



Wishing all our readers and advertisers a happy, healthy and prosperous New Year

Meet Oban's special Christmas angels

by Fiona Scott
fscott@obantimes.co.uk



Angels have been in abundance in Oban throughout the past year so the task of picking one who stood out was almost impossible.

So Oban FM and BID4Oban's search to honour the town's Christmas Angel has ended with two worthy recipients.

Maggie Dougall, Oban Link Club, and super neighbour Michelle Morris went above and beyond for others during lockdown and both received £50 worth of LoveOban vouchers just in time for Christmas.

Maggie, who works at Oban Link Group which supports people with mental health issues, was nominated by a group member.

'Maggie and the link club have done so much to help us out in what for so many of us has been a very difficult time,' they said.

'I cannot praise this lady enough. Personally, for me, she

is a lifesaver in the true sense of the word.

'At one point I was suicidal and I can honestly say Maggie's support, for hours at a time over a long time, saved me from taking my life.'

During the restrictive period, Maggie checked in with members at least two to three times a week, helped with prescrip-

'All this hard work is done without Maggie looking for thanks...'

tions and ensured people had items such as craft equipment and tablets to help them get through Covid.

When one member was taken to hospital in Glasgow, Maggie arranged for items to be delivered and ensured the electricity was topped up in their flat.

'All this hard work is done without Maggie looking for
Continued on page two.

Boxing Day baby is best Christmas gift ever



Constanze Rose-Keller and Robert Keller with baby Eleanor.

Boxing Day baby Eleanor Keller is her mum and dad's best present ever.

The tot weighed in at just over 7lbs when she was born at 3.30am at Lorn & Islands Hospital on December 26 – the only new arrival to put in an appearance over the festive break.

Delighted mum Constanze Rose-Keller and proud dad Robert Keller were home in time for breakfast just a few hours later at Airdeny Chalets, Glen Lonan, which they took over in October.

The couple, from Germany near the Swiss border, said: 'Eleanor is the best present we could ever have. Thank you to the midwives who looked after us. We were in good hands. Everything went very well with the delivery. Eleanor is sleeping lots and is just fine.'

The midwives on call in Oban this Christmas were Ronnie Allan and Kirsty Smith.

Work to start soon on Kerrera's 'life-changing' road

Work on a track connecting north and south communities on Kerrera will start next year.

The new road will be 'life-changing' for people living on the island says Isle of Kerrera Development Trust chairman Martin Shields.

Islands Minister Paul Wheelhouse announced the good news on Monday, saying planning is under way to make sure the work is completed as soon as possible with funding from the Scottish Government's Infrastructure Investment Plan.

Costs for the project are still being identified but are expected to be finalised early in the new year.

Mr Wheelhouse said improving transport links will support more activities on the island and lead to improved economic and social sustainability.

Mr Shields said: 'The road project will be life-changing for the Kerrera residents. It will allow our two separated populations to finally become one strong, vibrant community that can thrive and grow together.'

'It will mean the whole community has equal access to all the island's services and assets.'

Wishing all customers and friends a very Happy New Year
- from the team at Mathesons

mathesons
FURNISHINGS

In line with government restrictions, we remain temporarily closed and will reopen when allowed.

We are still able to help you with your furnishings needs, please contact us using the following details:

01631 565195 | 07930179249 | info@mathesons.co.uk | mathesons.co.uk



OT

Memorial shinty matches postponed

The annual shinty match between Oban Celtic's Young Guns and Old Crocks will be played at some point.

Celtic had been working towards playing the Mossfield memorial fixture with the appropriate measures in place but news of a Boxing Day lockdown blew their plans out of the water.

Speaking to The Oban Times last week, club aficionado Davie Hamilton said the decision to postpone the Boxing Day match had been made with a heavy heart but that it would definitely take place once things got back to normal.

Paperwork

'We wouldn't be able to have spectators and the mountain of paperwork required even for the players and officials would have been horrendous,' he told The Oban Times.

'Nobody wanted to play without a crowd anyway. It's a get together for the Oban Celtic community and at the moment that just isn't possible.

'We will have it at some point though.'

The match, played in memory of former players Vince Carnie and Jamie Pearson, will be played once restrictions have been lifted, as will the Robert Wylie Memorial Cup.

John switches on to hospital telly appeal

by Kathie Griffiths
kgriffiths@obantimes.co.uk



TVs in a sorry state on wards at Oban hospital channelled patient John McGee's thoughts towards fundraising for new ones.

The 55-year-old from Bunessan on Mull came up with the idea after spending a week recovering from a serious infection on Ward B at Lorn and Islands Hospital.

One TV reached the ward before Christmas, with three more plugged in by the New Year with help from family-friend William Armstrong in Oban. And more TVs are on order. An appeal he made to well-wishers on Facebook for donations soon topped £1,000 and will stay open as a way of supporting the hospital, staff and patients. As well as televisions, he has board games and books on his wish-list once Covid restrictions allow.



John McGee is on a mission to get new TVs onto hospital wards in Oban.

Mr McGee's niece Annemarie MacCrone has also helped with the special deliveries, including a huge haul of toiletries for patients.

Mr McGee, who has a rare auto-immune disease, said he could not help noticing during his latest hospital stay that some of the TVs were in 'an aged and sorry state', only able to get a few channels and most of the

buttons on the remote controls were not working. The former fisherman and mussel farm manager decided he wanted to do something to help, especially as many of the patients were long-stay elderly.

'I'm a great believer that the happier people are, the quicker they will heal. Some of the old boys I was on the ward with were just sick to get

home. We could only get two channels on the TV we had. I managed to do something to get six channels in the end but it was a bit hit and miss. We eventually found some John Wayne films and they were in their glory watching them! It's the little, everyday things that most of us take for granted that make a big difference to people stuck in hospital. Hospitals just don't have the money nowadays to buy those kind of things, so other people have to step up and pitch in,' he said.

Mr McGee put a post on Mull and Oban Facebook pages asking people for help to add to a 'good donation' he made himself.

'This is a time for caring and sharing. All donations no matter how small would be very much appreciated.'

Donations can be made online via a Paypal link at mcgee-1965@hotmail.co.uk

**WISHING ALL A VERY HAPPY
NEW YEAR FROM ALL AT BID4OBAN.**

**REMEMBER TO
SUPPORT LOCAL
THIS YEAR!**

#ScotlandLovesLocal #Loveoban #ObanMinded

**If you would like to know more, have questions or
want to get involved in delivering activities.**

**Please contact us on 01631 569915 or email
info@bid4oban.co.uk , address: 43 Stevenson Street, Oban**



Oban Business Improvement District
www.bid4oban.co.uk



Maggie Dougall and Michelle Morris both went above and beyond for others during lockdown.

There must be an angel...or two

Continued from page one.

thanks. She's just that kind of lady, a real angel,' the nomination added.

Maggie said: 'You don't do it to be appreciated, but it's nice when someone lets you know that they are feeling better for something you have done.'

The second Christmas Angel was Michelle Morris who made sure her neighbours never went without during the pandemic.

The mother of two was nominated by one of her neighbours who said: 'Michelle's smiley face would appear at my window daily to check if I was okay.'

Michelle regularly juggled homeschooling two boys, shopping for her neighbours,

cleaning the close, painting, putting the bins out as well as baking for others.

'She would bake with the boys and leave samples outside my door,' the neighbour said.

'The elderly couple above me were in quarantine for health reasons so Michelle did their shopping several times during the week too, much to their delight. Michelle deserves a mention as a special angel because she is always helping everyone before herself with no complaints, only a smiley face.' Michelle, who had no idea she had been nominated, said: 'I don't really feel I deserve it, but someone seems to think so. I was just helping and being neighbourly.'

The idea of seeking out a

Christmas Angel came from Oban FM's Deb Frary after seeing how much one of her friends had done during lockdown. 'It has been a tough year for everyone and I thought it was important to recognise those that had gone above and beyond to help others,' she said. 'We live in an amazing community and many people act in such a selfless way. I believe they all deserve to be rewarded and honoured for their actions but for our Christmas Angel there could only be one winner, or so we thought! We would like to thank our friends at BID4OBAN for supporting our search and being the judges and, when choosing one Angel proved too difficult, donating a second prize.'

Group's call to get trains back on track from May

The Friends of the West Highland Lines has reported that in the new rail timetable Oban has lost two of its six daily trains, while the Caledonian Sleeper to Fort William has been temporarily suspended.

The group said it understood the need to temporarily withdraw some Scottish train services due to the Covid-related collapse in passenger numbers.

However, with the vaccination programme under way, it said it was time to plan for a relaunch of train services from May 2021 to help kickstart the West Highland tourism industry. It has called for the full 'pre-pandemic' West Highland train services to be restored from May, with special ticket offers and a summer marketing campaign to attract communities back to using the train and to help boost visitor numbers.

It said 'leisure rail travel' is expected to rebound faster than commuting over the

next year or two. It said the opportunity should be taken to capitalise on the potential of the scenic West Highland Lines with an 'enterprising timetable' designed for 2022 with additional trains giving a more frequent service and high quality travel experience. It has also said the Oban to Fort William bus service could be upgraded to introduce new round-trip tourist excursions by West Highland train and bus via Oban, Appin and Fort William.

A statement said: 'Oban should also be connected to London and the south via the Caledonian Sleeper. New zero-emission hybrid electric/battery or hydrogen trains with comfortable seats and panoramic windows should be constructed for Scotland's scenic railways as part of Transport Scotland's decarbonisation plans. This would allow the West Highlands to become a world-leading green rail tourism destination.'

Warning trade blockade could sink seafood firms

by Ellis Butcher
ebutcher@obantimes.co.uk



A national trade body for Scotland's seafood sector has warned 'millions' will have been lost during the UK-French border crisis.

Seafood Scotland said many companies have seen tonnes of fresh produce bound for the European Christmas market gone to waste and expressed concern for the impact on small companies.

The crisis came after French authorities announced a 48-hour suspension of all travel and accompanied freight from entering the country - leading to miles of lorry traffic building up on approach roads to the Port of Dover.

That move followed a decision by the UK Government to order a 'tier four' lockdown affecting London and the south east from Sunday December 20.

There have been rising concerns about the spread of

a new variant of Covid-19. Agreement was reached on Tuesday December 21 to allow freight to move again from Wednesday December 22 but that was too late for some, said Donna Fordyce, chief executive of Seafood Scotland.

She said the window in which companies would be able to salvage anything had 'closed'.

'Millions has been lost, much of it by small companies that were depending on this trade for survival,' she said.

'From our conversations with insurance companies, no policies will cover these major losses and without financial support from government many companies that were relying on these crucial 48 hours of trading to replenish their cash flow, will tragically go to the wall.'

She added: 'We fully understand the concerns are for public safety, so what we urgently need is routine testing of drivers, then clear prioritisation for seafood and



Donna Fordyce of Seafood Scotland. Photograph: Alan Richardson.

other live cargo. There are still markets in Europe between Christmas and New Year and Scottish seafood companies must have access to them to try to claw back some of the financial damage done.'

The UK Government said all people travelling from the UK into France were required to show proof of a negative

coronavirus test taken within the previous 72 hours. The protocol will be reviewed on December 31, but could run until January 6, it said.

All lorry drivers, irrespective of nationality, will require a lateral flow test. It can detect the new strain of Covid-19 and provide results in around 30 minutes, rather than the 24 hours required after a polymerase chain reaction test.

The French Government will also carry out sample testing on incoming freight to the UK, said the UK.

A mass testing programme for HGV drivers was getting under way to alleviate congestion at ports, said the UK Government.

Seafood Scotland said the situation had given a 'terrifying insight' into what the situation could be come January 1.

She said: 'While passage may not be formally blocked by then, there remains a red tape blockade which will likely have exactly the same impact.'



Kebabish

Of Oban

Enjoy Life, Enjoy Kebabish!

SERVING HYGIENIC & HEALTHY FOOD TO THE OBAN COMMUNITY SINCE 2007

UNABLE TO GO OUT THEN LET US BRING THE FOOD TO YOUR DOOR STEP.

PIZZA • CURRIES • KEBABS BURGER • CALZONE • MUNCHY BOXES

ICE CREAM, CAKES, SHAKES, SUNDAE,
HOT WAFFLES, HOT BROWNIE, SLUSHES SOFT DRINK

THERE'S A DEAL FOR EVERYONE TO ENJOY, AT THE BEST
PRICES THIS TOWN HAS EVEN SEEN GUARANTEED!

HAPPY NEW YEAR TO ALL OUR CUSTOMERS

Open till late and delivered to your door, fresh, tasty and hassle free!

99 George Street, Oban Tel: 566885, 563900

Order online www.kebabishoban.co.uk / Like us on



OT

Hogmanay fireworks safety message

The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service has warned of the dangers of using fireworks

With many public events cancelled, it said communities needed to be reminded that using fireworks in gardens and common areas could have devastating consequences.

Their improper use can cause serious injuries, distress to pets and neighbours, and impact on Scotland's emergency services, it said.

Alasdair Perry, deputy assistant chief officer, is its head of prevention and protection.

He said: 'With public events unable to go ahead, we may see people hosting private events in their gardens to mark the festive season and New Year's Eve. However, we must warn communities that fireworks are explosives at the end of the day, and if not used properly their use can cause life-changing injuries.'

'I would urge anyone considering purchasing fireworks to be well aware of both the dangers and the essential safety guidance.'

Ash Denham, community

safety minister for the Scottish Government, said: 'This festive season is going to feel very different and at this usual time for celebration I urge everyone to follow the rules on meeting up with other households to help stop the spread of the virus.'

