

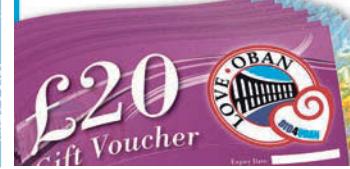
INSIDE THIS WEEK

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INSIDE!**

Calls for greater flood protection in Cullipool

by Kathie Griffiths
kgriffiths@obantimes.co.uk

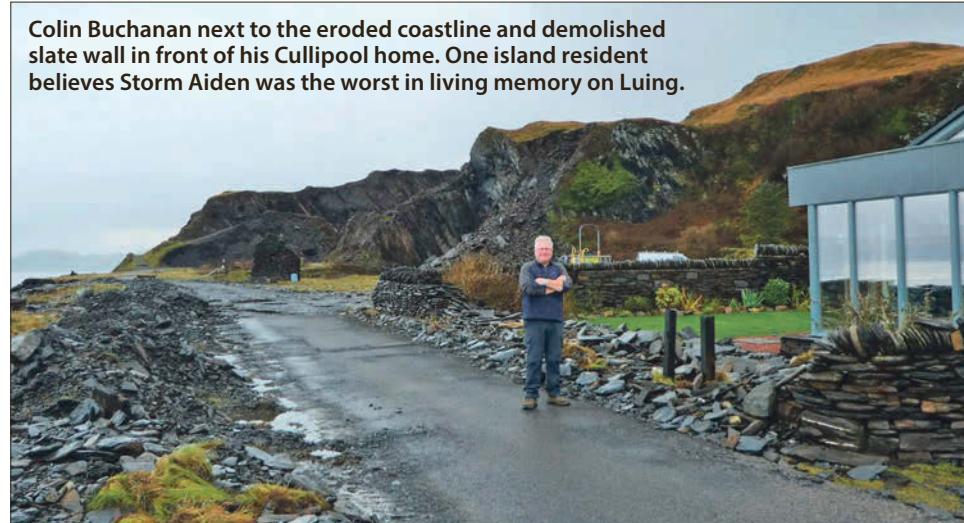
Island residents are calling in experts to help save their shore after Storm Aiden robbed it of more than 10 feet.

Flood protection to keep Cullipool safe from future storm surges is more urgent than ever, say worried residents after Luing was battered by powerful tides and huge waves that crashed inland, flooding some homes closest to the beach and destroying property.

Part of the coastline disappeared - dark water dredged the black sand and slate waste from the beach swept its way onto roads through the vulnerable village.

As well as devastation at the front of the white-washed village, water flowed like a river at the back of Cullipool, with some places two-foot under water. The storm spurred a massive mop up mission with villagers helping one another clear the debris, but the event over Hallowe'en weekend has heightened calls and the

Colin Buchanan next to the eroded coastline and demolished slate wall in front of his Cullipool home. One island resident believes Storm Aiden was the worst in living memory on Luing.



urgency for better sea defences. In February this year, islanders were invited to a public meeting to discuss coastal erosion and gauge peoples' thoughts and concerns. Colin Buchanan, whose home took the brunt of the storm with walls of water as high as 30 to 40 feet breaking against it, was tasked with pulling in expert advice on the best way to safeguard the disappear-

ing coastline. Not much has been left of earlier sea defences at Culipool, said Mr Buchanan, who had already linked up with Dynamic Coast Scotland before the latest storm and will be meeting with experts coming to the island soon.

'We will be seeking the best advice possible to see what can and what must be done to protect our coastline in a way

that will be sustainable. If we do nothing, in a couple of years we will have lost even more shoreline.'

'We must have lost between 10 to 15 feet of it in Storm Aiden - it's just gone.'

'We are looking for funding but we will need to have a detailed plan first,' said Mr Buchanan.

February's meeting was

co-organised by the community council with Luing Community Trust to explore whether an action group was needed to look at ways of keeping the island safe from future storms and flooding.

In the past, big boulders were placed along part of the front of Cullipool village as part of a community-funded defence system, with the help of Argyll and Bute Council. Although those defences had mostly still been holding strong, there had been reported signs of possible coastal erosion near the south corner of the settlement, close to old steps leading down to the beach.

Resident and Luing Stores owner Norman Bissell said he believed Storm Aiden had been the worst in living memory on Luing. 'Our flood defences were overwhelmed. We were lucky no-one was injured. If you doubt there's a climate emergency which has serious consequences for coastal communities, here was the evidence. It's a worry for the future,' he said.

Isle of Lewis ferry back in action

The MV Isle of Lewis has returned to service after a deep clean following three crew members testing positive for coronavirus.

CalMac confirmed on Monday afternoon the vessel was back on the Oban to Barra route with a relief crew in place having been cleaned by a specialist company.

Robert Morrison, CalMac Operations Director, said in line with strict procedures, the vessel was returned to Oban without passengers and underwent a deep clean before being returned to service.

Have your say on Oban harbour

An online opportunity for the public to have a say on the future of Oban's harbour has begun. The consultation went live on Tuesday and will run for one month at <https://ochda.scot/>

Oban Community Harbour Development Association wants to hear people's views as part of a plan to develop a community-led harbour authority for the town. The public's preferences over the seaward limits of the area which the new Harbour Authority will control are also being sought.

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OT

Oban residents help catch suspicious man

Sharp-eyed residents helped raise the alarm about a man acting suspiciously in Oban, the sheriff court has heard.

Stephen McLaughlan, 29, was spotted inside the secured yard of Howdens Joinery in Quarry Road, Oban, at 9.15pm on June 22 this year. A passing motorist saw him, as did a nearby resident who was alerted by an alarm going off, the court was told on November 4.

David Glancy, Procurator Fiscal, said residents saw the accused standing behind a vehicle parked by a wall and then move towards the front of the building in an effort to gain entry. He then scaled a wall and got into the grounds of Oban Mountain Rescue, said Mr Glancy.

Police were called and the accused was found nearby but told officers: 'It didn't happen', the court heard.

Appearing before the sheriff, McLaughlan, of Flat B, 6 Corran Brae, Oban, pleaded guilty to a charge of attempting to break into the warehouse occupied by Howdens with intent to steal.

He also admitted being found in a vehicle at Jane Road, Dunbeg, on April 11 without lawful authority to be there so that, in all the circumstances, it may be reasonably inferred he intended to commit theft.

No mitigation was offered and Sheriff Patrick Hughes told McLaughlan the incidents were 'serious matters'.

Sentence was deferred until December 2 for reports.

Christmas present appeal starts early

by Kathie Griffiths
kgriffiths@obantimes.co.uk



Oban's Salvation Army needs more Christmas Appeal donations than ever before.

Covid hardship has taken its toll on many in the community, says Morvern Finlayson who became involved in the appeal 12 years ago.

Because of the need to stick to Covid restrictions when handling people's kind donations, the annual appeal has started earlier than usual.

The number of needy children, elderly and most vulnerable adults in the area who are on the list to receive festive cheer from the 2020 appeal has increased significantly because of the pandemic, says Morvern.

Donations of new and unwrapped gifts can be dropped off at the Salvation Army Hall in Stevenson Street on Wednesdays and Fridays from 11am until 2.30pm.

Nationwide on George Street

has also agreed to be a drop-off point again. Masks must be worn, unless exempt, and social distancing respected, reminds Morvern. The last day for donations is Friday November 27.

The appeal works with social workers, child workers and community-based care companies to make sure those who would most benefit from the appeal receive a gift to open on December 25.

'The wonderful people of Oban are generous every year without fail and we are confident this year, despite Covid, will be no different. We could not do this without them.'

'Whether it is through furlough struggles, job losses or illness, we are definitely seeing an increase in the number of those needing our help this year, numbers driven up because of Covid. Poverty is here in Oban.'

Morvern Finlayson is appealing for donations to this year's Salvation Army Christmas Present Appeal.

Without this appeal there are children who would have nothing to open on Christmas morning,' said Morvern.

Gifts for teenage girls and boys are very much in demand this year as well as toys, hats, gloves, socks, chocolates, puzzle books and notebooks and toiletry sets for other age groups. A popular request high up on the wishlist is family games.

The donations are collated into age appropriate bundles by volunteers before being passed on to agencies working in the community such as social services and Carr Gomm. Donations of wrapping paper are also needed so parents and care workers can wrap the gifts themselves.

Last year about 280 children and about 275 vulnerable and elderly people received gifts from the appeal, said Morvern.

No change in Covid levels for Argyll and Bute

Argyll and Bute will remain at covid level two, First Minister Nicola Sturgeon told Holyrood on Tuesday.

But Argyll and Bute could be among local authorities dropping down to level one in the coming weeks, Mrs Sturgeon revealed following a review of the 32 council areas in the country.

Argyll and Bute will remain in tier two with Aberdeen, Aberdeen City, the Borders and Dumfries and Galloway.

There had been signs of 'improvement and stability' in these areas, but insufficient evidence of a sustained decline in cases, she said.

More recently, the Borders and Dumfries and Galloway had seen an increase in cases, ministers were told.

'We consider it sensible for these areas to remain in level two for now but we do remain hopeful that some or all of those will be able to move to level one soon,' said Mrs Sturgeon. Although cases in Highland and Moray remain 'relatively low' there had been 'volatility' in these areas recently, she said. However, one of the tier one restrictions – applicable to the three island authorities – will be lifted on Friday. It will allow residents to meet with one other household inside their homes up to a strict maximum of six people. But Mrs Sturgeon warned 'importation' of the virus to the islands remained a risk, so clear guidance will be published for anyone who goes to or returns to the islands from the mainland.

Team effort to deliver festive season cheer

Royal Mail is teaming up with Hope Kitchen to help collect Christmas gifts for children who might otherwise not receive a present this year, writes Kathie Griffiths.

Donations need to be tagged for a boy or girl, with a rough

age guide. The last dropping off day at Royal Mail's Customer Service Point in town is on Wednesday December 9.

Hope Kitchen is also collecting items for Christmas boxes for those in need this year.

The parcels will include adult

and children's gifts, as well as three days of meals – breakfast, lunch and dinner – including everything for a Christmas feast.

Items can be left at Tesco and Lidl in the special baskets at the checkout or dropped off at

New Hope in Soroba Road between 10am and 4pm, Monday to Friday, using the back door.

The deadline for donations is again December 9. Items will be distributed between December 14 and December 18.

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Thousands gifted to MND charity in Brian's memory

by Kathie Griffiths
kg Griffiths@obantimes.co.uk

A lifeline charity caring and supporting people with Motor Neurone Disease has received more than £7,000 from fundraisers in memory of much-loved Oban man Brian MacDonald.

Janis Hamill met with Brian's sister Tia MacDonald this week to hand over a cheque for MND Scotland after the charity helped him and his family during his brave battle against the muscle-wasting condition.

Janis, a friend of Brian's for more than 20 years, set up a Justgiving page to help buy a mobility chair for him. The £2,000 goal was quickly smashed and the total just kept on growing.

Retired firefighter Brian, who was just 43 when he died in July, was aware of the fundraising and was 'overwhelmed' by



people's generosity, said Janis. 'Brian told me he had to fund some of his own equipment and that was the motivation for me to do something to help. The kind of chair he needed costs about £10,000. I set a goal of £2,000, put up a Justgiving page and very quickly the money came in and just kept escalating. Brian was aware of

how much was being raised and was as overwhelmed as I and his family were. People's generosity was mindblowing, especially during the pandemic,' said Janis.

Tia added: 'The money came in from all over. Brian had so many friends and the power of social media helped too. After Brian passed away, we all

agreed the money should go to MND Scotland. They were good to him and to us.'

Janis added: 'Brian wasn't a celebrity like Doddie Weir but he did so much to raise awareness of the condition and the charity. He wanted it to be known. Brian was an inspiration, a fighter, he kept his patter and wit right up until the end. He was more determined than anyone I have ever known.'

Looking to the future, Tia and family are planning more fundraisers in aid of MND Scotland to help the charity keep up its vital work.

To fundraise for MND visit <https://www.mndscotland.org.uk/fundraising/organise-your-own-event>

'Please support us' is rally cry from Chalmers staff

Staff at Chalmers in Oban have issued a rally cry for shoppers to return after it reopened on Tuesday, writes Ellis Butcher.

News finally broke last Friday that operator Edinburgh Woollen Mill (EWM) has formally gone into administration. However, on Saturday, word came through that the Chalmers premises at 42-26 George Street – which has been closed for seven months and failed to reopen when high street shopping returned – would now be reopening on Tuesday from 10am with its five original members of staff. Under the administrators, it will trade again seven days a week, including 11am to 4pm on Sundays. Its long term future rests on a buyer being found and the shop being able to demonstrate viability in the countdown to Christmas.

Manageress Helen Hetherington has been employed there for 12 years and described it as a 'family', with staff members Mary, Iona, Morvern and Kimberley all dedicated to their roles.

Mrs Hetherington issued a

rally cry to shoppers who have sent well-wishes, saying: 'Please, please, come and support us. My staff are absolutely ecstatic but obviously a question remains over how long are we actually going to stay open for.'

Closing down posters will be going up, but Mrs Hetherington emphasised: 'Hopefully we are going to keep trading, show that we are profitable and get a buyer.'

She added: 'It would be devastating if Chalmers were to close. We still have people saying they used to run around in the revolving doors as children and we get visitors from America and China returning and Christmas cards from customers. We love our store and go above and beyond to keep our customers happy and once you work at Chalmers you are part of the family.'

Mrs Hetherington ensured that during the closure food-stuff had been distributed to the needy rather than thrown away.

On Monday, staff at the EWM-run McCaig's Warehouse were said to be still waiting on news.



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PIZZA EXPRESS 2 Any 12" Pizza + 12" Margherita served with Chips, Wedges, Onion Rings, 2 Sauces + 2 Pepsi 500ml £12.95	CURRY EXPRESS 2 Vegetable Pakora, Any Special, Karahi OR Balti Dish, Rice & Nan £9.99 (Lamb +£1)	GREEDY BOX Mixed Pakora, 2 Mince Samosa, 2 Mince Spring Rolls, Chips, Popcorn Chicken, Chicken Nuggets, Onion Rings, Donner, Salad, 2 Pita Bread, 2 Sauces, 2 Cans of Pepsi £9.99	KIDS EXPRESS 2 Chips, Popcorn Chicken, 2 Mozzarella Sticks and 12oz Ice Cream Shake £4.95	FAMILY EXPRESS 2 Mixed Pakora, Any Special, Karahi or Balti Dish, Rice, 12" Rosara Pizza, Donner Kebab Chips & Cheese and 2L Pepsi £22.99 (Lamb +£1)
PIZZA EXPRESS 3 Any 14" Pizza + 12" Garlic Bread with Cheese served with Chips, Wedges, Onion Rings, 4 Sauces + Pepsi 2L £17.95	SHARING CURRY EXPRESS Mixed Pakora, Any 2 Chicken Dishes, Rice & Nan, Slice of Chocolate Fudge Cake & 2 Cans Pepsi £17.99 (Lamb +£2)	MEATY BOX Chicken Pakora, Battered Chicken Fillet, Spicy Chicken Fillet, Popcorn Chicken, Chicken Bites, Chicken Wings, Chips, Donner, Salad, 2 Pita Bread, 2 Sauces, 2 Cans of Pepsi £11.99	Sharing Kids Express 10" Margherita, Chips, Onion Rings, Popcorn Chicken and 2 12oz Ice Cream Shakes £9.95	Family Express 3 Mixed Pakora, Any Chicken Dish, Rice & Nan, King Donner Nan, 12" Hawaiian OR Pepperoni Pizza + Chips, Cheese & Chicken Nuggets and 2L Pepsi £29.99 (Lamb +£1)

OT

Covid scare man told off by Sheriff Hughes

A man sparked a Covid scare at a hostel for homeless people in Oban which resulted in 'considerable inconvenience' for everyone concerned, a court has heard.

Steven Colin Pattison appeared before Oban Sheriff Court on Wednesday November 4 in connection with the incident at Solas in Albany Street, operated by Blue Triangle Housing Association.

David Glancy, procurator fiscal, told the court that at 10pm on October 5, Pattison verbally abused two members of staff who were starting nightshift. He refused to go to his room, told them he had suspected Covid and called them 'f*****g b****s and f*****g cows', said Mr Glancy.

His refusal to isolate left housing officers with no alternative but to call in police who then had to drive him to Glasgow causing 'considerable inconvenience' for everyone

In the aftermath, Pattison had 'cleaned the place up' and written an apology

concerned, the court heard. Other occupants in the Solas building were also advised to self isolate while his result was awaited. Pattison was tested on October 6 but found not to have coronavirus, Mr Glancy said. The accused pleaded guilty to a charge of behaving in a threatening or abusive

manner on October 5 and the same offence relating to a different incident at Solas on September 14.

In the latter, Pattison had tried to get into the building with a bottle of vodka but then had it confiscated by staff and was 'clearly unhappy' about it, said Mr Glancy.

Pattison told a female member of staff: 'Give me my f*****g bottle, I f*****g hate this place,' the court heard.

'If he was a child it would be described as a tantrum,' said Mr Glancy, who said Pattison tried to overturn a large bin but because it was too big he resorted to a smaller one.

Pattison then self harmed and had to be taken to hospital, he said. Ruben Murdanagium, representing Pattison, said

his client had mental health and alcohol issues but could not have face-to-face support, although he was now fully supported. In the aftermath of the incidents, Pattison had 'cleaned the place up' and written a letter of apology to staff, he said.

Of the Covid scare, Mr Murdanagium said his client had genuinely been ill and was suffering from a high temperature and not feeling well.

'It's not that he was faking it,' said Mr Murdanagium, who said the staff at Solas were happy with him to be there and understood his problems.

The background to both incidents stemmed from the fact his client had been living at Solas for quite some considerable time waiting

to be rehoused and was depressed that he had not moved on like others, said Mr Murdanagium.

Sheriff Patrick Hughes told the accused that telling organisations such as Solas and the police he had Covid placed them under more pressure than they were already.

Sheriff Hughes said he understood Pattison's difficulties but pointed out staff members had their own 'cares and problems' to worry about also, alongside their role of providing vital services.

'No-one wants to see you go to prison or to suffer but there's a limit to what people are prepared to take,' said Mr Hughes.

He deferred sentence until December 14 for reports.

POLICE FILES

At 7.15pm on November 3, on the A816 a mile south of Oban, a car allegedly collided with a parked car. Police attended and a woman, aged 61, was arrested for allegedly driving while under the influence of alcohol. A blood sample was taken for analysis.

A 32-year-old man was charged with careless driving and driving without insurance after a collision between a Fiat 500 and a Skoda Yeti at 5.20pm on November 4 on the A828 near Benderloch. Only minor injuries were sustained as a result of the collision and a report will be submitted to the Procurator Fiscal.

About 9.30pm on November 5, in Columba Court, Oban, a woman, 48, was arrested for behaving in an abusive manner. The woman was charged and issued with a Recorded Police Warning.

Sometime between 8.30pm on November 5 and 10am on November 6, at Shuna Terrace, Oban, the front passenger door of a grey Nissan X-Trail car was scratched. Police are investigating.

About 12.05am on November 7, in Miller Road, Oban, a man, 23, was arrested for behaving in an abusive manner. The man was charged and issued with a Recorded Police Warning.

About 1.10pm on November 8, in Stranraer Road, Oban, a 24-year-old woman was charged with assaulting another woman. A report will be submitted to the Procurator Fiscal.

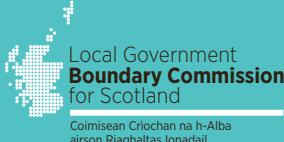
Sometime between October 8 and November 8, a dark blue Raleigh Randonneur bicycle was stolen from a communal garden at the rear of 51 Combie Street, Oban. Police are investigating.

About 11.05pm on November 8, in Glenfoot Terrace, Oban, a man, 20, was searched by police and allegedly found in possession of cannabis. The man was charged and a report sent to the fiscal.

About 9.50pm on November 7, in Ledaig, Oban, three men were disturbed trying to break into a wooden shed. Nothing was stolen and they ran off.

Anyone with information in relation to the above, or to any incident, should contact their local police station on telephone number 101 or anonymously through Crimestoppers on 0800 555111.

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Women's taxi fight ends up involving driver

An argument between two women in a taxi from Oban spilled over into a fight - with the driver also getting involved, a court has heard.

Lindsey Lawson, 34, and Matthew Moore, 21, both pleaded guilty to a single charge of assault on a woman at MacVicar Court, Dunbeg, on March 19.

Prosecutor David Glancy told the court the complainer and Lawson had got a taxi to Dunbeg and were collected by Moore.

The complainer was in the back, with Lawson, aged 34, in the front, but an argument developed between the two women, said Mr Glancy.

The taxi driver left them alone for a short time but a fight broke out inside the vehicle which then spilled out on to the street, the court heard.

Moore tried to break it up but was unable to do so and resorted to kicking the complainer twice on the head, Mr Glancy told the court.

The complainer was kept in hospital overnight and underwent an X-ray but had only suffered a scratch on the forehead and a soft tissue injury, the court heard.

Edward Thornton, representing Lawson, of 1 Hillside, Dunbeg, said the incident was 'totally and completely' out

of character and her view was that she acted in self defence.

'Lindsey Lawson is not someone who gets involved in this sort of behaviour,' said Mr Thornton. 'She allowed her temper to get the better of her and accepts she went beyond self defence.'

Mr Thornton told the sheriff the complainer in the case was 'well-known' to the court and had a 'substantial history' of violence, with too much alcohol having been consumed.

Moore, of 2 Victoria Place, Oban, was not represented by a solicitor.

Asked if he had anything to say, Moore told the court: 'Anything we did do was in pure self defence. She was way out of order and started fighting in the car before we even got out.'

Both accused were fined £150 each and ordered to pay it at £20 per fortnight.

Sheriff Patrick Hughes told the court that a line had been crossed and any suggestion of kicking to the head was 'inherently dangerous'.

Anger over Soroba 'snub'

by Kathie Griffiths
kg Griffiths@obantimes.co.uk

People living in Soroba are feeling like 'snubbed second-rate citizens' after notice to dig up roads on their estate was given just days before work was due to start.

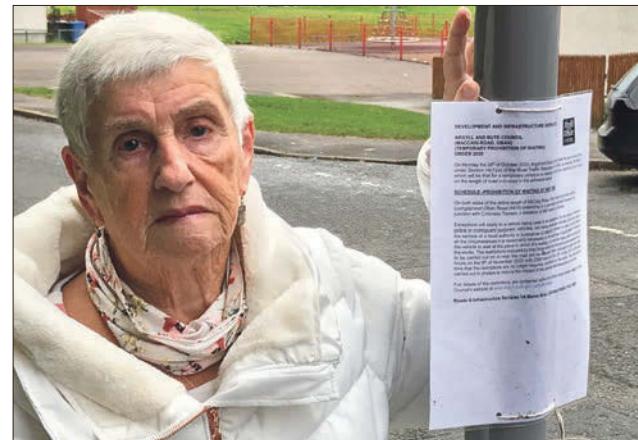
Essential work scheduled to take six months – for Phase 1 – due to start this week as part of a £2.7million investment to renew and upgrade Scottish Water's infrastructure in Oban, has now been put off until November 16 after residents complained they were not consulted first.

The water provider said the need to improve pipework was identified earlier this year but the pandemic postponed it.

According to residents, notices only went up on the estate a few days before work was about to start in Colonsay Terrace and McCaig Road.

Parking on the roads will be banned while work is being carried out but residents say they have nowhere else to go.

Soroba man George Berry said the lack of consultation



was a snub on the community, treating them like 'second-rate citizens'.

Marri Malloy from Soroba Community Enterprise Limited and chairperson of Oban Community Council said: 'To spring this major work on the people of Soroba with just a few days notice is an absolute disgrace. Even if they are not obliged to tell us because it's termed as essential, it's only courtesy. This work will cause mayhem.'

'There are eight roads filtering into McCaig Road and

there's seven school buses to take into account, as well as building work at the bottom of the road to build two houses. It's going to be a shambles.'

If, as the notices say, there is to be no parking of cars on the affected roads during the works where are residents supposed to leave their cars? It's not been thought through.'

After The Oban Times took residents' concerns to Scottish Water, details of the work were outlined to us. The first phase of the work will replace 1.8km of pipework between Colonsay

Marri Malloy says the timing of the work has not been thought through.

Terrace and the junction of McCaig Road and the A816. As it progresses, more investigation work will take place in sections of Jura Road and Shuna Terrace.

Road traffic management has been agreed with Argyll and Bute Council and temporary traffic lights will be in place, says Scottish Water. Although access to properties will be maintained, parking within the work areas will be restricted during that time.

Georgina Reid, Scottish Water's corporate affairs regional manager, said the essential improvements were needed to reduce the chance of water bursts, adding: 'We'd like to thank the local community and road users in advance for their patience and understanding while this essential work is carried out.'

'More information on phase two of the project will be released when it is possible to do so,' she added.

Oban playpark partially reopens

Council officials have partially reopened the playpark at Atlantis Leisure.

It follows a notice being placed at the site in Oban telling visitors the playpark was closed until further notice.

The play park was inspected as part of an annual once over with repairs required on individual pieces of equipment.

Councillor Elaine Robertson, for Oban, North and Lorn, said: 'Our guys from the coun-

cil have worked hard to open it for the children.'

Part of the playpark has been screened off and some defective equipment has now been removed.'

A council spokesperson said: 'We have reopened Atlantis playpark, but the items still requiring maintenance are closed off.'

We are working hard to source the necessary parts to do the repairs.'

Man fined for 'disturbing' assaults

A man who assaulted two people in unprovoked incidents in Oban has been fined £900.

Daniel Brandon Torrie, 21, of Connel Road, Oban, pleaded guilty at a court hearing in September to two charges of assault on November 22 2019 and June 24, 2020.

That hearing was adjourned for reports, with Sheriff Patrick Hughes telling Torrie at the time the incidents 'met the threshold of custody'.

Appearing at Oban Sheriff Court for sentencing on Wednesday November 4, Sheriff Hughes told Torrie the level of violence involved had been particularly 'disturbing'.

He added the assault on the visitor to Oban last November must have been a 'horrific experience' but he was prepared to regard the incidents as a one-off.

However, the Sheriff said he expected the incidents not to be repeated and imposed fines of £300 and £600 respectively to be paid at £50 per month.

Kevin McGinness, defending, said that Torrie, who worked on a fishing boat had fully accepted the findings of the reports and had taken full responsibility for both incidents.

He was regarded as a 'low risk' of reoffending, he added.

We must keep on protecting each other.

HANDS FACE SPACE

OT

Around Oban

KAY MCDONALD
editor@obantimes.co.uk

The first Christmas window has appeared in Button Nose Boutique and it's an absolute cracker.

I'd usually think it's a bit early, but this year anything that cheers things up is a huge plus and I think we all feel the same. I mentioned the Shine Bright Scotland Facebook page a few weeks ago and it inspired me to go and buy some wee Christmas lights for beside my front door which will be going out this week.

It's that time of year when the shops get all Christmassy and to encourage as much participation as possible among businesses in the town BID4Oban is running a competition for Christmas windows and displays, for those who don't have a window. First prize is £50, second is £30 and third is £20. It would be fantastic if as many businesses as possible were ready for November 19 which is the first of the late night shopping evenings, with judging starting the week of December 7. I can't wait to see what everyone comes up

WHERE IS THIS?



with this year. Don't forget to get in touch with BID4Oban on 01631 569915 or email admin@bid4oban.co.uk to let us know you're taking part. We'll also be sharing as many photographs as possible on the LoveOban Facebook page.

It's not going to be our usual Christmas this year, which I think we've all accepted, but that doesn't mean we can't make it beautiful, bright and merry.

The photograph last week, sent in by Margaret Powell-Joss, was Rangatira Place, running from Farmfoods to beside Coasters – I hadn't known its name until now. This week's is one of my own and perhaps a bit easier.

War heroes remembered

War heroes who made the ultimate sacrifice for their homeland were remembered across Oban and outlying areas this year but in a different way as a result of the pandemic, writes Kathie Griffiths.

Despite Covid restrictions, wreaths were laid, with social distancing respected at war memorials on Oban's Esplanade, on Luing, Seil and at Kimeldorf, as well as other neighbouring communities.

Netherlorn Churches streamed an online Remembrance Service, led by Maura Rae, including the Godly Play story they had hoped to share with Easdale Primary School this year.

Although there was no official parade in Oban, people and organisations visited the seafront memorial on Sunday to pay their respects.

Right: Neil Matheson, Deputy Lord Lieutenant, lays a wreath. Photograph: Ben Sunderland
Below: Councillors Roddy McCuish and Jim Lynch on behalf of Argyll and Bute Council. Photograph: Kevin McGlynn



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After careful consideration we decided to close on Sunday 8th November.

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Due to the Covid-19 situation, demand has reduced significantly to the point that we cannot cover the business costs.

Currently, we've no further plans for when we will re-open, perhaps a pop-up in December.

We'll keep our website and social media up to date with future plans.

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Remembered in Oban and Lorn



Clockwise from far top left: Oban High School pupils paid their respects at Oban War Memorial. Photographed, from left, are: Ailsa Dowd, Clan Leader of Somerled; head girl Freya McKechnie; head boy Alik Aleynik and Bethany Dunlop, Diarmid Clan Leader. Photograph: Kevin McGlynn. Councillor Alastair Redman lays a wreath at Portnahaven on behalf of Argyll and Bute Council; Oban Rotary Club President Kees Von Rein at the memorial, flanked by Iain MacIntyre and senior vice president Dave Walther, prior to laying a wreath on behalf of the Rotary Club of Oban; people paid their respects at Taynuilt. Photograph: John Murphy. Wreath layers at Kilmelford were Mary Sandilands, representing Royal British Legion Scotland, and Sarah Edwards, representing Kilmelford Community Fire Station. They are pictured with the Reverend Walter Ritchie and piper Jim Robb; People on Seil paid their respects at Balvicar.

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OT

Christmas countdown as Oban gets in festive mood

Businesses and services large and small across Oban are being urged to spread some comfort and joy this Christmas by putting on a fabulous window or interior display, writes Ellis Butcher.



Bid4Oban has announced the timetable for those wanting to take part in its winter window competition and can choose from either a Christmas or winter wonderland theme.

With Christmas just six weeks away, Andy Spence, chief executive of BID4Oban, said the competition was open to any type of business from retail to hospitality.

He said ideally it would be useful to have displays on show for the first of the town's late night shopping events on November 19 when the town's Christmas lights are lit.

Anyone entering has to email BID4Oban via admin@bid4oban.co.uk so judges have a list of premises to visit.

Judging will take place during the week beginning

December 7, with the winners receiving Love Oban vouchers of £50, £30 and £20 for the top three places.

The winners will also be revealed in The Oban Times on December 17.

Mr Spence said Christmas displays always help lift the mood of the town and get people in the festive spirit, this year more than any other.

'We would love to see everyone getting involved and everyone doing something – no matter how big or small,' he said. Mr Spence also urged people to shop and spend locally as much as they can.

The sharp-eyed will already have spotted the first signs of street decorations starting to go up in Oban this week, while a large Christmas tree is expected to be delivered to Argyll Square next week.

People will also be asked to use social media to help identify businesses which have great displays and have gone the extra mile.

Preferred pylon plan fails to spark support

by Kathie Griffiths
kgriffiths@obantimes.co.uk

Pylon protestors in Dalmally have vowed to challenge power giant SSE's bid to get planning permission for a new transmission line.

The No Pylons In Dalmally group said Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks (SSEN) had not formally advised the community it had chosen its preferred route after public consultation.

The route SSEN now wants to progress to upgrade its North Argyll transmission network is Option 3 – a new overhead line connection built east of Dalmally and a new substation.

The original route was an overhead line to the existing Dalmally substation which people worried would bring more lines through the village.

SSEN's Project Manager Paul McQuillan said based



Locals want to avoid more pylons being built in the village.

on the feedback received from consultations and engagement supported by technical, environmental and engineering studies, they were 'progressing with option three'.

'This option reduces the impacts on local communities by bypassing the need to connect to the existing substation in Dalmally,' he said.

But No Pylons In Dalmally said the recent online consultation was 'not thought out' and

claimed SSEN did not address the fact a large section of the community was 'unable to take part', either because they did not have an internet connection or because their broadband speed was inadequate.

'SSE was made aware of this but went ahead anyway. As a result, the so-called public consultation only reached approximately 10 per cent of the community,' said the No Pylons in Dalmally campaign

team which, supported by the community council, intends to challenge SSEN's forthcoming planning application and wants to see a public inquiry into it.

'None of the routes proposed by SSE in the consultation process are good for the Dalmally area. At very best, Option 3 is the least bad. It at least means that for now, residents of Glenview and the children who attend the primary school will not be subjected to any additional life threatening electromagnetic radiation emitted from the overhead lines.'

Glenorchy and Innishail Community council chairman John Kerr blasted the outcome.

He said: 'There is no need for this transmission line to come anywhere near Dalmally. Using the existing route via Inveraray to Ardlui, owned by SSE, is the obvious solution.'

SSEN plans to hold a further consultation next spring.

Win!

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The spa team comprises an Ayurveda practitioner, herbalist, aromatherapist and sound healer; all coming together to weave the magic of Ardrhu House for a bespoke spa experience. World-famous brands like Ila and Temple Spa are part of the ranges of products used for these exquisite treatments available exclusively in Scotland at Ardrhu House.

Treatment choices vary in length and include a therapeutic range for insomnia, restlessness, anxiety, stress and exhaustion. The massage treatments are popular with male and female customers and a couples' visit includes some amazing rituals to be shared together side by side in the same treatment

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- 90 minute treatment of your choice, for 2 people
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Enter the competition today for your chance to win!
Simply tell us, Ardrhu House sits on the edge of which loch?
You can enter the competition via the Oban Times & Lochaber Times website at <https://wyvexmedia.wufoo.com/forms/qqv324j16cnwu/>
The winner drawn at random from all entries will be notified on Friday 27th November – so don't delay, enter today! Entries close at 5pm on Thursday 26th November.
For more details on the spa offering at Ardrhu House, visit <https://www.ardrhuhouse.com/spa>

T&C's: The winner will be notified by email/telephone where provided. The prize redemption will be valid until 31st March 2021, excluding Christmas and New Year. All entries will be disposed of after the competition in line with GDPR rules. No cash alternative. Editor's decision is final. For full T&C's see the entry form online.

Prize value £180!

Applications open for new Scottish Child Payment

The Scottish Government is launching a new benefit scheme for families.

Scottish Child Payment starts on February 15 2021 and will give families on certain benefits and tax credits an extra £40 every four weeks for each child under six.

Social Security Scotland will deliver the benefit on behalf of the Scottish Government. It is expecting huge demand which is why they are asking you to apply now.

By taking applications early, they can make sure they have all the information they need to check eligibility. This will help them make a decision on your application and, if eligible, make payments as quickly as



possible once the benefit starts.

To get the payment your child will need to be under six years old on Monday February 15. You'll also need to be getting one of these - Child Tax Credit,

Income Support, Pension Credit, Working Tax Credit, Universal Credit, income-based Jobseeker's Allowance or income-related Employment and Support Allowance.

If you apply before Monday February 15, your payment will be calculated from Monday February 15.

Make sure you get all the money you are due by applying in advance.

If you apply after Monday February 15, your payment will

be calculated from the date you apply.

Social Security Scotland delivers a number of benefits for families. This includes Best Start Grant Pregnancy and Baby Payment, Early Learning Payment, School Age Payment and Best Start Foods. You apply for Scottish Child Payment and all of these using a single straightforward form.

