated.

Ten players requires a minimum of a quarter pitch and two coaches, 14 players a third of a pitch and three coaches whilst 18 players need a half pitch and four coaches.

Additionally, clubs have to have

appointed a Covid officer and players must be made aware of all protocols around arriving and departing training. South Lochaber secretary, Rebecca Small, has taken on the Covid officer role.

Training is scheduled to be running in Caol at 6.30pm every Wednesday while all High Life Highland facilities remain closed.

Local friendly fixtures remain unavailable but, all things being equal, will be allowed from September 11.

South Lochaber Player/Manager Alan Gray commented: 'It is excellent news that we can return to full contact training. It feels like it has been a long time coming and local friendlies will be along very soon as well, so it's important that we are as conditioned and fit and ready to go as possible.'

'We had a great attendance for our pre-season fitness sessions from both the men's and women's teams and I'm sure now we can get back to full on training this will only get better.'

Work completed on Point FC's new stand

Community wind farm organisation Point and Sandwick Trust has marked a new milestone – its biggest capital investment in a project to date, with the installation of a new stand at the grounds of Point Football Club.

A grant of £45,000 allowed for the purchase of the 100-seater stand from Stadium Solutions, with workers coming all the way up from Brighton to install it, together with the necessary groundworks.

Work was completed on August 10 – with the workers downing tools on Sunday to observe the local Sabbath tradition.

The stand is now gleaming and all ready for the start of the new season, in April 2021.

Point and Sandwick Trust board member Donald 'Buck' Macdonald is one of the coaches with the Point FC juniors and said it was 'brilliant to see the new stadium is now in place at Garrabost'. I know a lot of work has gone into getting it to this point. It looks fantastic and I can't wait to see it in use once things get back to some sort of normal.'

Point FC had decided to replace its stand as the previous one had become 'a health and safety issue' due to the extent of rust. As well as being eye-catching in the Point colours, the new one is also galvanised, so should not deteriorate in bad weather, and has 100 seats instead of the previous 50.

Rugby internationals swap boots for bikes

With virtually no cycling experience between the four of them, a quartet of Scotland rugby stars biked the 234 miles of the Caledonian Way for charity at the weekend, writes Fiona Scott.

Ruaridh Jackson, who earned 33 caps between 2010 and 2018; Richie Vernon, the first man to go to World Cups for Scotland as a forward then as a back; Ryan Grant, the former Scotland prop and 2009 Lions tourist and Andrew Easson, the former Edinburgh and Scotland Sevens player, were hoping to raise £5,000 in aid of Doddie Weir's My Name's 5 Foundation and Unite Against Cancer.

At the weekend the four intrepid cyclists passed through Fort William on their way to Fort Augustus as part of the ride from Campbeltown to Inverness that by Monday had already raised more than £7,000. Taking a break at Gairloch on

Saturday, Vernon, who retired at the end of the current 2018/19 season after a 13-year career that saw him play for Glasgow Warriors, Sale Sharks and London Scottish, as well as earn 24 caps for Scotland, told the Lochaber Times the cycle had gone well so far.

'We have been really cracking on and making good time. This is a bit different from our usual training and activity, so our legs are getting quite sore and it can be hard going tackling the inclines,' he said.

'We are really enjoying it and love the sections on the cycle path – especially the flat bits and have avoided using the road wherever we can.'

Making a brief stop by the canal side at Gairloch are, from left, Andrew Easson, Ryan Grant, Richie Vernon and Ruaridh Jackson.

Photograph: Iain Ferguson, alba.photos



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