'It is vital that on Hogmanay the public adhere to the rules restricting travel between different local authority areas and meeting up with other households. Under both level four and level three restrictions it is not possible to meet up indoors or in large groups outdoors on Hogmanay.'

'With large, organised Hogmanay firework displays cancelled we know that some people may consider using fireworks in their back gardens.'

'If you do plan on using fireworks please do so responsibly and safely. If we all play our part we can ensure that Hogmanay this year is safe and enjoyable for everyone.'

To view the fireworks code and find more information, visit www.firescotland.gov.uk/your-safety/fireworks-safety.aspx



Merry Christmas – and thank you one and all!

Residents and staff at North Argyll House welcomed a special visitor over Christmas as these pictures show. Above is manager Morag Telfer and Santa with 95-year-old resident Nancy Gardiner; and below right is 100-year-old Cathie Potter having a wee dram from a bottle of Oban whisky.

North Argyll House want to thank Oban Rotary Club who gave the residents chocolate sweets and calendars, and Oban Distillery who generously gave the residents a bottle of whisky and lovely whisky glasses.

CalMac to continue freight service

Businesses have won their fight for the loose freight service operated by CalMac to continue – for the time being at least.

CalMac has deferred a review of the service it provides to Raasay, Arran, Bute and Cumbrae for six months. The deteriorating effect of the Covid-19 restrictions on island communities has led to the deferment and any review of the service will now be made later next year.

However, this is a u-turn from its earlier position after CalMac told businesses the service, which is widely used to get parts and goods from the mainland, that the service would stop at the end of the year. Talks then saw a stay of execution agreed until the end of February but this has now been extended to beyond June when the process will resume.

CalMac will continue to consult with the Small Isles to define the future loose freight operation, as this service differs from the others islands involved.

TRADITIONAL STEAK PIE FOR NEW YEAR'S DAY

Recipe

Brought to you by BID4Oban

Melt-in-your-mouth beef stew topped with a flaky puff pastry lid is a family favourite any day of the year, but especially the first day!

You will need:

Large Pot
Mixing Bowl
Pie Dish – We used a round 22cm (8.5inch) tin

Ingredients:

- 800g Diced Beef Stewing Steak (Approx 2lb)
- 2 tbsp Plain Flour
- 2 tbsp Olive Oil/Butter
- 2 Large Roughly Chopped Onions
- 500ml Beef Stock
- 35ml Worcestershire Sauce 1 tbsp Tomato Puree
- 1 tsp Dijon or wholegrain Mustard
- Salt and Pepper to taste
- Make life easier for yourself and by ready made puff pastry (375g)

Method

Toss the beef in seasoned plain flour.
Heat your pan and oil/butter, once hot add the onions and cook until soft.
Once the onions are soft add the beef to brown it for a couple of minutes. Once browned add the stock, Worcester sauce, tomato puree, mustard and seasoning.
Bring the mixture slowly to the boil and then cover and reduce to a gentle simmer for 2.5 hrs,



stirring occasionally.
Once the sauce has thickened and the meat is tender, tip the mixture into a pie dish, $\frac{3}{4}$ full. Preheat your oven to 180°C or 356°F, approx gas mark 4.

Cover the top of the pie dish with the rolled puff pastry, use your thumb or a fork to push down or crimp the edge of the pastry along the rim of the dish, helping to seal the mixture and the flavour in.

Make a hole in the centre of the pie to allow steam to exit during cooking.

Place your pie into the preheated oven for roughly 30 mins or until the pastry has risen and is golden brown.

Serve with fresh greens and buttery mash. Yum!

Christmas share of sea farm funds goes out to good causes

Nine good causes around Oban and on Mull have received a share of a £18,000 Christmas gift from Scottish Sea Farms, writes Kathie Griffiths.

The community groups and worthy causes are among 43 in Scotland in total to benefit from the funding from the fish farm company's Heart of the Community Trust.

Scottish Sea Farms' Heart of the Community Coordinator Georgie Mackenzie said: 'Every year, in addition to the larger grants awarded, each of our farm managers is given £500 to support the local cause or causes of their choosing. It's a great way of ensuring that the money goes where it's needed the most.'

'This year, however, with the coronavirus taking up everyone's focus from March onwards, only a small number of farm managers had been able to allocate their awards, with the result that there was still £18,280 in the fund.'

'To ensure local causes benefited before the year was out, each manager was asked to nominate projects in their communities where the money might make a real and positive



Scottish Sea Farms Spelve manager Alan Tangny.

difference to those struggling because of coronavirus.'

The Argyll causes to benefit were RNLI Oban Lifeboat, the Salvation Army, Oban and Mull & Iona Community Hospital, Hope Kitchen, Kerrera Community Hub, Soroba Young Family Group, Mull Safe and Sound and the Isle of Mull Pony Club.

Alan Tangny, farm manager of Spelve on the Isle of Mull, was also quick to come up with a great way of how a £500 share could be spent close to home. As a father of five, with four at Salen Primary and Pre-school he knew it could be put to good use there, buying new library

books because Covid has been creating a novel problem in their library.

Alan said: 'They are having to quarantine books that are taken home, so having extra books will be a big help.'

The funds will go towards buying story and factual books, and hopefully they will be on the shelves in time for the children returning for the new term.

Scottish Sea Farms' Heart of the Community Trust, which marks its 10th anniversary next year, has given more than £1,322,562 to community causes since it was established in 2011.



Oban Business Improvement District

www.bid4oban.co.uk



Family business spreads festive cheer on Isle of Mull

by Fiona Scott
fscott@obantimes.co.uk



What started off as a small project to raise some money for a local primary school has now resulted in every child on Mull receiving an extra Christmas gift.

Husband and wife Mark and Emma Alecock, of MEA Furniture and Crafts on the Isle of Mull, realised there was a need for face coverings to protect the local community on Mull in March and began research into designs.

Taking up the story Emma said: 'Those designs turned to product and we began making masks to give away to volunteer groups, shops and services on the island.'

'We quickly realised there would be a long-term need for masks and decided to turn our project into a fundraising activity for our local primary



Mark Alecock of MEA Furniture and Crafts with just some of the gifts to be sent to schoolchildren on Mull.

school, Lochdon, who were unable to fundraise themselves due to the restrictions.

'Bob and Linda Boswick at Craignure Spar very kindly sold the masks on our behalf and many months of mask-making provided

much-needed funds for the local school.'

Given that it had been a tough year for everyone, MEA then thought their island's young people might appreciate a bit of festive cheer, and the crafty couple began to make

handmade Christmas stockings using some of the funds raised to fill them with goodies for all children at Lochdon and sister school, Ulva, plus the babies/toddlers and High School young people in their local school area.

With the school on board, Mark and Emma then thought it would be nice if they could do something for children in other parts of the island, so began to make up big boxes of games, puzzles and books for all the primary schools on the island.

Thanks to Mark's sister, Amanda Shepherd, who is a manager at the Entertainer Toy shop, they were able to make the funds stretch even further.

High School pupils received a specially-designed face mask which the couple thought would be fun as well as practical from an 'elf and safety' perspective.

Mark told us: 'This project turned from just something to do in the evenings to a full-scale production and we have enjoyed every minute of it.'

'We roped our two daughters in to help on the sewing machines and everyone mucked

in with the wrapping and delivering of the Christmas gifts.

'When it all started we didn't want or intend to make money out of the virus, we just wanted to help our community, and because we had the big cutters etc, we turned our hand to making masks and then scrubs.'

'Word got out and we started receiving requests for masks, and when the tourists started to come back we thought, well, why not raise money for the school. It just grew from there and has been real fun.'

A total of 57 stockings, seven boxes and 135 festive masks were delivered in the first week of December to start the Christmas countdown with some fun festive cheer.

'A big thanks to everyone who supported the mask-making project without whom none of this would have been possible,' added Emma.

Appin Aid still here to help

Appin Aid is still supporting people in the community needing its help into the New Year and beyond, writes Kathie Griffiths.

Leaflets have been dropped through doors letting people know what help is available but organisers want to get the word out wider in case anyone has been missed.

There are hopes to restart the Appin Community Transport Scheme soon while remaining in line with government guidelines. Once up and running again, the service will be limited to hospital or medical appointments, with only one household using the car at any one time.

Even households not already registered with Appin Aid and needing to self-isolate on advice from the test and protect scheme can get help from it, such as with shopping and medication deliveries, says Appin Aid co-ordinator Clare Hunt. A hardship fund set up earlier in the year in the wake of Covid to support Appin residents struggling with financial difficulties because of the virus's impact, is also still open and any enquiries will be dealt with in the strictest of confidence.

And to keep people connect-



One of Appin Aid's many volunteers was Sarah Keating helping deliver meals in lockdown.

ed digitally, the aid scheme that has received help from the Supporting Communities fund has also bought a tablet device to be loaned out to anyone in the community who wants to use it for contacting friends and family on video call or to shop online. Plans for when current restrictions ease, are to get a volunteer to visit peoples' homes to help show how it works and get them online.

In the meantime, anyone feeling lonely or in need of a blether can contact Appin Aid to have a friendly voice check

on them and make sure they are coping okay.

Clare can be contacted on 01631 730 416 or by emailing clare_appintransport@outlook.com. Alternatively, any needs can be discussed with Appin Community Development Trust trustee Alison MacCorquodale via alisonmaccorquodale@btinternet.com

Donations to Appin Aid are still welcome via www.appin.scot

'We send a huge thank you to all those have donated to Appin Aid so far,' said Clare.

SUBSCRIBE

to Scottish Field and choose a **FREE** bottle of Glasgow Gin, Leith Gin or Arran Malt*



The Perfect Christmas gifts for those that love all things Scottish



Save 25% on the cover price only £10.69 per quarter delivered direct to your recipients door.

Call 01778 392014 and quote Noell or go to scottishfield.co.uk/subscriptions

The award winning monthly glossy lifestyle magazine. Scottish Field brings you the very best interiors, antiques, gardens, wildlife, motoring and country news along side entertaining and informative writing. Get ahead of the field and Christmas wrapped up with a subscription to Scottish Field magazine

*Terms and conditions apply. For over-18s and UK-based subscribers only. Minimum one year subscription to Scottish Field. Offer ends 31 Dec 2020. While stocks last. Limited stock available. first come, first served basis. By claiming this offer, you agree that you are of UK legal age for purchasing and consuming alcoholic drinks.

for the facts drinkaware.co.uk

OT

Funding for Mull and Iona arts trail

by Kathie Griffiths
kgriffiths@obantimes.co.uk



Funding has been awarded for a new art trail showcasing creative talents on Mull and Iona in time for Easter.

Financial support from the Scottish Government's Scotland Loves Local fund means Visit Mull & Iona (VMI) can keep on artist Alicia Hendrick to co-ordinate and deliver the project.

VMI chairperson Margaret Matthew said the islands already have a flourishing cultural scene and the funding will help highlight this vibrant aspect of island life even more.

'The Scotland Loves Local award, that will provide an Art Trail and associated website, will help inform and encourage both locals and visitors to explore the creativity on offer in the islands,' she added.

Once up and running, the Mull and Iona Art trail will be



the first stage in a campaign supporting the cultural life of the islands.

People living there and visitors alike will be encouraged to explore the arts with the help of a special map highlighting locations and venues that can be visited - a new website will also be created.

Visit Mull and Iona hopes the Art Trail project will help

bring in a new audience of arts admirers and culture seekers.

The Scotland Loves Local Fund is administered by Scotland's Towns Partnership.

Alicia said the art trail project is still in its early days but is likely to take the form of a map and an artists' directory, marking out venues and artists to flag up the vast wealth of creativity across the two

Alicia Hendrick is co-ordinating the Mull & Iona Art Trail.

islands: 'It's an opportunity to build on our cultural heritage. It's for the local audience as well as visitors. We are a big island including Iona, it may be that people in the north are not so aware of what's happening in the south and vice-versa. It will link artists up as a way of networking too. It might be that we can all come together for some kind of future funding for more projects.

'It's early on but the possibilities are already exciting. We want to make sure the map will be an asset for now and in the future. Through this time of Covid, a lot of artists who are self-employed have lost out on a lot so they need all the support they can to be visible,' added Alicia who was formerly An Tobar's Arts Officer and has her own studio on Mull.

Fond farewell as Barra piping tutor retires

Castlebay School bid a fond farewell to Domhnall Padruig Nicholson as he 'retired' from his role as volunteer chanter and piping tutor earlier this month, writes Mark Entwistle.



was also there to support us during the more challenging times. I very much hope he will continue to visit once things return to normal!

Domhnall Padruig has been instrumental in many ways for the delivery of music teaching in the Barra school.

He has dedicated his time weekly over many years to teach children the chanter and pipes, including trips to join the Sgoil Lionacleit Pipe Band and mainland excursions such as the School Pipe Band Championships and Celtic Connections: Dileab.

Head Teacher for Castlebay Community and Eoligarry Primary Schools, Suzanne Forman, said: 'I have had the pleasure of working with Domhnall Padruig over many years and been amazed by the progression and talents of his many students.'

'As a member of the wider school staff, Domhnall Padruig

Community and Eoligarry Primary Schools' piping tutor, Donald 'Ban' MacDonald, said: 'As the school's piping tutor, I would like to thank Domhnall Padruig very much indeed for all his hard work and assistance to me. This he did on a purely voluntary basis over the past few years. I would like to wish him well.'

Martin Sinclair S6 pupil said: 'I feel very fortunate to have been taught the pipes by Dòmhnall Phàdraig. I'd like to thank him for his patience and all his encouragement over the years. On behalf of the pupils, staff and parents, the school presented Domhnall Padruig with a Blair chanter which is engraved with 'Ceud Mile Taing bhon a h-uile duine ann an Sgoil Bhàgh a' Chaisteil.'