Mhoraig Green, Strategic Lead for Social Justice, Citizen's Advice Scotland, said: 'We are

really looking forward to the new Scottish Child Payment. We know lots of families in Scotland are facing tough times at the moment and are struggling to make ends meet and this new money will help to make their lives easier.

'What's really important is that everyone who is entitled to the payment makes a claim when applications open in November.

Citizens Advice Bureau are working in communities across

Scotland to help people to access the social security they are entitled to. So, if you are unclear about whether you are entitled or you need help applying then please get in touch and our Money Talk teams will be able to help you.'

Stacey Bush, 36, of Girvan, South Ayrshire, said: 'I have three children aged three, five and 17. When my husband was furloughed and out of work we didn't have a lot of money. I relied a lot on my nan and my

mum. This new payment would mean I wouldn't need to do that. I could put it towards shopping. We do struggle so it would help to take the stress away – clothes, shoes, and I'd probably like to spend it on a day out. We don't ever have the money to do fun things with the children, so I'd like to spend it on something like that.'

For more information or to apply for Scottish Child Payment, visit mygov.scot/benefits or call 0800 182 2222.

Staff well-being is priority after bullying claims

by Kathie Griffiths



Argyll and Bute's Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP) insists staff's health and well-being is a priority after a former HR manager spoke out about bullying he said he faced at the organisation.

In a recent interview with a Scottish daily newspaper, the man described the HSCP - a partnership involving Argyll and Bute Council and NHS Highland - as being an 'absolute nest of vipers', saying it led to depression and him being signed off work for four months only to return to be told his role no longer existed.

Last year saw a damning report into NHS Highland's management culture by John Sturrock QC.

One of the recommendations from the Sturrock Report was to carry out a Culture Survey for NHS Highland staff in Argyll and Bute and this took place in February and March this year.

The findings from the survey were published in May and an apology was offered to colleagues who had indicated they had experienced bullying and harassment. A 100-day action plan to address the key findings was immediately put in place.

Due to staff confidentiality, the HSCP would not comment on individual employees either past or present who have participated in that process.

But Joanna Macdonald, Chief Officer of Argyll and Bute HSCP did say, following the man's allegations in the media: 'The health and well-being of staff is a priority for the organisation and earlier this year we established the Healing Process which enables former and current employees to access an independent team of external advisers to discuss their concerns about their experience of bullying and harassment.'

'This is in addition to launching an Employee Assistance Programme and an external Speak Up Guardian service for employees.'

'We also set up an Argyll and Bute Culture Group, consisting of representatives from staff, managers, stakeholders and unions, which is focused on the delivery of the action plan, identifying local priorities in relation to the Culture Programme and identifying any training and development needs that are required.'

HAVE YOUR SAY
email us at editor@obantimes.co.uk

Specsavers stays open with safety in sight

SPECSAVERS is urging people to continue to look after their eyes and hearing health during the current restrictions, after one in three people noticed a deterioration in their eyesight and others in their hearing during the first lockdown¹.

While many retailers are having to close at the moment, opticians and audiologists are deemed essential healthcare providers and can therefore remain open. This means that Specsavers can continue to offer a full range of services that include:

- Eye and hearing tests
- Home eye tests for people with a physical or mental disability who are unable to leave their home

- Contact lens consultations
- New glasses and frame repairs
- Hearing aids and repairs

Specsavers are also offering remote services for people who are self-isolating, vulnerable or unable to leave their home. These include:

- RemoteCare – a free nationwide consultation service offering advice and care via video and telephone link
- Online shopping with a current prescription
- Ask The Expert – a web-based and Facebook group answering all your eye and hearing health concerns seven days a week

Clinical services director, Giles Edmonds, says: 'We want to reassure customers that it is absolutely safe to book an appointment or come in as scheduled as we have all the necessary safety measures in place. We have adapted our ways of working so we can remain open to serve the public's health needs and every store is adhering to strict government guidelines to

ensure customer and colleague safety remains paramount.

'As providers of an essential health service, we have played a key role in looking after people's eye and hearing health throughout the pandemic and are pleased that we can continue to do so, while also playing our part in relieving some of the strain on our partners in the NHS.'

To find out more information, request an appointment or browse the online store, visit specsavers.co.uk/stores

Specsavers

¹Specsavers customer panel survey of 1,618 respondents, 1 June 2020. 32% of people have noticed a deterioration in their eyesight during lockdown. Specsavers customer panel of 482 respondents, 1 June 2020. 6% of over-65s experienced difficulties in their hearing when having phonecalls during lockdown.

OT

Man with binoculars put on sex offenders register

COURT

A man found guilty of using binoculars to watch a two-year-old girl has been ordered to complete a 200-hour community pay back order and register as a sex offender for five years.

Kevin Hobbs, 32, appeared before Oban Sheriff Court on Wednesday November 4 for sentencing having been found guilty at a trial last month.

Hobbs, formerly of 11 Croft Avenue, Oban, and now of 69 West Princes Street, Helensburgh, had denied behaving in a threatening and abusive manner which was likely to cause a reasonable person to suffer fear and alarm.

It related to an incident in Oban on June 1 where he was accused of having loitered at a bedroom window and used binoculars to observe a two-year-old girl who was playing



in her garden in a state of undress.

At the trial last month, the court was told both parents described spotting him watching them from inside a house nearby.

When he realised he had been seen he 'jumped to one side and hid', the court heard. The mother told the trial: 'I felt shocked. I was concerned he was looking at my child.' The

father had gone to the house to confront him.

Hobbs had elected not to give evidence at the trial but had told police he was looking for the family cat. However, Sheriff Patrick Hughes found him guilty of the charge.

Hobbs' solicitor, Michael Sweeney, told the sentencing hearing: 'He maintains he was not guilty of the offence but accepts the court's decision. Mr Hobbs' position is that he was not behaving in that manner.'

'There's a background between him and his neighbours and he considers that they were attempting to engineer a situation away from their accommodation.'

Hobbs had consumed alcohol on the day of the offence and was working with different agencies on offender management and alcohol consumption, added Mr Sweeney.

Sheriff Hughes said the of-

fence was 'deeply concerning' to the parents.

The 'threshold' for custody had been passed, he said, and it was 'very concerning' that the offence had been committed while Hobbs was already subject to a community punishment order and signing the Sex Offender's Register.

That related to a previous conviction from December 2019 and concerned the possession of thousands of indecent images of predominately female children aged between nine and 15.

Sheriff Hughes told the accused: 'The use of binoculars denotes looking at the child in particular detail. I am satisfied that there was a significant sexual nature to this with a young child wearing shorts and a t-shirt.'

Hobbs is required to complete the community pay back order within 18 months.

Sentence deferred on man of 'impeccable character'

A man of 'impeccable character' has appeared in court following the breakdown of his 16-year marriage.

Stephen Francis Peter Craig, 50, pleaded guilty to a single charge of behaving in a threatening or abusive manner towards his wife at their Oban home on September 17.

The sheriff court was told the accused had 'significant' health issues and his wife was his main carer.

Since a terminal illness diagnosis in January, followed by having to shield through lockdown, there had been a decline in the relationship, the court heard.

On September 17, she said she intended to leave and Craig 'took it badly' by shouting and swearing which put her in a state of some fear and alarm, said procurator fiscal David Glancy.

Craig's solicitor, Kevin McGinness, said his client was on 'experimental medication' and also suffered from Tourettes syndrome.

In early 2020, the marriage had become 'tense', said Mr

McGinness, and in July he had asked for a divorce, although no positive steps had taken place.

Of the incident, it occurred following a discussion about car insurance. He had found both her tone and comments 'deeply offensive' and felt he had been 'deliberately provoked', Mr McGinness told the court.

Moved

Craig, who had moved to live with his mother in Glasgow, was facing 'extremely challenging' circumstances but was a man of 'impeccable character' with no criminal record, Mr McGinness said, and no intention of finding himself in court again.

At the hearing on Wednesday November 4, Sheriff Patrick Hughes told the accused: 'This is clearly a very difficult time for you.'

Sheriff Hughes accepted that the incident was a one-off rather than a pattern of behaviour.

Sentence was deferred for three months with Craig ordered to be of good behaviour until then.

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Oban panel's mission to boost access awareness

by Kathie Griffiths
kgriffiths@obantimes.co.uk



Two thousand fliers will soon be spreading the word about an access-for-all group making living with a disability easier in Oban, Lorn and the islands.

Oban Access Panel, a registered Scottish charity made up of people with varying disabilities and supporters, is on a mission to improve getting around, in and on streets, paths, businesses, buildings and transport.

Work by volunteers to keep people safe and encourage access awareness dates back to the 1970s in Oban but the need for the initiative to grow is now bigger than ever, says

Marie Harrower, who joined the panel three years ago after concerns she had about the lack of distinction in pedestrian and traffic space in an area between the Esplanade and bus station

where taxis also operate. Shared space is a no, no – certainly for people who have visual impairments like me,’ said Marie, who is blind and runs a private physiotherapy practice in the town.

From promoting social inclusion to encouraging businesses to better position advertising boards and street furniture, such as al-fresco tables and chairs, and advising on shop

layouts and builds before they begin, the access panel is on hand to help.

It has a trained auditor who can carry out access checks for community organisations and businesses and there is the opportunity to take up the offer of organised awareness sessions and training to help people understand disability requirements, said Marie, who worked

on the fliers with Argyll and

Marie Harrower and Andrew Spence show off the new leaflets.

BID4Oban, whose chief executive Andrew Spence is one of the panel’s directors.

‘Part of the panel’s work is to help businesses, whether it is helping increase their awareness from employing people with disabilities to making sure their premises are easy and safe to access. We are here to support businesses, not catch them out,’ said Mr Spence.

‘We hope our new leaflets will help spread the word more about what we do and how we can help,’ he added.

Anyone who wants to find out more about the panel’s work can also join meetings held on the second Tuesday of every second month. The next one will be in January.

Oban also has a Shopmobility service provided by Matheson’s Furnishings, Tweedmill, Soroba Road.

For more details or to get help from the access panel email obanaccesspanel@aol.com

Full-time roles for Coastguard volunteers

Two Argyll volunteer Coastguard Rescue Officers are taking up senior positions in the organisation.

Jaimie Alexander is staying in Argyll and Colin Willis will be taking up a job in Lerwick, Shetland, in their new roles as Senior Coastal Operations Officers.

Coastal Operations Area Commander for Argyll and the Isles Dave Graham said: ‘Just one of the many reasons for volunteering for HM Coastguard is the opportunity to apply for full-time positions. Volunteering doesn’t guarantee you the job but having coastguard experience is beneficial. It’s really great to see our volunteers getting the opportunity to work full-time. They bring operational experience and a passion to the role, as well as bringing their own unique experience from their professional lives.’

To find out more about volunteering visit www.gov.uk/volunteer-as-a-coastguard and contact the relevant area email address.

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OT

Oban telecoms tower plan withdrawn

Controversial plans to install telecommunications equipment, including a 25-metre tower near an Oban farm park, have been withdrawn.

Plans for the site west of the former Oban Rare Breeds Farm Park off Glencruitten Road were lodged on December 13 2019.

Of 68 public comments submitted to Argyll and Bute Council, 66 were objections.

No reason was provided for the withdrawal of the application.

A lot of the objections related to the potential visual impact and flooding issues at the site.

The plans were submitted by Glasgow-based Mono Consultants, acting for telecoms giant EE.

It is part of a plan to upgrade the Emergency Services Network, including three antennae and two 60m satellite dishes.

Surveyor Naomi McAdam said in the original statement: 'This proposed telecommunications site is required as part of the Emergency Services Network, an integral part of the Emergency Services Mobile Communications

Programme. 'Mono Consultants Limited are acting as agents for the Home Office, lead department for delivery of this government programme, which seeks to replace the existing Airwave blue-light communications system with a 4G platform. The proposed site that is subject of this application is required to cover a minor road connecting Glen Lonan to Oban and the surrounding area.'

'The acquisition, design and build undertakings are being overseen by EE which has appointed Mono Consultants as part of its supply chain to secure planning consents for the required sites.'

'The proposal outlined in the application is identified as the most suitable site option and design that balances operational requirements with local planning policies and national planning policy guidance.'

The statement went on to say: 'The choice of design at this site has been influenced by the location and the requirement to provide uninterrupted, high quality emergency services communications coverage to a section of unnamed road between Glen Lonan and Oban and the surrounding area.'

'The proposed lattice tower will be 25m to top, which is the necessary height required to ensure the antennas can

meet the emergency services communications network coverage demands.'

'Given the sensitive nature of the proposed site location, the green lattice mast has been selected as it is considered that the lattice design allows light to pass through the structure thus reducing bulk and mass, thereby helping to minimise the visual impact.'

Faulty valve caused Oban water stoppage

Scottish Water has said a faulty valve was to blame for the water going off in parts of Oban.

Householders in areas near the hospital found their supplies off for a time on Wednesday November 4.

A Scottish Water spokesperson said: 'Some customers in Oban experienced an interruption to normal supplies due to a faulty valve on our local network.'

'Steps were taken to identify and rectify the issue and bring customers back into normal supply.'

'We apologise for any inconvenience this caused for the local community and thank everyone for their patience and understanding.'



Children from Appin have been using the new playpark regularly.

Community joy at opening of playpark

The opening of a playpark in Port Appin has marked the end of a huge community fundraising effort, which was almost undone by the Covid lockdown.

Funding criteria meant the village playpark had to be completed by the end of August but lockdown delays meant that deadline was under threat.

Appin tradesmen Ronnie MacColl junior and Allan Colthart helped to ensure the ground was ready for the new equipment which was erected just in time, much to the delight of the children who have been visiting the playpark every day.

The £42,000 project at Shuna View was led by a parent group headed by Louise Davidson and by Penny Cousins and Bob Cornish of Appin Community Development Trust.

Louise said: 'The playpark has been a fantastic addition to the communities of Appin and Port Appin. There's barely a day goes by that children are not using it, despite the autumn weather. I am extremely grateful to the community for its support and for the work of Appin Community Development Trust.'

Funding for the equipment came from the Argyll and Bute Leader Programme; Awards for All; West Highland Housing Association; Scottish Sea Farms; Aggregate Industries; Argyll Community Housing Association and Highland Titles.

There was also a fundraising drive across the wider Appin community which included raffles, an afternoon tea, a ceilidh, bingo, a sponsored walk

and a tombola, which paid for site preparation, insurance, health and safety training and signs. The site was previously owned by West Highland Housing Association but when the original playpark needed to be replaced, the land was transferred to the community. Previous local consultation through the community trust had identified a new playpark as a priority.

Bob Cornish, Appin Community Development Trust chairman, said: 'The building of this playpark underscores how, with the right support, interested groups in our community can secure valuable services. We are delighted for the Appin Young Families Group and for the children who will benefit from the successful project.'

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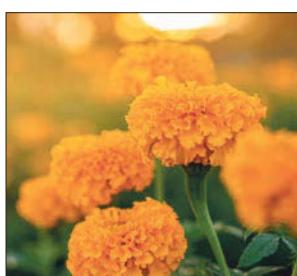


Eye to eye with John Wallace

Why Marigolds Can Help Your Eyes

Measuring how well you see is complex. Optometrists measure the size of objects you are looking at (visual acuity) and also consider the quality of your vision. If you drive in fog you can see what is in front but it is very hazy. That's called contrast sensitivity. Visual acuity and contrast sensitivity are both heavily influenced by diet. The two most common causes of vision loss are cataract and macular degeneration. Both are strongly related to increasing age, but are also influenced by poor diet and exposure to blue light.

In the human eye the macula (that's the area that provides us with high definition vision) is protected from aging and the damaging effect of blue light by yellow pigments (carotenoids). These pigments are



not naturally occurring in the human body and are provided in our diet. Recent research has found that eating a healthy diet rich in fruits and veg is insufficient to maintain the high levels of protection the macula requires. I have long been an advocate of eating lots of spinach, broccoli and kale. All of which are known to help reduce the risk of macular degeneration. But, with the best will in the world, it is not

possible to obtain sufficiently high levels of carotenoids from our diet simply eating fruit and veg.

We cannot stop the aging process but it is possible to modify our diets to minimise vision changes. EU funded Irish research has found that oral supplementation rich in lutein, zeaxanthin and meso-zeaxanthin significantly improves visual function even in the healthiest individuals. Lutein, zeaxanthin and meso-zeaxanthin supplements are derived from Marigold flowers. They have also been shown to improve cognitive ability and research is now studying Alzheimer patients who, as a patient group, have the lowest levels of macular pigments.

John Wallace BSc (Hons), FCOptom, DipCLP

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Permanent fix needed to save Easdale harbour

by Kathie Griffiths
kgriffiths@obantimes.co.uk



Easdale harbour is at risk and the ferry service is in jeopardy unless more work is carried out soon to give protection, the leader of Argyll and Bute Council has been warned.

Former Highlands and Islands MSP and Easdale resident Mike MacKenzie says more dredging is urgently needed otherwise it will become impossible to run the ferry service and there is a danger the island will lose its harbour altogether.

Work to dredge the harbour's entrance was only completed a couple of weeks ago says Mr MacKenzie, but Storm Aiden took its toll.

Easdale and Seil Community Council chairman Zim Knight agrees a more permanent solution needs to be found, saying: 'We are aware the harbour wall has been breached just a matter



of weeks after the council finished repairs. We will actively work with the council to find a permanent solution.'

In an open letter to council leader Robin Currie, Mr MacKenzie said: 'The cost of this work must have been significant. Unfortunately Saturday's gale, the first of this winter, has resulted in the shin-

gle bank, which protects the harbour, and much of the work done by council contractors has already been undone because no further steps have been taken to protect and stabilise the loose shingle bank and harbour entrance. I would ask that you arrange further dredging.

'Unless this is done soon it will become impossible to

Mike MacKenzie at Easdale harbour where permanent repairs are needed, he says.

run the ferry and there is a danger we will lose the harbour altogether. I would stress again more permanent protection measures should be put in hand otherwise the council will continually face further and needless expenditure.'

An Argyll and Bute Council spokesperson said: 'Had we not carried out recent work, storm damage would have been much worse. So that is a positive.'

'We hope any future plans for the harbour can be taken forward in partnership with all users - council, community and commercial. The first step would be a feasibility study to consider constructing breakwaters to the north of the channel.'

'We would hope to issue the brief before the end of the financial year.'

Row at home leads to court appearance

A man who was punched during a night out was arrested by police back at his own home, Oban Sheriff Court has heard.

Darren Hoyland, 50, pleaded guilty to a single charge of behaving in a threatening or abusive manner at 4 Polvinister Gardens by shouting, swearing and acting in an aggressive manner on October 3.

Someone heard the disturbance and called police, the court heard on Tuesday November 3.

Procurator fiscal David Glancy said police officers went to the scene and heard a male shouting.

They found teenagers inside along with the accused and his partner.

The couple were both heavily under the influence of alcohol, said Mr Glancy, and Hoyland was unhappy about an event that had taken place earlier.

Jane McLaren, representing Hoyland, told the court he had been upset about being punched by someone on a night out and had been trying to explain this to his partner.

However, he accepted that his behaviour could have

made others upset, said Mrs McLaren.

The couple had been together for two-and-a-half years and they all had a 'very good' relationship, said Mrs McLaren. Her children considered him a 'very nice person' and like a father, she told the sheriff. His partner had not wanted to play a part in the proceedings against him and they remained together, the court was told.

Hoyland's bail conditions had required him to live separately from them since the incident a month ago, she said.

'He wishes only to return home to reside with his family,' said Mrs McLaren.

Sheriff Patrick Hughes told Hoyland that because of his good background and to be satisfied the incident was just a one-off, sentence for the offence would be deferred until February 24.

Reports would be compiled to ensure Hoyland remained of good behaviour in the interim and there is no further offending.

Hoyland was allowed to return home as a result, the sheriff said.

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T&Cs: Winner must be able to collect vouchers from the BID4Oban Office, 43 Stevenson Street, Oban PA34 5NA at 10.30am on Monday 30th November. Digital Subscribers, please email a copy of your digital subscription email with a screenshot of each token to adverts@obantimes.co.uk. You will be interviewed by one of our trained journalists and photographed and this will appear in the Oban Times on Thursday 3rd December. We will protect your personal data. We only gather what we need for the requirements of this competition. Entry data will be deleted/disposed immediately upon the competition entry deadline and in a manner appropriate to GDPR regulations. Entrant's details will not be used for any other activity.



HOW TO ENTER

All 3 tokens must be sent in a single envelope to Oban Times Love Oban Competition Crannog Lane, Lochavullin Industrial Estate Oban, PA34 4HB. One token from each week is required, multiple entries are allowed, but must be submitted in separate envelopes. Photocopied tokens will not be accepted. Winners must agree to take part in publicity. Employees of Wyvex Media Ltd and their immediate family are not eligible to enter. The editor's decision is final.

OT

LETTERS

Community and Christmas

With our Christmas supplement in this week's paper hopefully getting you all in the mood for the festive season, the fact it won't be the same as other years doesn't have to be a bad thing.

This has been a tough year for a lot of us, but many people will also have counted their blessings, which may have come unexpectedly and out of the blue.

Like the rest of the year, when we have seen a huge amount of community spirit, where we have supported each other – our friends and family, our neighbours, our local charities and our local businesses – we hope this Christmas that will only increase.

As a region, we are blessed with the number of organisations and individuals there to help us through the tough times – Hope Kitchen, Martyn's Monday Club, Argyll and Bute Women's Aid and, yes, our local council and all its employees, to name a few.

We are blessed by the number of local retailers ready to go the extra mile in a way that the large, out-of-town businesses won't – that has been quite obvious throughout the pandemic if you didn't notice it before.

So while this might have to be a leaner Christmas than you would want, you have all you need round about you.

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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For press freedom with responsibility

Light shines in the darkness – particularly in times of Covid

Mae MacDonald (Letters, Oct 29) cites a section of the Gospel according to Matthew when reminding me of the importance of gathering for spiritual fellowship: For where two or three gather in my name, there I am with them.

Spirituality can seem like something nebulous or only to be fleetingly glimpsed at, a bit like an eagle on a telegraph pole as a train races over mountain moorland. If the train grinds to a halt, though, we are then forced to take much greater stock of our surroundings.

In 2001 I came to work temporarily at Dalmally surgery as a relief GP. At that time foot-and-mouth and the resulting farming crisis saw a number of restrictions on countryside access or activities. My plans for a season of skiing, fishing and walking were seriously disrupted; but God sometimes steps into what seems like random chaos to us, and gifts us a chance to take stock of life and explore spiritual matters.

As a militant atheist for many years, obsessed with outdoor activities and partying, it was a shock to have time to take stock of existential or spiritual issues. Over several weeks I explored the case for Christ in considerable detail and was shocked at just how much positive evidence there is for faith. I started attending Glenorchy Parish Church, and much to the amazement of friends and family in Ireland, went on to profess faith. This started an amazingly exciting life adventure.

Mae MacDonald is right to stress the importance of the positive message of hope which the Church brings to individuals and communities. The pandemic situation has the capacity to drive any of us to despair at times. We can easily get depressed as negative Covid news items unfold around the clock. It is good to knock the dust off the Bible and know that the light shines in the darkness.

Dr James Hardy, Belfast.

Forestry road is good news

In response to an article in the Lochaber Times (October 22) about the forestry road being built on Drimnin Estate, I would like to make the following points – a) The Drimnin community I'm sure welcomes the building of the road to take out the timber, as the alternative does not bear thinking about; b) The state of the B849 in several places is little better than a cart track and getting worse.

My partner and I have lived in Drimnin for

Write to us: send your letters to editor@obantimes.co.uk or The Editor, PO Box 1, Oban, Argyll PA34 4HB

Beachd Ailein

ALLAN CAMPBELL

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Thug mi iomradh anns a' cholbh seo air an t-seachdain a chaidh mun uabhas a bha air tighinn air pàirtean den Tuirc agus na Grèige a' leantainn crith-thalmhainn chumhachdach san sgire. Bha mi a' dèanamh deilbh de dhaoine nan èiginn bròin a' bùrach anns an sprùilleach far an robh àitean-còmhnaidh agus teaghlaichean a' fuireach roimhe. 'S e gun teagamh iomhaigh dhùilich a th' ann agus mun àm a chriochnaich an obair-teasairginn feasgar Dhiciadain seo chaidh bha ceud is sia deug neach air an lorg marbh agus bha mile is trithead 's a còig air an leòn.

Bha sgiobaidhean-teasairginn air a bhith ag obair mar pheilear am beatha bho ghoirid an dèidh dhan sgrios tachairt Dihaoine, agus tuigear an toileachas tiambahaidh a bh' orra nuair a chaidh clann òga a lorg. Ach còrr air ceithir latha air adhart bu bheag a bha dhùilis a' chòrr fhaotainn beò, agus nach b' iongantach mar sin an sealladh caileag tri bliadhna a dh'aois a bhith ga togail beò bhon bhùrach anns an robh i tioldhlaite fad còrr air naochad uair 's a h-aon! Cha b' iongnadh Mèar bhaile Izmir failte a chur air a' ghleidheadh a chaidh oirre mar mhiorbhail, agus adhbhar gairdeachais anns an dorchadas uabhasach a bha an sgire a' fulang! Tha e duilich aithris gun deach màthair na h-ighne a mharbhadh, ged a thàrr a h-athair is a bràthair às beò, agus chan urrainn dhomh gun a bhith smaoineachadh dè seòrsa

over 16 years and the decline in parts of the road has deteriorated to the extent that the subsurface is breaking up. Some time ago parts of the road were resurfaced with little disruption and we were told the remainder would be done. This has not happened.

I need to use a car as my partner has several medical problems, a heart condition being one. The constant wear and tear on my vehicle is a serious financial worry and one I can ill afford, being a pensioner on a fixed budget. Yours in exasperation

Brian Mullins Drimnin.

Other view on salmon study

I agree with Sally Campbell that the new salmon genetics study will achieve little, although for very different reasons. Any differences in stocks of wild salmon, if they ever existed, were wiped out a long time ago. As far back as the Victorians, rivers were being restocked with fish from any origin while wholesale slaughter of salmon

làraich a dh'fhàgas an tachartas air an leanabh sin. 'S dòcha leis gum bheil i cho òg nach lean mòran neo fiù 's dad idir na cuimhne, agus nach bu mhath gur ann mar sin a bhiodh agus, ged a bhios i gu nàdarra ag ionndrainn a màthair, gum bi saoghal fada sona an dàn dhi.

Chaidh aithrisean naidheachd mun chrith-thalmhainn a mhùchadh an ire mhath feadh an t-saoghal fo chuidream sgeulachd chrith-thalmhainn de shòrsa tur eadar-dhealaichte far an robh taghadh chinn-suidhe ùr Ameireagaidh a' gabhail aite bho Dhimàirt seo chaidh. Gu h-iongantach bha na h-eòlaichean bheachd a bha a' faidheadaireachd gum buannaicheadh na Deamocrataich gun chus strì fada ceàrr, a-rithist! Dh'fhàg sin farpais ghuineach a' leantainn fad làithean, agus suidheachadh cha mhòr do-chreidsinneach le Ceann-suidhe tè de phrìomh dhùthchannan an t-saoghal a' cur chasaidean foill an aghaidh an t-siostam taghadh phoilitigeach aig a dhùthach fhìn, agus a' bagairt a dhol gu lagh gus an taghadh a ghleidheadh. An dèidh ceithir bliadhna de bhurraindheachd is bhuaostaireachd Dhòmhnaill Trump chan eil 's dòcha dad a ni e a' cur annas air mòran, ach feumar cuimhneachadh gum do bhòt faisg air seachdad millean Ameireaganach air a shon a-rithist mar Cheann-suidhe! Dè tha an dàn dhan t-saoghal ann an solas leithid sin? An còir dhuinn a bhith draghail?

stocks for sport compromised any differences in the gene pool.

Most importantly, in 2012, the wild fish sector spent £1 million, mainly of taxpayers money I believe, to investigate the genetic make up of rivers across Scotland. They failed to find any differences, yet they persist with the idea that salmon of different origins are genetically different. The farmed fish is only about 10 generations away from the wild. How different can they be?

On one hand, the wild fish sector says farmed salmon aggressively mate with any wild fish in the river but then say any offspring are weak and inferior. If interbreeding should occur then Darwin's survival of the fittest would ensure that these inferior fish would not survive to pass their genes on.

The messages about farmed salmon are often confused by a small number of vocal activists who simply don't want to see salmon farming take place in their neighbourhood.

Dr Martin Jaffa, Callander McDowell.



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DISTRICT NEWS

Tiree rescue fundraiser receives seal of approval

A Tiree sea tours business has come to the rescue of volunteers saving wildlife on the island.

When Frazer MacInnes, who co-runs Tiree Sea Tours, heard about a fundraising appeal to buy a specialist seal stretcher, he offered to pay the lot, writes Kathie Griffiths.

Volunteers on Tiree have got used to 'making do' with make-shift kit to help them get seals and other wildlife out of danger but after a recent seal rescue they decided to launch a Justgiving appeal to buy a specially-made stretcher so it would be easier to carry them along the beaches and rocky shoreline.

A volunteer's coat was used to wrap up the latest rescued seal, putting it into a holdall bag and getting it to the vets after it was discovered at wave battered Balevullin in need of fluids and rest.

The next day the young common seal was ready to go back to the wild and the volunteers had to tie a couple of fish boxes together to transport it.

Hayley Douglas from Tiree Ranger Service, who was one of its rescuers, told The Oban Times: 'The seal was off like a rocket when it arrived back on the beach. We were all ecstatic but discussed how we could improve rescues in the future.'

Hayley contacted 1-2-1 Animal Handling



Volunteers with the new stretcher and, inset, the common seal pup pokes his head out of the holdall that volunteers used as a makeshift carrier.



Products which makes shark carriers for moving them between aquariums and they were so intrigued by her request they offered a stretcher at a discounted price. 'That evening we put the story out about the recent seal rescue along with a link to a Justgiving page and a target of £500. Within an hour of it going up, I got a message from Frazer MacInnes. Tiree Sea Tours wanted to pay for the stretcher!' said Hayley.

Frazer told Hayley his business relies on the wildlife in the waters around Tiree, so it was important they helped look after them too.

'I let the team know and by the next day we were buzzing as not only had we had this

great news, we had exceeded our fundraising target to £695,' Hayley added.

The new stretcher has now arrived and the volunteers, who include members of British Divers Marine Life Rescue are also in the process of ordering some other essential pieces of kit. We are incredibly grateful to Tiree Sea Tours, 1-2-1 Animal Handling Products and all the generous supporters of our appeal which will ensure the safety of rescued seals and cetaceans in the coming years on Tiree,' said Hayley.

Candlemakers shine a light in memory of Eilidh

Fundraisers from the Eilidh MacLeod Memorial Trust have teamed up with a North Uist candlemaking business to help support its charity work, writes Kathie Griffiths.

Family-run Hebridean Candles has just launched a new range of candles called Island Girl remembering the spirit and character of 14-year-old Eilidh from Barra who was a victim of the 2017 Manchester Arena attack.

Eilidh's family have helped work on the scent in a nod to summer strolls and machair flowers.

All profits from the sale of Island Girl can-



dles and waxmelts will go to Eilidh's Trust, which was launched in 2018 to support young musicians.

The trust also upkeeps a permanent memorial to the teenager and a garden of remembrance and reflection on Barra.

Robin Spratt of Hebridean Candles said: 'With the close involvement of Eilidh's family, I feel we have created a scent that captures many of Eilidh's favourite places and reflects the beauty of her island home. We are very happy to support the work of the trust in this small way.'

Founder of Eilidh's Trust Suzanne White added: 'We are grateful to Hebridean Candles for creating a beautiful island floral combination that creates memories of island summers – a time of year that Eilidh loved.'

Visit hebrideancandles.co.uk/product/eilidhs-trust-island-girl

At random

MARTIN LAING
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Beating the odds

I remain in awe of the business community in Oban, never more so than this year.

I feared widespread devastation to the local economy as a result of the pandemic but, while there have obviously been victims, the notable thing for me has been the business sector's astonishing resilience.

A number of jobs have been lost but the town's retail sector remains relatively buoyant despite the unprecedented pressures. Among the bullish retailers are Button Nose Boutique, which has moved to bigger premises in Airds Crescent, the new Retrophenia shop that has opened in George Street and Roxy's cafe, which has opened an outdoor area, also in Airds Crescent.

In last week's Oban Times, BID4Oban chief executive Andy Spence articulated the positivity infusing the business community. 'We have to reinvent ourselves,' he said, 'and make sure Oban is at the top of the list as a go-to destination.'

With that kind of upbeat attitude, there is every chance the business community will thrive in 2021, whatever challenges the year throws at us.

Cheers, John

I mentioned last week that Davie Buchanan and I had retired on Friday October 30 and we met at the Whisky Vaults, formerly the Woodside, to raise a glass to each other in the beer garden.

My host John McLachlan got wind of the occasion and brought us a couple of superb Glenfarclas 25-year-old drams. It retails at £21 a nip – considerably in excess of the cost of my usual imbibing.

John and his lovely partner Helen have now closed for the season to take a well-earned holiday after toiling cheerily without a break for months. It's a more than deserved hiatus. Enjoy your time off, both of you, and thanks again for your generosity.

What do you think? Send your comments to editor@obantimes.co.uk

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Mince Tarts

Ingredients

- Low calorie cooking spray

For the pastry:

- 225g plain flour
- pinch of salt
- 110g low-fat spread or butter
- Cold water, for mixing

For the filling:

- 16 level tbsp mincemeat
- 1 level tbsp icing sugar for dusting

• 2½ Syns each • 45 minutes • Makes 32

Santa will love these Slimming World mince pies!

Method

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

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BUSINESS NEWS

Award-winning diner shortlisted

The Real Food Café at Tyndrum has been shortlisted for a prestigious Catey Award to be revealed later this month.

The awards, organised by hospitality magazine The Caterer, are considered the ultimate mark of success for hospitality businesses and professionals across the UK.

The roadside diner is owned by Sarah Heward, pictured, and Alan McColm.

Their award is in the best marketing campaign category for its Gluten Free Fortnight campaign and has seen them shortlisted alongside Marriott International and Café Rouge.

The Real Food Café celebrated its 15th anniversary this year and specialises in fish and chips. It has been serving the 'gluten free' version for more than a decade - way ahead of the curve.

The diner set up an annual Gluten Free Fortnight in 2019 to celebrate securing an A Grade as a Coeliac UK Accredited Caterer for the fifth consecutive year.

Sarah Heward said: 'I am elated we have been shortlisted for this award. Honestly, to be up against international brands with huge budgets for campaigns is surreal.'

'We created the Gluten Free Fortnight to showcase everything that is good about our trade and industry: delicious food, a well-trained team delivering superb customer service and collaborations with suppliers. It created a fun environment and added value for customers.'

The winners will be unveiled at a virtual ceremony on Tuesday November 24.

This year the café has already won the National Fish Fryers Federation's Quality Award Champion at the National Fish and Chip Awards and was crowned Best Informal Dining Experience at this year's Thistle Awards.



Tourism body set for major changes

by Ellis Butcher
ebutcher@obantimes.co.uk



The Oban and Lorn Tourism Alliance (OLTA) has announced a series of changes which it says are aimed at securing the long-term future of marketing the area to visitors.

OLTA members have given their initial approval to a series of proposals after it decided not to levy hard-pressed local tourism businesses with subscriptions this autumn.

As a result of discussions, many of OLTA's key functions will now be taken on by Argyll and the Isles Tourism Co-operative (AITC) from next year. AITC, a destination management organisation, will also oversee a major upgrade to oban.org.uk which OLTA said it would not have been able to fund.

As a result, OLTA may be restructured to become a 'tourism advisory group' rather than a membership organisation as first established.

To help with the switch, AITC has agreed to waive joining fees for OLTA members until March 1 next year. Business listings on www.oban.org.uk - one of the key benefits of OLTA membership - will remain free until March next year. Members will also be featured on AITC's www.wildaboutargyll.co.uk

AITC will also oversee a review of the Oban site's current content, while behind the scenes, the site will switch to a more sophisticated content management system (CMS).

Linda Battison, a founding member of OLTA and its marketing director, said: 'We believe this is the right direction for OLTA.'

'Alone, we do not have sufficient resources to finance a tech project of this scale and we certainly do not have the manpower to grow our destination management organisation. The world has moved on and Oban cannot afford to be left behind.'

The OLTA board had recognised that after the pandemic, AITC is in a better position to help market Oban and Lorn to visitors, she said.



OLTA members in 2018: Calum Ross, left, VisitScotland regional director; David Adams McGilp, OLTA director; Linda Battison, BID4Oban chief executive; Andrew Spence and OLTA director Neil Mackay.

It is also better resourced to represent tourism at local and national government level, she said, adding the new future arrangements had been met with 'positive and supportive comments'.

Ms Battison added: 'For now, the board and structure of Oban and Lorn Tourism Alliance remains a co-operative consortium limited by guarantee but next year, when the proposed changes are in place and our existing members subscribe directly to the regional DMO, the board will consider its options.'

Constraints

'The important point to remember is that OLTA, in whatever form it takes in the future, will still have a seat at the table with the regional DMO. We would still work collaboratively with BID4Oban and our other established partners in the area, but we would have freed ourselves from crippling administrative and financial constraints.'

'I have been involved with OLTA since its inception and I am relieved this proposal provides a long-term future for the organisation.'

'It has been a difficult year for tourism and hospitality and the industry looks likely to be adversely affected well into 2021.'

'OLTA believes we are "stronger together" and by pooling our resources we will ensure destination marketing for our area is underpinned and secured.'

Calum Ross, of Loch Melfort Hotel, is a founding director of AITC and a past chairman of OLTA.

He described the proposals and the changes as 'the next logical step'.

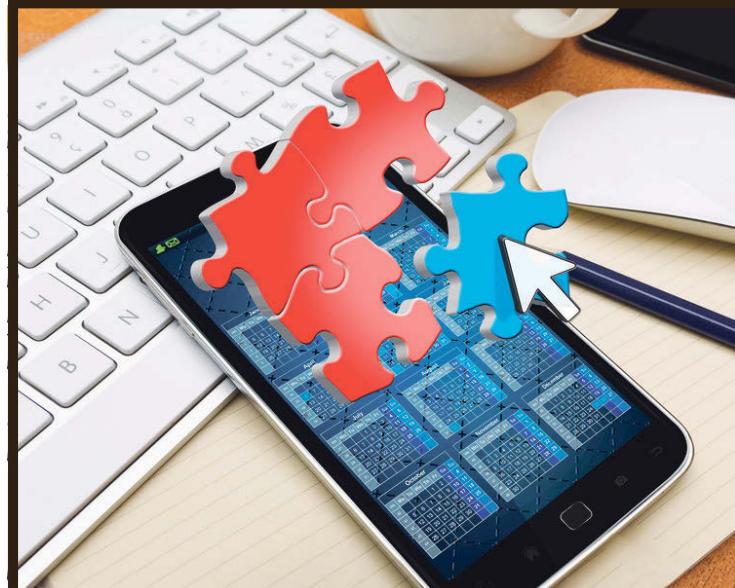
Mr Ross aid: 'AITC was formed in 2012 as a co-operative with its membership being the local marketing and sectoral groups.'

'Collaboration with the DMOs and business through the region has been its *raison d'être*.

'OLTA has been a key member from the start and it's particularly pleasing this influential DMO is ready to take the concept of collaborative working one stage further.'

Mr Ross added: 'As a business owner in the area, I am confident this move will provide targeted destination marketing for this area and secure our core marketing activities for the future.'

'We've already signed up for AITC membership and any other business that would like to join can do so by visiting the Wild About Argyll website: www.WildAboutArgyll.co.uk/membership/



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Oban Phoenix Cinema general manager Jennie Larney said the team was overwhelmed to receive the Creative Scotland cash which will help ease some of the strain on the social enterprise.

£61,000 lifeline to help Oban cinema

by Ellis Butcher
ebutcher@obantimes.co.uk



Oban Phoenix Cinema is among 30 independents across Scotland to receive a grant.

A total of £3.5 million is being shared by Screen Scotland from the Scottish Government's Independent Cinema Recovery and Resilience Fund and The National Lottery.

The fund aims to bridge the immediate financial gap faced by independently-owned cinemas as a result of coronavirus.

Oban will receive £61,000 from the fund, aimed at helping support cinemas to operate in the short-term, within Scottish Government guidelines, and help others reopen when safe to do so.

Manager Jennie Larney said: 'We are overwhelmed by the support of Creative Scotland. The funding we have secured will have a

profound impact on our ability to operate our cinema for our community and maintain the jobs of the staff.'

'These are challenging times and without the funding we would have really struggled to maintain ourselves and our cinema.'

Fiona Hyslop, cabinet secretary for culture with the Scottish Government, said: 'We understand the severe impact this pandemic has had on businesses across Scotland, including our independent cinemas which play such an important role in communities across the country.'

'We have had to make some really difficult decisions recently that will impact on cinemas which have worked so hard to re-open safely, but we have to put health considerations above everything else and I hope this funding, along with the business support that will be available, will help independent cinemas cope with the challenges they face.'

'Culture is vitally important to all of our

lives and we are determined to do everything within our powers to see the sector through this crisis. This fund is part of the ongoing financial support the Scottish Government is making available to the sector.'

Sambrooke Scott, head of audience development at Screen Scotland, said: 'Independent cinemas have always played a vital role in communities across Scotland, bringing people together to immerse themselves in great film experiences from filmmakers around the world and around the corner.'

'It's been the most challenging of times for these hard-working venues but, with the help of this Scottish Government and National Lottery support, they will continue to open and operate safely as local restrictions allow.'

'By putting stringent measures in place to protect staff and audiences, they will open where able and bring the magic and escapism of cinema back, which is something we need now more than ever.'

New Alba business takes root in Oban

Oban has another independent business opening to celebrate as Graham Fraser adds a third enterprise to the town.

Alba's Kitchen Garden, a new delicatessen in Albany Street, officially opened on Friday October 30.

It sits alongside Alba's gallery and framing shop and card and gift shop.

Run by manageress Rose Russell, it is offering freshly-baked bread, delicious cold cuts of meats, a huge range of Scottish cheeses, olives and ground coffee, among other goodies, including oatcakes and retro sweets.

First over the door and cutting the ribbon was shopper Christine Hill from Connel.

The new enterprise takes its name from Oban's original Kitchen Garden and Delicatessen, but with an Alba twist.

Andy Spence, chief executive of town centre business group Bid4Oban, said it was 'absolutely fantastic' to see another business opening in the town, given this year's events.

'A business like that has been sorely missed in Oban since the original Kitchen Garden shut down. I can't wait to go in.'

It follows on from Go Naked Veg setting up in Stevenson Street, Button Nose Boutique and The Anglers Corner moving into larger premises and the opening of Retrophenia this summer.

Mr Spence said: 'As ever, we want absolutely everyone to stay in town and shop local.'



Graham Fraser and manageress Rose Russell welcome customer Christine Hill to Alba's Kitchen Garden.

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OT

Appeal for memories of Oban's 'Dulcimer King'

by Kathie Griffiths
kg Griffiths@obantimes.co.uk

The great granddaughter of Oban's famed Dulcimer King is searching for more memories of him.

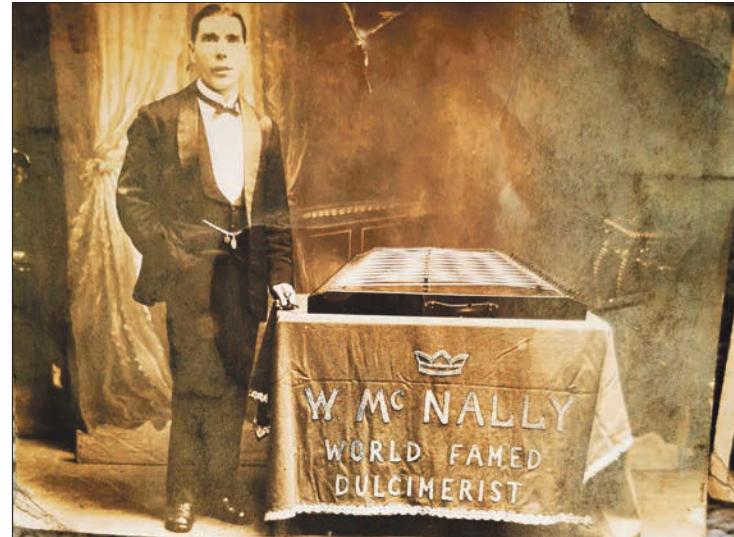
JacQui Lochhead from Clarkston, Glasgow, hopes Oban Times readers can help her find out more about William McNally who charmed audiences from Royals to steamer passengers.

Mrs Lochhead is also searching for more information about how her great grandfather, a devout Catholic, used some of his musically-earned wealth to help build St Columba's Cathedral in the town.

'It would be amazing if anyone in Oban had any information or memories of him,' said Mrs Lochhead, whose family treasure a number of photographs, newspaper cuttings and records made by him.

'When I was little, my parents and grandfather used to play his records all the time but never really made a big thing about his story or his achievements. It was only later that I found out just how fascinating my great grandfather's story was.'

'I'd love to hear from anyone who knows more or whose grandparents might have remembered him. I don't know if CalMac has anything about him in its archives or if St Columba's has anything documented about what he con-



tributed,' added Mrs Lochhead, who recently met a 90-year-old man who remembered William coming into his Oban school to play.

William, who was 84 when he died in 1954 in Glasgow, developed a love for Oban at a tender age.

Research by his grandson Dominic revealed how the young William had been left stranded in Oban by his parents who were circus people and heavy drinkers.

The story goes that his parents had packed up after a summer season in Oban and were well on their way to Glasgow when they realised they had left him behind. Being winter, it was too risky a journey to turn back, so he was left to fend for himself.

Luckily for William, a kindly harbour master let him sleep in a storeroom under the pier until his parents returned the next spring.

As William grew up, he became a gifted musician and regularly returned to Oban to play for rich guests in the big hotels, accepting invites to perform at private parties and special events.

He played before King George V and Queen Mary, when they were the Prince and Princess of Wales and on a state visit to Glasgow, and he was invited to perform on Sir Thomas Lipton's yacht during the race from England to America for the America's Cup.

He also received an introduction to famous composer and

conductor Sir Edward Elgar. William, taught the dulcimer by his mother when he was 10, played across Britain and Europe including Monte Carlo, Nice and Cannes, but always loved coming back to Oban and the west coast in the summer, playing for passengers on MacBrayne's steamers. The Iona and Staffa run was his favourite.

In his later years, most of his shows were for charity and he donated a large amount of money to the gradual building of St Columba's cathedral, the mother church for the Catholic diocese of Argyll and the Isles.

Anyone with information to share can get in touch with JacQui by emailing minesatia-maria@gmail.com

Waterfall Fund aids a safe return to school

Mull and Iona school pupils have been able to get back into class safely thanks to a cash donation from The Waterfall Fund which paid for foot-activated sanitisers.

The funding meant that after months of lockdown with lots of guidance and new norms to stick to, children and teachers felt less apprehensive about going back to school.

Parent Tracy Mayo, chairwoman of Dervaig Parent Council, said getting the sanitisers was 'just one example of many of how the people in Mull pull together to support their community'.

'Children were keen to see friends and teachers had missed the energy of the children in Dervaig Primary School. Lots of hard work and preparation has gone in to making the return as safe as possible and to reassure parents and carers that advice given had been acted on,' she said.

'It was identified that a foot-activated hand sanitiser in the playground would be useful as all children would have sanitised their hands before entering the school offering protection to staff and themselves, hopefully reducing the spread of the virus.'

'Funding for schools can be peppered with unhelpful rules but in my quest to get the sanitiser for Dervaig, I spoke with Councillor Mary-Jean Devon, Moray Finch at Mull and Iona Community Trust (MICT) and Highland Services.'

'This is just one example of many of how the people in Mull pull together to support their community.'



MICT's Moray Finch with the sanitiser at Dervaig Primary School. Funding for the equipment came from The Waterfall Fund.

put foot activated sanitisers in all schools in Mull and Iona and to cover delivery costs.

'James at Highland Services went above and beyond to be helpful and huge thanks to Mary-Jean and Moray for all their advice.'

'This goes to show not only the strength and importance of how our community works for everyone, but also how we depend on the support of community groups, other local trusts and the community as a whole when other funding sources have not been forthcoming. Finally, thanks to Martin Brant at the Co-op for giving us the sanitising liquid.'

'Thankfully the Waterfall Fund accepted a proposal to



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2020

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might be a bit
DIFFERENT
this year but
you can still
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the amazing local
businesses right
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CELEBRATE GOOD TIMES!

We all need a good Christmas: with good company, good friends and a good family get-together.

Add to that a good Christmas dinner, some good nights out and some good, old-fashioned, cosy nights in.

Treat yourself to some good food, drinks and thoughtful presents to give. Do some good, too, by helping out a charity or people who might need a little extra help.

It might not be the Christmas we have become used to recently but that does not mean it won't be a good one. No, forget that – it will be a GREAT one!

A quick look at our archives will show you we have had Christmases with islands cut off by terrific gales; whole areas isolated by massive snowfalls, war time with its rationing when tiny communities have suddenly found themselves playing host to a couple of air force squadrons, the crews of warships and a secret submarine base.

And guess what? The reports said everyone enjoyed themselves.

Covid will not cancel Christmas; it will take more than a bug to stop us.

This is the West Highlands and islands, we know how to roll with the punches, and by doing so coming up with the perfect solution. Never forget that we know how to throw a great party – even if the ceilidh and the cràic are online this year, or shouted from doorstep to doorstep.

And remember that the key to Christmas is to have fun and a stress-free time preparing for it.

That is why we are so lucky here in the West Highlands. Our shops, produce, restaurants and services are so unique and special. Why give yourself the stress and hassle by shopping elsewhere?

CHRISTMAS IN OBAN

Even during this crazy time we find ourselves in, it is our hope that everyone enjoys themselves and has a fantastic time and that the many retailers and restaurants in Oban benefit from a wave of support from locals. The buzz word is definitely 'local', more so this year than any other, and 'community'. 'United by common ground' is another biggie for Oban this year too. By spending within your local community, you are helping to sustain our local businesses during what is already going to be a tough winter. It's easy to click, click, click, but let's keep the high street alive! In Oban, everything you need is within walking distance and a tour of the town can double as a festive foray to soak up the buzz of Christmas – look out for some lovely Christmas displays in the shop windows this year.

Oban is lucky to have a vibrant retail and business community that continues to attract major retailers to the town along with bespoke local businesses. Believe it or not we do not have a lot of empty shop premises compared to other towns, let's try and keep it that way!

LET'S MAKE IT AN OBAN KIND OF CHRISTMAS...

You will find beautifully-crafted, original gifts from the plethora of shops this year; think Button Nose, Room 15, Orsay, The Jetty Gallery, McDougall's, The Iona Shop, Made in Argyll, Oban Chocolate Shop, Alba, The Wee Gallery – to name just a tiny few. The list goes on and on. The extensive selection of hair and beauty salons, florists and jewellery shops, food and drink retailers all have some amazing things to choose from for your friends and family, and a voucher for a meal out is always a great shout! Amble through the side streets and take a wander around those that are a little more off the beaten track – Stevenson Street, Stafford Street, The Esplanade, Combie Street and Station Square are jam packed with Christmas inspiration. If you believe that a shopping trip is only really a great day out when there is coffee and cake (or pizza and Prosecco) involved, you are spoilt for choice from the array of cafes and bars offering a warm, albeit socially distanced, welcome.

What's the best gift you can give this Christmas?

Love Oban Gift Vouchers can be redeemed at over 80 businesses throughout Oban and are valid for 12 months! Check out **Love Oban** on Facebook for Christmas promotions and Festive Headliners.

You can buy your **Love Oban** Gift Vouchers from:

Alba Art Shop, Button Nose, Oban Phoenix Cinema, The Sports Shop, Etive Restaurant, Websters of Oban and BID4Oban Office



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www.bid4oban.co.uk



Shop local, support local, use local

Christmas will be different this year but Oban's Business Improvement District (BID4ObanLtd) is urging the community to take this opportunity to embrace their town like never before during the festive season.

BID is embarking on a shop local, support local and use local campaign, putting the spotlight on local businesses and services in the run-up to Christmas.

Chief Executive Andrew Spence said: 'It goes without saying that supporting local businesses, restaurants, pubs, shops, and services is key to the prosperity of our town.'

'This means every business in the town, whether owned by a national company or not. Every

shop, office, service, and business in this town supports the salary of their workers who in turn spend in local businesses. In contrast to online. 'Shopping online may save a little time or a little money, but for every £1 spent only 5p trickles back into the local economy and that is probably being generous.'

Mr Spence extolled the virtues of the town's national and independent businesses that create an attractive and vibrant town.

'Unlike some parts of the country we have few empty sites in our town centre,' he added.

'Where we do, these are quickly changing hands and become occupied with new businesses.



'Along with a strong service sector, Oban is well placed as a destination for shopping and commerce. Shopping local is key to the future success of our town during these difficult times.'

GIFT VOUCHERS

Love Oban vouchers, the Oban Pound, were set up by BID4Oban to

encourage spending in local shops, restaurants and businesses and have proved extremely popular. Over the last year sales of these vouchers have increased by over 40 per cent compared to the previous year.

Over the 2019 Christmas period £8,500 of vouchers were sold which is a new record for the town. By buying and using the

vouchers you can ensure that the money spent on these vouchers stays within the Oban business community and local businesses.

The vouchers can be used in over 70 businesses and Mr Spence is asking businesses not listed on the database to contact his office to find out how they can participate.

An ideal present for weddings, anniversaries, birthdays or just to say thank you, the vouchers are available from the BID4Oban Office, Oban Phoenix Cinema, The Sports Shop Oban, Alba Art Shop, Button Nose and Etive Restaurant.

WINTER FESTIVAL

This year's Winter Festival, the Lights Switch-on and



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Reindeer Parade were all cancelled due to the pandemic, but Mr Spence and his team want businesses and members of the public 'to make the best of things' and enjoy the festive spirit the town is renowned for.

'There will be competitions for the best window displays in shops, cafes or restaurants, or where a shop doesn't have a window presence the best internal display,' he said.

'So, come on some of the big retailers, show us what you can do! We will be looking for nominations for the best ones from the public.'

Carrying on in the spirit of the Winter Festival there will still be late night shopping in the

town, while the festive lights and Christmas trees will be in place to instil some festive cheer.

'Like no other year we would love the business community to come together to light up and dress their windows,' urged Mr Spence.

'This has been a bit of a dismal year, so we need everyone to pull together to brighten the place up.'

BID4Oban is currently in negotiation with Argyll and Bute Council and it is hoped that through joint working free parking in town car parks will be in operation throughout December.

Check in the Oban Times over the coming weeks for some great offers across town.



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COVID-19 GUIDANCE IN PLACE

CHRISTMAS BUBBLES

Last year the only bubbles we had to worry about were in our prosecco – oh, how things have changed!

Never fear, be it bubbles or baubles, we are going to have a sparkling Christmas 2020 and it is going to fizz with good things.

This is going to be a very special Christmas, because it is going to be so very different compared with the type of Christmases to which we have become accustomed.

There is no mistaking that we have all had tough times to deal with in 2020 and uncertainty has caused so much worry for so many of us. That is why we need to make this a special Christmas; a bright, happy moment in the midst of a winter packed with woes. You do realise, don't you, that this Christmas is going to go down in family history? It will be: 'Do you remember the Covid Christmas when we ...?'

It is going to be a year we remember, so make it a year worth remembering!

Have your recent Christmases seemed to blur into one? Well here is our chance to do something special for the people who have that special place in our hearts.

SOMETHING SPECIAL

It is a simple Christmas gift-buying formula: someone special needs something special.

And sometimes your Christmas gifting is best achieved by one, high-quality luxury item instead of a handful of, shall we say, more ordinary presents. In these decluttering, downsizing days this can be the perfect solution; that one, special, present with a huge 'Wow factor'.

The luxury gift idea is also a brilliant way to solve family present-buying problems. You can all get together, pool your spending power and buy that extra special luxury gift upon which you know someone has their heart set and it would thrill them to receive.

Scotland is home to so much luxury – our cashmere is the best in the world; Harris Tweed is unique to the island and our whisky is legendary, while our gins are making a huge name for themselves. And do not forget wool, sheepskin or leather, or jewellery are all other categories where Scottish craftsmen and women excel.



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Announcing the official calendar of John Lowrie Morrison's images for 2021. The calendar has been released with the aim of helping The Mackintosh Appeal. This is a strictly limited edition of 1,500 and all royalties will be donated to the Appeal.

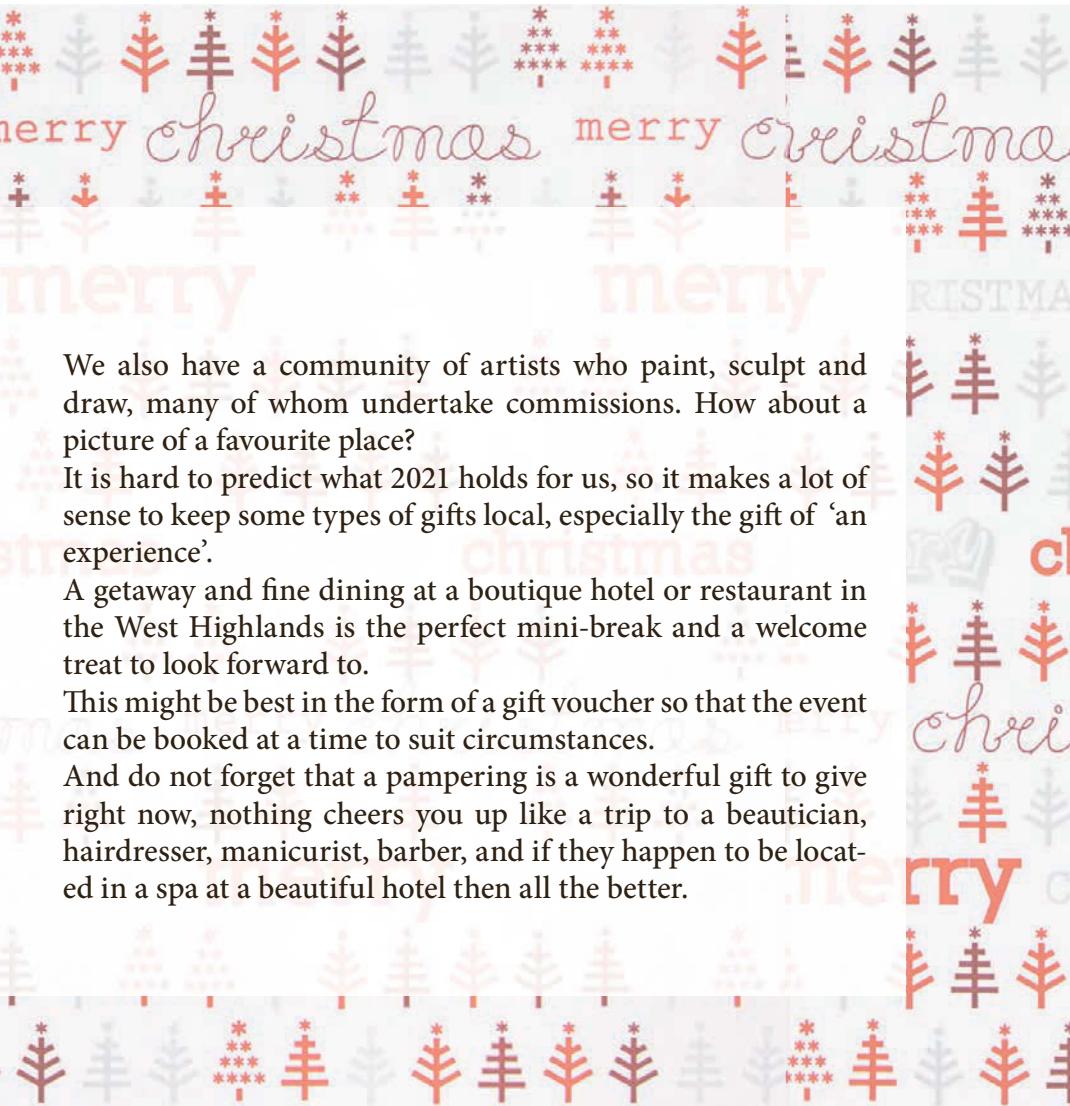
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We also have a community of artists who paint, sculpt and draw, many of whom undertake commissions. How about a picture of a favourite place?

It is hard to predict what 2021 holds for us, so it makes a lot of sense to keep some types of gifts local, especially the gift of 'an experience'.

A getaway and fine dining at a boutique hotel or restaurant in the West Highlands is the perfect mini-break and a welcome treat to look forward to.

This might be best in the form of a gift voucher so that the event can be booked at a time to suit circumstances.

And do not forget that a pampering is a wonderful gift to give right now, nothing cheers you up like a trip to a beautician, hairdresser, manicurist, barber, and if they happen to be located in a spa at a beautiful hotel then all the better.

The Iona Shop

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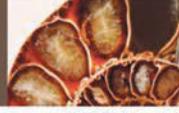
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WANT, NEED, WEAR, READ

The four-word gift guide of 'want, need, wear, read' has become a popular Christmas saying and that is because it works!

Four little words that sum up present buying to a tee!

Together they help concentrate your mind wonderfully and help focus on the individual for whom you are buying a gift.

If buying for children, how about keeping two of the rules and then giving the other two to the grandparents, that way they all get covered, with no present overlap and duplicates.

And 'want, need, wear, read' works in oh so many ingenious ways – and often to your advantage. You might want your teenager to go to bed earlier and get better quality sleep; you could nag, or you could buy a cute or crazy-looking sleep mask and a pillow spray or comfy new PJs.

Or maybe the dog needs longer walks, so how about treating someone to a great new rain jacket, wellie boots or a powerful torch so they have no excuse on dark winter mornings not to take the dog out – and if the dog gets a new coat, then it's got no excuse, either.

SOMETHING SPECIAL

When it comes to buying a special, luxury gift remember that it does not have to be something that has to be owned.

For many people – those downsizing, or older people who have all the possessions they want and need – things to consume are far more popular. Let's face it, here in the West Highlands and Islands we have some of the finest food and drink the country.

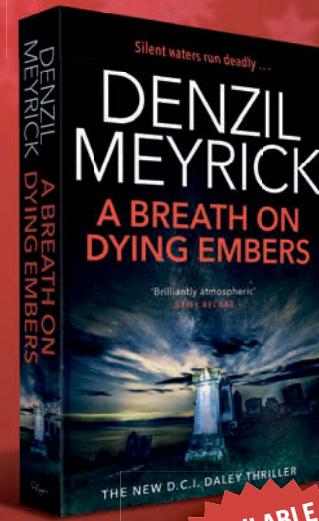
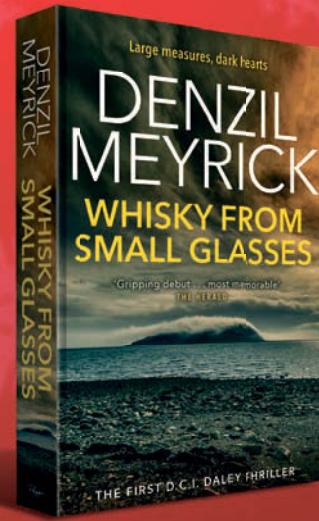
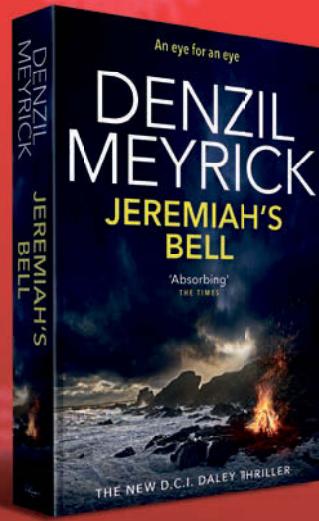
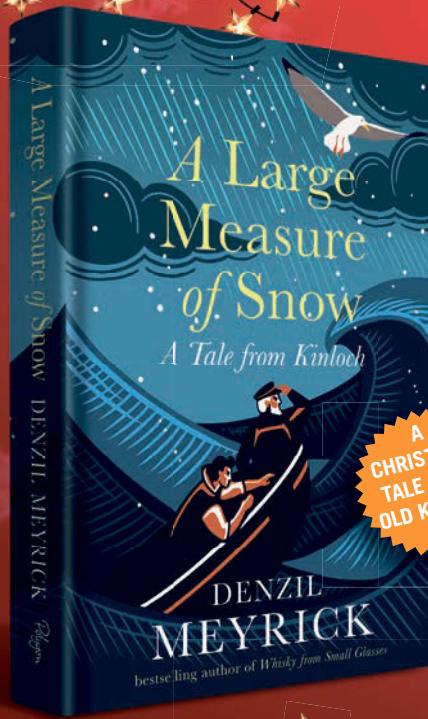
Instead of giving people something to own, eat or drink, how about giving them something to experience?

It could be a helicopter ride, a trip to the islands by sea or air, or a chance to try their hand at a craft or a speciality, such as falconry.

For these latter presents, once again a gift voucher can be the best idea right now, so that the event can be timed to fit in with life.

Right now a great idea can be gifts that keep on giving all year round, such as a subscription for a magazine, or books, or a series of treatments, or membership at a salon or spa.

CRIMINALLY GOOD... DENZIL MEYRICK



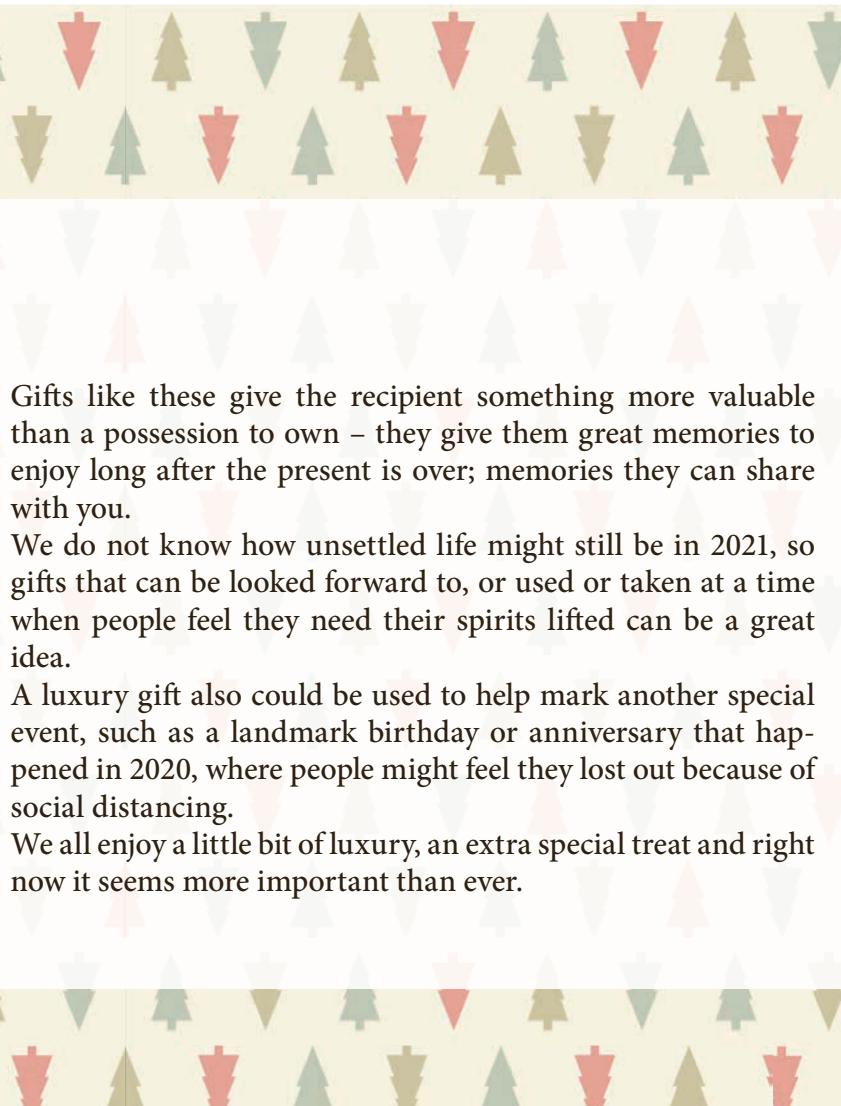
'The perfect winter antidote' – Oban Times

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Gifts like these give the recipient something more valuable than a possession to own – they give them great memories to enjoy long after the present is over; memories they can share with you.

We do not know how unsettled life might still be in 2021, so gifts that can be looked forward to, or used or taken at a time when people feel they need their spirits lifted can be a great idea.

A luxury gift also could be used to help mark another special event, such as a landmark birthday or anniversary that happened in 2020, where people might feel they lost out because of social distancing.

We all enjoy a little bit of luxury, an extra special treat and right now it seems more important than ever.





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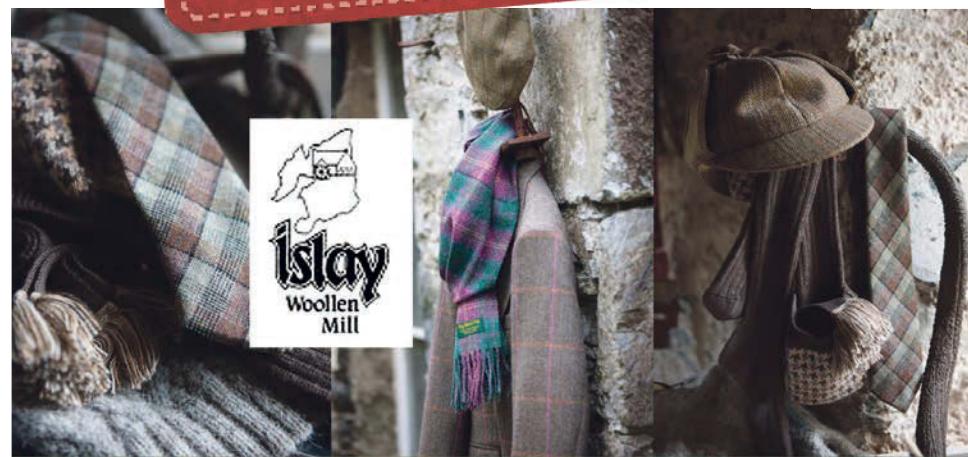


SPECIAL OFFER: Who doesn't dream of being the Lord or Lady of his or her very own Highland estate? Give the gift of nobility this Christmas from Highland Titles. With their discount code, get 10% off a plot of land, which allows owners to style themselves as the Lord or Lady of Glencoe, as well as a discount on anything in the Gifts and Accessories shop. Visit highlandtitles.com and enter the code OBANTIMES.