Wishing all our customers a

**HAPPY
HEALTHY
SAFE
NEW YEAR!**

MACLEOD

CONSTRUCTION LIMITED

WE WOULD LIKE TO THANK YOU
FOR YOUR VALUED CUSTOM.

01546 602989 • sales@mkmacleod.co.uk •
macleodconstruction.co.uk

PMG ENGINEERING SERVICES

**Mobile hydraulic hose specialists,
on site service covering, Oban,
Campbeltown, Argyll, mid Argyll
and the west coast.**



**24 HOUR
CALLOUT
24/7
COVERAGE**

**Across Argyll and the
West Coast of Scotland**

info@pmg-services.com • www.pmg-services.com • 07766 513 585

Construction • Forestry • Quarry • Static Plant • Agricultural • Marine

Santa, Elsa and elves visit Oban

by Ellis Butcher
ebutcher@obantimes.co.uk



Santa, Elsa from Frozen, the Grinch and a handful of elves helped bring the magic of Christmas to children in Oban, Benderloch and Dunbeg.

A source close to the man himself said the reindeers are on furlough this year and Lapland is at tier zero, but a group of local people were more than happy to step in when they heard he wanted to pay a flying visit to Oban.

Accordingly, Santa toured the area in a specially decorated but socially-distanced sleigh – a finely-decorated Mazda frosted with snow, followed by an eye-catching Edinburgh Hackney Cab decked from boot to bonnet in twinkly lights with a stock of goodies.

The visit helped to put a smile on the faces of young and old at the end of a hard year, with lots



Santa's sleigh arrives in Oban.

The sleigh was kindly donated by Wayne and Leanne Johnson and family who run Retrophenia, George Street, where Santa left a stash of leftover sweets. The Elf Mobile was borrowed from Steve Smith and Sandra Melnikaite and family who run AQ Group at Glencruitten Glen.

The aim was to spread a bit of fun and those involved stress that everything was kept within the guidelines at all times.

When Santa's sweets began to run low, he went in to buy more from Lidl and the kind manager donated a few bags. So, too, did Tesco, and with Santa needing something to warm him after a long night out in the cold, takeaway firm Kebabish in George Street, gave him and his elves a cut-price dinner to top off a festive night.

of favourable feedback from the public.

Santa kept this visit strictly under wraps to help prevent crowds forming and was not collecting any money for charity. One of his Elves told The Oban Times that anyone who appreciated his efforts can contribute to Hope Kitchen

in Soroba Road. Anyone who prefers to donate to another charity is welcome to do so.

Our Santa source said: 'Above all, he just wants everyone to be as nice as they can to one another over this particularly difficult Christmas and to do everything they can to pull together as a community.'

Finn the elf gets up to mischief – again!

Mull's very own elf on the shelf has been up to tricks again, writes Kathie Griffiths.

Mum Naomi Marsh from Tobermory has been raising cheer once more by putting up daily posts of 22-month-old son Finn getting up to all sorts of naughtiness dressed as a cute elf.

Last year The Oban Times published some of Naomi's photographs of Finn wreaking havoc and it was such fun. Here is a taste of just some of the latest mischief he got up to for Christmas 2020.

Naomi said: 'Finn has well and truly jumped back into the role of the mischievous elf. He's decorated the toilet, visited Spoonville in Tobermory to add a newly decorated festive Spork the stag, wrapping paper bombed my mum's office at Island Holiday Cottages, wrapped up all the shoes in the house with clingfilm and even made a bath full to the top with balloons!

'We've had so many nice comments from people saying the posts are really making



Finn the Elf gets up to mischief, adding Spork the stag to Spoonville.

their days and they look forward to each post.

'Finn has been having such a laugh getting up to mischief and it's really nice to share that smile.'

MOREPHOTOS
www.obantimes.co.uk

ADVERTORIAL

JANUARY SALE

- Dettol E45 Liquid Hand Wash: 1.25
- Paradox Omega Capsules 60pk: 4.99 (HALF PRICE)
- Nivea Men Sensitive Post Shave Balm 100ml: 3.25 (HALF PRICE)
- Zoflora Fresh Home Disinfectant 500ml: 2.99 (500ML)
- Garnier Micellar Rose Water Cleanser & Glow: 3.25 (HALF PRICE)
- Head & Shoulders Classic Clean 250ml: 1.79 (250ML)
- Simple Cleansing Facial Wipes: 2.99
- Oral-B 3D White Luxe Perfection 75ml: 2.49 (HALF PRICE)

The festivities continue with January sales at Gordons Chemists

The longest month of the year is upon us and the only way to beat those January blues is to, not only treat yourself but, eagerly splash the cash on our fabulous January Sales as Gordons Chemists are back again with even bigger and better savings!

After the predetermined Christmas overabundance on gift giving, why not gift yourself with a special something or two? It's time to relax and unwind, you deserve it after all! Enjoy a post-Christmas cleanse with the Garnier Skinactive Micellar Rose Water for only £3.25 or get the Simple Cleansing Facial Wipes for just £2.99!!

Start the New Year fresh with Oral-B 3D White Luxe Perfection 75ml for HALF PRICE! Wash away the dreaded January Blues with Head & Shoulders Classic Clean 250ml for an outstanding £1.79! We know life isn't perfect, but your hair can be! Get that soft finishing touch with Nivea Men Sensitive Post Shave Balm 100ml for ONLY £3.25 – double the relief at just half the price!

We all know that 2021 will be the year of both health and hygiene so why not stock your cupboards with all of the cleaning supplies, toiletries and everyday essentials you could ever need? Keep your hands soft and sanitary with Dettol E45 Liquid Hand Wash for an amazing £1.25! Keep your home smelling and feeling fresh with the Zoflora Odour Remover & Disinfectant 500ml for a whopping £2.99! Keep your Omega 3, 6 & 9, along with your Vitamins D & E, topped up to the max with Paradox Omega Capsules 60pk for HALF PRICE – high in Omega but low in price!

Keep up to date with our FABULOUS weekly offers, competitions and exciting product launches, by following us on Facebook: www.facebook.com/gordonschemists. We've got lots of amazing deals coming your way and all of our stores remain open.

With 9 stores across Scotland, we have a store near you, or if you want to avoid the crowds, you can catch our outstanding deals online at www.gordons-direct.com

#SHOPLOCAL
SHOP ONLINE

GORDONS
CHEMISTS
WWW.GORDONSDIRECT.COM



OT

Review of the year

Part one: January to June



JANUARY: Flooded streets, cancelled ferries and a car in danger of being swallowed by the sea were just some of the issues Storm Brendan caused at the start of the year. Tobermory Main Street was like a loch and motorists were warned to avoid the area. Lasting damage seems to have been mitigated, however, as 'businesses seemed to get their sandbags and flood barriers in time,' one resident said the following day. Also suffering during the high tide was Oban's Columba Hotel and Bar Rio restaurant. Firefighters were in attendance to pump out six inches of water from the flooded basement back into the sea. Debris flung from the sea was also spread across Oban's Esplanade.



FEBRUARY: More than 90 young people from across Oban and Lorn had an informative and fun day out when they attended an Under the Sea science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM) event at the Ocean Explorer Centre in Dunbeg. Primary five pupils from a number of schools in the area joined secondary pupils from Oban High School for the event, where they experienced a range of fun STEM activities including boat-building, seabed sampling, learning about microplastics, making a sea-themed video game, Lego robotics and green screen movies.



APRIL: A BBC Scotland documentary, Priest School, saw the Pope enjoying a joke with Scottish seminarians. When they handed him a bottle of Oban whisky,



JANUARY: Oban firefighter Kerrie McPhail was gearing up to appear on prime-time TV after taking part in a driving challenge for the popular Top Gear show. Paired up with Freddie Flintoff, Kerrie competed against members of the police and ambulance services in an extreme driving challenge which was aired at the beginning of March.



MARCH: Robert MacIntyre was delighted to accept a cheque on behalf of Martyn's Monday Club for more than £15,000 raised by Robert Cruickshanks, father of Oban man Martyn who took his own life in May 2018, from the sale of his Ootmahooswindae wildlife calendars.

FEBRUARY: Despite the weather and ferry cancellations due to Storm Ciara, the Highland Cattle Society 129th Spring Show and Sale attracted a large crowd in Oban. One of the people delighted to have made it to the show was Emily Armstrong from Balearmartine Fold, Tیره, who was named overall winner of the young handler competition.



Photograph: Kevin McGlynn

MARCH: Oban photographer Stephen Lawson was keeping a focus on wildlife in the hills between Ganavan and Dunbeg where a rare black fox had been spotted. Sightings of black foxes are so infrequent that some say they are just folklore. While the Ganavan black fox remains elusive, other creatures have not been so shy. Roe deer are out and about in the hills and feathered friends putting



in an appearance include great northern divers and peregrine falcons winging their way into recent confirmed sightings logged by eagle-eyed spotters.



APRIL: A therapy charity put out an appeal for help to keep its two ponies fit and well. The Carriage Driving Group desperately need to pay farrier fees and other essential coronavirus stopped all the activities for an income.



instead of just handing it to his assistant as usual, he held it up and laughing, he said: 'Questa e la vera acqua santa', which means 'This is the real holy water'.



MAY: Obanvision winner Lachie D'Arcy had double reason to celebrate when he was reunited with his dad after 11 weeks apart. The all-singing and dancing nine-year-old whose cover of Uptown Funk won the most hearts and votes during the town's Facebook alternative to Covid-cancelled Eurovision, was over the moon to see the return of his dad who had been working away in India as a commercial diver but managed to get back just in time to watch Lachie's performance online from a safe social distance at a neighbour's house where he had to self-isolate for two weeks.



urgent plea for... Argyll RDA needed funds costs after it relies on



JUNE: About 200 people lined the seafront at Oban sending out a message of love and equality to all. Georgie Stones and friends James MacIntyre and Issy Thomson organised a silent show of solidarity along the esplanade after feeling 'fed-up and unhappy with the world.' They spread word of their solidarity event online with Black Lives Matter Oban and other groups and were overwhelmed by the number of people who turned up with banners to show support for people who have to fight for equal rights. The socially-distanced line stretched from Station Square past the Columba Hotel.



MAY: Scotland's top golfer Bob MacIntyre and Covid-19 survivor James Scott hit the first tee shot at Glencruitten since the course went into lockdown. The 2019 European Tour Rookie of the Year joined 63-year-old Mr Scott to officially reopen the course on May 29. Mr Scott, whose mum Jessie died from coronavirus, had just launched a crowdfunding campaign to raise £15,000 towards a special infection control room at Lorn and Islands Hospital. The granddad, whose been a member of Glencruitten Golf Club for eight years, spent 38 days in hospital himself because of the virus and was put in an induced coma for more than two weeks.



JUNE: A summer solstice Facebook party live-streamed from a secret location above Oban plugged into more than 4,500 hits. DJ Mark Gowdie and best friend Neil Gillies carried a generator and a pile of gear up to the view point at Lonan Woods to stream a two-and-a-half-hour club and dance session on midsummer night.

FOLLOW US
www.facebook.com/obantimes

Next week:
Review part
two: July to
December

OT

Meet the flockers – and their wo

by Fiona Scott
fscott@obantimes.co.uk

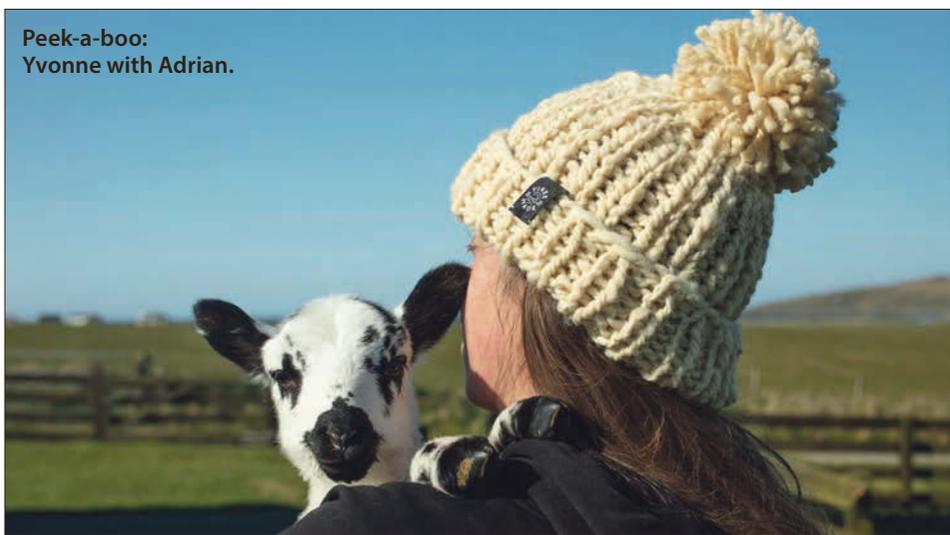


A Tiree couple are feeling a bit woolly-headed since their adoptive family grew from two to 13 in the space of a year.

Looking to escape the city scene, Jason and Yvonne Lancaster moved to the island in 2018 and, following a chance conversation with a crofter friend over a cuppa, a few months down the line found themselves the proud parents of two orphan lambs.

Skip forward a year and the couple now run a successful operation producing hand-made hats courtesy of their woolly family which has now reached double figures.

Taking up the story, Yvonne told us: 'Before our sheep and wool filled lives on Tiree, we were the typical cliché – working in the city, spending our days heading to client meetings, juggling time, fighting congestion and battling ever shrinking deadlines all on repeat day in and day out.