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CHANGE CAN BE GOOD

Christmas dinner will be completely different for many of us this year, so why not take a different approach to the big occasion right from the start?

In fact, why not have a rethink of all your Christmas catering for this year?

The traditional large gathering could well be unachievable and eating out on the big day limited in different ways.

Don't worry – the hills, fields and seas of the West Highlands and Islands have so much to offer.

And Christmas isn't just the big day and its feast. Think of days before and after, with supper on a tray on your knee – think of great traditional soup recipes, sausages, casseroles, venison stew, fish pie, a big helping of kale, – recognised as a super food to help you beat the bugs – and, of course, a wee dram, a bottle of locally-brewed beer, or a nice botanical gin.

Remember the golden rule of cooking for a party or big event such as Christmas dinner: buy a third, prepare a third in advance and make a third on the day.

And also remember that at least once during the holiday there is a big fish supper or takeaway on the menu to give the family cook a night off.

FESTIVE LARDER

West Highland and Island food and drink are made for Christmas! Everything at which we excel can be included in a Christmas feast. The finest whiskies, unique gins and craft ales will be the drinks of choice for people all around the UK, if not the globe, so we have a head start right there.

Smoked and fresh fish and seafood will be first courses, canapés, and making their way into hearty fish pies for holiday suppers.

When it comes to roast dinners we have hill-reared lamb, superb beef and a growing specialist pork market, as well as prime turkeys and chickens that have been raised here. Game and venison from our region feature on some of the finest tables in the land, so why aren't they on yours?

Then we come to the incredible, ever-growing artisan food produce market. Our cheese makers have led the way and dairy producers such as local island milk and ice-cream makers are now adding to the list.

Celebrating 25 Years in Scotland

All the best
this Christmas.



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North Road Retail Park,
Fort William, PH33 6PP
Mon-Sat 8am-10pm Sun 9am-8pm



Everyday Amazing.

What can compare to the produce coming from our own egg suppliers? They can supply duck, goose and quail eggs and chicken eggs from a variety of breeds.

If you have not tried them, buy a box this year and you will be converted; you might have forgotten how good eggs can taste. Some of the first and most highly-acclaimed chocolatiers in Scotland are working in the West Highlands and Islands. The phrase 'cottage industries' sounds too condescending to describe the army of small businesses supplying cakes, bread, biscuits, jams, pickles and preserves. The quality and variety of their products is outstanding.

And you will even find coffee-roasting companies that can supply a near-bespoke service to suit your tastes.

And don't get us started about the gorgeous vegetables grown here! Fresh sprouts, as near fresh from the field as they can be, will convert even the most hardened Brussels sprout hater.





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LOCHABER CHRISTMASES PAST



Everything tastes better in **LOCHABER!**

Lochaber Chamber of Commerce, the team behind the Outdoor Capital of the UK campaign and salmon farming leader MOWI are co-sponsoring special promotions over the next few weeks in the Lochaber Times and Lochaber Life – to showcase all that the area has to offer this Christmas time.

The Chamber is big on helping its members to sell overseas. It has even organised a Virtual International Trade Mission to Nova Scotia in Canada but the message here and now is shop local. ‘Never before has shopping locally been so important’ said Mark Gibbins of the chamber, adding: ‘we have everything you need here in Lochaber for Christmas’. The Christmas shop is getting closer and shopping in your local Lochaber shops will have your cupboards full and will

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- ❖ 6 BOTTLE XMAS LUXURY WINE CASE - £119.00 (2 X BILLECART-SALMON BRUT CHAMPAGNE, 2 X NEW ZEALAND SAUVIGNON BLANC, 2 X CHIANTI RISERVA)
- ❖ 12 BOTTLE XMAS WINE CASE - £99.00 (2 X PROSECCO SPUMANTE, 2 X FRENCH SPARKLING BLANC DE BLANC, 2 X PINOT GRIGIO, 2 X AUSTRALIAN CHARDONNAY, 2 X ARGENTINEAN MALBEC, 2 X SOUTH AFRICAN SHIRAZ)
- ❖ 12 BOTTLE XMAS LUXURY WINE CASE - £189.00 (2 X BILLECART-SALMON BRUT CHAMPAGNE, 2 X FRENCH SPARKLING BLANC DE BLANC, 2 X NEW ZEALAND SAUVIGNON BLANC, 2 X FRENCH VIOLNIER, 2 X VALPOLICELLA RIPASSO, 2 X ARGENTINEAN MALBEC)

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put big smiles on those faces! Consider purchasing some of your fresh produce and meats from our local businesses like Lochaber Larder who have a passion for sharing their love of food with everyone they meet. Have you heard about the new Wild Venison Shop located in a pop-up retail pod opposite the recycling centre in Ben Nevis Industrial Estate? Run by Jahama Highland Estate, it supplies local, sustainable venison from the area. The Outdoor Capital of the UK extends from sea lochs to summit and we are lucky to be home to both abundant fresh seafood and the finest wild game charcuterie. You must try the local smoked salmon, speciality cheeses, and, of course, the whisky, gin or... craft beers we have on offer! With great options for Christmas shopping, The Granite House has you covered with gift ideas, festive stationary and art supplies for all of the family and friends. There's locally made skincare from The Highland Soap Co. and a superb variety of bestsellers, local stories and family friendly books from The Highland Bookshop plus fair trade and ethical delights from The Emporium of Worldly Goods. All of these local shops are also online so you can still shop local even if you can't make it out to the shops.



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YOUR LOCHABER. YOUR CHRISTMAS.



**Lochaber
Chamber of
Commerce**

WORKING FOR BUSINESS IN THE
OUTDOOR CAPITAL OF THE UK



**OUTDOOR
CAPITAL
OF THE
UK**

LOCHABER



LOCHABER CHRISTMASES PAST



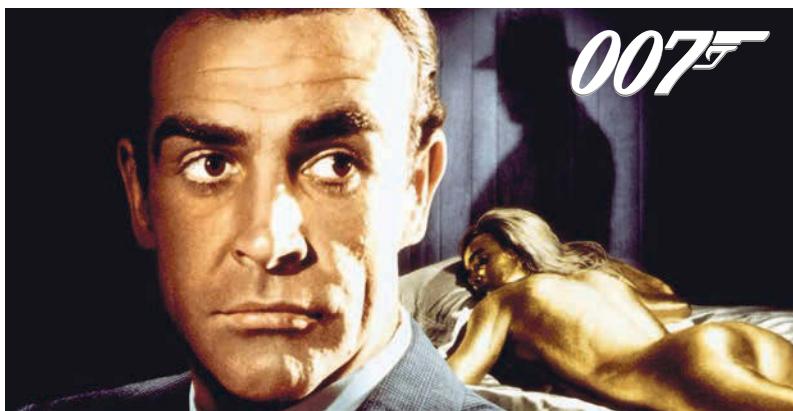
Think community THIS CHRISTMAS

Throughout this year's problems Lochaber has been a shining example of all that's best in a caring community.

It goes without saying that everyone is supporting their neighbours, older relatives and friends but do not forget that the community as an entity needs us all to unite and help it to keep it healthy during this strange time. And that includes financial health as well.

As the area's chamber of commerce keeps stressing: shop locally. We might not have Lochaber's legendary 'Mad Friday' this year when everyone coming home for the Christmas holidays, be it from working away or studying, goes out to celebrate. We can still enjoy all the incredible drinks brewed and distilled here – think drinking less, but drinking smarter.

Although it has been more than three years in the planning and



In tribute to the late, great Sean Connery, we will be showing every one of his Bond films, starting with Dr. No on Saturday 21st November.



We are pleased to announce that gift vouchers will be available to purchase at the Box Office from Wed 18th Nov – just in time for Xmas!

All this and more!

WWW.HIGHLANDCINEMA.CO.UK



Starting every Monday at 11am from 16th November, special reduced rate showings for parents and children aged four and under!



Filmed in Glencoe and Fort William, we are hosting the premiere of *Lost At Christmas* on Thurs 26th Nov, with the Director in attendance!



Remember that this year many hotels and restaurants are here to cook your Christmas dinner or festive dinners be it socially-distanced indoors or by offering takeaway services. Book early!

financing the new seven metre-wide canopy in Fort William's Cameron Square could not have arrived at a better time. A joint venture involving the Fort William Town Team and the town's marina and shoreline company, it is just the thing for these socially distancing times and has already been the venue for a craft fair.

The newly built Highland Cinema is just a stone's throw from here and if you haven't experienced it yet – it's a must. Great idea for Christmas Gift vouchers too!

Whatever you are thinking of giving this Christmas, give the gift of local – food, drink, entertainment, clothing, jewellery, home accessories, gifts and toys are available in abundance from brilliant businesses on the high street and across Lochaber.



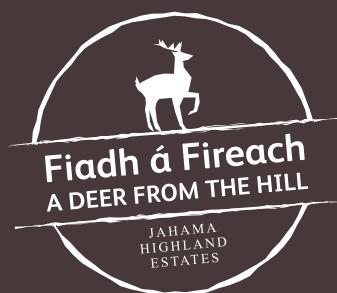
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LOCHABER CHRISTMASES PAST



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see website for details of the regime in place.

MOWI: Lochaber's leader

Family Christmas feasting changes over the decades; chances are you aren't eating the once-traditional sugar plums and figgy pudding or consommé, and very few still have goose and apple sauce. Fish is coming back into fashion and you cannot get more local in Lochaber.

Mallaig remains one of the busiest fishing ports in the west of Scotland and its produce will be on plates across the UK and Europe this Christmastime. And Lochaber is at the heart of operations for Scotland's major producer of salmon.

MOWI salmon are the UK's most-valued food export, enjoyed by customers around the world; so all the more reason to have it on our plates. The company's 1,500 employees in Scotland – the majority in our community – would agree with you.

Don't forget that MOWI has a Royal warrant; you will be in good company, if you do!

The Spirit of Ben Nevis

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Have a dram good Christmas

Lochy Bridge, Fort William, PH33 6TJ
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www.bennevisdistillery.com

r in changing tastes

As a company MOWI believes in being at the heart of the communities where it is based, here in Scotland and in more than 20 other countries around the world. It sponsors sports and organisations, and supports local groups and initiatives.

'Our ethos and business is central to the community and our products are at the heart of the Christmas table,' said MOWI's spokesman. 'We are consistently seeing a rise in salmon sales during the festive period. We all want salmon at Christmas.'

Go online to check out MOWI's recipe pages – there is even an app you can download.

From a whole roast salmon to smoked salmon or kedgeree for Christmas morning the recipes are quick and easy to follow.

Make sure you have salmon somewhere on your menu this Christmas holiday.

DELICIOUS SALMON RECIPES

Download our free new salmon recipe app with great ideas on how to make quick, tasty and healthy meals with fresh and smoked salmon.

Each recipe has easy to follow, step-by-step instructions, as well as a shopping list of ingredients.

View high-quality images of the finished recipes and galleries of some of the stunning locations in the West Highlands and Islands of Scotland where we farm our salmon.

The app also includes information about our company, Mowi Scotland, our teams and sites, as well as information on what we do.

We grow our salmon in the remote and pristine waters of the Western Highlands and Islands of Scotland. We provide jobs and support fragile rural economies in some of the most remote communities in the country.

Thanks to chef Roy Brett, Scottish Salmon Producers' Organisation and Mowi employees worldwide who contributed the recipes.

Visit <http://app.mrnhrv.st/> for some online inspiration or search 'Mowi Salmon Recipes' from the app store on your phone or tablet.

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MOWI

Proud to be a part of the Lochaber community



Support Local ❤ Shop Local ❤ Love Local

*Wishing every household in
Lochaber a wonderful Christmas*

MOWI

CHRISTMAS IS COMING

Don't worry if you cannot come out for Christmas, because Christmas can come to you. Have no fear, whatever level of lockdown you and yours might find yourselves in across the West Highlands and Islands in the run-up to Christmas for there is a wealth of businesses ready and waiting to help you out and keep the festive season on track. Those of us on the mainland are only just catching up with our island neighbours who have known this for years.

Santa and Rudolph have never had such effective back-up!

All across the region businesses are delivering their goods and services themselves, sending them by nationwide couriers and the Royal Mail, or liaising with our own courier services based here in the Highlands and Islands to make sure that Christmas stays on course.

You might not be able to get out for your usual Christmas dinner, but the great thing is that many of our leading hotels and restaurants are doing home deliveries or a takeaway service. Many are calling on local couriers and taxis to make deliveries for them.

CHRISTMAS **DELIVERED**

You name it and it can be delivered to your door these days. The e-commerce revolution means that a sophisticated webpage, ordering and payment systems are within easy reach of all businesses. And do not forget that many of our leading food and drink producers also issue catalogues by post as well. This is because their high-quality products go to discerning customers all around the world.

Our famous distilleries producing world-famous malts and the ever-expanding new ranges of gins are a fine example, as are our renowned smokehouses, and venison and game dealers.

These long-established brands will not only deliver to you but provide you with a wonderfully easy way to send presents to all the family and friends you might not be able to meet up with this year. These big-hitters are joined by an ever-growing army of smaller producers, who will supply everything from condiments to cake and much more.



Busy Christmas shopping day?...
...Grab a takeaway



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E-commerce means that smaller ventures can have a wide market, so we have an exciting range of artisans now offering an incredible array of goods.

You can order your entire Christmas feast online.

A wee tip: defrost the freezer this week and make sure you have plenty of space for all the deliveries and a hiding place for all the cakes and chocolates.

And do not just think deliveries are for food only. All kinds of retailers – from booksellers to picture galleries, clothes shops to kilt makers – are all waiting to deliver your Christmas to you, and your gifts to others, at the mere click of a mouse, the completion of an order form or a phone call.

The secret is to start looking now and book early to ensure orders arrive in plenty of time. Look out for the websites listed in the advertisements here in our feature.



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We are closed from 19th Dec until the 4th Jan.

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COORIE DOON THIS CHRISTMAS

If ever there was a year to coorie doon, as your granny used to say, to feel warm, safe and snug, then 2020 is it.

Wintertime and Christmas are when we get together; get those candles lit, the log burner blazing and the Christmas tree lights twinkling in the background. Think scented candles and throws, knitted socks and hot chocolate.

But don't just stay tucked up there all Christmas. Keeping warm and cosy is just one part of keeping well.

The other part is exercise and fresh air, and that means wrapping yourself up wind and water-proof, and getting out there to enjoy yourself in our wonderful outdoors.

You don't have to go climb a mountain! A walk along the Esplanade in Oban or the Waterfront in Fort William, around the bay in Campbeltown or The Front in Lochgilphead can be just as exhilarating.

You can walk off the food or work up an appetite and show off your new clothes or Christmas bike and say hello to the people you meet.

KEEP WARM AND WELL

A cosy coorie doon this Christmas all depends on how warm your house is to begin with.

As well as thinking about co-ordinated throws and cushions you also need to think about the practicalities of keeping your house heated.

If money is tight this year for you – as it is for so many people – there is no better quick fix for your heating than the words: 'put another woolly on'. A bit of commonsense with our heating can mean some serious money saving.

So put those new Christmas jumpers to good use, snuggle under a rug or throw and turn the central heating thermostat down a notch. Have a think about your hot water and ask an electrician to reset the hot water tank thermostat where applicable. A drop from 60C to 50C can make a good saving. And when you turn the heating on, or light the fire, you don't want all that heat escaping, so make a note to get the insulation checked or top it up yourself.



✖ If you're not ready to think about Winter yet, please cut out and save until a cold rainy day ✖



Winter Is Coming!

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You may have seen adverts on TV recently showing this type of electric heating as a replacement for storage heaters. We have been supplying these across Scotland for nearly ten years! Hundreds of happy customers. Better quality and better prices. Island deliveries a speciality. Don't miss out.



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If you remember the warmth from the sun on a sunny day, or the cosy heat from a stove in the middle of Winter, then you have experienced radiant heat.

Our German heaters, for which we have become renown across Scotland, produce mainly radiant heat. A very effective replacement for storage heaters and for heating conservatories or cold spots.

Particular wavelengths of radiant heat produce the best warming effect in the human body, this we know as Far Infrared.

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even supplied as a photo or mirror on the wall. More info here: www.scottishinfraredheating.co.uk



Our infrared saunas use the same principles to heat the body, producing a deep sweat at a much lower temperature than traditional steam saunas. This removes toxins from deep within the body and has been known to help with ailments such as high blood pressure, fibromyalgia, lymes disease and many other complaints.

There are many potential health benefits using our saunas. Its not right for us to make specific claims on these, but please research for yourself and come to your own conclusion. We will help point you in the right direction where we can.

Improve Your Health With Our Infrared Saunas



The health benefits of these saunas are not widely known in the UK. Developed about twenty years ago in America, infrared heat is used instead of steam. This penetrates deep into your body removing toxins and helping improve your overall wellness. They are widely believed to help with a wide range of medical conditions.

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Cosy for Christmas

Modern stove design has changed considerably over the past few years and there are now a number of free-standing models on the market which have been designed to fit fairly snugly into a corner situation without the need for any further fire-proofing.

These stoves can also be situated onto a "superimposed hearth" of only 12mm thick, typically stone, steel or glass, removing the need to build up a constructional hearth underneath.

While all these modifications have made installation simpler and opened up more options as to where a stove can be sited, the greatest consideration should still be reserved for the situation of the chimney. A stove with a poorly functioning chimney is a bit like a TV with an aerial that doesn't work – it doesn't matter how much you spend on the most advanced model, if you can't get a decent signal then the TV is useless! Similarly, in any installation, the chimney is just as important as the stove and this is why we devote a considerable amount of time to advising our customers where the best site for their stove and chimney is in order to ensure the most efficient and trouble-free installation



possible. For further inspiration our website offers a wealth of information including a virtual showroom featuring many of the models we offer and our portfolio page showing some excellent examples of what can be achieved.

With more than 40 years of hands-on experience serving customers across Argyll, Lochaber and the Islands, Backwoodsman has all the expertise required to ensure you end up with the best results. For further information please call us on 01631 720539 to discuss your ideas.

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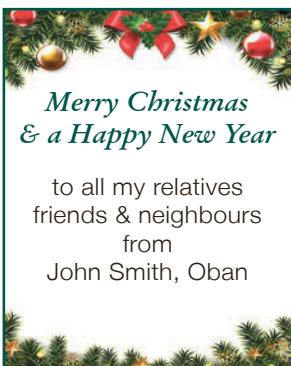
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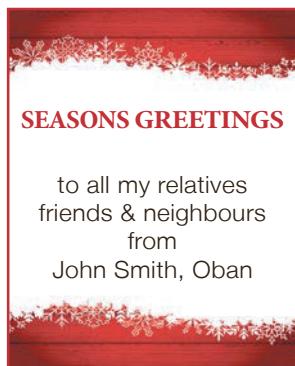


Your personal Christmas messages

A



B



C



CHRISTMAS GREETINGS

Published on 10th December

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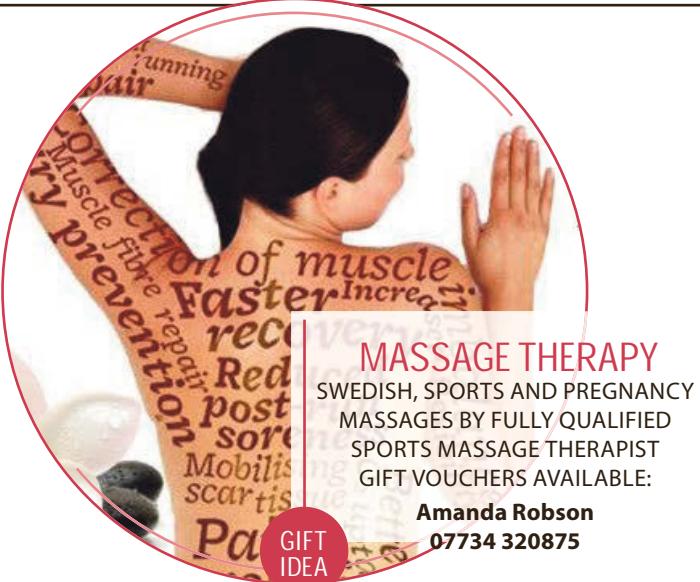
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SWEET CHARITY

Charities have taken a knock this year so let's all help them this Christmas time. Traditional sources of revenue have dried up or become a trickle for the larger, national charities we support and the smaller, local charities that we all hold so dear. This has happened at a time when many of them are being called on to help people out more than ever. Collection tins have been sitting in closed shops, empty cafés and restaurants; big fundraisers have been cancelled, such as the Oban Lions' Charities day. Such events are main money earners for local charities and good causes. Please do not forget the incredible acts of kindness that many of our shopkeepers, caterers and hospitality providers have provided with free food and services during the height of this year's difficulties. The best way to thank them on behalf of the wider community is to keep giving them your support. They have been loyal to us and deserve our customer loyalty in return.



Adopt a dolphin for someone you love this Christmas. Your gift will help protect over 200 bottlenose dolphins living around the Moray Firth. Your loved one will receive an adoption pack with a personalised certificate, a quarterly magazine and a monthly email with news about their adopted dolphin.

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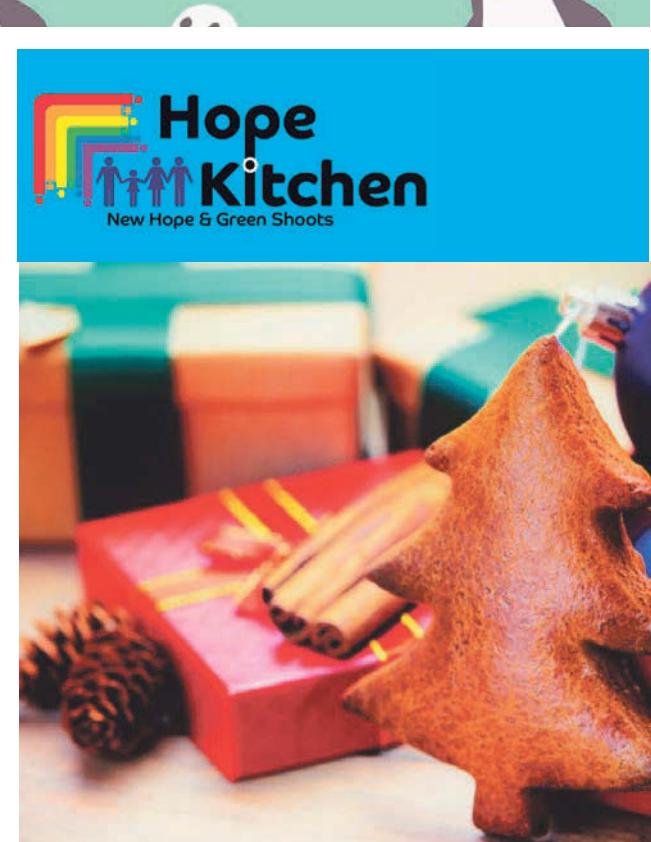
THE GIFT OF **GIVING**

Right now some of us are worried about our finances and many more people are feeling very low but here are a couple of things to consider. When you have financial problems, give something even if it is only a single coin. That action says you are so confident that things will come good that you can still afford to be generous. And likewise if you are feeling depressed remember the saying, 'get your mind off yourself and onto someone else'. Spend sometime doing something for someone else – be it making a friendly phone call or sorting some goods to send to a charity shop. A simple friendly hello shouted across the street to someone feeling blue; all these can help lift their spirits – and it will make you feel good too. Before Christmas have a good clear out in anticipation of gifts to come – especially toy cupboards and children's clothes to give to charity shops.



The Society's Christmas brochure containing many great gift ideas, cards and calendars is out now. Every sale supports Scotland's dogs through rehoming, neutering or veterinary aid schemes. Call the office or download a copy from the website.

Tel: 0131 668 3633
www.dogaidscotland.com



Every year the community is amazing in their support for Hope Kitchen. We need small gifts for children and adults (unwrapped/please provide wrapping paper) sweets, treats, tinned food and food for the Christmas table. **Deadline for items Wed 9th December** All your items will be distributed locally for info on where to take leave items

call us on 01631 565730 or email obanhopekitchen@gmail.com

LOCAL SERVICES

To help make your Christmas perfect this year there is a whole army of services you can call on. Just remember to book early!

Appointments in the most convenient timeslots at the hairdressers, salon and barbers get booked up early. This is more so this year as they have to deal with the regulations on distancing and extra deep-cleaning between clients.

And the same will apply for taxis and mini buses, if they are needed. Many local taxis are also offering collection and delivery of goods, food and takeaways for people who cannot leave home.

And what about getting the house ready? Make sure your chimney is swept in plenty of time for it will have been working overtime with people working from home. Come to think of it, make sure the log store is topped up – and the gas or oil tanks too, while you are at it. There is still time to call painters, decorators and carpet fitters if you plan to brighten up your interiors before the big holiday and furniture shops.

IN THE VAN-GUARD DURING 2020

This has been a year when we have all realised how much we depend on local services: the Posties, the courier drivers, local shops who have stepped up by providing delivery services and the bigger stores with their click and collect and online shopping. Then there are the fuel-oil tanker drivers, the coal merchants and firewood suppliers. Between them they have kept us all well-fed and warm.

And alongside them all have been a fleet of smaller vans – the tradesmen and women who are often self-employed or work for small businesses. You name it and they can deliver any type of goods or services to your door – from flowers to a haircut and shampoo for your dog.

And at a time of so much financial uncertainty it makes sense to call on all these diverse services to keep money circulating with the West Highlands and Islands; that way we can make sure as many local businesses, small or large, can come through this difficult time intact.

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Research shows that for every £1 spent with a local, independent business, between 50p-70p circulates back into that local economy

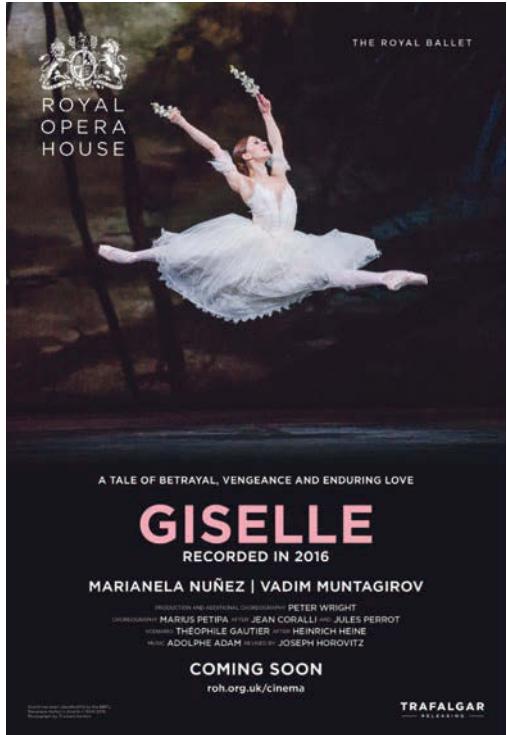
THANK YOU

Every time you pick up a copy of The Oban Times you are not just helping one local business but a whole range of local businesses

WHAT'S ON

AT OBAN PHOENIX CINEMA

EVENTS



NT Live: War Horse (2014)	Sun 15 Nov 15:00
The Royal Ballet: Giselle (2016)	Thu 19 Nov 19:30
Uncle Vanya	Sun 22 Nov 15:00 Thu 26 Nov 19:30
The Royal Ballet: The Nutcracker	Thu 10 Dec 19:30
Berliner Philharmoniker Live New Year's Eve Concert	Thu 31 Dec 16:00

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FESTIVALS



FILMS
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PEOPLE
OF COLOUR
OCT'20-MAR'21

Three Days and a Life *Trois jours et une vie*
Fri 20 Nov 19:30 & Mon 23 Nov 14:30

Fences
Fri 13 Nov 19:30 & Mon 16 Nov 14:30

The Lost Prince *Le Prince oublié*
Fri 27 Nov 19:30 & Mon 30 Nov 14:30

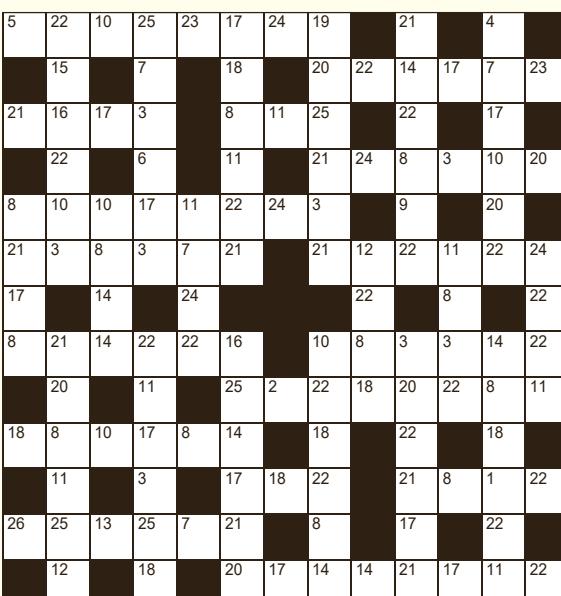
The Lost Prince *Le Prince oublié*
Fri 27 Nov 19:30 & Mon 30 Nov 14:30

Small Country: An African Childhood *Petit Pays*
Fri 4 Dec 19:30 & Mon 7 Dec 14:30

Small Country: An African Childhood *Petit Pays*
Fri 4 Dec 19:30 & Mon 7 Dec 14:30

The Sleeping Car Murders *Compartment tueurs*
Fri 11 Dec 19:30 & Mon 14 Dec 14:30

In the Heat of the Night
Fri 18 Dec 19:30 & Mon 21 Dec 14:30

CROSS CODE

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ

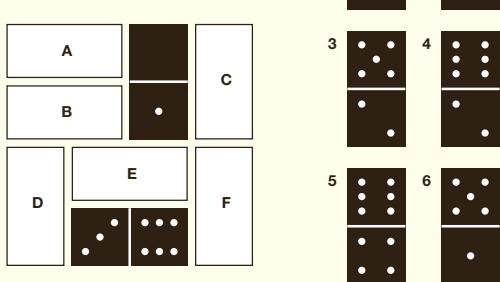
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	A	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	S	22	23	24	25	26

Each number in the Cross Code grid represents a different letter of the alphabet. You have three letters in the control grid to start you off. Enter them in the appropriate squares in the main grid, then use your knowledge of words to work out which letters should go in the missing squares.

As you get the letters, fill in other squares with the same number in the main grid and control grid. Check off the alphabetical list of letters as you identify them.

SPOT CHECK

Can you place the six dominoes (right) into the grid below in such a way that the number of spots in all four rows across and all four rows down totals the same?


PATHWORDS

Starting from the central shaded letter, move one letter at a time (up, down, right or left, but not diagonally) to find 15 popular summer activities.

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

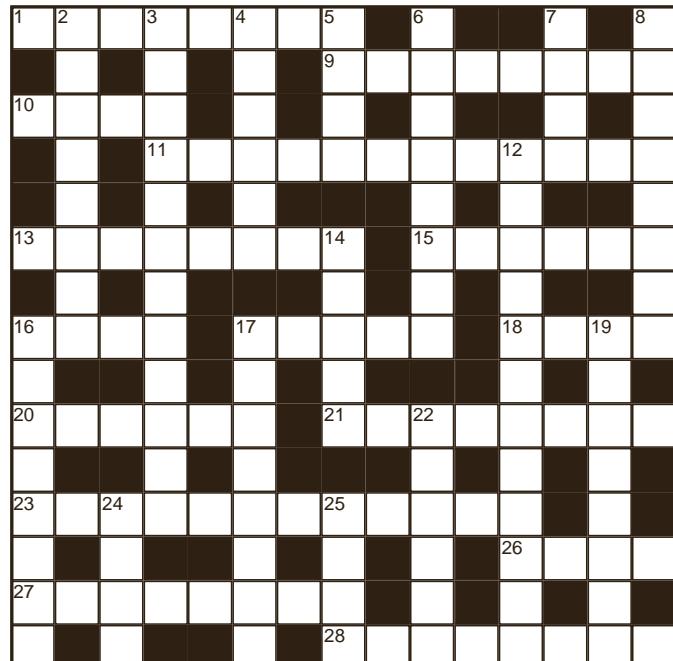
General Knowledge Crossword

**Who? Why? How?
When? Where?**
ACROSS

- Aircraft control column (3-5)
- Bridge built to carry water (8)
- Facetious term for an expense account (7-5)
- Desert largely in Mongolia (4)
- Concord is the capital of this US state (3,9)
- Adherent of an English Protestant denomination (8)
- Most unusual, least common (6)
- Increase by the addition of (4)
- Cardinal number that is the product of twenty and three (5)
- Roman poet, author of Tristia (4)
- Inflammatory disease of the skin causing itching (6)
- Indicator at a road junction (8)
- Cultivation of plants (12)
- Socially unacceptable (3-1)
- Renovated or patched up (8)
- Common or usual (8)

DOWN

- Daniel -----, Irish nationalist leader, 1775-1847 (8)
- From a certain point of view (2,1,3)
- Green New Zealand parrot (4)
- , Duke of Gloucester, 1391-1447 (8)
- Extinct volcano in central Japan (4)
- Of cattle, certified to be free from tuberculosis (8)
- Trumpet-shaped edible fungus (4,2,6)
- Means of connection between members of a group (5)
- Circular graph divided into sectors (3,5)
- Painting or photograph of an ocean (8)
- Badges or emblems of rank (8)
- Persistent feeling of resentment (6)
- Slang word for an acid house party (4)
- Vein containing metallic ore (4)


WORD WIZARD

Here is an unusual word with three definitions, only one of which is correct. Can you identify the right definition?

TUGRIK

- The standard monetary unit of Mongolia, equal to 100 mongos;
- An edible but tasteless underground fungus of the southern US;
- A small, red annelid worm that lives in fresh water.

DIALLING CODES

Telephone dialling pads combine several letters on one key. Here we have encoded several sets of words or items by using numbers rather than letters. Then we have divided them into groups of three characters and run all the words one after another to make your task a little more difficult. Can you crack the code?



Spaces and any punctuation marks are represented by 1.

films starring Leonardo DiCaprio

- 352 646 186 242 463 318
431 284 286 712 282 416
314 319 681 226 184 312
322 418 482 642 174 888
371 475 263 184 319 653
- 163 192 551 787 338
244 224 612 855 712 766
559 616 387 167 526 361
624 421 267 866 123 584
271 639 196 751 564 257
- 721 445 278 178 58
425 317 423 742 618 443
712 522 517 446 623 767
125 831 942 531 733 196
186 766 861 727 867 714

characters from the Star Trek franchise

- 536 627 316 226 914 846
261 526 371 811 547 517
383 616 316 463 177 625
196 731 532 615 821 742
273 132 821 696 821 848
- 766 915 367 273 134 619
425 317 423 742 618 443
712 522 517 446 623 767
125 831 942 531 733 196
531 442 681 726 321 794
- 721 445 278 178 58
425 317 423 742 618 443
712 522 517 446 623 767
125 831 942 531 733 196
691 447 767 682 687

3. foods from the sea

- 727 346 317 784 314 377
464 174 746 715 627 837
126 246 891 687 735 125
261 886 212 631 335 174
524 273 175 242 312 722
- 162 867 871 697 837
767 371 489 542 617 327
435 571 235 327 284 667
132 479 126 918 377 917
125 514 653 178 254 891
- 162 867 871 697 837
767 371 489 542 617 327
435 571 235 327 284 667
132 479 126 918 377 917
125 514 653 178 254 891

TOTALISER

Boost your mental agility against the clock. Start with the number on the left and follow the instructions as you go across. Within the 30-second time limit beginners should complete the Level One challenge, intermediate players Level Two and advanced players Level Three.

LEVEL ONE

3	TIMES ITSELF →	x2 →	+3 →	÷3 →	+13 →	3/4 OF THIS →	-5 →	x3 →	÷6 →
---	----------------	------	------	------	-------	---------------	------	------	------

ANSWER

LEVEL TWO

22	+6 →	÷7 →	TIMES ITSELF →	+9 →	÷5 →	+5 →	x2.5 →	-1 →	1/4 OF THIS →
----	------	------	----------------	------	------	------	--------	------	---------------

ANSWER

LEVEL THREE

75	x3 →	÷5 →	+5 →	60% OF THIS →	TIMES ITSELF →	-459 →	✓ OF THIS →	+7 →	3/4 OF THIS →
----	------	------	------	---------------	----------------	--------	-------------	------	---------------

ANSWER

Fighting to protect our natural heritage

Morvern Lines

IAIN THORNBER

iain.thornber@btinternet.com

Continued from last week.

Doubtless someone will remind me timber is required for the building industry but the UK cannot do forestry as well as the Scandinavians. We therefore have to import more. Coronavirus and the mess that is Brexit mean that very shortly the UK will be compelled to start growing more food. Sitka spruce buds, no matter how well they look on Christmas trees, are not very palatable. Now is not the time to be planting up good hill and agricultural ground.

There is a school of thought, most likely initiated by the timber producing business, which believes that putting millions of trees in the ground will help save the planet – a theory which has now been thrown into disarray by leading world scientists. Rather than benefiting the environment, large-scale tree planting may do the opposite, two new studies have found. One paper says financial incentives to plant trees can backfire and reduce biodiversity with little impact on carbon emissions. Another found that the amount of carbon new woodlands can absorb may be overestimated. The key message from both papers is that planting trees is not a simple climate solution and where money is being thrown at them willy-nilly there is a high risk of not only wasting it but also releasing more carbon and losing biodiversity.

So much for the first two, what of the third? Despite government propaganda and biased ecological newsfeeds, the West Highlands and Islands are not overrun with deer. Numbers have dropped so low that thousands upon thousands of acres of once rich grassland are being overrun by poorer species through under grazing which is far more of a long-term problem. Muir-burning is discouraged, ditches are choked and bracken is on the increase. Twenty years ago, when every estate had a resident stalker who knew his hill and the deer on it, he culled accordingly. If he saw too many he shot more. If there had been higher than usual winter deaths, common sense told him to shoot less. It was as straight-forward as that. Nowadays computer models, pie charts and several thousand pages of waffle rule.

Our local man quietly collaborated with his neighbours over a cup of tea or a dram at the



sheep-dog trials, clippings and cattle sales. Everything was sorted out. No meetings were necessary to determine his or anyone else's cull. These men, who were schooled and lived out their lives in the same glen knowing no other form of employment, hefted to the hill like some old stag, would have felt insulted if someone in an office hundreds of miles away had the audacity to try and tell them their business.

Much of this has gone – locked in the drawer of a filing cabinet labelled ‘tradition do not open – no grandfathers’ rights’ – leaving chaos in its place.

The anti-deer lobby began around 2010 when Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) took over from the Red Deer Commission (RDC). The RDC was set up by an Act of Parliament with the passing of the Deer (Scotland) Act 1959. It had two tasks, namely controlling and conserving red deer in Scotland. Its value lay in the fact the chairman and his field staff were all stalkers with a sound practical knowledge of deer and their ways. More importantly, for everyone, they were on

friendly terms with just about every landowner, shepherd, stalker, pony man, ghillie and factor in Scotland. Among their number may be mentioned Louis Stewart MBE, Dick Youngson, Ian Mackay and many others who, although they have passed into legend, are still remembered in drawing rooms and bothy bed-sits whenever stalkers meet.

Recognising the usefulness of local knowledge, the RDC established voluntary deer groups which were encouraged to meet and share information on proposed culls and other mutually beneficial subjects such as poaching and to assist where possible with deer counts. At the inaugural meeting of the Moidart group, I recall Patrick Gordon-Duff-Pennington, the chairman, began by saying it was probably the first time all the local lairds had sat round the same table since the 1745 Jacobite Rising! As long as RDC was in charge, these groups were a success. Meetings rotated round lodges; they were brief and good natured; lunch was provided and drams were not unknown. But

all that was to change. SNH had no practical experience of the hill and its deer management record throughout Scotland in the past decade did not gain – and still doesn’t – the same respect among stalkers as that of its predecessor. They have long ago allowed themselves to be taken over by The Trees for Ever Mutual Admiration Society and keyboard warriors who regard deer as little more than vermin to be exterminated wherever and whenever possible. Under SNH, Deer Management Group (DMG) meetings and politically correct Deer Management Plans have became mandatory. Depending on the chairperson, meetings can ramble on for hours, eventually creating an atmosphere that could be cut by a gralloching knife.

Now and again SNH pays for deer counts by helicopter, although these days they prefer DMGs to organise their own which are never entirely accurate as they cannot be done with a limited number of people within a 24-hour period. Depending on wind, weather and disturbance by hill-walkers, deer will move around

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Tide tables for Oban during the week from Thursday November 12, 2020 are listed below with differences for major ports listed underneath. All times are GMT (add one hour BST)

	03.33	3.5	09.09	1.1
Thur	15.36	3.9	22.04	1.1
Fri	04.09	3.8	10.00	0.8
	16.16	4.2	22.45	0.8
Sat	04.43	4.0	10.48	0.6
	16.55	4.3	23.24	0.7
Sun	05.19	4.1	11.34	0.5
	17.35	4.4	**.**	**
Mon	00.03	0.6	05.57	4.2
	12.20	0.5	18.14	4.3
Tues	00.44	0.6	06.37	4.2
	13.06	0.6	18.53	4.1
Wed	01.26	0.8	07.19	4.1
	13.53	0.8	19.34	3.8

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

Ardishaig	-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 and a moderate breeze
Temperatures 9°C to 11°C.

Friday

Light rain and a moderate breeze
Temperatures 8°C to 9°C.

WEEKEND OUTLOOK

Saturday

Light rain and a moderate breeze
Temperatures 9°C to 11°C.

Sunday

Light rain and a fresh breeze
Temperatures 7°C to 10°C.

FRIDAY FORECAST



heritage – part 2



leading to double counting. In summary, today's DMGs have allowed themselves to be hi-jacked and Section 7 control agreements are used by SNH as a big stick if it doesn't get its way.

Fewer and fewer stalkers turn up to DMG meetings and who is to blame them, having to sit through so much codswallop from so-called experts and outside advisors? Ninety per cent of SNH staff have never had the good fortune to actually work among the deer and to learn what a noble and ancient animal they are; able to survive in the harshest conditions and convert the poorest grazing into the finest organic red meat in the world with no help from us. Moreover, they cost nothing except now and again when a few caring landowners provide extra fodder to help them through the leanest and meanest months of the year. The greatest tragedy of all is there are few, if any now, in the corridors of power who will champion their cause – not even the landowners whose deer forests they made household names – or the Association of Deer Management Groups, which sits on the fence.

Deer are deeply embedded in the nation's DNA. They are as much part of Scotland's heritage as Burns, haggis and whisky, but for all that we don't really know everything about them.

We shall miss them when they are gone but life goes on, we hope, and the brotherhood of the hill are still there to inspire us at least for the moment. If just 10 readers who agree with what

Men, who were schooled and lived out their lives in the same glen knowing no other form of employment, and knew their hill and the deer on it, managed their numbers and culled accordingly.

they have read here and are disturbed about the future of Scotland's wild red deer, would write to Roseanna Cunningham MSP, Cabinet Secretary for the Environment, The Scottish Parliament, Edinburgh, EH99 ISP, Roseanna.Cunningham.msp@parlment.scot it might make a difference.

Holly Marriott Webb, a student based at the University of Aarhus in Denmark, is writing a PhD on the history of the human-deer relationship in Scotland since c1800, with a particular focus on stalking and the interactions between stalkers and the deer rather than the more English way of stalking.

Holly, who already has an MA in Environmental History from Uppsala University, Sweden, is looking at the transition of knowledge and power over the deer now resting in the hands of conservationists, scientists and government bodies.

She is in the Highlands for a time and would like to hear from anyone in the neighbourhood with old deer stalking stories or observations of deer up to the present and can be contacted on hmw@cas.au.dk

DOWN MEMORY LANE

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



We have a water theme to this week's photographs. Above is fiddler David Boag, piper Alasdair Fraser and guitarist Michael Simpson of Feis Ross preparing to launch the Crossings Festival – a series of performances organised by various artists on board CalMac ferries throughout the Highlands and islands. But do you know which year?



We have no idea who these fine four fellows are. Are you in the photograph or do you know who they are and what was the occasion and year? If you have any information on either of these photographs, please let us know by emailing editor@obantimes.co.uk

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LEISURE & ENTERTAINMENT

Musicians tune up for awards

by Fiona Scott
fscott@obantimes.co.uk

An online performance platform featuring musicians from Argyll and Bute, Lochaber and further afield has been nominated for the Community Project of the Year at the MG ALBA Scots Trad Awards 2020.

Launched on Facebook in April by Capercaillie founder Martin MacLeod – who is originally from Oban – and his son, also Martin, Tunes in the Hoose has become a global phenomenon with artists joining from all over the world forming a virtual musical community, born out of lockdown.

The initiative was inspired by Scottish musician and MacLeod family friend Peter Wood, who was posting videos of himself playing tunes in his home during lockdown 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.

In its first five months alone the site boasted 411 productions, 2.5 million views world-

wide, 10,000 followers from 75 countries, and 800 traditional Scottish musician members.

Speaking to The Oban Times last week, Martin junior said: 'When we created Tunes in



Father and son are delighted to have their project nominated for the Community Project of the Year at the MG ALBA Scots Trad Awards 2020.

the Hoose there was very little opportunity for musicians to share their talents to an audience and little opportunity for audiences to enjoy live music.

'My dad has lived and breathed the scene for more than 40 years and really wanted to do something to preserve the craft and maintain morale throughout these trying times.

'We are honoured to have our 'wee project' recognised as a worthy candidate alongside all the fantastic community pro-

jects that have taken place this year. Thank you to everyone who nominated us.'

Tweaked for 2020 to reflect the huge change the entire industry has made due to Covid-19, this year's 12 awards are:

■ Music Tutor of the Year, sponsored by Creative Scotland

■ Gaelic Singer of the Year, sponsored by The Highland Society of London

■ Album of The Year, sponsored by Birnam CD

■ Up and Coming artist of

the Year, sponsored by Royal Conservatoire of Scotland

■ Community Music Project of the Year, sponsored by Greentrax Recordings

■ City Finlayson Scots Singer of the Year, sponsored by Traditional Music and Song Association

■ Event of the Year

■ Trad Video of the Year, sponsored by Threads of Sound

■ Online Performance of 2020, sponsored by the Gordon Duncan Memorial Trust

■ Services to Gaelic Award, sponsored by Bòrd na Gàidhlig

■ Original Work of the Year, sponsored by PRS for Music

■ Trad Music in the Media, sponsored by Sabhal Mòr Ostaig

■ Musician of the Year, sponsored by the University of the Highlands and Islands.

Voting opened on Monday November 2 and runs to Sunday November 18.

To see the list of nominees and to cast your vote, go to tunesinthehoose.com and click on the link.

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Source: YouGov 2018



Robert in lockdown

ROBERT ROBERTSON

robert.d.robertson@hotmail.co.uk

Always keen to maintain this column's hard won reputation for keeping abreast of current affairs, and after a week where our television screens have been filled with the presidential election across the pond, I thought I would attempt an American theme this week.

My understanding of US politics being fairly vague, I'll spare you any ill-informed commentary and tell you instead of an absolutely brilliant trip I had six years ago to the land of the free and the home of the brave.

I recall writing about it at the time in my Glasgow Letter so a look into the archives will reveal how accurate, or otherwise, my memory is.

Each year, the male and female Mòd gold medallists are flown across the Atlantic to sing and judge at the American National Mòd. After winning in Paisley in 2013, myself and Eilidh Goudie - Eilidh Munro back then - headed out to Washington DC where such a seismic transfer of power is occurring this week.

What an absolutely incredible city.

We spent days wandering its streets in absolute awe at its architecture - from the White



Robert in Washington DC.

House to Capitol Building, to Arlington Cemetery and, to my favourite, the Lincoln Memorial.

We even took in a Washington Capitals ice hockey match. In keeping with my election theme, the Mòd took place in neighbouring Pennsylvania - the state that held so much sway in the outcome of the 2020 race for the White House.

We rolled into the beautiful, sleepy town of Ligonier and after an evening of Gaelic songs in a hotel which disastrously had no bar, we headed the following day for the Mòd. Is it really called a Mòd, I hear

you ask, when the hotel has no bar? The event was part of a Highland Games, the scale of which I had never seen in my life. I was dressed in my kilt but, for a reason I can't recall, my bag with my brogues, my sporran and my belt was in another gentleman's car. On our arrival at the event, I was told that the guy with my bag was running late. Too late. I was ushered onto the main stage and introduced, I kid you not, as a representative of the Royal National Mòd - the pinnacle of Scottish Gaelic song.

Yet there I stood, in front of droves of expectant Americans, with neither belt nor sporran and wearing trainers with my kilt socks!

In an attempt to win over an increasingly sceptical audience, I gave a heartfelt rendition of Mo Mhàthair. As the last line of the song approached, I paused, closed my eyes and drew breath slowly to deliver the final notes. At exactly this point, I heard a commotion at the back of the crowd. A man began sprinting down the aisle, clutching my bag, and shouted in an American accent that will remain with me for as long as I live: 'Robert, I got your shoes!'

Scottish Opera brings its autumn highlights direct to your home

Scottish Opera has created a digital version of its hugely popular Opera Highlights, which was released last month and is currently available to watch online.

While the autumn tour usually sees the company travelling the highways and byways to many different venues in far reaching Scottish communities, this year's online Opera Highlights is a celebration of opera, music and performance in the time of social distancing.

Challenges

Director Rosie Purdie's colourful production of Opera Highlights looks at the current challenges facing performers in the time of Covid-19 and the strange new practices required in life and on stage.

The production imagines a time when performance can once again happen inside theatres, with four singers delighted to be performing live for the first time since lockdown, even if it means embracing the three-metre social distancing required at this time.

A determined organiser struggling to make sure



Shengzhi Ren in Opera Highlights. Photograph: Colin Hattersley.

everyone follows the rules, a disorganised singer and social distancing getting in the way of flourishing romances, make for a fun and relevant production of this year's Opera Highlights.

Scottish Opera's Head of Music Derek Clark has curated a playlist of operatic classics and must-hear rarities, with highlights including Verdi's Brindisi, Bizet's Habanera and more from Gilbert and Sullivan, Mozart and Lehár.

Pianist Susannah Wapshott is joined by Scottish Opera

Emerging Artists soprano Catriona Hewitson, mezzo-soprano Margo Arsane, tenor Shengzhi Ren and baritone Arthur Bruce.

As well as the production being available online, audiences will be able to delve further into Opera Highlights with the digital programme, which will also be available on the Scottish Opera website.

To watch the video, visit <https://www.scottishopera.org.uk/shows/opera-highlights-autumn-2020>

WHAT'S ON AT OBAN PHOENIX CINEMA

FRIDAY 13 NOV

The Secret Garden | PG
Honest Thief | 15
Cordelia | 15
Fences | 12A

16:30

17:00

19:00

19:30

MONDAY 16 NOV

Fences | 12A
The Secret Garden | PG
The Runaways | 12A
Cordelia | 15
Honest Thief | 15

14:30

16:30

17:30

19:00

20:15

SATURDAY 14 NOV

The Runaways | 12A
Two by Two: Overboard! | U
Max Winslow & The House of
Secrets | 12A
The Secret Garden | PG
Honest Thief | 15
Cordelia | 15

13:00

13:45

15:45

16:00

18:30

18:45

TUESDAY 17 NOV

The Secret Garden | PG
The Runaways | 12A
Cordelia | 15
Honest Thief | 15

16:30

16:45

19:00

19:30

SUNDAY 15 NOV

The Runaways | PG
Two by Two: Overboard! | U
NT Live: War Horse | 12A
The Secret Garden | PG
Cordelia | 15
Honest Thief | 15

12:15

13:30

15:00

15:45

18:15

18:30

WEDNESDAY 18 NOV

The Runaways | PG
The Secret Garden | PG
Harry Potter and the Prisoner of
Azkaban | PG
Honest Thief | 15

16:15

16:45

19:00

19:15

THURSDAY 19 NOV

The Runaways | PG
The Secret Garden | PG
Honest Thief | 15
The Royal Ballet: Giselle

16:30

16:45

19:15

19:30



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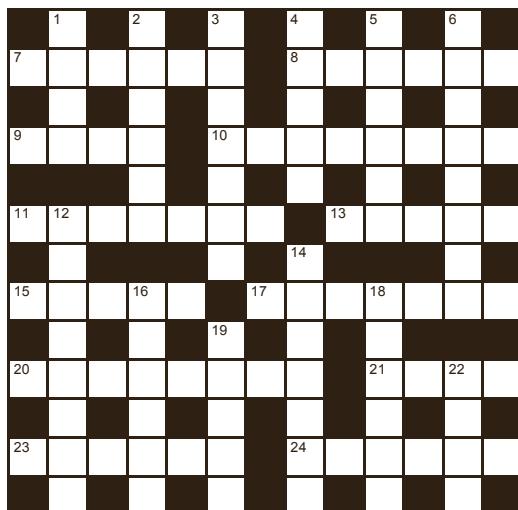
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MONDAY:	8am-12pm Breakfast show with Stephen
5pm-7pm	Drive time with Marcus
12-3pm	Lunch with Bob G
4.45pm-5pm	Talking Pages
5pm-7pm	Drive Times with Marcus
7pm-8pm	Highland Fling with Rosemary
8pm-9pm	John McLuckies Show
9pm	David Cullen Show
8am-10am	Breakfast Show with Stephen
10am-12.30pm	Ken Hunter
1pm-3pm	Macky on FM
3pm-5pm	Mental Musings with Mer & Vicki
5pm-7pm	Drive Times with Bob G
7pm-8pm	Highest Praise with Stuart Chalmers
8pm-9pm	Scottish Sounds with Archie Cameron
WEDNESDAY:	8am-10am Breakfast Show with Stephen
10am-1pm	Comfort Zone with Lesley
1pm-3pm	Doug in the afternoon
4pm-7pm	Drive Times with Campbell
7pm-9pm	Country meets Rock N Roll with Len Gordon's Grooves
9pm	Breakfast Show with Andy & Sarah
8am-11am	Lunch Show with Steve
11am-2pm	Drive Time with Stephen
3pm-7pm	Christine's Collections
7pm-9pm	Ann's Ceilidh
9pm-10pm	Margo Till Midnight
10pm	Breakfast Show with Jay
8am-10am	The One with Allan
10am-1pm	Talking Pages
1pm-1.15pm	Teeney & Tiny Show with Harry
4pm-6.45pm	Sports View with the Dream Team
6.45pm-7pm	Country Meets Country with Jackie Craig
7pm-8pm	Evening Show with Peter Rannnie
8pm-10pm	Late Show with Jay.
10pm	Breakfast Show with Stephen
SATURDAY:	Saturday Morning Live with Linda
8am-10am	Jukebox Jamboree with Ken Mc
10am-1pm	Sports View with the Dream Team
3pm-6pm	Sounds Scottish with Archie Darling
6pm-7pm	Evening Show with Dave Hobbs
7pm-8pm	Sunday Morning with Breege
8pm-10pm	Sunday Brunch with Stephen
9pm-11am	New Country Show with Dave & Murdoch
11am-2pm	Drum & Bass with Graham.
SUNDAY:	

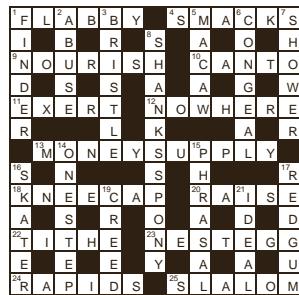
CROSSWORD



Across

- 7 Cream bun (6)
- 8 Take-away (6)
- 9 Dirty mark (4)
- 10 Excessive (8)
- 11 Sail hoister (7)
- 13 End piece (5)
- 15 Raft wood (5)
- 17 Three-pronged spear (7)
- 20 Young singer (8)
- 21 Small recess (4)
- 23 Damaged (6)
- 24 Slow down (6)
- 6 Item to scrutinise (8)
- 12 Turn of expression (8)
- 14 Cheese (7)
- 16 Tacky (6)
- 18 Give (6)
- 19 Key material (5)
- 22 Yours and mine (4)

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION



Down

- 1 Trick (4)
- 2 Pie cover (6)
- 3 Place to store weapons (7)
- 4 Eight in a group (5)
- 5 Fate (6)

Piper Stuart triumphs at Glenfiddich championship

by Colin Cameron
editor@argyllshireadvertiser.co.uk

Like many other aspects of life in 2020, this year's Glenfiddich Piping Championships had a different feel to it – but a familiar name came out on top.

Courtesy of two second placers, renowned Inveraray piper Stuart Liddell – pipe major of multiple world champion pipe band Inveraray and District – won the overall championship for the third time, beating a 'who's who' of piping talent in the process.

Willie McCallum, originally from Campbeltown, won the March, Strathspey and Reel competition as Benderloch's Angus McColl took fifth place in the Piobaireachd.

Organised by the National Piping Centre and supported by the William Grant Foundation, the Glenfiddich Piping Championship took place in the Great Hall at Blair Castle under strict coronavirus restrictions.

The entry list included the defending Glenfiddich champion Finlay Johnston and the winner of the Bratach Gorm and overall champion from the 2019 Scottish Piping Society of London annual competition Callum



Pipe Major Stuart Liddell, shows his delight at winning the overall championship for the third time. Photograph: Derek Maxwell.

Beaumont. To bring the total to 10, invitations were extended to past Glenfiddich champions and, because of duplications, to second overall placings so the list was completed by Jack Lee, Roddy MacLeod MBE, Angus MacColl, Stuart Liddell, Iain Speirs, Willie McCallum, Connor Sinclair and Bruce Gandy.

The competitors actually performed their sets the day

before the competition was streamed 'as live' on Saturday October 31.

Such is the prestige of this invitational competition, regarded by most as the pinnacle of solo piping. Canadian pipers Bruce Gandy and Jack Lee quarantined in Scotland for two weeks prior to the event and face the same isolation period on their return home.

The Piobaireachd judges were Iain MacFadyen, Willie

Morrison and Dr Jack Taylor, with Walter Cowan, Colin MacLellan, Ian MacLellan judging the March, Strathspey and Reel. Fear an tighe was John Wilson.

Results

Overall: 1 Stuart Liddell; 2 Jack Lee; 3 Roddy MacLeod.

Piobaireachd: 1 Jack Lee, British Columbia, Lament for Colin Roy MacKenzie; 2 Stuart Liddell, In Praise of Morag; 3 Finlay Johnston, Glasgow, Rory MacLeod's Lament; 4 Roddy MacLeod, Glasgow, The Battle of Aldearn #2; 5 Angus MacColl, Benderloch, The Unjust Incarceration.

MSR: 1 Willie McCallum, Bearsden, Angus Campbell's Farewell to Stirling, Shepherd's Crook, Bessie MacIntyre; 2 Stuart Liddell, The Duke of Roxburgh's Farewell to Blackmount Forest, Catlodge, Drumlithie; 3 Roddy MacLeod, The Marchioness of Tullibardine, The Piper's Bonnet, The Grey Bob; 4 Bruce Gandy, Nova Scotia, Leaving Lunga, The Ewe wi' the Crookit Horn, Stornoway Castle; 5 Iain Speirs, Edinburgh, Royal Scottish Pipers' Society, Tulloch Gorum, John McKechnie's Big Reel.

Armadale Castle to help save endangered species

Armadale Castle Gardens in Skye is to play an important role in endangered species conservation.

Through a new collaboration with the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh (RBGE), Armadale's historic gardens will be linked with the prestigious International Conifer Conservation Programme (ICCP) as a satellite garden for threatened plant material. The south Skye gardens will become part of a network of 'safe sites' where endangered tree species are able to flourish.

Conifers are of major importance worldwide and more than 34 per cent of all conifer species are threatened. This 'living collection' of endangered species will contribute to the ICCP's vital research about endangered species and potentially be used for conifer restoration programmes.

Armadale Castle is to receive



Andrew Peters is given a guided tour of the garden.

more than 100 young conifers this year, all of which are under threat of extinction. The trees are grown in Edinburgh from seeds collected in the wild under strictly controlled

licence arrangements. Some of the trees will be planted this autumn and next spring, while others will be grown on in Armadale's nursery for future planting.

Prior to joining the programme, Armadale Castle hosted a visit from the RBGE's conifer expert Martin Gardner MBE, co-ordinator of the ICCP and former chairman of the International Union for Conservation of Nature Conifer Specialist Group. The visit enabled Martin to assess Armadale's suitability as a satellite garden and identify the range of material the gardens could support. This gave rise to an invitation to select from



The Something for the Weekend team is returning with a bigger and better broadcast tomorrow.

Oban Times trio back on Friday with bigger and better podcast

Looking for something to brighten up your Friday?

Then look no further. The Oban Times podcast, Something For the Weekend (SFTW), is returning to a device near you on Friday November 13.

Yes, back by popular demand, reporters Kathie Griffiths, Fiona Scott and Ellis Butcher, along with the OT's IT VIP Steevie Day, are standing by their mics in preparation for the launch of the rebooted show which promises to be bigger and better than ever.

SFTW was first aired at the beginning of lockdown with the purpose of bringing some cheer into people's lives as well as putting forward ideas for

things to do in the new isolated world,' explained Fiona.

'Once restrictions began to lift we felt we had served our purpose. However, having heard how much people had been enjoying it, we decided to bring it back with the same familiar Friday morning craic but a much broader remit.'

Featuring sporadically in the remodelled edition will be interviews and inserts from 'weel kent' folk with local connections, upcoming events in the week ahead, unusual stories from The Oban Times from 25 years ago, a Scottish word pronunciation challenge and other weird and wonderful items for listeners in Oban and around the world to listen to and join

in with. Steevie added: 'We are very excited about getting the SFTW gang back together and looking forward to some of our new features that we have planned whilst keeping the original banter and fun.'

SFTW is recorded on a Friday morning and published to our website www.obantimes.co.uk and Facebook page around lunchtime the same day.

'I can't wait to bring the banter back with SFTW, a perfect perk up for the weekend,' added Kathie.

To get involved, email your messages, suggestions and comments on the podcast to somethingfortheweekend@obantimes.co.uk or via the Facebook post.

red trees in new partnership

an extensive list of potential trees.

The new additions are set to complement the existing planting at Armadale's 40-acre woodland garden, which is widely recognised for its fine collection of trees.

These include a number of specimens from the 1870s and earlier, as well as a number of more recently planted exotic species which thrive in the sheltered climate of south Skye.

Conservation

Andrew Peters, Gardens Consultant at Armadale Castle, said: 'This new partnership is a major step on the way to us achieving our long-term aim of creating an internationally recognised arboretum and woodland garden at Armadale, with conservation at its core.'

'It enables us to build on our important existing collection

and create a lasting legacy for future generations.'

'At a time when the world's biodiversity faces unprecedented threats, we believe it is more important than ever to protect forests and threatened species and we are honoured to be part of this important programme.'

Mr Gardner of RBGE and ICCP said: 'The International Conifer Conservation Programme is delighted to welcome Armadale Castle Gardens to its network of more than 200 'safe sites' for threatened conifers.'

'The sheltered aspect of the gardens makes it especially suitable for many of the conifers it will be growing as part of an international effort to help guard against the loss of these species in the wild.'

He added: 'Andrew Peters and I have been colleagues for many years and I know the

team at Armadale will do an excellent job of caring for these important specimens and engaging the public with the importance of conservation.'

'We look forward to a long and fruitful collaboration.'

The team at Armadale Castle is keen for the local community and wider public to become involved in the programme.

Planting

Volunteers will be invited to join in the tree planting next year and events and learning activities are planned.

There will also be opportunities to support the programme through sponsoring a tree or making a donation towards the costs of planting materials and cataloguing the collection.

READ MORE
www.obantimes.co.uk

M' ALBA

MY ALBA

**DIARDAOIN 12 an t-Samhain
THURSDAY 12 November**

- 17.00 Prògraman Chloinne – Children's programming
- 19:05 Clann a' Chogaidh Mhoir (Small Hands in A Big War) (rpt)
- 19.30 Speaking Our Language (rpt)
- 19.55 Earrann Eachdraidh (rpt)
- 20:00 An Là – News
- 20.30 NEW Earpa
- 21:00 Truinnsearan ar Sinsrean (rpt)
- 22.00 FUNC (rpt)
- 22.30 QE2 (rpt)
- 23.15 Dhan Uisge (Rubislaw Quarry) (rpt)
- 23.20 Binneas na Trads (rpt)
- 23.30 Na Trads: An Tobar (rpt)

**DIDÒMHNAICH 15 an t-Samhain
SUNDAY 15 November**

- 16.00 Prògraman Chloinne – Children's programming
- 18.15 An Là – News
- 18.30 Seachd La – News Review
- 19.30 Alleluia! (rpt)
- 20.00 Earpa (rpt)
- 20.30 Vets: Gach Creutair Beo (rpt)
- 21.00 Linn de Dhealbhan (Johnston Collection) (rpt)
- 21.30 Cearcall (rpt)
- 20.00 Ceolmhor@Piping Live! (rpt)
- 20.30 Thar na Loidhne/Crossing the Line (rpt)
- 21.00 Farpaisean Chon-Chaorach (rpt)
- 22.00 NEW The Optimists
- 22.50 Dhan Uisge (Rubislaw Quarry) (rpt)

**DIHAINE 13 an t-Samhain
FRIDAY 13 November**

- 17.00 Prògraman Chloinne – Children's programming
- 18.35 Machair (rpt)
- 19.00 An Là – News
- 19.25 Fraochy Bay (rpt)
- 19.30 Cearcall (rpt)
- 20.00 Ceolmhor@Piping Live! (rpt)
- 20.30 Thar na Loidhne/Crossing the Line (rpt)
- 21.00 Farpaisean Chon-Chaorach (rpt)
- 22.00 NEW The Optimists
- 22.50 Dhan Uisge (Rubislaw Quarry) (rpt)

**DISATHAIRNE 14 an t-Samhain
SATURDAY 14 November**

- 16.00 Prògraman Chloinne – Children's programming
- 17:45 An Là – News

**DICIADAIN 18 an t-Samhain
WEDNESDAY 18 November**

- 17.00 Prògraman Chloinne – Children's programming
- 19.00 Turas a Bhradain (rpt)
- 19.30 Speaking Our Language (rpt)
- 19.55 Earrann Eachdraidh (rpt)
- 20.00 An Là – News
- 20.30 Leugh Mi (rpt)
- 21.00 Bho Stalag Gu Gulag (rpt)
- 22.00 NEW Na Trads: An Tobar
- 22.30 Truinnsearan ar Sinsrean (rpt)
- 23.30 Julie Fowlis – Ceol Aig Baile (rpt)



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Hurrah! it's time for Children in Need!

To launch BBC Children in Need's 2020 fundraising Appeal – Together, we can – a YouGov poll on behalf of BBC Children in Need has shed light on the impact of recent events on children and young people across Britain, six months after the UK went into lockdown due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The survey also offers insight into the issues that matter most to young people and their hopes for the future.

The nationwide survey of 831 parents and 697 children and young people respectively reveals that:

- 94% of children and young people have had cause to feel worried, sad or anxious in the last six months.
- More than half of parents (54%) feel that lockdown has had a negative effect on their child's overall happiness and wellbeing
- 52% of children and young people say that they have felt more lonely during the past six months than they did before lockdown
- Six months after lockdown, nearly half (45%) of parents feel that their child displays more feelings of worry or anxiety than they did before
- Over half of parents (58%) feel that the events of the last six months (since lockdown) will have a negative effect on their child's future career and education prospects

• Three in ten children and young people (30%) feel it will be harder to get the job or career they want after the pandemic

• When asked about the issues which mattered most to them, over half of children and young people (59%) selected racism as an issue that was important to them personally. Climate change/global warming was also a concern, with 56% stating that this was important to them

• When asked which one world issue they would most like to see improve or get better, 22% of children and young people selected climate change/global warming, followed by coronavirus (13%)

• In terms of their hopes for the future, having a happy life is most important to children and parents alike. 74% of children wished for a happy life. 57% also said getting a good job was important to them. When asked about their one greatest wish for their child's future, 66% of parents said that their child having a happy life was most important, followed by them enjoying good health, with 20% of parents saying that was their greatest wish for their child.

The online surveys of 831 parents with children aged 5-18 years old* and 697 children aged 6 - 18 years old** were both carried out by YouGov on behalf of BBC Children in Need to launch the charity's 2020 Together, we can fund-

raising campaign. BBC Children in Need's 2020 campaign aims to inspire the nation to show their support for children and young people facing disadvantage across the UK, and demonstrate that Together, we can make a difference to young lives at this time of urgent need.

A number of celebrities have pledged their support for BBC Children in Need's Together, We Can 2020 campaign, including Ade Adepitan MBE, Zoe Ball, Nadiya Hussain and Joe Wicks:

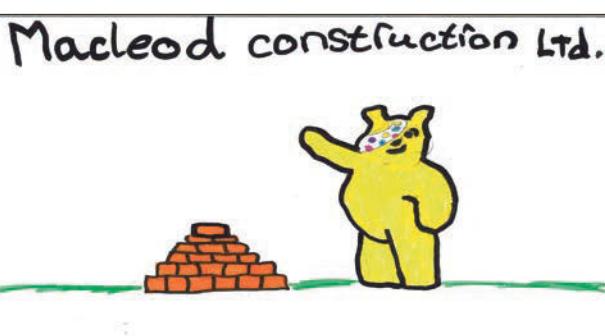
Ade Adepitan said: "The impact of Covid-19 on the lives of children and young people across the UK has been severe, and sadly, will likely be long-lasting. I have visited a number of BBC Children in Need funded projects in the past, and know the lifeline they offer to children in their time of need. This is a time of need. If you feel able to support this year, please do."

Zoe Ball commented: "This year's Appeal feels more important than ever given the situation we all find ourselves in, but there is hope. Extraordinary things happen when people join forces to make a difference. BBC Children in Need have accomplished incredible things over the years and that is only possible thanks to the public's generosity. Together, we really can make a difference."