Peek-a-boo:
Yvonne with Adrian.

'In 2018 we listened to our gut and took a leap of faith. As it turns out moving to a small island in the Atlantic was not going to be the biggest change to our lives.

'Somehow two orphan lambs became seven – technically a flock – in the space of a week.

'And people told us life slows down when

you move to an island!' The couple now have a little flock of 13 orphan lambs. The original seven: Noah, Bubble, Dot, Matrix, Kelp, Nori and Popcorn were joined in 2020 by: Rocky, Adrian, Athena, Jeff, Serg and Pepper.

'Rocky got his name because he came to us on death's door,' Yvonne explained.

'Very weak and not given much chance of survival. But he is a fighter and little Rocky is fighting fit now.

'The others were named after seaweed and by friends and family. It's hard work thinking up names for lambs so in 2021 we're going to ask for name suggestions and may even hold a little competition with

those who suggest the winning names receiving a free woolly hat from us.'

Like all loving guardians, Jason and Yvonne don't admit to having favourites and have formed a strong bond with their family.

Yvonne added: 'Each has their own personality. They come running when they see us, and that's without bribing them with food or treats. It turns out they are just happy to hang out with us – OK, they do demand a scratch as well!

'Most people probably don't realise but sheep do recognise their names and they can remember up to 50 individuals and whether you were nice to them. Our little flock of orphan lambs are here to stay and it's our aim that they live out their natural lives happily and healthily.

The couple support their flock by making woolly hats that are ethical, local and lasting, and set up WELAN Tiree as a way to bring structure to the challenge and enable

them to work together with like-minded people.

As well as learning everything they could about how to look after their new flock of fluffy family members, the Lancaster's set out to learn how to turn their summer haircuts, which they need yearly to stay comfortable in warm weather, into woolly handmade hats. After many weeks of trial and error, the 100% Tiree Made woolly hat was born.

'The amazing thing about living on a small Scottish island is how quickly acquaintances become friends, added Yvonne.

'Friends who invite you over for a simple cup of tea which turns out to be a life changing moment. Life changing not just for us but for our new fluffy, four-legged family members.

'And thanks to them people across Scotland have warmer heads on colder days. We hope the result is more orphaned lambs become sheep who live long, healthy and happy lives.'

WIN £200 WORTH OF SHOPPING



DASH

COURTESY OF TESCO OBAN

We all spend far too much money over Christmas and New Year, so how great would it be able to fill your shopping trolley COMPLETELY FREE OF CHARGE in January?! Courtesy of our friends at Tesco in Oban, one lucky reader will win the chance to fill their trolley with up to £200 worth of goods (see T&C's for exclusions). All you have to do is collect 4 tokens over four weeks starting on 10th December, get them to us by 10am Thursday 7th January and you will be entered into a prize draw to win this fantastic trolley dash.

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

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

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Winner must be at Tesco, Lochside, Oban, PA34 4HP for 9.30am January 18th. Excludes tobacco, lottery, baby food, non-food items and alcohol. Quantity limited to two per item. The winner will be given a hand held scanner to monitor spend to the value of £200.

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

DIGITAL SUBSCRIBERS

Digital subscribers who have an active subscription covering the period from December 11, 2020, to February 1, 2021, can enter the competition by sending their name, address and email address that they subscribe with to Oban Times Trolley Dash Competition, Crannog Lane, Lochavullin Industrial Estate, Oban PA34 4HB by 10am Thursday January 7. Only one entry per subscription permitted. Entrant must be able to attend the trolley dash in Oban on the January 18, 2021.

ENTRY FORM

Name.....

Address

Telephone

email

I have included my 4 tokens (please tick)

Your entry must be received by 10am Thursday 7th January. Send your entry to Oban Times, Trolley Dash Competition, Crannog Lane, Lochavullin Industrial Estate Oban PA34 4HB



woolly family



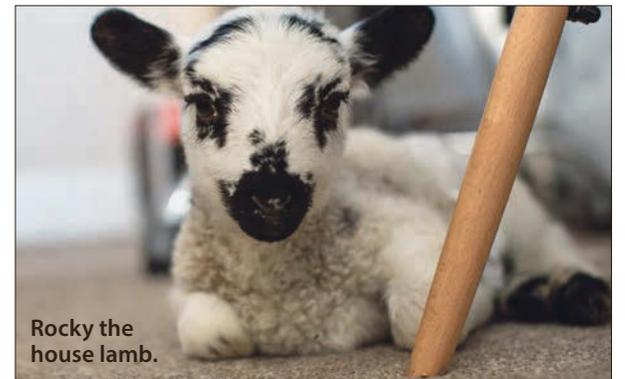
Popcorn is always happy to see Jason; and below, making wool by hand with a drum carder.



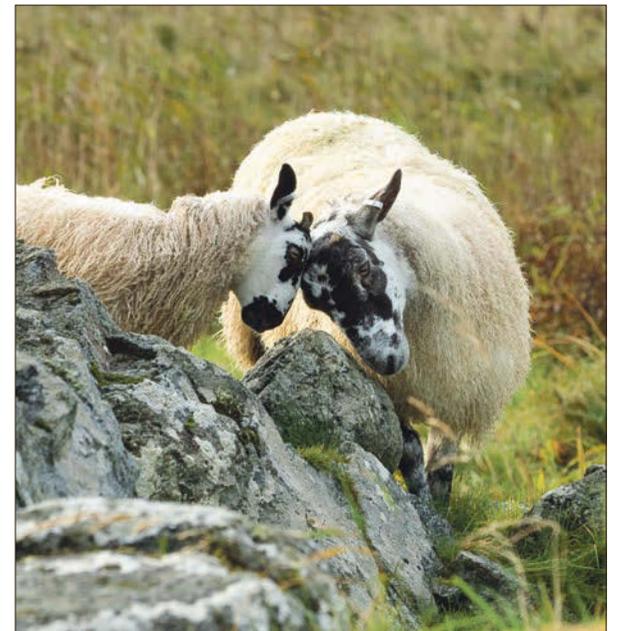
Yvonne with Kelp – but someone else wants a bit of attention!



Yvonne relaxing with Adrian, Jeff and Rocky.



Rocky the house lamb.



Rocky and Kelp say hello.

GO DIGITAL YOU CHOOSE
ENJOY LAPTOP
BOTH THE OBAN TIMES AND LOCHABER TIMES
PAGE TURNER EDITIONS TABLET
PLUS MOBILE
14 YEARS OF ARCHIVES
ACCESS
BREAKING NEWS
AS IT HAPPENS ON OUR WEBSITE

NEVER MISS AN ISSUE
WITH OUR NEW CONTINUOUS CREDIT CARD PAYMENT

AWESOME DEAL

THREE MONTHS FROM £6.99
ONE YEAR FROM £24.96

*recurring payment option via credit card

SUBSCRIBE AT WWW.OBANTIMES.CO.UK/SUBSCRIPTIONS

Love Whisky?

Take a look at the latest issues of **Cask & Still** magazines, and previous issues for **FREE** at:
issuu.com/caskstillmagazine

THE NEW APP FROM CASK & STILL MAGAZINE
#ScottishWhiskyTrail
START EXPLORING!
DOWNLOAD OUR FREE APP TODAY

GET IT ON Google Play | Download on the App Store

CASK & STILL MAGAZINE

The Glenlivet Distillery
The Glenlivet Distillery sits in a wild and remote glen. Its history is packed with drama and intrigue. So in every bottle of whisky we make, we capture as much of the spirit of the glen as we can. We invite you to the heart of Scotland's whisky-making country, to explore the turbulent history of the whisky smugglers, delve into the intriguing mysteries of distilling and sample the golden magic that is The Glenlivet.

Address
The Glenlivet Distillery, Ballindalloch, Banffshire, AB37 9DB

Contact
Tel: +44 1340 821790
Email: theglenlivet.admin@pernod-ricard.com
Web: <http://www.theglenlivet.com/en-UK>

OT



Left, the advent calendar to date; above, crew members Leonie Mead, top, and Lawrie McMillan; top right, Donald Matheson with one of the babies born on board the lifeboat; and right, David Isaac is king of the shouts.



Oban lifeboat's Christmas countdown

by Ellis Butcher
ebutcher@obantimes.co.uk



Volunteers of Oban RNLI launched a special countdown to Christmas with a lifeboat-themed advent calendar.

The 24 fascinating facts about the station, lifeboat and its volunteers helped shed new light on the service to social media followers.

Leonie Mead, the station's volunteer press officer came up with the initial idea and volunteers wracked their brains for corresponding facts for each date. She said: 'It started back in November as I was trying to think of ideas for Christmas publicity. I wanted to include some of our station history and stories of interest and it evolved from there.'

The hugely informative #LifeboatdaysOfChristmas idea had last week generated 70 new followers to its Facebook page since December 1 and more supporters to Instagram and Twitter too.

Leonie explained: 'That translates to another 70 people we are able to pass safety messages on to. We hope that leads to 70 more people we're able to keep safe and that they become supporters of the RNLI.'

The public engagement exercise is important in 2020 because the service relies entirely on donations and has been unable to welcome visitors to its station for its annual open day or other events.



Leonie said: 'Social media has proven invaluable for us to stay connected to our supporters. It's through these channels that we can continue pushing our safety messages and raise awareness of both the work of our volunteers and the RNLI.'

'Not only has this been a successful publicity campaign for us but its creation has also provided enjoyment among our crew and station officials. It's helped reconnect our lifeboat family socially, when we aren't able to do so face to face. It's also brought back lots of memories and highlighted so much we should be proud of as a station.'

RNLI volunteers around Scotland will remain on call this Christmas and New Year - ready to drop everything and leave their families, should their pagers sound.

It is one of Scotland's busiest single all-weather lifeboats and Oban's volunteers have

faced a busy year regardless of the coronavirus.

Ally Cerexhe, coxswain for Oban Lifeboat, said: 'We are normally a busy station so our volunteers already dedicate a huge amount of time to call outs and training.'

'But this year we've faced more challenges; additional PPE has been required and extra safety measures have been put in place to ensure we can continue launching throughout this pandemic, and our volunteers continue to risk their lives to save others.'

'As always, we remind everyone to stay safe when visiting the coast. Daylight hours are short and the temperature drops quickly. If you find yourself, or spot someone in difficulty, remember to call 999 and ask for the coastguard.'

To view all 24 facts, be sure to head to the Oban RNLI's Facebook page at www.facebook.com/rnliobanlifeboat.



Left, day nine represents 90 years of fundraising; and above, it's been 15 years since the rescue of Classic Wave.

Here's a quickfire version of the 23 days so far.

December 1: We have one lifeboat at our station - a Trent class all-weather lifeboat, the Mora Edith MacDonald. Since her arrival 23 years ago, she has launched on service over 1,350 times.

December 2: We have two women on the crew and we've just recruited a third.

December 3: 300* bottles of Oban Lifeboat whisky raised over £30,000 for the RNLI. *It was 297 to be precise!

December 4: Four babies have been born onboard Oban Lifeboat.

December 5: Oban lifeboat once got tasked to five call outs in one day.

December 6: Oban lifeboat carries a daughter craft with a top speed of six knots and it was once used to rescue a Bernese Mountain dog.

December 7: Both our flank stations Tobermory and Islay

Lifeboat operate a Severn class lifeboat.

December 8: Eight lifeboats have been on service in Oban since the station was first established in 1972.

December 9: 90 years of fundraising. Although Oban's lifeboat station itself wasn't established until 1972, fundraisers have been raising money for the RNLI in Oban since the 1930s.

December 10: 100 callouts in a year. In 1998, Oban lifeboat recorded 100 callouts in a year for the first time.

December 11: Dr Colin Wilson spent 1,100 hours at sea - the distance he covered while responding to his pager equals travelling half way around the world!

December 12: 2012 saw crew members Andrew and Leonie first meet and five years later resulted in a lifeboat wedding.

December 13: Oban's 22-member crew does not have

anyone assigned to number 13.

December 14: In 2014, the team was joined by its youngest volunteer Andrew Scott, then aged 17.

December 15: Fifteen years have passed since the Classic Wave rescue; saving three yachtsmen and one lifeboat crew member on the September 17, 2005.

December 16: Crew number 16 is David Isaac, he's attended more call outs than any other current crew member - responding over 570 times.

December 17: There are 17 sea lochs, more than 100 islands and around 495 miles of coastline in its patch.

December 18: At the age of 18, each baby born onboard is gifted a commemorative bell as part of an old maritime tradition.

December 19: Nineteen years ago on its furthest shout, the Mora Edith MacDonald burned 1,900 litres of fuel, with the volunteer crew travelling 130 miles.

December 20: Oban Sea Kayak Race has raised over £20,000 for Oban RNLI.

December 21: In 2019, the lifeboat helped 221 people and launched on 21 training exercises.

December 22: 2022 will mark the 50th anniversary of Oban Lifeboat Station.

December 23: Oban lifeboat Mora Edith MacDonald was the 23rd Trent class lifeboat ever built and she's been on service for 23 years.

ALBA

bbc.co.uk/alba



Nollaig 2020 | Christmas 2020



NY2SY

Diciadain 30 Dùbhlachd, 9f | Wednesday 30 December, 9pm

Bho dhoimhneachd inntinn gu iomradh air bhàrr tuinn a' Chuain Shair: sgeulachd Niall Iain Dòmhnallach.

The dramatic highs and lows of a lone Atlantic rowing challenge, with Niall Iain MacDonald.