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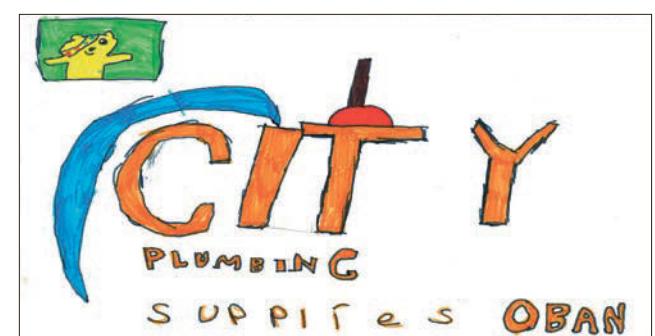
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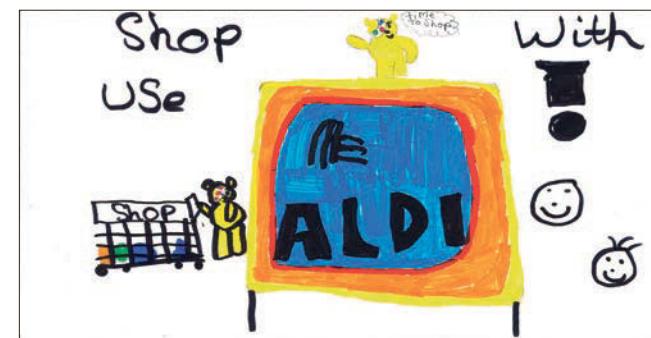
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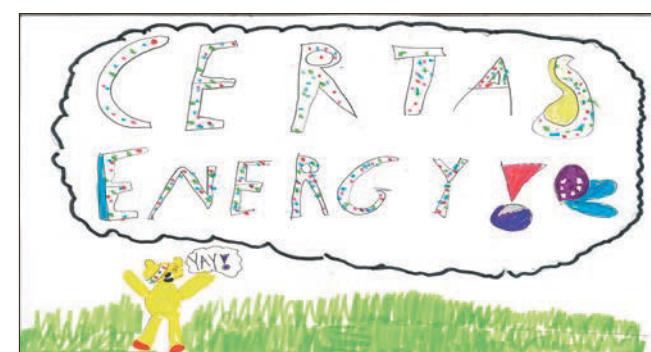
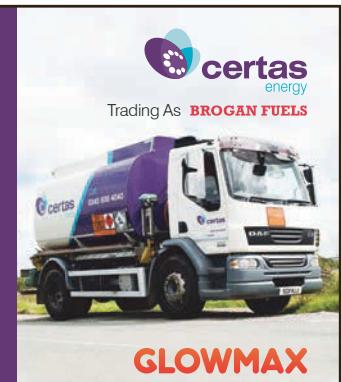


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Around the markets

United Auctions, Islay, Friday November 6: sold 1141 sheep of all classes. Lambs averaged £67.32(+£9.83). A mixed show of lambs sold at rates in keeping with current mainland levels. All classes of Ewes sold well.

Leading Prices and Lots
Lambs - SuffX - £90.00,
Carrabus; £86.00, Lossit; £78.00,
Smaladh; £77.00, Ballimartin;
£77.00, Carrabus; £76.00,
Ballachlaven; £76.00, Keills.
TexX - £91.00, Tallant; £81.00,
Laggan Estate; £80.50, Stanalane;
£80.00, Ellister; £80.00, Carn;
£79.00, Ballimartin; £78.00,
Carrabus; £78.00, Keills; £70.00,
Keills. BeltX - £81.00, Starchmill;
£80.00, Carrabus. HB - £93.00,
Carrabus. ChaX - £80.00,
Starchmill. £72.00, Stanalane.
Chev - £83.00, Lossit; £82.00,
Tormisdale Croft. Cross - £89.00,
Carrabus; £88.00, Carrabus;
£72.50, Leorin, £70.00, Duich.
Mule - £78.00, Starchmill; £76.00,
Smaladh; £72.00, Ballachlaven.
BF - £77.00, Lossit; £71.00, Leorin;
£71.00, Ballachlaven; £70.50,
Carn; £67.50, Coille; £65.50, Taigh
Fhraoich; £63.00, Duich; £63.00,
Lower Cragabus; £60.00, Lower

Cragabus.
Ewes - SuffX - £100, Stanalane;
£60.00, Coille. BFL - £91.00,
Ballachlaven; £65.00, Coille.
TexX - £104, Stanalane; £96.00,
Carrabus; £83.00, Keills; £81.00,
Carrabus. Chev - £67.00, Tormisdale Croft. £60.00, Stanalane. Cross - £81.00, Stanalane; £74.00, Smaladh. Mule - £68.00, Islay Estates. BF - £52.00, Stanalane; £49.00, Kinnabus.
Lambs per Kilo
SuffX - 206p, Ardtalla Estate;
202p,
200p, Duich; 199p, Lossit;
194p, Carrabus; 191p, Keills.
TexX - 219p, 216p, Ardtalla Estate; 208p, Laggan Estate;
204p, Stanalane; 203p, Tallant;
202p, Carn; 195p, Carrabus;
195p, 194p, Keills; 190p, Carn.
BeltX - 213p, 208p, Starchmill;
198p, Carrabus. ChaX - 194p,
Stanalane; 194p, Starchmill. Chev - 200p, Duich; 199p, Tormisdale Croft; 197p, Lossit. Cross - 219p, Ardtalla Estate; 211p, Ardnavie;
208p, Lower Cragabus; 206p, Sannaigmore; 203p, Duich;
200p, Ardtalla Estates; 193p, 191p, Carrabus. Mule - 197p, Crookston, Heriot.

193p, Duich; 191p, Starchmill;
188p, Sannaigmore; 188p,
Ballachlaven. BF - 199p, Coille;
199p, 193p, Lower Cragabus;
191p, Duich; 189p, Carn; 188p,
Lossit; 187p, Ballachlaven; 182p,
Keills; 182p, Taigh Fraoich; 182p,
181p, Leorin.
Dingwall & Highland Marts Ltd, Fort William, Friday November 6: sold 340 rams at its annual sale.
Blackface ram lambs (52) averaged £590.96 and sold to £4,700 gross from Allanfauld Farm, Kilsyth.
Blackface shearlings (205) averaged £352.68 and sold to £5,400 gross from Dalchirla Farm, Muthill.
Blackface two shears (16) averaged £174.38 and sold to £650 gross from Achnaha, Morven.
Blackface three shears (13) averaged £276.92 and sold to £1,050 gross from Glenrinnes Farms, Keith.
Blackface aged rams (4) averaged £182.50 and sold to £400 gross from West Bracklin, Callander.
Texel rams (14) averaged £206.43 and sold to £350 gross from Veltigar, Orkney.
Beltex rams (5) averaged £486 and sold to £700 gross from Crookston, Heriot.

Swale rams (3) averaged £213.33 and sold to £400 gross from Abercairney Estate, Creiff.
Cheviot rams (20) averaged £212 and sold to £450 gross from Balmaglaster (Cameron), Spean Bridge.
Blue Faced Leicester rams (6) averaged £375 and sold to £550 gross from Crookston.
Suffolk rams (2) averaged £210 and sold to £220 gross from Newton of Crathie, Ballater.
Other leading prices per head
BF ram lambs - Elmscleugh, Dunbar, £3,600 & £2,000,
Midlock, Crawford, £2,600 & £2,400, Dalchirla, £1,800.
BF shearing - Midlock, £3,200, Elmscleugh, £2,600, Nunnerie Farm, Biggar, £1,900.
BF two shear - Clints Farming, Heriot, £300.
BF three shear - Craig Farm, Straiton, £550.
BF Aged - West Bracklin, £200.
Texel shearing - Succouth, Ardeonaig, £300, No 3 Glenrath, Kiarkton, £250.
Beltex shearing - Crookston, £550 (twice).
Cheviot 2 shear - East Bracklin, £400.
Cheviot 3 shear - Balmaglaster, £300.
Cheviot shearling - 1 Kinloch, Arisaig, £250.

Blue Faced Leicester shearling - Crookston, £500.
Suffolk shearling - Crookston, £200.
United Auctions, Stirling, Thursday November 5: sold 7307 prime sheep, comprising of 5567 new season lambs selling to average an 205.30p and 1740 ewes and rams.
New Season Lambs (5567) - Berrydyke (BTEx) £119.00; Doune Farms (BTEx) £117.00; Berrydyke, Groan & Doune Farms (BTEx) £114.00; South Flanders (Tex) £113.50; Wardhead (Tex) £110.00; Hangingshaw & Ballinloan (Tex) £109.00; South Flanders (Suf) £109.00; Pittenkerrie, Bogburn & Hangingshaw (Suf) £108.00; Balgay (Cha) £105.00; Fullarton (Cross) £98.00; Ballinloan (Chev) £97.00; Monzie & Cumnock House (Chev) £93.00; Bogburn (Mule) £94.50; Darnhall (Mule) £94.00; Coates, Dyke & Home Farm, Dens (Mule) £93.00; Rossie (Rom) £93.50; Letham (Chev/Mule) £93.00; Monzie (Chev/Mule) £90.00; Darnhall (BF) £92.50 x2; Home Farm, Dens (BF) £87.00; Burnhead (BF) £86.00.
New Season Lambs (5567) - Berrydyke (BTEx) £267.00ppk; Colilavoulin (BTEx) £261.00ppk; Doune Farms & Groan (BTEx) £260.00ppk; Wardhead (Tex)

242.00ppk; Ballinloan (Tex) £241.00ppk; Claish 238.00ppk; Cairnton (Suf) £212.00ppk; Darnhall (Suf) £211.00ppk; Cairnton (Suf) £210.00ppk; Victoria (Chev) £218.00ppk; Cumnock House (Chev) £211.00ppk; Glenlyon (Chev) £210.00ppk; Doune Farms (BF) £217.00ppk, 212.00ppk & 211.00ppk; Lossit (Cross) £215.00ppk; Doune Farms (Mule) £207.00ppk; Hopes Estate (Mule) £206.00ppk; North Deanhead (Mule) £203.00ppk; Balgay (Cha) £206.00ppk; Rossie (Rom) £200.00ppk; Monzie (Chev/Mule) £197.00ppk; Letham (Chev/Mule) £195.00ppk x2.
Ewes (1740) - Broadshean (Tex) £120.00; Cumnock House & Milton (Tex) £116.00; Chalmerton (Suf) £120.00; Pennytersal (BFL) £115.00; Glenhead (Tex) £114.00; Braendam & Glenhead (Tex) £110.00; Hangingshaw & Overhill House (Cont) £106.00; Hole O Clean (SufX) £107.00; Broadshean (SufX) £104.50; Colilavoulin (BTEx) £103.00; Darnhall (CharX) £100.00; Easter Craigduckie (Mule) £87.00; Cumnock House (Mule) £86.00; Whitesykes (Mule) £85.00; Balnacree (Chev) £97.00; Moor & Colony (Chev) £96.00; Braeside of Lindores (Chev/Mule) £90.00; Point (Cross) £85.00.

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TRANSPORT SCOTLAND

NOTICE OF DETERMINATION

A82 MEETING OF THE THREE WATERS, GLENCOE

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

DETERMINATION UNDER SECTION 55A OF THE ROADS (SCOTLAND) ACT 1984

The Scottish Ministers give notice that they have determined that the project to secure the three rockfaces at the Meeting of the Three Waters on the A82 in Glencoe is a relevant project within the meaning of section 55A of the Roads (Scotland) Act 1984 ("the 1984 Act") and falls within Annex II of Directive 2011/92/EU on the assessment of certain public and private projects on the environment, but that having regard to -

- (a) the selection criteria contained in Annex III of that Directive, namely -
 - (i) the size and design of the whole project;
 - (ii) the use of natural resources, in particular land, soil, water and biodiversity;
 - (iii) the production of waste;
 - (iv) pollution and nuisances;
 - (v) areas classified or protected under national legislation; Natura 2000 areas designated by Member States pursuant to Directive 92/43/EEC and Directive 2009/147/EC,
- (b) the results of the Environmental Screening Assessment under section 55A(2) of the 1984 Act and the assessment under regulation 48 of the Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 1994 ("the 1994 Regulations") concluded that there would be no likely significant effects on the Glencoe Special Area of Conservation, the Glencoe Site of Special Scientific Interest, the Glen Etive and Glen Fyne Special Protection Area and the Glencoe National Nature Reserve,
- (c) the information set out in the Record of Determination dated 14 September 2020, available at <https://www.transport.gov.scot/transport-network/roads/road-orders-and-records-of-determination/#63527>,

the project does not require an Environmental Impact Assessment. The main reasons for the conclusion that no Environmental Impact Assessment is required are:

- (a) Following construction and implementation of mitigation, the area in which the works are to be completed will not be significantly different from that which currently exists;
 - (b) The 1994 Regulations Assessment determined that with mitigation measures, there would be no likely significant effects on the Glencoe Special Area of Conservation, the Glencoe Site of Special Scientific Interest, the Glen Etive and Glen Fyne Special Protection Area and the Glencoe National Nature Reserve;
 - (c) The scheme is not located within a densely populated area;
 - (d) The scheme has limited impact on ecological connectivity or habitats of conservation concern, and works are limited to three rockfaces that are considered unlikely to support protected species. The features of the project which are envisaged to avoid or prevent significant adverse effects on the environment are:
- (a) Potential construction effects on local air quality, ecology, water quality, land use and landscape, and noise and vibration will be minimised through best practice working procedures and implementation of appropriate mitigation;
- (b) Works will be undertaken outwith the summer months to minimise disruption to travellers and tourists;
- (c) The Waste Hierarchy will be applied and adhered to throughout the construction phase with excavated materials being reused in-situ where practicable.

S R LEES

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



THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL (LOCHABER) (DISABLED PERSONS' PARKING PLACES) ORDER 2011 AMENDMENT ORDER 2020

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that The Highland Council on 2nd November 2020 made, in terms of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 Sections 32 (1) and 45(2) and part IV of Schedule 9 , the above Order which will come into operation on Monday 9th November 2020.

The Order was previously advertised by Notice in the Lochaber Times on Thursday 4th June 2020 and the effect of the Order is as described in that Notice (with the exception of the disabled parking place at Mulroy Terrace, Roy Bridge which is now located in line with the east boundary fence of 13 Mulroy Terrace extending in a westerly direction for 6 metres or thereby).

Copies of the made Order, together with a copy of the relevant maps can be inspected via the following link: www.highland.gov.uk/troconsultations

Any person wishing to question the validity of the Order or of any of its provisions on the grounds that it is not within the powers of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, or that a requirement of that Act or of any relevant regulations made thereunder has not been complied with may, within six weeks from the date on which the Order was made, make application for the purpose to the Court of Session.

02/11/2020: Richard Porteous, Roads Operations Manager, Lochaber, Nairn, Badenoch & Strathspey Area.

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APPLICATION**

1. IA Maclean, 206 Acharacle Fillans Cottage, 0.08ha, Existing house site (105456)

Comments from any member of the crofting community within the locality of the croft and any expressions of demand for the croft (which may be made public), may be sent to the Crofting Commission by 11/12/20 at info@crofting.gov.scot / Crofting Commission, Great Glen House, Leachkin Road, Inverness IV3 8NW.

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

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
20/04247/FUL	National Trust for Scotland Visitor Centre, Glenfinnan	Installation of water station
20/04188/FUL	Whinburn, Lundavra Road, Fort William	Change of use from house to guesthouse
20/03960/FUL	Land 130M East of Laggan Cottage South Laggan, Spean Bridge	Formation of two dewatering lagoons to facilitate hydraulic dredging
20/04281/FUL	Land 80M NW Of the Lodge on The Loch, Onich	Proposed Cafe and 9 no. Letting Units

Time period for comments is 14 days

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

BREEDON

Blast site: Banavie Quarry

Fort William

Date of Blast: Fri 13th Nov 2020

Time of Blast:

12:00hrs – 14:00hrs

**Oban Times
PUBLIC NOTICES**

**FIRST REGISTRATION
OF A CROFT**

Mrs Mary Cattanach and Mrs Sheila McKie have registered their croft known as 12 Keil, Benderloch, Ardchattan & Muckairn on the Crofting Register held by the Registers of Scotland.

Any person who wishes to challenge the registration may apply to the Scottish Land Court by the 29th July 2021.

Details of the registration can be found at www.crofts.ros.gov.uk/register/home. The croft registration number is C7217.

First Registration of a Croft

Sheila McIntosh has registered their croft No. 3 Bohenie, Kilmonivaig on the Crofting Register held by the Registers of Scotland.

Any person who wishes to challenge the registration may apply to the Scottish Land Court by 2nd August 2021.

Details of the registration can be found at www.crofts.ros.gov.uk/register/home. The croft registration number is C7237.

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Proposed Assignment of a Grazing Share

Mrs Shona McVean Sinclair Campbell is applying to the Crofting Commission for consent to assign the tenancy of the grazing share in the Stronmlichian Common Grazings pertaining to the croft at Loch Awe View 2 (Share) to Peter Russell Bryan Hennessy of Carraig Thura, Dalmally, PA33 1AJ.

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 by 10th December 2020



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**

20/01750/PP	Redevelopment of barn to provide dwellinghouse at first floor level	Site Address Kinloch Steadings, Pennyghael, Isle Of Mull, Argyll And Bute, PA70 6HB
20/01500/PP	Construction of rock armour breakwater and steel monopile berthing facility	Iona Slipway, Isle Of Iona, Argyll And Bute
20/01223/PP	Erection of holiday letting unit	Garden Ground Of Ruarcie, Laurel Road, Oban, Argyll And Bute, PA34 5EA
20/01798/PP	Formation of vehicular access including erection of bridge over existing burn	Coille Achachenna (Lot 3), Kilchrenan, Argyll And Bute
20/01833/PPP	Renewal of planning permission in principle reference 17/01747/PPP (Site for the erection of dwellinghouse)	Plot 4 Memorial Field, Land South Of Drimmin Cottage, Kilchrenan, Taynuilt, Argyll And Bute
20/01707/PP	Change of use of shop to form addition to existing dwellinghouse	Brac Shop, 1 Crown Street, Portnahaven, Isle Of Islay, Argyll And Bute, PA47 7SW

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, Lochgilphead, 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 Council's 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:
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MARINE (SCOTLAND) ACT 2010

MOORINGS

LOCH CRERAN, BARCALDINE

Notice is hereby given that Aggregate Industries UK Ltd has applied to the Scottish Ministers of the Scottish Government, under Part 4 of the Marine (Scotland) Act 2010, in respect of two moorings at:

Cost	£35,000	
Location	Latitude	Longitude
Loch Creran	56° 31.087' N	005° 21.807' W
	56° 31.126' N	005° 21.693' W

(WGS84)

Plans showing the position of the works may be inspected at <https://bit.ly/35cfsc8>.

Objections relating to safety of navigation or environmental issues in respect of the application should be made in writing to:

Licensing Operations Team, Marine Scotland, Marine Laboratory, 375 Victoria Road, Aberdeen, AB11 9DB within 28 days of the date of this notice or by email to: MS.MarineLicensing@gov.scot, quoting reference: 00008963 and Aggregate Industries UK Ltd.

Fair Processing Notice

The Scottish Government's Marine Scotland Licensing Operations Team (MS-LOT) determine applications for marine licences under the Marine (Scotland) Act 2010 and the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009. During the consultation process any person having an interest in the outcome of the application may make representation to MS-LOT. The representation may contain personal information, for example a name or address. This representation will only be used for the purpose of determining an application and will be stored securely in the Scottish Government's official corporate record. Representations will be shared with the applicant and/or agent acting on behalf of the applicant, any people or organisations that we consult in relation to the application and, where necessary, be published online, however personal information will be removed before sharing or publishing.

A full privacy notice can be found at: <http://www.gov.scot/Topics/marine/Licensing/marine/PrivacyNotice>. If you are unable to access this, or you have any queries or concerns about how your personal information will be handled, contact MS-LOT at: ms.marinelicensing@gov.scot or Marine Scotland - Licensing Operations Team, Marine Laboratory, 375 Victoria Road, Aberdeen, AB11 9DB.

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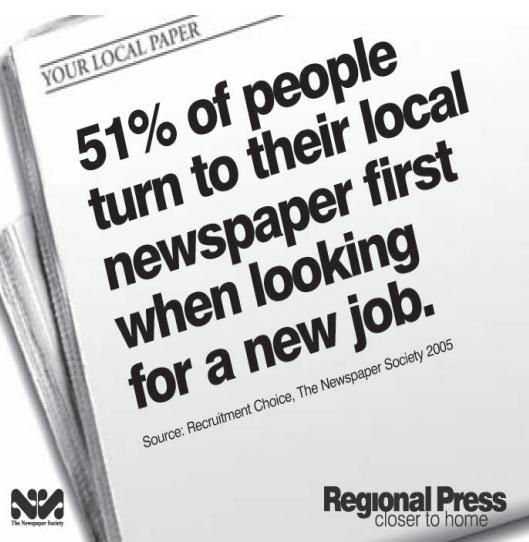
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Closing date: Monday 23rd November 2020.



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DEATHS

BINNIE - Suddenly at Lorn and Islands Hospital, Oban, after a short illness courageously fought, Deborah dearly loved wife to Lorne, devoted mother to Jensen, Brodie and Arden, daughter of Janet and Callum Robertson, sister to Pamela and auntie to Alex and Gabriella, forever in our hearts. A private funeral will take place in accordance with current government guidelines. Anyone wishing to pay their respects can do so, whilst maintaining a social distance. The cortege will leave Balvicar Road at 12.30 pm travelling down Soroba Road, along Combie Street, through Argyll Square, onto George Street, along the Esplanade and up past the Corran Halls, enroute to Pennyfuir Cemetery. Family flowers only please.

Donations in lieu of flowers should be made in Deborah's memory to Breast Cancer Support (<https://breastcancersupport.org.uk/donate>), should you wish to do so.

CAMPBELL - Peacefully at home in Calgary, Isle of Mull on November 2, 2020, Dugald McKechnie Campbell, aged 94 years. Beloved husband of Morag (née) MacVicar, father of Duncan and Alison, grandfather of Iona and Ian. Youngest son of the late Archibald and Mary Campbell, latterly of Silvercraigs. Funeral service was held at Cardross Crematorium on Tuesday, November 10, 2020.

LOWE - Peacefully at Etive House Care Home, Benderloch on November 3, 2020, aged 84 years, Jeanne, dear wife of William, beloved mother of Donald, Joanne and Simon,

much loved grandma of Vivian and Mark, a dear sister, aunt and friend to many. May she rest in peace.

MACIVER - Jemima (Mima) née MacMillan, peacefully in Inverness on November 6, 2020 aged 83 years. Former Guest House proprietor at Loudon, Dalriach Road, more recently of Shore Street, Oban. Devoted mother to Pauline and Jenny. Treasured friend, granny, sister and aunt. Due to current restrictions, funeral private. Arrangements by DA Munn, Funeral Directors, Oban.

SWANN - Peacefully on November 8, 2020 at Mandurah, Western Australia, Jessie Rowan Swann née Menzies. Beloved wife of the late Roy, eldest daughter of the late Alexander and Flora Menzies, Glenroy, Oban. Cherished mother,

grandmother and much loved sister. Sorely missed.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

BOA - The Boa family from Dervaig on the Isle of Mull wish to thank relatives, friends and neighbours for their kindness, cards, messages, flowers, phone calls and expressions of sympathy which was hugely appreciated following the sad passing of Lorna MacColl Henry Boa. Special thanks to the local community who were scattered at all locations as Lorna made her final journey to Keil, Morvern, and to our local nurses (who always brightened Lorna's day), the staff at Mull and Iona Community hospital and Lorn and Islands hospital for their care, the ambulance and air ambulance services, Billy at Mull Funeral Service, the crews on the Isle of Mull ferry and the Lochinvar ferry (Lochaline), the Lochaline Hotel for a lovely lunch and to Michelle, Heather and Maggie for the beautiful funeral favours.

LAWRIE - Elizabeth (Betty) Lawrie. Passed peacefully at home on October 13, 2020. The family would like to thank the District Nurses, Care at Home staff, Crossroads staff, the local G.P.s. Belford Hospital, Ambulance staff, neighbours and friends for their care, support and kindness shown during and after Mum's illness.

DUNCAN - In loving memory of my dear husband Howard, called to rest on November 12, 2001. Your life was a blessing Your memory a treasure You are loved beyond words And missed beyond measure. - Chrissie x

MACLEOD - The family of Christina MacLeod would like to thank friends and neighbours for their kind expressions of sympathy by cards, flowers,

phone calls and messages received following bereavement. Thanks also to all those who lined the road on the day of the funeral. Special thanks to the Rev Dugald Cameron, Ian of D&A Munn, piper Donnie Files and The Thistle and The Rose for the floral arrangements. Lastly sincere thanks to nurses and council staff who daily assisted and made Christina's last days so much more comfortable.

MEMORIAMS

CAMERON - In loving memory of our Louie, a dear sister, sister-in-law, aunt and great-aunt who passed away at Kilmalieu on November 10, 2000. Sadly missed.

- MacKechnie family at Fort William, Oban, Killin and Balfron.

DICKSON - In loving memory of Annabel, who died November 13, 2016, dearly loved wife of Hugh and devoted mother and gran to all the family. Always in our thoughts. - Hugh.

MACKAY - In loving memory of our parents Bertie, who died on November 11, 1989, and Agnes, who died on January 29, 2011. Always in our thoughts.

Also remembering Uncle Jack, who died on November 17, 1993. - The Mackay and Gillies families, Oban and Lochgilphead.

No distance can divide
In memory's garden day by day
We still walk by your side
- Hamish.

EMSLIE - Remembering with love and gratitude our mother, mother-in-law and granny Anne, who passed away on November 16, 2002.

A light is from our household gone

A voice we loved is stilled
A place is vacant in our home
Which never can be filled
- Your family.

KENNEDY - In loving memory of my dear niece Isobel, who died November 11, 2019. And while she lies in peaceful sleep, her memory I shall always keep.

KENNEDY - Precious memories of my dear sister Isobel who passed away November 11, 2019. Always so good, unselfish and kind

Few on this earth her equal we find.
Honourable and upright in all her ways,
Loyal and true to the end of her days.

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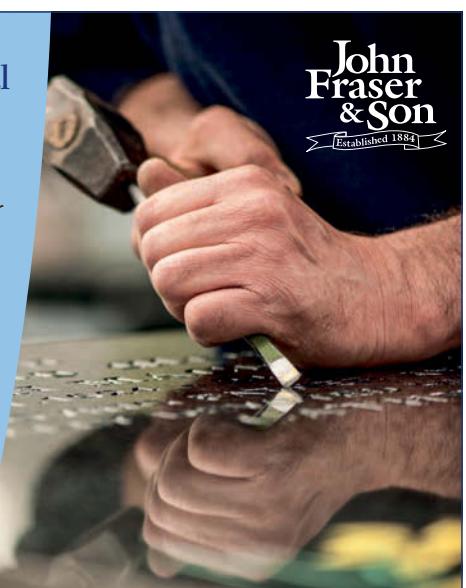


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MACNICOL - In loving memory of Ishbel M MacNicol, 27.2.45 - 14.11.13.

No longer in our lives to share
But in our hearts you are always there.

- Love Hamish and family.

PARKINSON - Treasured memories of a dear Dad and Pop, Arthur (Scouse), who passed away November 12, 1990.

They say time is a healer and can ease the grief and pain,
But it's thirty years since you left me Dad,

And I miss you just the same.

- Peggy, Alistair, and family x

PEARSON - Proud and precious memories of our Gary, a much loved Dada, son and brother, taken from us so tragically on November 13, 1999, aged 22 years.

We cannot believe that it has been 21 years without you.

However you remain in our hearts every day.

May the winds of Heaven blow softly and whisper in your ear
How much we loved and miss you and wish that you were here.

- All the family.

ROSS - In loving memory of our dad Charlie, who passed away November 11, 2019.

In our hearts you will always stay
Loved and remembered every day

- Kay, Susan, Craig and families.

ROSS - In loving memory of Charlie Ross, who passed away November 11, 2019. A loving brother-in-law and uncle.

Always remembered.

- Kathleen and family, Farnborough and Fleet.

Appreciation: Graham Stewart 1955-2020, silversmith

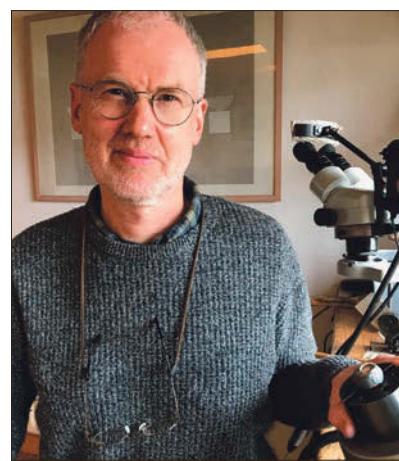
Graham Stewart, who died in Edinburgh on Wednesday October 28, is widely regarded as one of the finest silversmiths of his generation.

Born in Bridge of Allan and educated at Dollar Academy and Gray's School of Art in Aberdeen, Graham's earliest influence in the craft, at which he was to excel, was his father, William Morrice Stewart, an optical instrument maker who trained as a silversmith in later life.

Graham's shop and workshop in Dunblane's High Street, was a place to which lovers of fine quality silver and jewellery from all over the world made their way. Both as a designer and craftsman, Graham commanded the respect of his peers and the many admirers of his work all over the world. His sculpture, The Honours of Scotland, sits in the Main Hall of the Scottish Parliament, and he is responsible for the claret jugs which are part of the Millennium Collection for Bute House, the official residence of Scotland's First Minister.

Yet, for all his undoubted success, and all the well-deserved plaudits, Graham remained a deeply humble and gentle man, who took as much care in helping someone visiting his shop to select just the right gift for Christmas or any other special occasion, as with the most prestigious commission. Precious though their purchases from Graham may be, so also are the memories people have of their encounters with Graham as they made their choices or worked with him as he sketched a design, seemingly with such ease.

As well as being full of things of great beauty, many of which were created on the premises by Graham and his



would be sketched by Graham on his return home before taking shape in silver in due course. I remember admiring a table centre, the inspiration for which was some star anise.

Graham has been a good friend to Dunblane Cathedral, with which he has had a long association, faithfully dealing with any bashes and scrapes suffered by the Cathedral's Communion Silver over the years, or cleaning the intricate silver lantern that hangs above the font. His very generous gift to the Cathedral of a communion cup, designed by him and made in his workshop, is something that I suspect will be treasured and used for many generations to come.

Although essentially a quiet and private person, Graham has been a good friend to many people in Dunblane and far beyond. An outstanding artist and silversmith, as well as a good teacher of his craft, he retained, along with his deep sense of humility, a lovely capacity for wonder and appreciation. Out of such deep humility, patience and a rare gift for careful observation, true wisdom can emerge. Graham was, indeed, a wise man.

Many of those of us who were privileged to know Graham may wonder if a man so genuinely humble ever truly knew just how talented and deeply loved and respected he was.

Graham is survived by his wife Elizabeth, their children, Thomas and Hannah and their spouses, his grandson Ivor, his mother Betty, (who celebrated her 100th birthday in September), his sister Wilma and his brother Iain.

Colin C. Renwick, Minister at Dunblane Cathedral

THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK

I recently finished my tax return and what a relief!

Funnily enough that coincided with the Gospel reading set for the subsequent Sunday, Matthew 22:15-22.

Those who were always wanting to trap Jesus were trying to trip him up, and they asked 'Is it right to pay taxes to Caesar or not?' As usual Jesus turns the question around, shows them a coin, and says: 'Whose portrait is this?'

In our present day that would be our Queen, representative of the government. Taxation is necessary. I guess God's only interest in taxation is - is it fair? who is hurt by it? and who is favoured? And so we pray for politicians of integrity who uphold Godly values.

Well, I have sent in my tax return and I will pay what is necessary. But what of the second part of Jesus's answer - 'Give to God what belongs to God'? What does God want from me, from all of us?

Just a little further on in the same chapter we read that the greatest commandment is 'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and all your strength, and your neighbour as yourself'.

Surely that is the absolute bottom line; love. But our only hope of following that commandment is to first open our hearts to receive God's love for us, and then anything we give, to God or to people, becomes an inevitable overflow of that perfect, unconditional and totally undeserved heavenly love.

Joyce Watson, Iona

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Crash leaves John unable to capitalise on pole position

Oban's Moto3 star John McPhee was unable to capitalise on his pole position at Circuit Ricardo Tormo after crashing out of the Gran Premio de Europa on lap five.

Although John initially had good drive off the start line, he found himself in the clutches of the pack heading out of the first corner, dropping to ninth on the opening lap.

Sitting inside the top 10 throughout the opening laps, the Petronas Sprinta Racing Team rider made sure he kept within the main field.

Unfortunately, John's race came to an early end on lap five, crashing out on a damp patch at turn one. McPhee maintains sixth position in the riders' standings.

After the race John said: 'I'm gutted to have finished the race early after starting from pole position. I didn't feel good on the first lap.'

'I was trying to attack but felt something strange. It took me too long to find my rhythm in the first few laps and I dropped too many places. Then when I started to attack again I caught a wet patch in turn one and crashed.'

'It's really unfortunate because we missed out on a good opportunity to close the gap in the championship. We will re-group though and focus on the next two races.'

There will be no rest for John as the Gran Premio de la Comunitat Valenciana, also held at Circuit Ricardo Tormo, will get under way tomorrow, Friday November 13, until Sunday November 15.

Brilliant finish sees Bob clinch first tour victory

Robert (Bob) MacIntyre capped a brilliant fortnight's golf on the European Tour by securing the first victory of his short career in the Cyprus Challenge at the stunning Aphrodite Hills resort.

Following last week's third place finish on the same course, the Oban star went into the tournament as one of the favourites and after an opening round of 65 it was easy to see why.

The best was yet to come, however, and after comfortably qualifying for Sunday with rounds of 68 and 67, his final day winning score of 64 was sensational.

Speaking immediately afterward to Sky Sports' Tim Barter, Bob's reaction was typically down to earth: 'I cannae believe it. It is unbelievable. It's what I've dreamed of as a wee kid watching Scottish Opens at Loch Lomond.'

Speaking after his round, the Oban left-hander revealed that standing on the 18th tee he remembered his dad Dougie's advice to 'tee it high and let it fly' and that is exactly what

he did, launching a 345-yard monster straight down the centre of the fairway leaving himself a relatively comfortable nine-iron approach over the water to the green.

With all of Oban cheering him on in front of their television screens, he hit a majestic approach shot to 20 feet, rolled the putt up close and tapped in for a winning birdie four to complete a back nine of 30 which will live long in the memory of those who witnessed it.

Speaking immediately afterward to Sky Sports' Tim Barter, Bob's reaction was typically down to earth: 'I cannae believe it. It is unbelievable. It's what I've dreamed of as a wee kid watching Scottish Opens at Loch Lomond.'

This week's format suited me and I took it. The 17th hole was huge, when I saw the scores.

I've done a lot of work in the last six months, not thinking about winning a golf



Robert MacIntyre with the trophy after winning the Aphrodite Hills Cyprus Showdown at Aphrodite Hills Resort on Sunday.

Photograph: Andrew Redington/Getty Images.

almost when it opened up slightly. You felt you were getting released into the open but were still getting told what to do. That was tough for me. It's been a difficult few months for me, only my family know what's going on.'

He went on to pay tribute to his family and psychologist for helping him hugely during that time.

Following his victory in Cyprus, Bob has jumped to 62nd in the world rankings, 24th in The Race to Dubai standings and pocketed just over £180,000.

Robert MacIntyre has announced himself firmly on the world stage and did himself, his family and the whole of Oban proud.

tournament, just to play my golf. Last year, I was talking and thinking about winning golf tournaments when I was going down the back nine on a Sunday, but this year I've just tried to take my time and let it happen. What will happen, will happen and it's happened today.'

West Highland away day win for Oban Saints in League Division One friendly match

SL Thistle	0
Oban Saints	4
Friendly	

Oban Saints and South Lochaber Thistle were finally able to get game time under their belts at Kinlochleven High School last Saturday afternoon.