Ceòl na Loidhne | Song of the Track

Diardaoin 31 Dùbhlachd, 9f | Thursday 31 December, 9pm

Tha Ingrid NicEunraig a' comharrachadh dealbhan ùra a chaidh an lorg de Loidhne na Gàidhealtachd an Iar.

Ingrid Henderson celebrates newly discovered photographs of the West Highland Line.



Siud agad e! 2020

Diardaoin 31 Dùbhlachd, 11f | Thursday 31 December, 11pm

Bidh Kathleen NicAonghais agus Calum MacFhionghain a' toirt thugainn sgeulachdan aoireil agus èibhinn, gus soraidh slàn a thoirt air a' bhliadhna.

Kathleen MacInnes and Calum MacKinnon present a side-splitting mixture of sketches, satire and general silliness to bid fare well to the year.



Cèilidh na Bliadhn' Ùire Hogmanay Cèilidh

Diardaoin 31 Dùbhlachd, 11.30f | Thursday 31 December, 11.30pm

Cathy NicDhòmhnaill agus Niall Iain Dòmhnallach le sàr cheòl bho leithid Peat & Diesel, Glenfinnan Ceilidh Band, Sian agus Trail West.

Hogmanay ceilidh hosted by Cathy Macdonald and Niall Iain Macdonald. With Peat & Diesel, Glenfinnan Ceilidh Band, Sian and Trail West.



An Sgoil Bheag Mu Dheireadh The Last Little School

Dihaoine 1 Faoilleach, 8.05f | Friday 1 January, 8.05pm

Ann an 2013, bha sgoil bheag iomallach sna Hearadh gus dùnadh. Dh'fhàgadh i sianar chloinne às a dèidh, agus beàrn ann an cridhe coimhearsnachd.

In 2013, a remote little school in Harris was about to close. Six children would be left without a school, and a community's heart would be broken.



God Save The Quine

Dihaoine 1 Faoilleach, 9f | Friday 1 January, 9pm

Le agallamhan bho leithid Annie Lennox & Eddi Reader, tha Fiona NicChoinnich a' rannsachadh saoghal ciùil nam ban Albannach.

Fiona MacKenzie explores the journeys travelled by the country's most revered female artists including Annie Lennox & Eddi Reader.

Tha BBC ALBA a' gluasad air Virgin Media. BBC ALBA is moving on Virgin Media. Bho 4 Faoilleach chithear BBC ALBA aig | From 4 January watch BBC ALBA on:

• Virgin Media 120 (Alba / Scotland) • Virgin Media 161 (An còrr den RA / Rest of UK) • Freeview 7 (Alba / Scotland) • Freesat 109 • Sky 117 (Alba / Scotland) • Sky 169 (An còrr den RA / Rest of UK)

OT

LETTERS

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

Christmas angels

This week's front page story sees the town celebrating two very special women, Maggie Dougall and Michelle Morris.

Both went above and beyond to help others during the last nine months of lockdown and restrictions and their care and compassion and cheery demeanor saw them nominated for the inaugural Oban FM and BID4Oban Christmas Angel award.

And we think both women are very worthy recipients. Congratulations to you both.

The one thing Oban and its surrounding communities have in abundance is people who think nothing of going above and beyond for their neighbours, their communities and even strangers.

Another example of this is John McGee of Bunessan on Mull. Having had to spend time in Ward B at Lorn & Islands Hospital recovering from a serious infection, John was struck by how old and sorry looking the TV was in his ward. So as soon as he got home, he put a post on Mull and Oban Facebook pages asking people for help. And help they did. Four TVs have already made it to the hospital, with more on order.

Thank you to everyone who helps to make our communities the special places they are. Wishing you all the very best for 2021.

The editor welcomes letters of approximately 300 words in length for publication on this page. However we reserve the right to shorten, to amend or to refuse to print them. Names and postal addresses must be supplied, including on emails, to indicate good faith. A daytime phone number is also required for verification. Anonymous letters will not be printed. Please email: editor@obantimes.co.uk or write to: Letters page, The Oban Times, PO Box 1, Oban, Argyll, PA34 4HB.



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

At the Oban Times we endeavour to ensure that all our reports are fair and accurate and comply with the Editors' Code of Practice set by the Independent Press Standards Organisation (IPSO). We realise, however, that mistakes happen from time to time. If we have published anything that is factually incorrect, please email: editor@obantimes.co.uk; telephone on 01631 568000; or email editor@obantimes.co.uk. We will attempt to resolve your issue in a timely, reasonable and amicable manner. However, if you are unsatisfied with our response, you can contact IPSO by email: inquiries@ipso.co.uk. We will abide by the decision of IPSO.

Good use of our cash?

The report on the Piers and Harbours Asset Management Plan and Fees and Charges – 2021/22, submitted to the Argyll and Bute Council Harbour Board meeting of December 3, 2020 makes interesting reading.

At a time when budgets are tight, and councils have had to make hard decisions about where to cut services, it is difficult to understand why the council budget should be used to supplement the funding of dedicated ferry infrastructure for which CMAL should be responsible.

The Asset Management Plan allocates £10,335,000 for planned marine infrastructure works for the year 2021/22, of which only £1,255,000 is devoted to multi-use facilities. The remainder, £9,080,000, is mostly allocated to single-use ferry facilities, and a huge proportion of that is to provide overnight parking for CalMac ferries (to the exclusion of all other vessels); readers will have to make up their own minds about the merits of spending £4,050,000 for an overnight berth at Fionnphort, and £100,000 on a feasibility study for a breakwater at Lismore.

CMAL pay back around half of the £9,080,000 to the council through harbour dues for the use of council-owned piers, however that still leaves a whopping £4 million gap in the required funding.

If past experience of other CMAL projects is anything to go by, the planned 8 per cent increase in council harbour fees and charges up to 2028/29 is not going to cover it.

Fergus Gillanders, Kilmelford.

Closed borders

It was striking to note the restrictions between Scotland and England over the festive season, and to highlight that it was almost 70 years ago to the day that the border between the two nations was closed for the first time in 400 years.

That, of course, was due to the return of the Stone of Destiny to Scotland, when four student nationalists removed the ancient artefact from Westminster Abbey on Christmas Day in 1950.

The incident happened nearly seven centuries after the stone was taken from Scone by King Edward I during the Scottish Wars of Independence and placed under the monarch's chair in the abbey.

When news of the stone's removal broke, the authorities closed the border between Scotland and England. It was ultimately recovered from Arbroath Abbey, where Scottish nationhood had been asserted with the Declaration of Arbroath in 1320. It was returned to Westminster Abbey

Beachd Ailein

ALLAN CAMPBELL

ailean@obantimes.co.uk

"Siud i a' falbh 's tha chead mhòr aice!" Air starsaich bliadhna ùr, agus a' gabhail beannachd le tèile! Mar a dh'èirich dhan mhòr-chuid aig deireadh na bliadhna 2020, tha mise cuideachd glè thoilichte gum bheil crìoch air bliadhna air am bi cuimhne air sgàth a' choròna-bhiorais.

Gu tròcaireach cha do dh'fhuiling a h-uile duine an tinneas, ach a dh'aindeoin sin cha deach aig duine san dùthaich air a buaidh a sheachnadh, eadar glasadh agus bacaidhean. Rinn sinn gàirdeachas ris an fhiosrachadh gun robh banachdach ùr ceadaichte, agus bu nàdarra dhuinn misneachadh fhaotainn à toiseach libhrigidh oirre.

Ach mar dhearbhadh air meud an t-srì a tha romhainn fhathast tha sinn a' dol dhan bhliadhna ùr fo riaghailtean ìre 4 air tìr-mòr Alba, agus a' chuid eile de Bhreatann cuideachd a' neartachadh ìrean dìona gus sgapadh riochd ùr den bhioras a cheannachadh.

Tuigidh sibh gum bheil mi a' sgrìobhadh seo beagan làithean ro àm foillseachaidh, agus an-diugh tha fios air nochdadh gum bheil An Fhraing air aontachadh leigeil le làraidhean siubhal à Breatann a-rithist fhad 's gum bi dearbhadh aig dràibhear gum bheil iad saor bhon bhioras.

Tuigear an seòrsa sgàig a chuir naidheachd mun dreach ùr ghabhaltach seo den bhioras ann an ceann a deas Bhreatainn air Riaghaltas na Frainge, agus gu dearbh air caochladh dhùthchannan feadh an t-saoghail, agus cha b' iongnadh gun do dhùin iad a' chrìoch le Breatann. Ach cionnas, an dèidh eòlas fad faisg

in 1952. This action also coincided with attacks on postboxes in Scotland in a dispute over the title of the new British monarch, Elizabeth II, there being no Elizabeth I of Scotland.

Interestingly, it has recently been revealed that James Stuart, Conservative Secretary of State for Scotland recommended in 1953 the stone be returned to Scotland, but Churchill's government vetoed this seeing it as rewarding a small minority of hardline nationalists.

Alex Orr, Edinburgh.

Christmas gift like no other

None of us can deny that events in history can be literally life-changing. The current Covid-19

air bliadhna a' dèiligeadh ris an tinneas agus cuideachd a' deasachadh airson suidheachadh a dh'fhaodadh a bhith againn ma thig Breatann às an Roinn Eòrpa gun aonta malairt, a thug e trì latha de dheasbad mus deach aontachadh sgrùdadh a chur air dòigh dha na dràibhear.

Tha Ministear a' Chòmhdhail ag aideachadh gun toir iad 's dòcha suas ri trì latha a' sgrùdadh agus a' gluasad trì mìle làraidh agus bhanaichean a tha glaiste ann an Dòbhair, ach tha labhraiche bho ghniomhachas a' chòmhdhail ag ràdh gum bheil an àireamh a tha glaiste nas fhaisge air deich mìle! Gun iomradh air a' chruadal aig an luchd-siubhail sin glaiste nan carbadan gun bhìadh neo goireasan ionnlaid na eile, agus nach fhaigh mòran aca a-nise dhachaigh airson na Nollaige, tha iomadh gnìomhachas beag an cunnart a dhol à bith leis nach eil bathair luachmhor dol a ruigeadh a cheann-uidhe! Buille eile bhon choròna-bhioras, agus tha mòran de na buidhnean beaga sin ann an Alba, ach 'e an tàmailt gun robh cothrom agus còir an dàil seo a sheachnadh.

Stiùireadh màirnealach luideach bho riaghaltas Lunnainn a tha air cosnadh mhòran eile a chur an cunnart! Ma tha nàire orra bidh iad-san cuideachd toilichte 2020 fhaicinn seachad!

Most will be glad to say farewell to 2020, surely not least those in government who wasted three days before taking action to enable traffic to flow from Dover, a delay which has put some SMEs in serious jeopardy. Coronavirus can only be partly to blame for any job losses!

pandemic is undoubtedly one of the most poignant and significant crises this world has ever known. Yet, while 2020 has been a difficult year, two words will fall from the lips of many people across the world this week: Merry Christmas.

The greatest event in history will again be remembered – the coming of Jesus Christ.

When we exchange gifts there's a love that motivates the action, but when we examine the love of God, it was unmerited, undeserved and unequalled. God offers us salvation today through faith in His Son, Jesus, when we repent and believe the gospel.

We sincerely wish every reader, near and far, a very happy holiday and a blessed new year.

Donald J Morrison, Inverness.

DEREK WILSON

CARRIERS LTD

DAILY SERVICE OBAN - GLASGOW

MULL, COLL, TIREE, COLONSAY, ISLAY

Building on 30 years of Service Excellence

Tel: 01631 562655 email: dwoaban@gmail.com

Units 2/3 Crannog Lane, Lochavullin, OBAN PA34 4HB

Covid precautions
in place❖ Freight forwarding and
courier service❖ Furniture, appliances,
feed, automotive spares,
glass, building supplies,
etc.❖ "Won't ship to the
Scottish Highlands &
Islands?" Have your items
delivered via our
Glasgow depot!

DISTRICT NEWS

HO, HO, HO, a very healthy New Year to all

Healthy Options (HO) held a series of Christmas gatherings in December in order to thank their clients and staff for the exceptional effort into maintaining mental and physical wellbeing during the most difficult of years, writes Fiona Scott.

Held at Atlantis Leisure, HO clients were invited to take part in a socially distanced get together held over three days in order to adhere to government guidelines. Mince pies and coffee were enjoyed, with Christmas jumpers a must. Staff and volunteers joined in the festive fun, with some going above and beyond in terms of outfits.

The charity works with people who have, or are at risk of developing, life-long health conditions, and since the start of Covid restrictions back in March it has worked tirelessly to develop and deliver a range of online resources to help the Healthy Options community.

These consisted of a daily Message from Mull, Exercise for the Day and video content



The Healthy Options team.

that relates directly to the Healthy Options programme, such as Education and Move Well classes.

Emma Grant, HO project manager and fundraiser, told us: 'We would like to sing the praises of all our clients who quietly continued to support themselves, their friends and their

neighbours as much as they were able to over this challenging year.

'Self-care included walking or cycling in our beautiful surroundings while others were restricted to their gardens or houses for their exercise; self-care also meant reaching out to others with a phone call or perhaps with some fresh produce being dropped at a neighbours door.

'As we approach 2021, we see more challenges ahead, but are excited as to what innovations the year will bring and look forward to our time together, in person or on line.'

Due to the coronavirus pandemic, and subsequent implications, Lorn and Oban Healthy Options has reviewed its referral pathway. All clients MUST be referred by either their GP, Health Care Professional or Pharmacist.

Please speak with your relevant qualified health contact if you would like their support. Visit www.lornhealthyoptions.co.uk for more information.

At random

MARTIN LAING

editor@obantimes.co.uk



What a year

By the time any of you read this, Christmas will be behind us with Hogmanay hovering enticingly just over the horizon.