Referee Martin Rae ensured

strict matchday protocols were followed and a brace from captain for the day Craig MacEwan, together with strikes from Lewis Cameron and Aaron McKay, gave Saints victory over their Greater Glasgow Premier League Division One hosts.

The deadlock was broken in the 32nd minute when, in a slice of bad fortune for

Andrew Brown, his attempted clearance hit Lewis Cameron with the ball falling kindly for Craig MacEwan, who slotted the ball low to Brown's right to open the scoring.

Pressure on the home goal eventually told in the 65th minute when Craig MacEwan made a near-post run to connect perfectly with Lewis Cameron's corner kick from

the right. A quickly taken 68th minute throw up to Lewis Cameron saw the Scottish Amateur Internationalist spin away from his marker and lift a cheeky lob over the advancing keeper.

With six minutes to go, Aaron McKay gleefully knocked home MacEwan's cutback from close range to score the fourth.

See the full match report at www.obantimes.co.uk.

Match report by Derek Black.



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by Mark Entwistle
mentwistle@obantimes.co.uk

Lochaber smelter owner GFG Alliance has given assurances it is 'business as usual' at the Kinlochleven hydro-electric power station following the revelation it has leased it to London-based infrastructure investor Equitix.

Equitix took over the running of the power station last month from Simec, a subsidiary of Indian-born metals and mining tycoon Sanjeev Gupta's GFG Alliance.

A GFG Alliance spokesman told the Lochaber Times this week: 'As part of a financing exercise, Simec Lochaber Hydropower has signed a lease agreement for Kinlochleven with Equitix, a world-class infrastructure fund that owns regional assets at Nathrach and Loch Eilde Mor. Simec will remain the landlord of Kinlochleven and continue to operate and manage the asset. We anticipate no change in how Kinlochleven is run, including employment levels

and the commitment to safety.' Constructed between 1905 and 1909, Kinlochleven was the first major hydro-electric project in Britain and harnesses water power from the Black Water chain of lochs through a 13km reservoir. The Blackwater dam, which serves Kinlochleven, is the longest in the Highlands.

The hydro-electric plant was part of the £330million deal

'We have heard many promises...we are still waiting to see action'

back in 2016 that also saw GFG Alliance acquire the Lochaber smelter at Fort William, along with 114,000 acres of land, from Rio Tinto.

The company's plan had been to construct an alloy wheels plant at the smelter, creating more than 400 jobs.

However, uncertainty around Brexit by the end of last year saw the plans put on hold and after the coronavirus pandemic struck, the firm announced in

July it would be scaling back the Alvance British Aluminium smelter workforce on a permanent basis. Councillor Andrew Baxter, chairman of Highland Council's Lochaber Area Committee, who lives in Kinlochleven, said this latest news illustrated why many Lochaber residents were sceptical about any announcements from GFG Alliance.

'We have heard many promises about how their ownership would transform the future of the factory and the Fort William area,' Councillor Baxter told the Lochaber Times this week. 'We are still waiting to see any action. Now we hear they are quietly disposing of valuable assets, which the taxpayer helped to buy in the first place with a Scottish Government financial guarantee. I am amazed there hasn't been any form of public parliamentary scrutiny of their commercial behaviour and the financial agreements with government. It's about time a spotlight is shone on them by our MSPs.'



Peter Davis and his wife Lucy, from Blarnafoldach, above, carried on an almost 40-year tradition of attending the Commando Memorial, despite there being no afternoon Remembrance Sunday service.

Mr Davis spent 15 years

in the Royal Marines, part of which was a year in Aden during the withdrawal of Britain from the then colony.

Turn to page 12 for more Remembrance Day photographs.

Photograph: Iain Ferguson, alba.photos

Vandalism at Lewis War Memorial

Comhairle nan Eilean Siar says it is aware of vandalism to the lights surrounding the Lewis War Memorial at Stornoway and is looking at repair options.

The matter has been reported to the police.

Comhairle Convenor Councillor Norman A Macdonald, said: 'This is dispiriting for all those who remember loved ones who gave so much for all of us. Given the amount of engagement with communities throughout the islands at the time of the 100-year commemoration of the lolaire disaster, this is extremely disappointing and displays a callous lack of respect to the memory of those who served their country. The matter has been reported to the police and we will now take steps to ensure appropriate repairs are made.'



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Mental Health Matters

NIC GODDARD

fort@obantimes.co.uk

One in four of us will be affected by mental health issues at some point in our lives. This week, I talked with Claire Wortley from Morar about her website on mental health issues on which she documents her journey with mental wellbeing in the hopes of helping others.

Claire set up the site early in 2019 having never hosted a website before as she felt driven to share her story. www.moodsmedsandmiracles.com started at a high point in Claire's 25-year battle with mental health issues as she was reducing her anti-depressant medications and felt able to write about her experiences since she was first diagnosed with Post Natal Depression after the birth of her daughter.

Claire's struggles with mental health started with a four-month residential stay in a mother and baby unit shortly after the birth of her daughter. A combination of anti-depressants and sleeping medication got Claire to what she described to me as 'a safe point'.

She continued: 'I felt able to leave the unit and moved in with my parents who supported me in learning how to be a mum. I had this idea of what motherhood might be like - filled with unconditional love, but the reality was a weight of responsibility and a level of anxiety which felt like being plugged in to the mains with 10,000 volts of electricity constantly running around my body.'

The years that followed



Claire Wortley has struggled with mental health issues for 25 years, and it wasn't until she felt involved in her healing that things got better. Her blog is part of that process.

had periods of settled times but also several low points of suicidal thoughts, various medications and a host of diagnoses including low mood, depression and anxiety.

Claire explained: 'I had so many labels I felt like someone had stuck post-it notes all over me. That is only helpful if it leads to getting the right treatment.'

In Claire's case that was a huge variety of doctor-prescribed medication, NHS therapies and 'every self help book the bookshop could find me', along with self hypnosis, Cognitive Behaviour Therapy and the Linden Method treatment.

Claire reached crisis point after a marriage breakdown and ended up signed off work after what she termed her darkest times.

Unable to sleep, she suffered daily panic attacks, finding herself rocking in a corner, crying on the floor and in a constant state of fear while her daughter slept.

The turning point came for Claire when she felt involved in her healing.

She told me: 'I spent a long time waiting to be saved, by meds or therapy. One day I realised no-one would save me other than me. I had thought that I wanted to die but then I suddenly understood that

what I actually wanted was for my pain to stop. I had spent so much of my life just coping. I hate that word 'coping'.

'I realised I didn't want to cope any more, I wanted to thrive. It gave me a fire in my belly to seize back control over my life and decide what was going to happen. To take responsibility for my life and my future.'

Claire's website is a big part of that thriving future. In 2019 she decided to begin writing her story in a series of blog posts in which she charts her highs and lows over the years.

She told me: 'I felt drawn to doing it. It has been a cathartic and helpful process for me,

helping to organise the mess of my memories and where I am right now. The site helps me to accept who I am and feel that what I have been through has some sort of purpose to it. I have this overflowing toolkit of wellbeing ideas from all I have been through and I want to share it. I love words and stories and connecting with people. This is my story and who I am.'

Claire has started to record audio files of her posts this year, reading them aloud and uploading them to the website.

She explained: 'I love listening to audio books. They have helped me through some dark times but I also want people to understand I'm a real person and these are my real stories. Being able to listen to me speaking hopefully does that.'

It is clear the biggest reason for setting up Moods, Meds and Miracles is for Claire herself. Despite, or maybe because of her battles, Claire is a proactive and inspirational woman. Brutally honest, passionate and filled with energy.

I leave you with Claire's own summary of her aim: 'Don't be afraid of taking control of your own healing. By all means get help whether it is from therapy or meds, but don't ever forget that you are a person who matters.'

'Lots of mental health problems lie to you - depression tells you not to bother getting out of bed, anxiety nags at you for worrying too much. In the same way that we are all unique as human beings, so are our wellness formulas.'

No change in Covid levels for Highlands

The Highland will remain at covid level one, First Minister Nicola Sturgeon told the Scottish Parliament on Tuesday.

Highland and Moray will remain in tier one alongside Orkney, Shetland and the Western Isles.

Although cases in Highland and Moray remain 'relatively low' there had been 'volatility' in these areas recently, she said. However, one of the tier one restrictions - applicable to the three island authorities - will be lifted on Friday.

It will allow residents to meet with one other household inside their homes up to a strict maximum of six people.

But Mrs Sturgeon warned that 'importation' of the virus to the islands remained a risk, so clear guidance will be published for anyone who goes to or returns to the islands from the mainland to avoid in-house mixing for a period after their return, she said.

She added: 'If you live in a level three council area do not travel outside of your own local authority area unless it is for essential purposes - such as work that can't be done at home, healthcare or caring responsibilities. If you live elsewhere don't travel into a level three area.'

Fife, Perth and Kinross and Angus were in tier two - along with Argyll and Bute which will remain there - but will move into level three from Friday as they are all on a 'sharply rising trajectory'.

No council area of Scotland is yet in tier four.

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Fort Argos store's future in balance

by Mark Entwistle
mentwistle@obantimes.co.uk

Argos' parent firm Sainsbury's says it cannot yet publicly say whether the Fort William branch of the popular retailer will be among those earmarked for closure as part of plans to slash hundreds of branches and thousands of jobs across the UK.

Sainsbury's intends to axe 3,500 jobs with the closure of 420 Argos outlets and all its meat, fish and deli counters.

The 420 standalone Argos stores are scheduled to close by March 2024, although Sainsbury's has plans to open 150 Argos outlets in its supermarkets.

Simon Roberts, Chief Executive of J Sainsbury plc, has said the company was responding to changing consumer habits and the growth of online shopping.

The 120 standalone Argos



stores that had not reopened since they were closed in March would now shut permanently and by the end of the restructuring programme, Sainsbury's says it expects the total number of standalone Argos outlets to be about 100.

Asked this week if the store on North Road in Fort William was one of those under threat, a Sainsbury's spokesperson told the Lochaber Times: 'We are in the process of reviewing our

estate and have not released a list of stores closing. We have shared plans to open 350 more Argos stores in Sainsbury's and Argos collection points in supermarkets and convenience stores by March 2024.'

'As a result of this, we will no longer need as many Argos standalone stores so we have said that we will close around 420 branches, bringing the UK Argos standalone store estate to around 100 by March, 2024.'

The branch of Argos in North Road, Fort William.

It was in April 2016 that Argos' parent Home Retail Group agreed to a £1.4 billion takeover by Sainsbury's.

In a statement, Mr Roberts said: 'Argos sales have been strong over the past six months and we have gained almost two million new customers as people have reconnected with Argos.'

'Over the next three years we will make Argos a simpler, more efficient and more profitable business while still offering customers great convenience, value and improving availability.'

Mr Roberts added that company bosses were now speaking to Argos employees on how the changes could impact their roles and the company expected to be able to offer alternative roles for the majority of impacted staff.'

Cameron urges Covid testing for ferry staff

A call has been made for the introduction of regular and rapid covid testing for CalMac ferry staff.

Shadow Health Secretary and Highlands and Islands Conservative MSP Donald Cameron has written to the Scottish Government urging it to test staff. CalMac ferry the MV Isle of Lewis has just undergone a deep clean after three crew members tested positive for coronavirus.

Mr Cameron acted after concerns were raised at outbreaks of coronavirus in several island communities including the Uists, Lewis and Mull.

He said: 'Although there has not been a direct link identified between the outbreaks

on the islands and CalMac's operations, it is a fact there has been an outbreak among staff on a ferry serving the Western Isles. And, given the vulnerability of our island communities, owing to a lack of emergency medical facilities and ICU capacity close to hand, we must be vigilant to minimise the possibility of transmission.

Indeed, the First Minister has indicated the relaxation of restrictions in the Western Isles could be put at risk by the importation of the virus. It is crucial the Scottish Government acts quickly to establish a system of rapid Covid-testing on all publicly funded ferry services.'



Donald Cameron MSP is urging the Scottish Government to introduce regular and rapid Covid testing for CalMac ferry staff.



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LT

Western Isles Foyer is wound up after subsea cable failure hits charity funds

by Mark Entwistle
mentwistle@obantimes.co.uk

A Western Isles charity which supports young people in their own accommodation says it is being forced to close, with all its staff losing their jobs, following the fault in the subsea cable running under The Minch.

The immediate impact of the failure of the subsea electricity cable was that all local wind farms, including Point Power, were no longer able to generate income.

Point and Sandwick Trust, the charitable arm of Point Power, notified Western Isles Foyer on October 28 that it would no longer be able to pay grant funding for the current financial year and possibly next year.

The prioritised grant of £50,000 represented a quarter of



In 2018, the Lord Lieutenant of the Western Isles, Donald Martin, presented Foyer chairman Matt Bruce with the Investors in Young People award.

the Stornoway-headquartered Foyer's total required budget for the current financial year and was planned to be handed over in November.

The Foyer housing model is a method of transitional housing for young people which sprang from temporary housing for

labourers in Europe. After the Second World War, foyers provided accommodation for many in rural France who moved to the cities looking for work. The term 'foyer' means 'hearth' in French.

The Western Isles Foyer was set up to support young people

to move on to successfully sustain their own tenancies and live independent and fulfilled lives and participate as active members of their community.

Given the changed financial situation now facing the Western Isles Foyer, its committee directors held an

emergency meeting on October 29 and made the tough decision the organisation was no longer viable to continue and would therefore need to cease trading, resulting in all of the Foyer's staff team being made redundant.

'This decision has been made with huge regret and in the knowledge that other island bodies do not have sufficient funds available to cover this shortfall at such short notice, especially given the current global Covid-19 pandemic,' said Foyer chairman Matt Bruce in a statement.

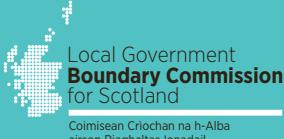
'Foyer's committee's directors would like to take this opportunity to thank Foyer's staff, past and present, for their dedication and hard work in supporting vulnerable young people.'

'We would also like to thank all partner agencies and funders, including Point and Sandwick Trust, for all of their input over the last 18 years to help support the achievement of positive outcomes for the young people Foyer support.'

The Foyer will officially close on December 2.

During the remaining time Foyer continues to operate, it intends focusing efforts on consulting with the Comhairle, NHS Western Isles and other partner agencies to ensure that the young people it currently works with will continue to receive appropriate levels of support.

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BBC Alba reporter Ruairidh MacIver visits Glenfinnan as part of the programme's investigations.

BBC Alba explores legacy of slavery in Lochaber and wider Highlands

Slavery's legacy in Lochaber and the wider Highlands and Islands is to be examined this week in a programme on BBC Alba, writes Mark Entwistle.

The stories of Highlanders who profited from colonial slavery are now coming to light and are investigated in the first of a new series of MG ALBA's European current affairs programme Eòrpa.

Reporter Ruairidh MacIver, who visited Glenfinnan for the programme, asks how the history and legacy of

slavery should be marked in the Highlands in the light of the recent Black Lives Matter movement, which has already generated intense debate - and direct action - across the world in an attempt to get wider acknowledgement of this history.

Eòrpa speaks to campaigners who want to advance this debate and to public bodies which seek to reassess the Highlands' place in this history.

The National Trust for Scotland (NTS) is one or-

ganisation which is looking again at this legacy of slavery.

Jennifer Melville, of NTS, said traditionally the charity had assumed it was its built properties that were associated with slavery.

'But in fact we've learned that quite a few Scottish estates were bought with money that came back from the slave plantations in the West Indies,' she added.

Eòrpa airs tonight (Thursday November 12) on BBC ALBA at 8.30pm.

Lochaber's link to the Grave of the Unknown Warrior

by Mark Entwistle
& Iain Ferguson

In the first week of November, The Queen visited Westminster Abbey to commemorate the centenary of the burial of the Unknown Warrior.

It was actually 100 years ago this week that a casket containing the body of an unknown British soldier was interred in the abbey. It is well known the body had been selected from a total of four exhumed on November 7 1920 from battlefields at the Aisne, the Somme, Arras and Ypres.

The following day the body was moved to Boulogne and placed inside a casket that was sealed and adorned with a Crusader's sword. The casket was placed aboard HMS Verdun for the overnight trip across the English Channel, before being transported by rail to London.

The coffin was borne on a gun carriage of the Royal Horse



The Reverend Railton, inset, and his grave in St Bride's churchyard, Onich. Photograph: Iain Ferguson

Artillery to Westminster Abbey and once interred, the Grave of the Unknown Warrior was covered over with soil that had been specially brought from the battlefields of France.

What is less well known, however, is the Lochaber link to how the idea of burying an unknown

soldier came about. The concept originally came from Reverend David Railton, a minister in Folkestone who served as a chaplain on the Western Front.

Never far from the dangers of the front line, in 1916 he was awarded the Military Cross for saving the lives of three men.

Reverend Railton would travel around battlefields setting up makeshift altars where he could, delivering his ministry and words of comfort. Mud, rain, shells, bullets and bombs – Reverend Railton would let nothing stop him reach the fighting and it was during these trips he started to think about the many dead men with no grave and their relatives with nowhere to visit and grieve.

He observed the makeshift graves, some of which had no name, and reportedly one in particular caught his eye at Armentières in 1916, where a plain wooden cross bore

the inscription 'An unknown soldier of the Black Watch'. In 1920 Reverend Railton wrote to the Dean of Westminster who contacted Prime Minister Lloyd George soliciting his support and who ultimately persuaded King George V to give his sanction for a permanent memorial to the fallen of the Great War who had no known grave.

It was decided the body would be buried with full honours in Westminster Abbey and on November 11 1920, Rev Railton saw his dream become reality.

The following year, the Union flag which he had draped over his makeshift altars during the war and over the bodies of dead soldiers, was donated to the abbey. The Padre's Flag, as it is known, now hangs close to the Warrior's grave.

After a long career in the church, Reverend Railton retired to Ard Rhu, Onich, where he is still remembered by some locals. He often helped out with



We must keep on protecting each other.

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Lochaber Housing Association elects new chairperson

Lochaber Housing Association's recent annual general meeting saw the retirement of Hughie Donaldson as its chairperson after five years' service.

The association's board has elected Andrew Carr as its new chairman. Relinquishing the role, Mr Donaldson said his five-year term had been challenging but rewarding as the association addressed the chronic shortage of affordable housing in Lochaber.

'As I hand over to Andrew, I wish him well and hope he finds the role as rewarding as I have. It has been a privilege to serve but it's time to hand the baton to another. I am certain Andrew will lead the association very successfully,' added Mr Donaldson.

The association's chief executive Blair Allan said: 'During Hughie's tenure, we have gone from strength to strength, developing many new, much-needed affordable homes across Lochaber, consolidating a sound business plan, furthering our strategic objectives and strengthening our governance.'

I am pleased to say though that he is continuing as a board member. His experience will be invaluable. I am looking forward, as well, to working closely with Andrew as our new chairperson. Andrew has been a board member for a number of years and will bring a fresh perspective to the role, to which he will bring his considerable skills to bear.'

Mr Carr added: 'I have big boots to fill following Hughie, who has led the association so ably. However, I look forward to the challenges that lie ahead and I know I'll have the full backing of a talented board and a hardworking and dedicated staff.'

In the past year, the association has completed an affordable housing development at the former primary school site, Old School Court, Lochyside, delivering 29 new homes for social rent and shared equity and is presently on site in Spean Bridge, Strontian and at the former Highland Council Offices at Fulton House in Fort William town centre, building a total of 37 new affordable rented properties.

VIEW FROM THE CHAMBER



Lochaber Chamber of Commerce, in collaboration with the Scottish Aquaculture Innovation Centre (SAIC), is pleased to announce an online event to celebrate and explore the huge growth potential of Scotland's aquaculture sector.

A Meeting of Minds will be staged on Zoom on Thursday November 26 from 10.30am to noon. The session will bring together leading businesses and organisations involved in Scottish aquaculture for insights into key areas of development for the sector.

Speakers from MOWI, Scottish Sea Farms, Scale AQ, the Scottish Salmon Producers Organisation, the Scottish Aquaculture Innovation Centre, Lantra and Northern Light Consultants will share ideas and inspiration for the future with topics including sustainability, business development and growth opportunities, innovations, career paths and skills training.

Frazer Coupland, Chief



The aquaculture event takes place on November 26.

Executive Officer of Lochaber Chamber of Commerce, said: 'We're delighted to be hosting this event that brings people from across aquaculture together. It's a hugely important sector for the west highlands with fantastic potential for the future.'

Aquaculture in Scotland is diverse, from the farming of Atlantic salmon and other marine and freshwater finfish species, to the production of mussels, oysters and the harvesting of seaweed. It is an industry that sustains the economic and social fabric of the Highlands and Islands

and is an anchor industry that keeps communities and career prospects alive in remote and rural areas.

The sector contributes £1.8bn annually to the Scottish economy and employs more than 8,800 people, many in rural communities. The potential contribution of farming Scotland's seas is even greater. Research shows that through sustainable growth, the sector has the potential to double its annual contribution to the economy from £1.8bn to £3.6bn or more by 2030. The number of jobs supported could reach 18,000.

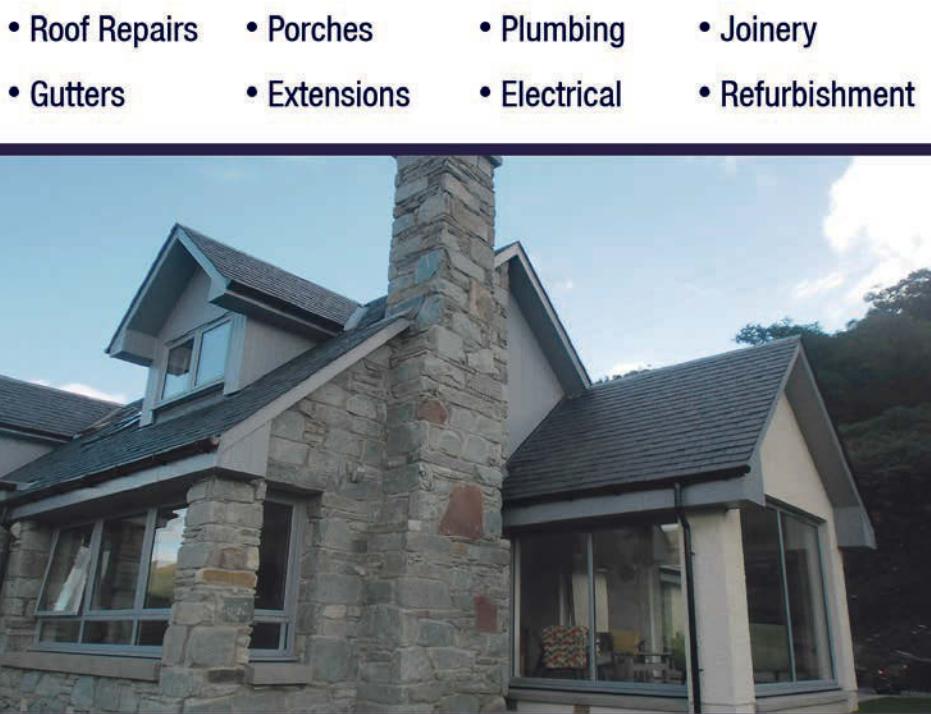
Heather Jones, Chief Executive Officer at SAIC, said: 'Aquaculture is an incredibly important part of the economic fabric of Scotland's rural communities. The sector, directly and indirectly, supports thousands of highly skilled jobs across the country, with more likely to be created as it sustainably grows in the years to come. I look forward to discussing the many opportunities that lie ahead at A Meeting of Minds, as well as how businesses in Lochaber and beyond can support and help unlock the sector's ambitions.'

Tavish Scott, Chief Executive Officer of the Scottish Salmon Producers Organisation, who will speak at the event, said: 'I am pleased to join this event and highlight the importance of aquaculture and introduce Scottish Salmon's new Sustainable Charter which reflects the importance of our sector being close to local people in the decisions we make that affect them.'

To book your free place on A Meeting of Minds, please go to www.lochaberchamber.co.uk/events or search for A Meeting of Minds on www.eventbrite.co.uk.

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It's not goodbye, just see you later....



After careful consideration we decided to close on Sunday 8th November.

We are disappointed, however we need to protect the business to ensure that we are here in 2021, that we protect the jobs of those that work here and can resume purchasing from our suppliers as soon as possible.

Due to the Covid-19 situation, demand has reduced significantly to the point that we cannot cover the business costs.

Currently, we've no further plans for when we will re-open, perhaps a pop-up in December.

We'll keep our website and social media up to date with future plans.

Thank you again to those who supported us this year.

See you in 2021, love and best wishes
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Rotary's knitted Christmas tree almost ready for delivery

Lochaber Rotary's ambitious community project 'Knitivity' is coming on well.

The four-metre high steel tube Christmas tree is due to be delivered by Macphersons Welding and Engineering Services this week and the tree will be on display in the Highland Cinema in Fort William's Cameron Square from the beginning of December.

The steel frame will be covered by hand-knitted and crocheted items folk have been making.

Organiser Sheana Fraser told the Lochaber Times: 'We are delighted to have had offers of help from knitters across Lochaber. All items will need to be handed over by November 25 and knitters should take them to the Alexandra Hotel, which has kindly agreed to provide a prominent bin from November 23 into which items can be placed.'

'We are looking for hand-knitted or crocheted items which will provide warmth such as hats, scarves and wrist warmers. These will be donated to homeless charities after Christmas. We are also looking for handmade twiddle muffs. These are knitted muffs with items attached such as buttons and ribbons, to keep dementia patients' hands active and busy. They are a source of visual, tactile and sensory stimulation.'



Rotary president Richard Baxter said: 'We are delighted that Kirsty Mann and the management team at the Highland Cinema will be hosting the tree and we look forward to seeing it give some seasonal colour to patrons.'

Anyone needing more information should contact Sheana Fraser on 07796 687921.

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Pledge to improve care at Uist home

by Mark Entwistle
mentwistle@obantimes.co.uk

Council bosses in the Western Isles say areas where improvement is needed at its Daliburgh care home on South Uist, where one resident died in a coronavirus outbreak last month, will be addressed with immediate effect.

The National Care Inspectorate this week published a detailed report following a recent inspection of care and infection prevention and control practices at Taigh a'Chridhe Uile Naomh (TACUN/Sacred Heart House) care home.

This inspection was Covid-19 specific, following last month's outbreak, which also saw a number of residents and staff test positive for the infection. As with all care homes which experience a Covid outbreak, an inspection into practices

was undertaken. The National Care Inspectorate spoke to staff and relatives of residents and carried out a physical inspection of the home, which was then graded on the quality of care and support during the pandemic.

Relatives speak highly of the care and support provided'

Infection control practices to support a safe environment for people experiencing care and staff were rated as good, as were staffing arrangements being responsive to the changing needs of residents. However, when it came to people's health and wellbeing being supported and safeguarded during the Covid-19 pandemic, the home was graded only as adequate.

Inspectors had spoken with six relatives over the telephone and by email. Their feedback was generally positive, while relatives and carers also spoke highly of the care and support staff provided.

On the reason for the 'adequate' grade, inspectors commented: 'While the strengths had a positive impact, key areas of performance need to improve. It is important that people and their relatives have regular communication that keeps them up to date on the impact of Covid-19.'

'Relatives spoke highly of the care and support provided and were very complimentary about the way people were supported during the recent Covid-19 outbreak.'

'Families felt that communication at other times could be improved as there was often a delay in the service contacting them about important issues.'

'While staff had a good knowledge about how to support people to maintain contact with people who were important to them, this was not detailed in their care plans.'

A Comhairle spokesperson commented: 'Our priority from the start of the outbreak was to have a sufficiency of staff in place, staff with the right skill set and to have robust infection control measures to manage the risk of further transmission.'

'The inspection report evidences that we succeeded in this respect and we appreciate the hard work and dedication of the staff working in TACUN who worked tirelessly to maintain high standards of infection control. The areas for improvement identified include improving our recording and quality assurance.'

'All the areas identified will be addressed and we will get to work with immediate effect.'

We won't be beaten on price, service or quality



Turley Treatment Tanks

LT

Covid restrictions force early end to Jacobite steam train services

Friday the 13th has proved a nightmare for Scotland's Harry Potter train this year, writes Mark Entwistle.

The steam-hauled Jacobite service should have continued running until then, but the Covid-19 pandemic has forced operators West Coast Railways (WCR) to end it a week early.

The last train departed from Fort William for the run to Mallaig on Friday last week.

A spokesman told the Lochaber Times: 'Unfortunately the rise of infections and the restrictions on travel have given us little option.'

'We realise this will cause a lot of disappointment. But the safety of passengers, staff and

local residents is paramount. Under the circumstances it would have been irresponsible to continue running the service.'

'However we will be back next March.'

The spokesman would not reveal when the two steam locomotives would haul the vintage carriages back to WCR's depot at Carnforth in Lancashire.

He explained: 'Crowds of spectators packed some station platforms to see the train when it travelled north earlier this year and ignored social distancing. In the interests of safety, we want to avoid more such scenes at the present time.'



Win!



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Drive-in church takes the road to Lochaber

by Mark Entwistle
mentwistle@obantimes.co.uk

The Faith Mission is to hold outdoor drive-in church services at several locations in Lochaber later this month and in December.

Jonathan Tink, pastor at Fort William Baptist Church, told the Lochaber Times: 'We are very excited about this opportunity.'

'We know that so many of our churches around Lochaber have remained closed for public worship for many months and many people have greatly missed the ability to physically meet together and sing out the great variety of praise songs available today.'

'As much as we have been able to provide pre-recorded services online through Facebook and YouTube over recent months, we greatly look forward to the opportunity to gather in one place – socially distanced and protected in



The 'drive-in' churches come to Lochaber on November 15 and December 13.

individual cars – and join in a live service.'

The Faith Mission has been conducting drive-in services over recent months around the Highlands and we are glad they are willing to bring their service to Lochaber.'

The Faith Mission will bring



a lorry with PA equipment and conduct a service in the lower car park of the auction mart at Aonoch Mor.

'We are encouraging people from the various churches of the area to 'drive in' and share in the services while remaining in their cars,' added Pastor Tink.

'We plan a service on November 15 then a carol service a month later, on December 13, both at 3pm.'

'We hope this will be an exciting opportunity for the community.'

a Spa treat with breakfast or afternoon tea for two at beautiful Ardrhu House

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Ardru House in Onich, just 9 miles from Fort William, is beloved by visitors and locals-in-the-know, and has answered the call with its holistic treatment menu offering an indulgent treat whilst maintaining a safe environment. Personalised Gift Vouchers are available making this the perfect gift to share with a friend or loved one!

The spa team comprises an Ayurveda practitioner, herbalist, aromatherapist and sound healer; all coming together to weave the magic of Ardrhu House for a bespoke spa experience. World-famous brands like Ila and Temple Spa are part of the ranges of products used for these exquisite treatments available exclusively in Scotland at Ardrhu House.

Treatment choices vary in length and include a therapeutic range for insomnia, restlessness, anxiety, stress and exhaustion. The massage treatments are popular with male and female customers and a couples' visit includes some amazing rituals to be shared together side by side in the same treatment

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Enter the competition today for your chance to win!

Simply tell us, Ardrhu House sits on the edge of which loch?

You can enter the competition via the Oban Times & Lochaber Times website at <https://wyvexmedia.wufoo.com/forms/qqv324j16clnwu/>

The winner drawn at random from all entries will be notified on Friday 27th November – so don't delay, enter today! Entries close at 5pm on Thursday 26th November.

For more details on the spa offering at Ardrhu House, visit <https://www.ardrhuhouse.com/spa>

T&C's: The winner will be notified by email/telephone where provided. The prize redemption will be valid until 31st March 2021, excluding Christmas and New Year. All entries will be disposed of after the competition in line with GDPR rules. No cash alternative. Editor's decision is final. For full T&C's see the entry form online.

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Western Isles communities go the extra mile during Covid crisis

Throughout the Covid-19 pandemic, communities across the Western Isles have benefited from the work of locals who have gone the extra mile to support their communities.

These groups and individuals have been recognised as part of the Scotland Loves Local Campaign - High



Comhairle nan Eilean Siar

Street Heroes Awards. The Western Isles regional champion award went to

Back Community Council in Lewis.

Caitriona Morrison and Elaine Stewart received Highly Commended Status and 15 other local groups were awarded High Street Hero Status.

Comhairle Leader Roddie Mackay said: 'It is pleasing to see so many of our local

heroes commended for their remarkable efforts throughout the Covid-19 pandemic.

The number of groups and individuals recognised in this campaign once again highlights the strong sense of togetherness present in Western Isles communities. We are incredibly fortunate to have so many high street

heroes in the Western Isles. It was also pleasing to see a number of Comhairle employees recognised for High Street Hero Status.

Elaine Stewart, our school technician in Barra, has been recognised as one of two Highly Commended High Street Heroes in the Western Isles area for activities during

Covid lockdown and the recovery.

The Comhairle media team and weekly ceilidh team have also been awarded High Street Hero status. The Comhairle Ceilidhs have been very well received and we are grateful to the media team and the talented local musicians who have made this possible.'

Applications open for new Scottish Child Payment

The Scottish Government is launching a new benefit scheme for families.



apply for Scottish Child Payment and all of these using a single straightforward form.

Mhoraig Green, Strategic Lead for Social Justice, Citizen's Advice Scotland, said: 'We are really looking forward to the new Scottish Child Payment. We know lots of families in Scotland are facing tough times at the moment and are struggling to make ends meet and this new money will help to make their lives easier.'

'What's really important is that everyone who is entitled to the payment makes a claim when applications open in November.'

'Citizens Advice Bureau are working in communities across Scotland to help people to access the social security they are entitled to. So, if you are unclear about whether you are entitled or you need help applying then please get in touch and our Money Talk teams will be able to help you.'

Stacey Bush, 36, of Girvan, South Ayrshire, said: 'I have three children aged three, five and 17.'

'When my husband was furloughed and out of work we didn't have a lot of money. I relied a lot on my nan and my mum. This new payment would mean I wouldn't need to do that. I could put it towards shopping.'

'We do struggle so it would help to take the stress away - clothes, shoes, and I'd probably like to spend it on a day out.'

We don't ever have the money to do fun things with the children, so I'd like to spend it on something like that.'

For more information or to apply for Scottish Child Payment, visit mygov.scot/benefits or call 0800 182 2222.

Scottish Child Payment starts on February 15 2021 and will give families on certain benefits and tax credits an extra £40 every four weeks for each child under six.

Social Security Scotland will deliver the benefit on behalf of the Scottish Government. It is expecting huge demand which is why they are asking you to apply now.

By taking applications early, they can make sure they have all the information they need to check eligibility. This will help them make a decision on your application and, if eligible, make payments as quickly as possible once the benefit starts.

To get the payment your child will need to be under six years old on Monday February 15. You'll also need to be getting one of these - Child Tax Credit, Income Support, Pension Credit, Working Tax Credit, Universal Credit, income-based Jobseeker's Allowance or income-related Employment and Support Allowance.

If you apply before Monday February 15, your payment will be calculated from Monday February 15.

Make sure you get all the money you are due by applying in advance.

If you apply after Monday February 15, your payment will be calculated from the date you apply.

Social Security Scotland delivers a number of benefits for families. This includes Best Start Grant Pregnancy and Baby Payment, Early Learning Payment, School Age Payment and Best Start Foods. You



Specsavers stays open with safety in sight

SPECSAVERS is urging people to continue to look after their eyes and hearing health during the current restrictions, after one in three people noticed a deterioration in their eyesight and others in their hearing during the first lockdown¹.

While many retailers are having to close at the moment, opticians and audiologists are deemed essential healthcare providers and can therefore remain open. This means that Specsavers can continue to offer a full range of services that include:

- Contact lens consultations
 - New glasses and frame repairs
 - Hearing aids and repairs
- Specsavers are also offering remote services for people who are self-isolating, vulnerable or unable to leave their home. These include:
- RemoteCare – a free nationwide consultation service offering advice and care via video and telephone link
 - Online shopping with a current prescription
 - Ask The Expert – a web-based and Facebook group answering all your eye and hearing health concerns seven days a week

Clinical services director, Giles Edmonds, says: 'We want to reassure customers that it is absolutely safe to book an appointment or come in as scheduled as we have all the necessary safety measures in place. We have adapted our ways of working so we can remain open to serve the public's health needs and every store is adhering to strict government guidelines to

ensure customer and colleague safety remains paramount.

'As providers of an essential health service, we have played a key role in looking after people's eye and hearing health throughout the pandemic and are pleased that we can continue to do so, while also playing our part in relieving some of the strain on our partners in the NHS.'

To find out more information, request an appointment or browse the online store, visit specsavers.co.uk/stores

Specsavers

LT

Lochmaddy Pier project hit by further delays

Comhairle nan Eilean Siar has confirmed improvement work at Lochmaddy Pier, on North Uist, will be delayed following the failure of the contractor, L&M Keating Limited, to return to the site.

It follows the company's suspension of the works, initially in March due to Covid-19 lockdown restrictions, then again in July 2020.

Following consideration of the contractual details by the Comhairle at the end of September, the contract with Keating has now been terminated and the Comhairle, in collaboration with Transport Scotland as key funders of the project, are exploring options for commissioning and organising delivery of the works.

In the meantime, there is a need to undertake reinstatement works at the site to ensure it is left safe and secure for the intervening period



and it is planned to undertake these in the coming weeks.

In addition, it is proposed to undertake a programme of enabling works over the coming months, including completing the demolition of the former VisitScotland and former Coastguard properties and undertaking advance utility diversion works at the site.

Councillor Uisdean Robertson, chairman of the Comhairle's Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, said: 'While we recognise the financial and organisational challenges facing the contractor, it is crucial we continue with the delivery of the improvement works.'

'The decision to terminate the contract was not taken lightly and we see re-engaging with the construction sector as soon as possible the best way forward for the project.'

Jahama unveils new Fort venison shop

by Mark Entwistle
mentwistle@obantimes.co.uk

Fort William's first shop selling ethically-produced wild venison was officially opened last week by Lochaber constituency MSP and Scotland's Cabinet Secretary for Finance Kate Forbes.

The new brand and outlet is part of the strategy by Jahama to make the activities and produce of its 114,000-acre landholding more accessible.

Jahama, part of Lochaber smelter owners GFH Alliance, says retailing its own venison is a natural progression for the company, which has a population of native red deer managed by culls annually.

The meat will be branded in Gaelic 'Fiadh á Fireach', which translates as 'a deer from the hill', reflecting the ancient connection between Highland people and natural resources.

Declaring the new shop



open, Ms Forbes said: 'This is an extremely challenging time for our economy, so the new venison shop in Fort William is a great encouragement.'

'It's allowing local people to access locally-sourced food, strengthening our links with the land. The rural economy is so critical to the nation's economic recovery and this new shop has already created a new job and protected other jobs.'

'As the constituency MSP, I was delighted to formally open

the shop today and speak to members of staff.'

Scotland's Rural Affairs Minister Mairi Gougeon MSP added: 'It is important venison is accessible to everyone at an affordable price and Jahama's products will help do that. Buyers can also take confidence in the fact their purchased produce was sourced in an ethical way.'

Julia Stoddart, chief operating officer of Jahama Highland Estates, said: 'Our mission is to

reconnect the local population with the land, with wild food produce helping to fulfil this part of our new management strategy. We also want to demonstrate how achievable it is for Scottish landowners to make native animal produce available for sale. Good quality wild meat harvested in a humane manner comes without the economic and environmental costs of transporting produce huge distances.'

Jahama will sell the venison in a variety of cuts, including mince, burgers and sausages, from a retail pod on the industrial estate adjacent to sister company Alvance's aluminium smelter.

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Council takes delivery of new snow ploughs

The Highland Council has invested in 10 new winter gritters to replace some of the ageing fleet.

The new vehicles, which have been distributed across the Highlands, complement the council's existing winter fleet that includes 99 gritters, 42 footpath tractors and two snowblowers, with more than 200 staff ready to provide winter maintenance services.

Chairman of the council's Economy and Infrastructure Committee Councillor Trish Robertson said: 'Modernising our fleet by buying the new vehicles is an investment that will help us provide our communities with an efficient and reliable service over the coming winter months.'

'These new top-of-the-range vehicles have all the equipment to make them as efficient as possible when carrying out the work.'

The winter roads maintenance team looks after 6,766kms of roads for which the council has responsibility.

Councillor Robertson added: 'All preparations have been

made and crews across the Highlands are ready to start the winter service as soon as required.'

There have been no changes to this year's winter policy so service levels throughout Lochaber will remain essentially unchanged from 2019.

The service will begin at 6am each day as and when required. There will be a Monday to Friday service where all roads are treated and a weekend service that includes treating all primary routes, strategic secondary routes and difficult 'other' routes.

The service will be provided within the resources available and as weather conditions permit.

As in previous years, Highland Council is offering assistance to communities who wish to take action in their own area to help clear snow and ice from footpaths by providing salt in either bins or heaps, snow shovels and pushers, gloves and hi-viz vests, as well as health and safety advice to volunteers and

public liability insurance.

Call for co-operation on future of lifeline service

by Mark Entwistle
mentwistle@obantimes.co.uk

Members of Highland Council's Economy and Infrastructure Committee have called for Transport Scotland and the Scottish Government to work with the local authority to secure the future of the Corran Ferry service.

In a meeting last week, members shared their disappointment over the Scottish Government's response to the council's recent proposal to form a working group.

After several years of discussions with officers from Transport Scotland, the council had hoped its proposal to move to the next level of detailed formal discussion would get approval by the cabinet minister.

Chairwoman of the committee, Councillor Trish Robertson said: 'We wrote asking for a



working group to be set up so we could move forward and the next level of detailed dialogue on the future of the service could begin.

'It is disappointing not to receive a more positive response to this request, so the committee agreed that we write to request a meeting with the Cabinet Secretary early next year and continue to lobby for an improved position.'

Members felt there was a lack of recognition from the

Scottish Government regarding the significance of the lifeline socio-economic dependant Corran Ferry service that links the fragile communities of Fort William, Ardgour, Sunart, Ardnamurchan, Moidart, Morar and Morvern.

The service is the busiest single vessel route in Scotland, carrying more than 260,000 cars each year, and is of national strategic importance connecting with the ferry network via the Lochaline-Fishnish route

and meeting the island needs on Mull.

Councillor and chairman of the Lochaber Committee Councillor Andrew Baxter said: 'This is an urgent issue that has a very strong socio-economic impact. The investment required will be significant, so we need to press for further engagement with the minister and Transport Scotland.'

Fellow Lochaber councillor, Alan Henderson, chairman of the Communities and Place Committee, added: 'Highland Council is now at a point where a critical decision will need to be made as a delay could result in service failure.'

The committee agreed all recommendations in the report and next steps will include the Corran Ferry project seeking a naval architect early next year to establish a statement of requirement specification and design for the two new vessels.

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LT

Communities still pay tribute

by Mark Entwistle
mentwistle@obantimes.co.uk

With coronavirus restrictions forcing the cancellation of large-scale services on Remembrance Sunday this year, war memorials across Lochaber still witnessed wreaths laid on behalf of local communities and organisations and individual personal acts of homage.

Encouraged by the Royal British Legion Scotland (RBLS) to pay tribute to the country's war dead in their own homes, many people in Lochaber stood outside their front doors in towns and villages around the region for the traditional two-minute silence.

James Porter, vice chairman of the Fort William and District branch of RBLS told the Lochaber Times: 'All of us at Legion Scotland Fort William and District branch are immensely proud and humbled by the amount of support that was shown on this different 2020 Remembrance Sunday by families and individuals where they respectfully held their own silence in respect of fallen servicemen and women who have paid the ultimate price since the Great War and up to present day wars and conflicts.'



Left: a small gathering at the war memorial in Fort William, where normally many hundreds of people would gather alongside servicemen and women to pay their respects on Remembrance Sunday; and right, a poignant tribute at Achtnacarry. Photograph: Iain Ferguson, The Write Image

'One of our main reasons of being is the Act of Remembrance and, even with the ongoing Covid pandemic, we are remembering and making sure veterans, family and friends all stay safe this year. Hopefully we will be back to some sort of normality for next year's Armistice Day.'

'We have also noticed the amount of effort from school pupils, individ-

uals and businesses from the area that have put up poppy displays to show support. A huge thanks to them all and local businesses which continue to support the branch and Poppy Scotland.'

Among the unique tributes were hand-knitted bollard covers at the war memorial in Kinlochleven.

Local resident Kim Irvine created

the bollard covers while other members of the village Knit and Natter group made knitted and crocheted poppies for the church.

Asked how the special bollard covers had been received, Mrs Irvine told the Lochaber Times: 'We've had very positive remarks about the bollard covers – people seem to really like seeing them.'



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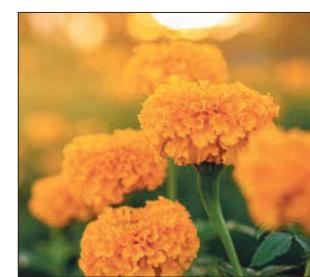


Eye to eye with John Wallace

Why Marigolds Can Help Your Eyes

Measuring how well you see is complex. Optometrists measure the size of objects you are looking at (visual acuity) and also consider the quality of your vision. If you drive in fog you can see what is in front but it is very hazy. That's called contrast sensitivity. Visual acuity and contrast sensitivity are both heavily influenced by diet. The two most common causes of vision loss are cataract and macular degeneration. Both are strongly related to increasing age, but are also influenced by poor diet and exposure to blue light.

In the human eye the macula (that's the area that provides us with high definition vision) is protected from aging and the damaging effect of blue light by yellow pigments (carotenoids). These pigments are



not naturally occurring in the human body and are provided in our diet. Recent research has found that eating a healthy diet rich in fruits and veg is insufficient to maintain the high levels of protection the macula requires. I have long been an advocate of eating lots of spinach, broccoli and kale. All of which are known to help reduce the risk of macular degeneration. But, with the best will in the world, it is not

possible to obtain sufficiently high levels of carotenoids from our diet simply eating fruit and veg.

We cannot stop the aging process but it is possible to modify our diets to minimise vision changes. EU funded Irish research has found that oral supplementation rich in lutein, zeaxanthin and meso-zeaxanthin significantly improves visual function even in the healthiest individuals. Lutein, zeaxanthin and meso-zeaxanthin supplements are derived from Marigold flowers. They have also been shown to improve cognitive ability and research is now studying Alzheimer patients who, as a patient group, have the lowest levels of macular pigments.

John Wallace BSc (Hons), FCOptom, DipCLP

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Homage to Fallen across Lochaber



From left: Peter Davis and his wife Lucy, from Blarnafoldach, carried on an almost 40-year tradition of attending the Commando Memorial, despite there being no service this year; the knitted bollard covers at Kinlochleven; a wreath was laid at Glenfinnan war memorial on Sunday afternoon on behalf of the community by Tearlach MacFarlane, right, while his son, Iain, left, played the pipes. Not photographed: local resident Commander Dave Taylor RN read the Ode to Remembrance, taken from the poem For The Fallen, by Laurence Binyon.

COMPETITION TIME WIN £200 OF LOVE OBAN VOUCHERS

With Christmas around the corner and pockets tightened this year wouldn't it be great to give that special someone exactly what they want! Courtesy of our friends at BID4Oban, one lucky reader will win £200 worth of Love Oban Vouchers COMPLETELY FREE OF CHARGE.

All you have to do is collect 3 tokens over three weeks starting on 5th November, get them to us by 10am Thursday 26th November and you will be entered into a prize draw to win this fantastic prize.

What are you waiting for, give the gift of Oban and start collecting your tokens!



[View www.bid4oban.co.uk/love-oban/spending-vouchers/overview/ to find out where you can spend the vouchers.](http://www.bid4oban.co.uk/love-oban/spending-vouchers/overview/)

T&Cs: Winner must be able to collect vouchers from the BID4Oban Office, 43 Stevenson Street, Oban PA34 5NA at 10.30am on Monday 30th November. Digital Subscribers, please email a copy of your digital subscription email with a screenshot of each token to adverts@obantimes.co.uk. You will be interviewed by one of our trained journalists and photographed and this will appear in the Oban Times on Thursday 3rd December. We will protect your personal data. We only gather what we need for the requirements of this competition. Entry data will be deleted/disposed immediately upon the competition entry deadline and in a manner appropriate to GDPR regulations. Entrant's details will not be used for any other activity.



HOW TO ENTER

All 3 tokens must be sent in a single envelope to Oban Times Love Oban Competition Crannog Lane, Lochavullin Industrial Estate Oban, PA34 4HB. One token from each week is required, multiple entries are allowed, but must be submitted in separate envelopes. Photocopied tokens will not be accepted. Winners must agree to take part in publicity. Employees of Wyvex Media Ltd and their immediate family are not eligible to enter. The editor's decision is final.

LETTERS

Community and Christmas

With our Christmas supplement in this week's paper hopefully getting you all in the mood for the festive season, the fact it won't be the same as other years doesn't have to be a bad thing.

This has been a tough year for a lot of us, but many people will also have counted their blessings, which may have come unexpectedly and out of the blue.

Like the rest of the year, when we have seen a huge amount of community spirit, where we have supported each other – our friends and family, our neighbours, our local charities and our local businesses – we hope this Christmas that will only increase.

As a region, we are blessed with the number of organisations and individuals there to help us through the tough times – Lochaber Hope Kitchen, Lochaber Women's Aid, Ewen's Room and, yes, our local council and all its employees, to name a few.

We are blessed by the number of local retailers ready to go the extra mile in a way that the large, out-of-town businesses won't – that has been quite obvious throughout the pandemic if you didn't notice it before.

So while this might have to be a leaner Christmas than you would want, you have all you need round about you.

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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Light shines in the darkness – particularly in Covid times

Mae MacDonald, Letters, October 29, cites a section of the Gospel according to Matthew when reminding me of the importance of gathering for spiritual fellowship: 'For where two or three gather in my name, there I am with them.'

Spirituality can seem like something nebulous or only to be fleetingly glimpsed at, a bit like an eagle on a telegraph pole as a train races over mountain moorland. If the train grinds to a halt, though, we are forced to take much greater stock of our surroundings.

In 2001, I came to work temporarily at Dalmally surgery as a relief GP. At that time foot-and-mouth and the resulting farming crisis saw a number of restrictions on countryside access or activities. My plans for a season of skiing, fishing and walking were seriously disrupted, but God sometimes steps into what seems like random chaos to us and gifts us a chance to take stock of life and explore spiritual matters.

As a militant atheist for many years, obsessed with outdoor activities and partying, it was a shock to have time to take stock of existential or spiritual issues. Over several weeks I explored the case for Christ in considerable detail and was shocked at just how much positive evidence there is for faith. I started attending Glenorchy Parish Church and, much to the amazement of friends and family in Ireland, went on to profess faith. This started an amazingly exciting life adventure.

Mae MacDonald is right to stress the importance of the positive message of hope which the Church brings to individuals and communities. The pandemic has the capacity to drive any of us to despair at times. We can easily get depressed as negative Covid news items unfold around the clock. It is good to knock the dust off the Bible and know light shines in the darkness.

Dr James Hardy, Belfast.

Forestry road is good news

In response to an article in the Lochaber Times, October 22, about the forestry road being built on Drimnin Estate, I would like to make the following points:

- The Drimnin community I'm sure welcomes the building of the road to take out the timber, as the alternative does not bear thinking about.
- The state of the B849 in several places is little better than a cart track and getting worse.
- My partner and I have lived in Drimnin for more than 16 years and the decline in parts of

Write to us: send your letters to editor@obantimes.co.uk or The Editor, PO Box 1, Oban, Argyll PA34 4HB

Beachd Ailein

ALLAN CAMPBELL

ailean@obantimes.co.uk



Thug mi iomradh anns a' cholbh seo air an t-seachdain a chaidh mun uabhas a bha air tighinn air pàirtean den Tuirc agus na Grèige a' leantainn crith-thalmhainn chumhachdach san sgire. Bha mi a' dèanamh deilbh de dhaoine nan èiginn bròin a' bùrach anns an sprùilleach far an robh àitean-còmhnaidh agus teaghlaichean a' fuireach roimhe. 'S e gun teagamh iomhaigh dhuilich a th' ann agus mun àm a chriochnaich an obair-teasairginn feasgar Dhiciadain seo chaidh bha ceud is sia deug neach air an lorg marbh agus bha mile is trithead 's a còig air an leòn.

Bha sgiobaidhean-teasairginn air a bhith ag obair mar pheilear am beatha bho ghoirid an déidh dhan sgrios tachairt Dihaoine, agus tuigear an toileachas tiamhaidh a bh' orra nuair a chaidh clann òga a lorg. Ach còrr air ceithir latha air adhart bu bheag a bha dhùilis ris a' chòrr fhaotainn beò, agus nach b' iongantach mar sin an sealadh caileag tri bliadhna a dh'aois a bhith ga togail beò bhon bhùirach anns an robh i tiodhlaithe fad còrr air naochad uair 's a h-aon! Cha b' iongnadh Mèar bhaile Izmir failte a chur air a' għleidheadh a chaidh oirre mar mhiorbhail, agus adhbhar għairdeachais anns an dorchadas uabhasach a bha an sgire a' fulang! Tha e duilich aithris gun deach māthair na h-ighne a mħarrbhadh, ged a thàrr a h-athair is a bràthair às beò, agus chan urrainn dhomh gun a bhith smaoineachadh dè seòrsa

the road has deteriorated to the extent that the subsurface is breaking up. Some time ago parts of the road were resurfaced with little disruption and we were told the remainder would be done. This has not happened.

I need to use a car as my partner has several medical problems, a heart condition being one. The constant wear and tear on my vehicle is a serious financial worry and one I can ill afford, being a pensioner on a fixed budget. Yours in exasperation.

Brian Mullins Drimnin.
Other view on salmon study

I agree with Sally Campbell that the new salmon genetics study will achieve little, although for very different reasons.

Any differences in stocks of wild salmon, if they ever existed, were wiped out a long time ago.

As far back as the Victorians, rivers were being restocked with fish from any origin while

làraich a dh'fhàgas an tachartas air an leanabh sin. 'S dòcha leis gum bheil i cho òg nach lean mòran neo fiù's dad idir na cuimhne, agus nach bu mhath gur ann mar sin a bhiodh agus, ged a bhios i gu nàdarra ag ionndrainn a màthair, gum bi saoghal fada sona an dàn dhi.

Chaidh aithrisean naidheachd mun chrith-thalmhainn a mhùchadh an ire mhath feadh an t-saoghal fo chuidream sgeulachd chrith-thalmhainn de shèorsa tur eadar-dhealaichte far an robh tagħadha chinn-suidhe īr Ameireagaidh a' gabha il-äite bho Dhimärt seo chaidh. Gu h-iøngantach bha na h-eħlaicean bheachd a bha a' faidheadaireachd gum buannaiceachd na Deamocrataich gun chus stri fada ceàrr, a-rithist! Dh'fhaġ sin farpais għuineach a' leantainn fad läithean, agus suidheachadha cha mhorr do-chreidsinnej le Ceann-suidhe tē de phriomh dhùthchannan an t-saogħil a' cur chasaidean foill an aghaidh an t-siostam tagħaidh poliitigieħ aqgħiha a dhùthiċċi fl-ħeb, agus a' bagairt a dhol gu lagh gus an tagħadha a ghleidheadh. An déidh ceiħir bliadhna de bhurraidiex is bhuamastaireachd Dhōmħnaill Trump chan eil 's dòcha dad a ni e a' cur annas air mòran, ach feumar cuimhneachadh gum do bhòt faisg air seachdad millean Ameireaganach air a shon a-rithist mar Cheann-suidhe! Dè tha an dàn dhan t-saogħil ann an solas leithid sin? An còir dhuuñn a bhith dragħħi!

wholesale slaughter of salmon stocks for sport compromised any differences in the gene pool.

Most importantly, in 2012, the wild fish sector spent £1 million, mainly of taxpayers' money I believe, to investigate the genetic make up of rivers across Scotland. They failed to find any differences, yet they persist with the idea that salmon of different origins are genetically different. The farmed fish is only about 10 generations away from the wild. How different can they be?

On one hand, the wild fish sector says farmed salmon aggressively mate with any wild fish in the river but then say any offspring are weak and inferior.

If interbreeding should occur, Darwin's survival of the fittest would ensure these inferior fish would not survive to pass their genes on.

The messages about farmed salmon are often confused by a small number of vocal activists who simply don't want to see salmon farming take place in their neighbourhood.

Dr Martin Jaffa, Callander McDowell.



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DISTRICT NEWS

Lochaber town centres to receive cash boost

Town centres in Fort William, Banavie, Corpach and Caol are set to share more than £84,000 in grant cash from the Scottish Government.

The Highland Council has been allocated an additional £1,066,000 ring-fenced to stimulate local construction activity and support employment across Highland. As well as the £84,156 for Lochaber, Broadford and Portree on Skye will get £56,104.

The Highland Council's Economy and Infrastructure Committee has welcomed the extra funding made available from The Scottish Government to boost town centres and confirmed that the decision on how this will be spent will be taken at a local level by area committee members.

The grant expenditure must be complete by March, 2021, and, in line with the council's area-based approach to the delivery of this fund, the committee when it met last week agreed that Area Committee members will make the decision on how their allocated share of the additional funding will be invested.

Chairman of the Economy and Infrastructure Committee, Councillor Trish Robertson said: 'This extra funding is very welcomed at a time when our town centres need more support than ever before and so does our construction sector which will have a positive knock-on effect on local communities.'

'However, all projects have to be completed, or at least contracts signed, and work started before the end of March next year so it is key that members and communities work together to quickly identify potential projects to ensure we make the most of this opportunity.'

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Barra children making music thanks to CalMac

Barra and Vatersay's musical culture has been brought to life for the island's aspiring musicians, thanks to CalMac's Community Fund.

A boost of £2,000 has helped to introduce delighted children to lessons in drumming, piping, fiddle playing and accordion.

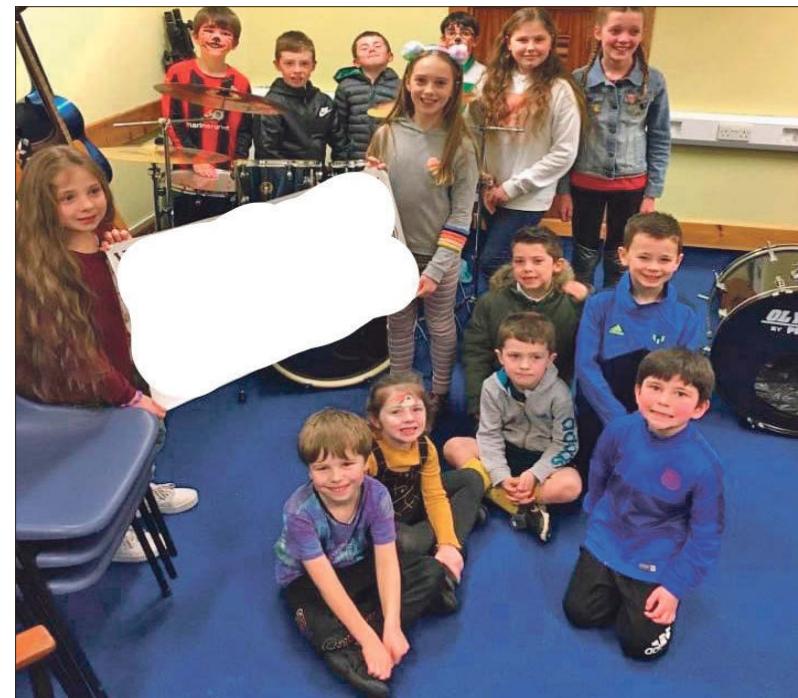
Catriona MacNeil, Feis Bharraigh administrator, said: 'Our project was a huge success. Over the last year we have provided additional opportunities for the children in Barra and Vatersay which, in turn, has developed their music and music playing and awareness of music and culture.'

'Money was spent within piping, accordion and fiddle and we bought a new drum kit and offer drum lessons throughout the year. As we expanded the music lessons on offer, we expanded the number of children engaging in the project.'

'Thank you to CalMac. This has made a huge difference to our charity and has contributed immensely to the children here on Barra and Vatersay. We started drum lessons in January 2020 and, hopefully, when restrictions allow, these will continue again and perhaps we will have some little bands in the future. Watch this space.'

Now in its second year, the CalMac Community Fund is open to non-profit groups across the CalMac network for projects which have made a difference to communities.

Applications for the latest round are now open.



Youngsters from Barra and Vatersay are making music thanks to CalMac.

In 2019, the CalMac Community Fund supported 76 groups across the west coast, benefiting the lives of children and young people. Projects included access to swimming, Highland dancing, sailing and video skills.

This year, the fund is seeking applications from organisations which are tackling social isolation, poor mental health, loneliness and/or poverty. They can apply for an award from the fund from between £500 and £2,000.

A82 in Fort to receive £80,000 of improvements

Motorists and pedestrians using the A82 in Fort William will benefit from better road drainage and pavements after £80,000 worth of improvements began on Sunday.

The improvements involve resurfacing pavements and upgrading the existing drainage system northbound over a section of the road almost 600m long on the North Road in Fort William.

The project is scheduled to take up to three weeks to complete.

To help minimise disruption to motorists, the improvements will be carried out between 8pm and 6am each night, with no work planned for Friday or Saturday nights.

The A82 will remain open throughout the



the safety of roadworkers and motorists. All traffic management will be removed during the daytime. Eddie Ross, BEAR Scotland's North West Representative, said: 'The work will improve drainage of the A82 and the footway surface for pedestrians.'

'We have taken steps to help minimise disruption as much as possible, including carrying out the improvements overnight and avoiding working on busier nights.'

'Our teams will do all they can to complete the project as quickly and safely as possible. We thank road users and pedestrians for their patience in advance and encourage them to plan ahead by checking the Traffic Scotland website for real-time journey information.'

Mince Tarts

Ingredients

- Low calorie cooking spray

For the pastry:

- 225g plain flour
- pinch of salt
- 110g low-fat spread or butter
- Cold water, for mixing

For the filling:

- 16 level tbsp mincemeat
- 1 level tbsp icing sugar for dusting

* 2½ Syns each * 45 minutes * Makes 32

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Method

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

Groups are Open!

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LT

Project officer for new centre in north Skye

A new project officer has been appointed by Ionad Thròndairnis to advance plans for a new community centre in the north of Skye.

Marion Anderson is from Flodigarry and graduated from Sabhal Mòr Ostaig with a BA in Gaelic Language and Culture. She worked at The Highland Council, Comunn na Gàidhlig, Staffin Trust and Bòrd na Gàidhlig before taking up a post with NHS Grampian where, most recently, she has been a senior administrator.

Margaret Nicolson, chairwoman of Ionad Thròndairnis, which made the appointment, welcomed the news: 'We are very happy to have appointed Marion, a Gaelic speaker from the area who knows the people and the community well.'

'It is always pleasing to see young people returning to take up work and Ionad Thròndairnis is very much of the view that more of this will happen once our plans come to fruition and a new centre is established in the area.'

'We have made significant progress to date through voluntary effort and we now look forward to reaching the trust's destination with the support and commitment Marion will bring.'

'We wish her well in her new post and are grateful to HIE and Bòrd na Gàidhlig for funding to establish this post.'



Armadale scoops gold award for its harbour

Armadale harbour on Skye has scooped a coveted gold medal from environmental charity Keep Scotland Beautiful, based on the criteria for the National Award for Environmental Excellence.

It was one of three ports in the Highland Council area, owned by Caledonian Maritime Assets Limited (CMAL) and operated by CalMac Ferries, to win an award, which acknowledges both companies' commitment to improving environmental quality.

The accolades recognise the achievements of both organisations across a variety of areas including building maintenance, cleanliness, waste management and engagement with the community.

Armadale receives its gold level award, partly thanks to its clear signs, its excellent



cleanliness and well-maintained bin storage area. The remaining two Highland sites, Kilchoan on Ardnamurchan and Lochaline, achieved

the silver level award. In the Western Isles, Lochboisdale on South Uist and Castlebay on Barra also received silver awards.

Armadale harbour on Skye was awarded a gold environmental award by Keep Scotland Beautiful.

In total, 26 ports were assessed across Scotland, with Armadale achieving the highest score of all.

Kevin Hobbs, chief executive of CMAL, which owns 26 ports and harbours across Scotland, said: 'These are hardworking harbours which provide a lifeline service for islanders.'

'However, they are also the first impression for many tourists visiting some of the most beautiful parts of Scotland so maintaining the balance between function and attractiveness is a constant challenge.'

'We are pleased to be recognised by Keep Scotland Beautiful for the hard work carried out by ourselves and

harbour operators CalMac, and will strive to maintain these high standards to showcase Scotland in all its glory.'

Klare Chamberlain, environmental manager for CalMac, added: 'These fantastic awards are down to the hard work of CalMac staff who take great pride in their ports.'

'We carry out regular litter audits at all sites, which has led to the installation of upgraded recycling bins and the provision of more recycling on board ferries.'

'CalMac operates in a beautiful part of the world and is committed to preserving the environment for everyone to enjoy.'

As well as individual site awards, CMAL and CalMac achieved an overall silver level environmental award for their management of all sites across Scotland.

Lochalsh Girls' Group highlighted for work during lockdown



The Lochalsh Girls Group has been highlighted in a YouthLink Scotland report that recognises the impact of youth work during the summer.

One of a number of High Life Highland youth projects, Lochalsh Girls Group worked together during lockdown and

Wellbeing and toiletry packs were delivered to houses and weekly online meetings were held to provide support and work towards the SQA Wellbeing award (SCQF level 4).

Other examples of the impact in Highland includes the support provided by the Fort

William High Life Highland youth work team, including the youth development officer, and a couple of the detached youth workers, who have been engaging with young people on the streets and around town on Friday and Saturday evenings.

Nigel Brett Young, Youth

Work Manager for High Life Highland, said: 'The youth work sector across Highland has continued to engage and support children and young people throughout the coronavirus pandemic. I am delighted the report has highlighted some of the good work that is going on.'



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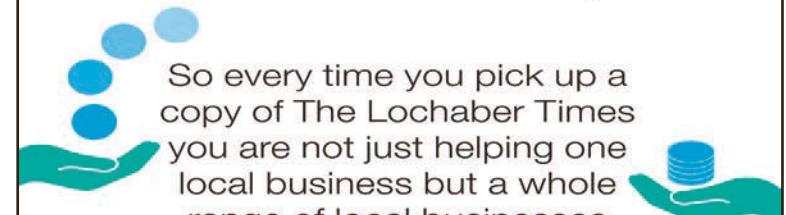
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Friendly fire from slick Saints blows SLT away

SL Thistle	0
Oban Saints	4
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Oban Saints and South Lochaber Thistle were finally able to get valuable game time under their respective belts at Kinlochleven High School last Saturday afternoon.

Referee Martin Rae ensured strict matchday protocols were followed by both sides where a brace from captain for the day Craig MacEwan together with strikes from Lewis Cameron and Aaron McKay gave Saints a comfortable victory over their Greater Glasgow Premier League Division One hosts.

Despite holding the upper hand in the early exchanges Saints were unable to break through the Thistle defence well marshalled by Kieran

Lopez and test keeper Andrew Brown.

The Jags keeper was finally tested after 15 minutes when Scott Johnston sent Craig MacEwan in behind the home defence where he turned onto his right foot and shot straight into the keeper's midriff.

Further Andrew Brown saves followed from Lewis Cameron, Craig MacEwan and Gavin Forgrieve efforts.

The deadlock was broken in the 32nd minute immediately following another Andrew Brown save.

In a slice of bad fortune for Brown, his attempted clearance hit Lewis Cameron with the ball falling to Craig MacEwan, who slotted the ball low to Brown's right to open the scoring.

In the second half pressure on the home goal eventually told in the 65th minute when



Callum Ruairidh Foxley on the ball for South Lochaber Thistle. Match report: Derek Black. Photograph: Abrightside Photography.

Craig MacEwan made a near-post run to connect perfectly with Lewis Cameron's corner kick from the right to make the score 2-0.

The home side looked comfortable on the ball and played some good football at times, but were finding it difficult against a hard-working Saints' outfit.

A throw up the left to Lewis Cameron saw the Scottish Amateur Internationalist spin away from his marker and lift a cheeky lob over the advancing Andrew Brown and into the unguarded net.

Saints' young striker Aaron McKay rattled the crossbar with a 28-yard shot in the 70th minute.

The home side brought on club captain Martin Munro for the closing stages easing the skipper back into action following his recent hamstring injury.

The introduction of Munro increased the home side's attacking threat but the Saints back three remained in control with the final goal from Aaron McKay who gleefully knocked home MacEwan's cutback from close range.

Full match report at www.lochabertimes.co.uk

Lochaber Phoenix boxer rewarded for dedication

As part of a programme to encourage young people attending Lochaber Phoenix Boxing Club training sessions, 11-year-old Keira Welsh has been presented with a medal in recognition of her dedication.

The award is made when a member shows particular dedication and willingness to learn. Keira was a regular at junior training before the Covid lockdown and since regulations allowed a return to training in the gym she has rarely missed an evening, always 'giving her all'.

Coaches also praised Keira for her hard work and willingness to take part. From the moment she arrives, she is ready to listen and take advice.

New equipment has recently been provided for the junior training sessions adding an additional element of fun while getting fit. As restrictions ease further, a greater range of activities are being introduced in line with Covid regulations – see the club's Facebook page.



Keira Welsh proudly shows off her medal.



Lochaber Rugby Club kicks ahead with new committee

Lochaber Rugby Club has unveiled a new committee which is making preparations for all the changes that coronavirus protocols bring for community sports clubs.

The committee, which has met virtually, is working through the challenges the Covid-19 pandemic has brought to the Banavie-based club. Protocols have been implemented in line with Scottish Rugby guidelines. The club has been expertly assisted by Dr John Wallace, acting Covid safety

co-ordinator, supported by Covid team leaders and assistants, who have ensured the club continues to safely provide junior and senior training.

Newly appointed club president and former first XV captain Charlie Donaldson told the Lochaber Times community was at the heart of everything that happened at the Banavie club. 'We're a core values-driven club looking to develop our players, coaches and opportunities for everyone as we look ahead to 2021 and

beyond,' he explained. 'The pandemic has been very hard on the community and has impacted our club.'

'The new committee and I will be pushing on with plans for the future, ensuring the club can prosper and continue to instil our core values that include leadership, respect and enjoyment.'

Mr Donaldson added: 'I would like to say a warm thank you to everyone who has supported and continue to support Lochaber Rugby Club.'

We have endured a challenging few months and recognition must be made to the former committee members who have worked tirelessly to ensure the club remained a strong part of the community and as a base for so many people's enjoyment, laughter and sense of purpose.'

Lochaber RFC has received £250 as a 'Legend Club' from RBS Rugby Force as well as a new Rugby Force support pack of training equipment to help with Covid precautions.

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