Now, I'm no different from anyone else and this hiatus between celebratory high points is usually a time when many of us reflect on the year in its last throes and ponder what the future may deliver.

Suffice it to say, it has been a year unlike any I can recall – and it looks as I write as if this dreadful pandemic has a considerable course to run. For me, it has been a year of astonishing change, and some of it – surprisingly, perhaps, given the circumstances – very much for the better.

I won't challenge your span of attention with a long list, but I will offer that I have ended a full-time career in newspapers which spanned 40 years. Other opportunities beckon now, though I hope to maintain my close relationship with The Oban Times and will continue to engage with you, dear readers, by way of this column.

As I have said before, I remain in awe of the Oban community and the people who make it what it is, and never has that spirit been more evident than this year and, indeed, this festive season.

The Oban Times in recent weeks has been replete with tales of ordinary – and extraordinary – people who have above and beyond to benefit others. Last week's edition was no different, with numerous smiling faces doing their best.

Personally, I would like to thank all those who have helped me in a wide variety of ways, including the simple fact of friendship and good times shared in good company. There have also, of course, been those doing vital jobs whose efforts and commitment contribute to make life the joy that it is. You know who you are.

There are undoubtedly more difficult days ahead as the coronavirus blights all our lives, but I am ever the optimist and trust that better times await.

Hopefully, 2021 will turn out to be memorable for much more positive reasons than its predecessor.

What do you think?

Send your comments to editor@obantimes.co.uk



Bags of sweets among Santa's festive treats

Santa was out delivering presents to the children of Islay with community helpers. The island's firefighters were among the volunteers and Bruichladdich Distillery who helped make it possible, distributing presents and pokes of sweets to delighted youngsters.

Mull producers' outdoor market pride

Tobermory has enjoyed the last of its open air markets for 2020 keeping the community connected safely during Covid.

The outdoor markets have helped raised just under £4,000 for the Aros Hall.

Market Co-ordinator Alicia Hendrick said: 'So proud that we were able to run these outdoor markets and help folk locally to see their neighbours from a social distance, and create a safe space to buy and sell for local producers and customers.

'We have raised just under £4,000 for the Aros Hall. The hall is at the heart of Tobermory and community owned.'

The open air producers' markets were set up by the Aros Hall Committee to run for 11 weeks every Monday 11am-2pm at the harbour, next to the pontoons overlooking Tobermory Bay.

Alicia said: 'We then transferred to the heart of Tobermory outside the Aros Hall and The Gallery to hold three Christmas markets. The first two of those were part of Tobermory's Socially Distanced Shopping Weekend. We were very happy to be able to promote the wonderful local produce from the Isle of Mull.

'We are grateful for funding from The



Tobermory meat and cheeses were just one of the producers' popular open air markets.

Supporting Communities Fund, The Waterfall Fund and for the support from Tobermory Harbour Association (THA) and their team.

'Thanks also to White Tails Gin, Tobermory Distillery, Carolyn Charrington, Chris Swinbank, Will Thorne, Dr Sam Jones, Alasdair McCrone, Katie McCrone, Robert Chalmers, Jamie Robb, Brian and Lorraine Jones, Dylan Cobban, Barbara Brown, members of the Aros Hall Committee and all the stallholders,' added Alicia.

WELL DONE TO EVERYONE THIS YEAR
Wishing festive greetings to all. Remember to check for Festive Slimming World recipes on the website.
WE WILL BE BACK IN THE NEW YEAR
GILLIAN 07796 040803

   slimmingworld.co.uk




Slimming[®]
-WORLD-
touching hearts, changing lives

BUSINESS NEWS

£150,000 council pledge for rural growth project

Argyll and Bute Council has agreed to set aside £150,000 towards developing business cases for its £50 million rural growth deal.

With the money secured from the UK and Scottish Governments, the next step will be to agree 'heads of terms' with both, said the council. This will set out the ways in which the funding will be used for Argyll and Bute. After that, the council and its partners will have to prepare business cases – setting out the detail of each project for investment. The funding will only become available for use once those business cases are agreed with both governments. Reaching this stage is expected to take up to a year-and-a-half, with projects being delivered over a 10- to 15-year period, said the council.

There are concerns about the decline in Argyll and Bute's population figures, how important roles will be filled and how the area will grow in future. Its forecasts estimate that by 2027, Argyll will need 10,000 more people to boost business development activity and deliver services for Argyll and the West Coast of Scotland.

Its policy and resources committee agreed to £150,000 from the council's inward investment fund being used to support the development of project business cases and other requirements, such as impact assessments.

Councillor Robin Currie, leader of Argyll and Bute Council, said: 'The rural growth deal is about putting investment where it will best support the growth of Argyll and Bute's economy to benefit the people who live and work here as well as national economic recovery. The complexity of putting this level of funding to work for Argyll and Bute is huge. The decision will help ensure we have sufficient resources in place to turn rural growth deal investment into the long-term action our economy needs.'

Hotel group's £200,000

by Ellis Butcher
ebutcher@obantimes.co.uk



A leading Scottish hotel group has announced that £200,000 will be made available to local charity groups.

Over the last decade, Crerar Hotels has awarded £8.5million in grants to more than 450 organisations as part of its commitment to invest in communities where its hotels are located.

Funds will be distributed to Cove Park, and Mull Shore and Wood Walk. Crerar will also be providing funds to charities which operate across Scotland and within Argyll and Bute. These include the Prince's Trust, MND Scotland, Tiny Tickers and St Andrew's First Aid.

More than 50 per cent of Crerar's distributable profits are gifted to local causes and charities.

Chris Wayne-Wills, chief executive officer, said: 'We are delighted that despite the difficult circumstances created by Covid-19, Crerar Hotels is still able to support a significant number of charities in 2020.'

'We believe this announcement is much-needed

good news for our local communities. It is our privilege to keep giving something back to them and particularly in a time which has been so challenging for all. Our continued community commitment is very important to us within Crerar; it's in our DNA.'

'For every stay our customers have with us they are supporting others who really need it. It is great for our folk in the hotels to see their hard work and efforts helping people in their own communities as well as those from throughout the whole of Scotland.'

'More than 16 organisations have benefited from these recent charitable grants, including Scotland's Charity Air Ambulance, St Andrew's First Aid, a Men's Shed, and Mull Shore and Wood Walk. We look forward to hearing how this funding helps impact their work.'

Crerar Hotels was founded by Paddy Crerar CBE in 2005. He said: 'As ever, it's a privilege to be able to help the folk around our hotels. In this year when we have seen so much heartache and fear, what we have gifted this Christmas feels like just a teardrop in a torrent. We will do

more when we can. It's a good thing to be able to help the community we are part of and it's the hard work of our teams that makes it possible. I can tell you that is something we are all very grateful for.'

'We at Crerar Hotels have been really lucky. We were able to weather the lockdown well enough and when our hotels reopened, we were treated with a tidal wave of bookings.'

'Loyal guests keen to return and enjoy a break and maybe do their bit to support Scottish hospitality.'

Mr Crerar added: 'Sadly, it will be a few years to recover what Covid-19 has stolen – once we do, our local gifting will get fully back on track.'

Its seven high quality four-AA star hotels and inn include Oban Bay, Oban; Loch Fyne Hotel and Spa, Inveraray; and the Isle of Mull Hotel and Spa.

Paddy Crerar CBE, right, of Crerar Hotels: 'Our continued community commitment is very important to us...it's in our DNA'.

Scottish Water wins plaudits for

Scottish Water has been awarded Fair Tax Mark certification for the first time.

The publicly-owned utility has also been rated as a leader in the water sector and fared well against nearly 100 other UK organisations.

The Fair Tax Mark is a world-leading independent accreditation which sees Scottish Water secure gold standard for fair and responsible tax conduct.

Scottish Water demonstrated it acts ethically in its tax affairs with a published tax strategy of 'exemplary transparency' and a commitment to forgo offshore profit shifting and complex tax structures.

Scottish Water also took part in a Responsible Business Tracker, run by an organisation called

Business in the Community. It is the oldest and largest business-led membership organisation dedicated to responsible business.

Evaluation took place against more than 100 organisations from across the water sector and beyond. The outcome placed Scottish Water as a leader in the water sector and above average in the wider network of organisations.

Douglas Millican, chief executive of Scottish Water, said: 'Our service provides the foundation to daily life across the country to millions of people and we're committed to providing high quality services at all times.'

'These benchmarking results show Scottish Water is an organisation which takes seriously its responsibilities to operate ethically, fairly

and transparently. These principles sit at the heart of what we do and how we do it.'

Paul Monaghan, chief executive, of Fair Tax Mark, said: 'We are delighted to announce that Scottish Water has joined the Fair Tax movement and are proudly saying what they pay.'

'Their certification means customers, suppliers and staff can clearly see they have a transparent and responsible approach to tax.'

'It is estimated that annually, due to corporate profits being shifted to tax havens, corporate tax revenue losses in the UK amount to at least £7billion.'

'In these challenging times, just think of the nurses, doctors and teachers we could employ if that tax was paid as it should be?'



WIDE RANGE OF VANS FOR HIRE

- 250 miles a day included
- 7 days a week
- Oban plus 15 miles free delivery

Local pick up available
Competitive rates

A happy and safe new year to all of our customers

Tel: 07825 581171
Email: morrisonmotorrepairs@gmail.com

Morrison Motor Repairs
Unit 1 Creran Marine, Barcaldine
by Oban, Argyll PA37 1SG



Time to refuel? 24/7 launderette
SELF SERVICE
WASH & DRY

Open 7am-7pm
except New Year's Day:
12 noon-4pm,
January 2nd:
9am-5pm

A happy and safe new year to all of our customers



HALFWAY FILLING STATION

Dunbeg, Oban PA37 1PX Tel: 01631 562784 Open 24 hours



Send us your business news by emailing editor@obantimes.co.uk or call 01631 568000

0 charity boost

Forestry jobs boost



The forestry sector is leading the way in helping employers secure public funding to recruit more young people into the industry.

Under a Growing Rural Talent initiative, backed by national funding, forestry companies are being encouraged to take on new young staff.

By offering generous subsidies, the initiative is funded under the Scottish Government's Kickstart programme and its Young Person's Guarantee.

Those aged 16 to 24 face a growing unemployment rate, exacerbated by coronavirus.

A partnership has so far involved Dumfries and Galloway Council, Skills Development Scotland, Scottish Forestry, Lantra Scotland and Forestry and Land Scotland.

It will now align with the Growing Rural Talent initiative to be rolled out nationwide.

It provides up to 100 per cent financial support to private sector employers for the first six-month period, then at a rate of 50 per cent for a further six months, dependent on an actual job opportunity.

There is also a £1,500 training budget for each person which will help to prepare them to work in a forestry situation.

Scottish Forestry is also due to take on six undergraduate assistant woodland officers in the New Year. Forestry and Land Scotland is also recruiting more than 30 new apprentices in 2021.

In addition, a new 'forestry careers toolkit' to help employers in the sector attract new talent is being prepared by Scottish Forestry. It is expected to be launched in the New Year.

The initiatives were discussed in the recent Forestry Jobs Summit involving rural economy secretary Fergus Ewing and key forestry organisations.

Already forestry companies, including Tilhill, Egger, and James Jones and Sons are providing new young recruits an exciting first step into forestry.

During the summit, companies have been confirming their plans to offer opportunities to new starters.

Mr Ewing said: "The forestry sector in



The forestry sector is helping employers recruit more young people into the industry.

Scotland is a success story. It generates around £1 billion to the economy each year and supports around 25,000 jobs.

"Timber production levels are increasing and in the years to come we will need to have a young skilled workforce in place to meet demand.

"I am pleased Scottish Forestry and Forestry and Land Scotland have doubled their intake of opportunities for young people.

"This is a great start and I'm encouraged two other companies have confirmed their plans to take on young people.

"It is welcome news the private sector is helping new people into the industry. I hope we can build on this and offer many more similar opportunities."

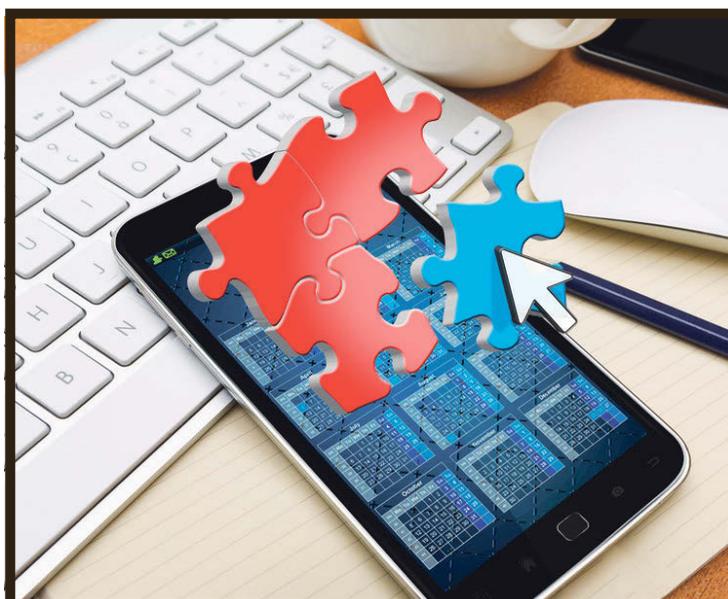
Stuart Goodall, chief executive of forestry and wood trade body Confor, said: "Forestry and wood processing is a sector on the up and very much of its time. By planting more trees, managing them well and using more home-grown wood, we can lock up carbon to help Scotland achieve its world-leading climate change targets.

"The drive to reach net zero by 2045 means we will need many more low-carbon businesses and far more young people with a wide range of forestry and wood-using skills who want to be part of this ambitious, exciting journey."

or transparent taxes



Left: Scottish Water flashback to March 2019 as part of the Top Up Tap project in Oban. Above: Douglas Millican, Scottish Water chief executive.



Wylie & Bisset giving free business advice to steer Scottish businesses through the Coronavirus crisis

Do you have a business that, through no fault of your own, finds itself confronting various pressing business problems as a direct result of the government restrictions to quell the spread of COVID-19?

CALL OUR DEDICATED HELPLINE

There are various options available to businesses and if you need a sounding board or to speak to a financial expert about your options, we are here to listen and offer free advice.

info@wyliebisset.com www.wyliebisset.com

Call now on 0141 566 7096

Wylie + Bisset
Chartered Accountants, Business & Tax Advisers

4 High Street, Oban, Argyll PA34 4BG

Tel: 01631 562478

168 Bath Street,
Glasgow G2 4TP

Tel: 0141 566 7000



A Lismore boating tragedy

Morvern Lines

IAIN THORNER

ian.thorner@btinternet.com



Tall, free-standing, Celtic crosses have been popular memorials throughout Scotland for over a thousand years.

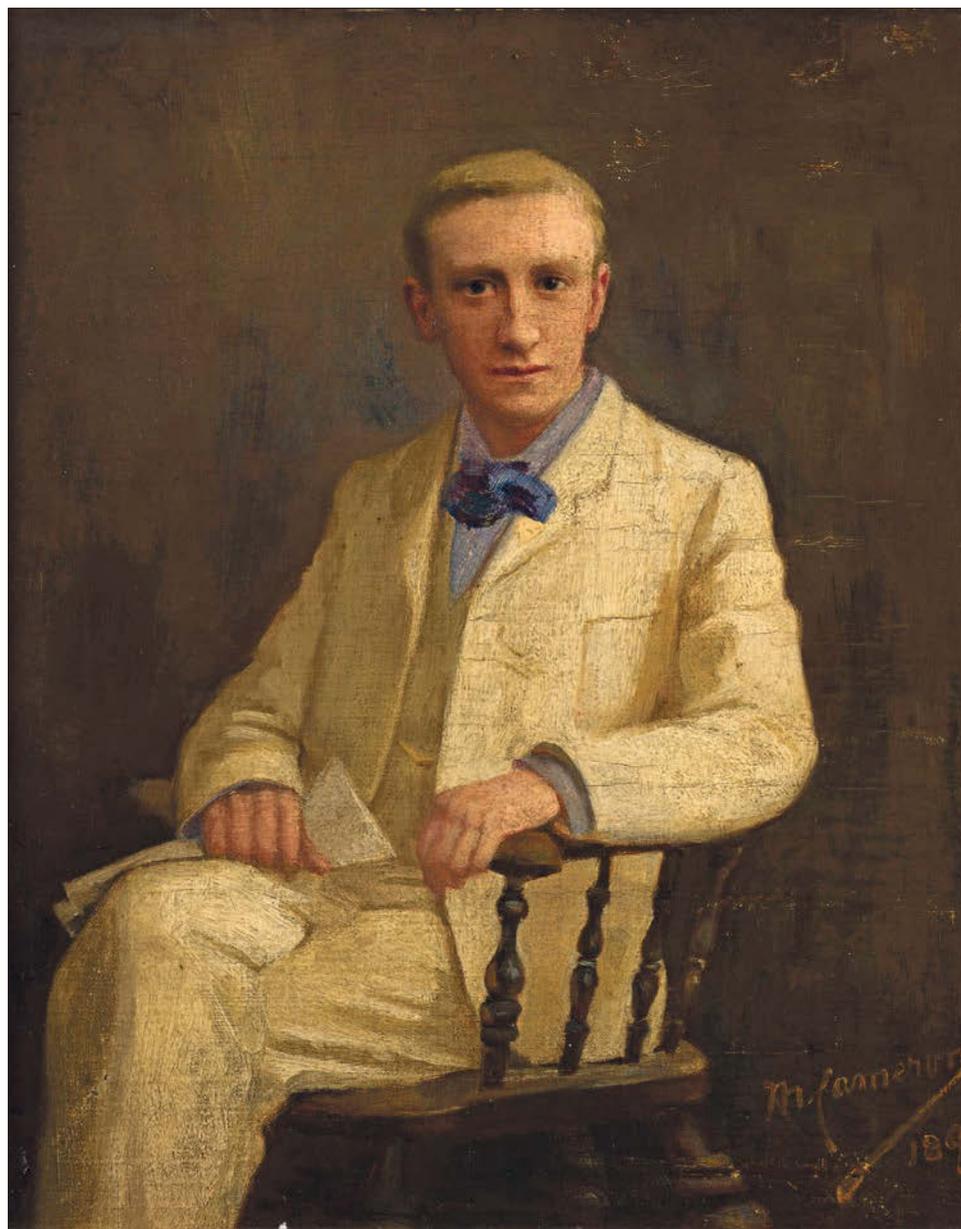
There are many wonderful examples and representations of all ages to be found in almost every graveyard and jeweller's shop in Argyll.

One of the most poignant and impressive I know of is on a rocky outcrop a little way above the high water mark on the east side of the island of Lismore, looking out over the Lynn of Lorn. At the base of this replica of the original St Martin's cross, which stands by the main door of the abbey on Iona, is a tablet inscribed: 'This monument is erected to the memory of Waverley Arthur Cameron of The Oban Times drowned on the 4th of June 1891 by the foundering of a sailing boat off this spot'. [Followed by a quotation from The Treasures of the Deep, a poem by Felicia Hemans 1793-1835]: 'To thee the love of woman hath gone down: dark flow thy tides o'er manhood's noble head. O'er youth's bright locks and beauty's flowery crown. Yet must thou hear a voice: restore the dead: earth shall reclaim her precious things from thee restore, restore the dead, thou sea. Erected by his sorrowing father'.

Waverley was the second son of Duncan Cameron who, along with his brothers John and Donald, were the owners of the Edinburgh-based printing and stationery firm of Macniven and Cameron. Duncan joined the firm in 1850, and in 1865 received a patent for the 'Waverley' nib, with a uniquely narrow waist and an up-turned tip designed to make the ink flow more smoothly on the paper. It was named after Sir Walter Scott's popular novels of the time.

Waverley, the subject of this article, was educated at the High School, Edinburgh and in France. Three years at Edinburgh University followed before he arrived in Oban to take on the management and editorship of The Oban Times, which the family bought for £4,000 in 1882.

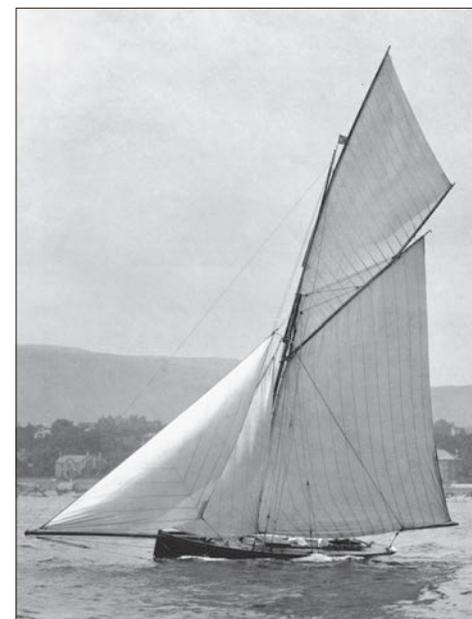
Reporting the accident a week later a contributor, perhaps his father, recorded; 'He [Waverley] had conducted this paper for the last two years, and has exhibited in this exacting position sagacity and power of mind quite beyond his years. There is no doubt he had a useful and,



Waverley Cameron (Credit: Mary Cameron: Portrait of Waverley Cameron, 1891; Private Collection: Photo: Eion Johnson).

we might almost say, brilliant career before him had he been spared to continue the work to which he was so much attached, and for which he was so well fitted. Possessed of singularly pleasing and winning manners and of a happy

disposition he made hosts of friends, among whom his ever-welcome presence will be sadly missed: while among those who were fortunate enough to come into closer contact with him, he was equally honoured and beloved.



'There is no doubt, he had a useful and, we might almost say, brilliant career before him had he been spared to continue the work to which he was so much attached..'

'Mr Cameron was connected with most of the societies in town, took a prominent part in their work and annual entertainments, in all of which he received unstinted praise for his clever and artistic impersonation of character. He was also on the Executive of the Oban Liberal Association, and young as he was, manifested a keen and intelligent interest in all the political movements of the day. His sad and untimely death creates, therefore, a blank in the social life of Oban that will not be readily filled – in short, he was a general favourite with both old and young in our own little community.'

The fatal accident occurred about 7.30 on the evening of June 4, a little way to the north of Achnacroish Pier, Lismore, where Waverley and three friends – John Sutherland, Allan MacDonald and Donald Campbell had gone in a small half-deck yacht called the Countess – a well known racer carrying a large spread of

NORTH WEST MARINE
DIVING & MARINE SPECIALISTS

SPONSORS OF THE OBAN TIMES WEATHER AND TIDES
7 E Glengallan Road, Oban, Argyll, PA34 4HG
T: 01631 565740 F: 01631 565780
M: 07836 366419
Em: enquiries@northwestmarine.co.uk
Web: www.northwestmarine.co.uk

**Chain, shackles and buoys
all available to purchase**



Tide tables for Oban during the week from **Thursday 31 December, 2020** are listed below with differences for major ports listed alongside. All times are GMT (add one hour BST)

| | | | | | | | | | |
|-----------|----------|-----------|----------|-----------|----------|-----------|----------|------------------|-------|
| 31 | 0015 1.1 | 2 | 0128 1.0 | 4 | 0250 1.1 | 6 | 0433 1.3 | Ardrisaig | -5.35 |
| | 0723 1.8 | | 0727 3.9 | | 0848 3.7 | | 1036 3.5 | Campbeltown | -5.30 |
| TH | 1407 3.2 | SA | 1401 1.3 | M | 1528 1.5 | W | 1731 1.7 | Crinan | -0.47 |
| | 2007 1.9 | | 1954 3.6 | | 2119 3.4 | C | 2318 3.1 | Islay Port Ellen | 2.00 |
| 1 | 0051 1.0 | 3 | 0207 1.0 | 5 | 0338 1.2 | 7 | 0538 1.4 | Lochboisdale | +0.30 |
| | 0651 3.9 | | 0805 3.8 | | 0938 3.6 | | 1150 3.4 | Mallaig | +0.25 |
| F | 1323 1.3 | SU | 1442 1.4 | TU | 1624 1.6 | TH | 1846 1.7 | Portree | +0.55 |
| | 1918 3.7 | | 2034 3.5 | | 2212 3.2 | | | Tobermory | +0.16 |
| | | | | | | | | Dover | +5.30 |

WEATHER

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

Friday
Light rain and a moderate breeze
Temperatures 5°C to 7°C.

WEEKEND OUTLOOK

Saturday
Light cloud and a gentle breeze
Temperatures 5°C to 7°C.

Sunday
Heavy rain and a moderate breeze
Temperatures 7°C to 8°C.

FRIDAY FORECAST

HIGH 7 **LOW** 5 **10 MPH**

MACNIVEN & CAMERON'S PENS
ARE THE BEST.
 3007 NEWSPAPERS RECOMMEND THEM.

THE WAVERLEY PEN "Is a treasure."—*Standard.*
THE PICKWICK PEN "Embodies an improvement of great value."—*Engineer.*
THE OWL PEN "Par excellence the Ladies Pen."—*Queen.*
THE HINDOO PEN "With oblique point is simply inestimable."—*Globe.*
THE FLYING SCOTCH-MAN PEN "The Fastest Pen we have ever used."—*Sportsman.*
THE FLYING DUTCH-MAN PEN "Writes over 100 words with one dip of ink." No complications.

6D AND 1s PER BOX AT ALL STATIONERS.
 SAMPLE BOX OF ALL KINDS, 1s 1d BY POST.

WAVERLEY WORKS, EDINBURGH.

Left, a Waverley Pen advertisement from The Oban Times 1900. Photograph lain Thornber; and centre left, a yacht similar to the Countess which sank off Lismore, resulting in the deaths of Waverley Cameron and Donald Campbell, June 1891. Photograph from the Archives of G L Watson & Co Ltd.

canvas. The party left Oban about 4pm reaching Achnacroish two hours later. On coming alongside the pier, John Sutherland, a land agent with Hosack & Sutherland who had business to transact on the island, disembarked. To pass the time the others amused themselves by tacking backwards and forwards. The wind was then blowing from the northeast in strong gusts, and when some distance to the north of the pier and about 200 yards from the shore, the boat was struck by a heavy squall shipping a large volume of water. She became water-logged and refused to answer to the helm; another wave hit her, filling her completely. Finding that the yacht was sinking beneath them, the three occupants jumped into the water. The accident was seen by several people on Lismore who immediately sprang into action. Two boats were launched, one by Dugald and Donald Carmichael and the other by Donald MacColl and his son, but it would have been about 15 minutes before they were able to reach the spot. By this time Waverley had disappeared below the surface; one of the boatmen just managed to get hold of Donald Campbell as he was sinking. Allan MacDonald was picked up almost unconscious from exhaustion. They were pulled into the boat and rapidly rowed ashore. The other boat stayed out to see if they could find any trace of Waverley but all they got was his hat and he was never seen again. MacDonald, an Oban solicitor, and Campbell were carried up to the nearest house,

where, under treatment, the former recovered, but all efforts to get his companion breathing again were unsuccessful.

In the course of the same evening Allan MacDonald and John Sutherland were able to return to Oban in a rowing boat, manned by the islanders. On arrival there about eleven o'clock, the relatives and friends of the deceased were told what had happened by Oban's well known Dr Robert MacKelvie whose memorial stands in Argyll Square. Meantime the steam launch Marchioness of Lorne was made ready and set off for the scene of the accident with Colonel MacDougall of MacDougall, Dunollie (Donald Campbell's step-father) and one or two members of the Oban Times staff - none of Waverley's immediate relatives being in Oban at the time. Coming close behind were a number of fishing boats with gear to look for his body. The search proved fruitless and after waiting some hours it was decided to convey the remains of Donald Campbell to Oban. This was accomplished by the steamer, and on arriving at Dunollie Point, the body was taken ashore and carried to Dunollie House. The Marchioness again returned to Lismore to assist in the search which was continued till darkness set in, but without result. Even the yacht, owing to the conflicting accounts given by the spectators as to the exact point at which it went down, could not be located.

To be continued.

DOWN MEMORY LANE

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



Oban Times reader John Hay sent in this photograph, saying it was of, 'Santa visiting staff of the female ward at the West Highland Hospital, Oban, in the early 1990s'. If you recognise the yourself, or a friend or colleague, let us know who the people in the photograph were. You can email us at editor@obantimes.co.uk



The year is obviously 1996 and the occasion is the launch of Oban FM, but who are all these fine looking people - we do recognise a few of the smiling faces? We'd love to hear from you, so email us at editor@obantimes.co.uk

Gordon & Strathern Ltd
HOME IMPROVEMENTS

Porches, Extensions, Roofline, Windows & Doors

TEL 01631 720074 or 07776402550
 sales@homeimprovementsargyll.co.uk
 www.homeimprovementsargyll.co.uk

VERA APPROVED INSTALLER

MACC Business Park

Workshops available to let

Sizes ranging from 62 Sqm to 1500 Sqm on secure business park site
 Onsite offices, accommodation, internal and external storage space
 Flexible lease terms available

Contact MACC Developments Ltd Office on 01586 551555 or enquiries@maccdl.co.uk for further information

LEISURE & ENTERTAINMENT

YOUR GUIDE TO WHAT'S ON IN ARGYLL AND LOCHABER

Aidan O'Rourke's Best of 365

by Kathie Griffiths
kgriffiths@obantimes.co.uk



The end of 2020 marked the finishing of a 'gargantuan' mission for Scottish fiddler, composer and producer Aidan O'Rourke.

The Best of 365 featuring 30 tracks is the culmination of a project that has taken Aidan, who has roots in Oban and Seil, four years to complete and is being hailed as a masterpiece of new Scottish fiddle music.

Reveal Records issued a deluxe double CD featuring highlights on December 18.

Steeped in tradition, restlessly breaking new ground, Aidan is renowned for the rich grain of his fiddle sound, for the stripped-back lyricism of his phrasing and for penning boundary-defying tunes full of ancient truths and off-kilter wit.

In this project, Aidan collaborated with celebrated jazz pianist/harmonium player Kit Downes. The Best of 365 also sees Aidan going back to tradi-



Aidan O'Rourke is making a mark with his Best of 365 latest release.

tional depths with Edinburgh harpist Esther Swift and Mull guitarist Sorren Maclean. Additional recording on the album came from An Tobar's Gordon Maclean.

The album is a showcase of artful fiddle playing and distilled musical storytelling.

In 2013, Scottish author James Robertson wrote a short story every day for a year. What began as a personal

writing exercise, with each story also containing exactly 365 words, became a collection of fairytales, memories and provocations, published by Penguin.

When James and Aidan met at Celtic Connections, there was mutual appreciation and the 365 project was born – although it came with a warning from James that to take on a project writing a daily tune

throughout a year in response to his tales could be dangerous to health and sanity.

'His response was don't do it!' said Aidan. Committing to a daily task could take him to some extreme places, he was told.

A couple of years later, Aidan – who described reading James' short stories as a daily gift to himself like a three-minute meditation – had matched the storyteller's endeavour and the end result has had a huge impact on his playing and composing.

Aidan said: "This 'Best of' is the culmination of a gargantuan four-year mission which has pushed me in so many new directions. Working with Kit, Sorren and Esther has teased out multiple aspects of my playing. James Robertson's way with words – his wise concision, his tenderness, his rootedness in old Scottish folk tales and deftness as reworking them – has been an endless source of inspiration. I've emerged out the other end of

this project a different player and composer, no question.

'Certainly I've gained a strong instinct that less is more – ironic, yes, given the absurd number of tunes, if not in quantity, in terms of the power of brevity. Perhaps James' writing encouraged me to leave more space around notes. And for me, that space has provided an essential antithesis to the noisy political backdrop we find ourselves in.' Creative Scotland got on board with funding to develop the 365 project and all the music with the short stories is online at www.365.net as a free piece of public art.

The tracks on this latest release were whittled down by Reveal Record's chief who is a big fan of the 365 project. There have been two previous volumes released from it.

'But this is the best. I'm really proud of it,' said Aidan.

Lockdown has seen Aidan holed up in Edinburgh Old Town with the only gigs impromptu doorstep perfor-

mances for neighbours. He said the inability to plan ahead has been frustrating. There had been hopes for a gig in January in Belfast and a cancelled tour moved twice now from 2020 with 30 to 40 dates has been pencilled in for May/June 2021, but Covid will have the eventual say on that.

Looking further into the future, Aidan says he has 'high hopes' for Oban's new Rockfield Centre to bring a burst of energy to the town's music scene: 'It would be really exciting to play in Oban again,' he said.

In his early years growing up in the town he would play to hotel guests in the town for a fiver and entertain older folk. Growing up in Soroba before the family moved to Seil, lessons in Oban were had from George McHardy and Morris Duncan with links to the Oban and Lorne Strathspey and Reel Society.

To see Aidan in action, regardless of Covid, check out Celtic Connection's 2021 online offering.

We are looking to buy casks for our award winning whisky company – Artful Dodger Whisky.

If you have been thinking of selling your casks or having the whisky you own bottled then get in touch with us today.



WOOLF/DRINKS
MERCHANTS
OF THE FINEST
WINE & SPIRITS

info@artfuldodgerwhisky.com
info@woolfdrinks.com
www.woolfdrinks.com



Fourteen years of digital archives

Available to Digital subscribers



The Oban Times
& WEST HIGHLAND TIMES

LOCHABER TIMES
& OBAN TIMES



Bring in the new year with Skerryvore.

Toast the new year in with Skerryvore

by Campbell Cameron
editor@obantimes.co.uk

Do you remember when first footing was a big thing, and the living room was full of visitors from not long after midnight when the bells rung, and the boats had sounded the arrival of the New Year.

My late mother swears that we had 42 folk in the living room at the croft in Benderloch one famous New Year – and one of them was playing the accordion.

I remember that as a kid and it was not a big room either!

Well, it is a bit different this year, of course, as with Covid spread as dangerous as ever, we are encouraged to bring in the bells by ourselves. We often enjoy the Tralee Bay fireworks, sometimes from the comfort of our back door with a dram. This year we may do the same.

But we will have an accordionist in the lounge – and a piper too. Two of them in fact. And more. Multi award-winning band Skerryvore have announced that they are coming round first footing – well virtually so.

It is first footing but not as

we know it, as the eight-piece won't be knocking at our door with a piece of coal for the fire or with a box of shortbread in hand. Instead they will be encouraging us all to get settled in for the evening, get the whisky poured at 7pm ready to toast the New Year in as they perform a special live stream that can be enjoyed from the comfort of your own sofa from anywhere in the world.

The show begins with a tour of Robert Burns' birthplace for a chorus of Auld Lang Syne no doubt before Norrie MacIver, the Skipinnish frontman, gets the unique gig under way.

Then it's Skerryvore Live – not at Mossfield or Inveraray Castle – but centre stage in your lounge. The band will relay 'A Happy New Year' to those who cannot be with us this year.

Daniel Gillespie, the man on the box, told us: 'The festive season is usually one of the busiest periods of the year for us as we take to the road and tour around Scotland celebrating the Christmas season with a run of gigs for fans across the country. We will really miss that this year.'

But adding to the atmosphere, artists, and friends from across the world will drop in with good wishes for 2021.

Remember Everyday Heroes – the charity single that the band released to raise money for NHS charities? In April it went to number one in just 12 hours of being released. Only this month, it won the band an MG Trad award. Well, on January 1, viewers will have the chance to win a unique signed and framed vinyl version of that single. Amazing!

So that everyone can get involved, the socially-minded band won't have a fixed ticket price, instead in the 2020 festive spirit you just pay what you can at

www.skerryvore.com/new-years-day-live

Then sit back and enjoy Skerryvore doing what they do best - playing live music!

Slainte Mhath – here is to 2021 – we hope it's your best yet!

SUBSCRIBE
www.obantimes.co.uk/subscriptions

The Ideal Gift SCOTTISH CALENDARS 2021

ORDER ONLINE at www.scottishcalendars.co.uk

or call us on 01778 392014

OR POST ALL ORDERS to: Wyvex Media Subscriptions, FREEPOST RUAC-JUXA-GYAU
Warners Group Publications plc, The Maltings, West Street, Bourne, Lincolnshire PE10 9PH

SUBSCRIBE to Scottish Field and choose a FREE bottle of Glasgow Gin, Leith Gin or Arran Malt*

The
Perfect
Christmas gifts
for those that
love all things
Scottish



Save 25% on the cover price only £10.69 per quarter delivered direct to your recipients door.

Call 01778 392014 and quote Noell or go to scottishfield.co.uk/subscriptions

The award winning monthly glossy lifestyle magazine. Scottish Field brings you the very best interiors, antiques, gardens, wildlife, motoring and country news along side entertaining and informative writing. Get ahead of the field and Christmas wrapped up with a subscription to Scottish Field magazine

*Terms and conditions apply. For over-18s and UK-based subscribers only. Minimum one year subscription to Scottish Field. Offer ends 31 Dec 2020. While stocks last. Limited stock available. First come, first served basis. By claiming this offer, you agree that you are of UK legal age for purchasing and consuming alcoholic drinks.

for the facts
drinkaware.co.uk



YOUR LOCAL RADIO LISTINGS

Tune in to 103.3 Fm or listen live at www.obanfm.com or on the TuneIn app.

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

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

Film locations in Highlands take centre

by Fiona Scott
fscott@obantimes.co.uk



A BBC ALBA programme has uncovered some surprising facts about films that have been made in the stunning scenery of the Highlands and Islands over the years.

Aired on Christmas Eve Cinema Gadelica revealed that the famous chase scene in the 1963 James Bond film From Russia With Love was filmed in Argyll on Craignish Loch to represent the coast of Turkey and takes viewers to James Bond's birthplace in Glencoe, as revealed in Skyfall.

The programme also discovered that Stanley Kubrick used the barren landscape around Loch na h-Airigh on the east coast of Harris to represent the surface of Jupiter in his science fiction film 2001: A Space Odyssey. Filmed from an aircraft, Kubrick used coloured lenses and optical distortion to achieve this otherworldly effect, and these are believed to have been the only scenes filmed outside the studio.

With the help of a computer graphic the documentary makers turned Campbeltown's Picture House into its own Cinema



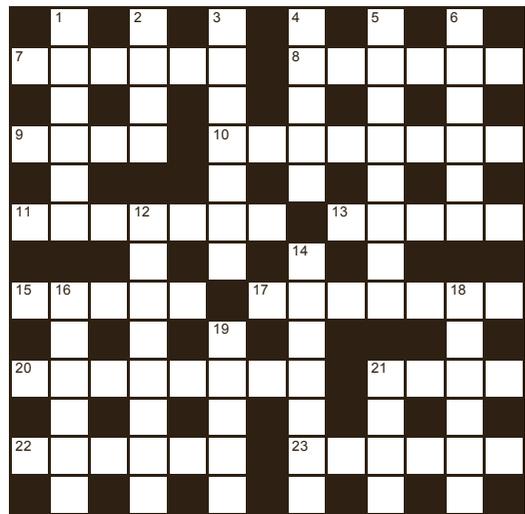
Above, the Old Man of Storr on Skye features in Ridley Scot's 2012 film Prometheus; top right, Presenter Patsi Mackenzie meets up with Oban-born tv producer Peter MacQueen at the Ring of Bright Water site; below right, director Les Wilson visits Glencoe where scenes in Rob Roy were filmed.

Gadelica for the production. Presenter Patsi Mackenzie, said: 'Scotland has some amazing filming locations that have been enjoyed by audiences around the world. It can be portrayed as kitsch, comic, romantic, violent, fantastical, gritty, historic or contemporary, and its characters can be ordinary, terrifying or inspiring. 'Scotland can be gloriously

Scottish or it can be the coast of Turkey, the wilderness of Nova Scotia or even the surface of Jupiter. With such a reputation, we can be sure that film-makers will continue to come to Scotland to use our spectacular landscape in telling their stories.' The programme also tells how Gene Kelly came to Scotland to find a location for the famous musical

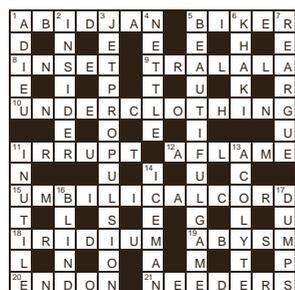
film, Brigadoon, but it was too wet so they decided to film on a Hollywood sound stage instead. Viewers will be transported to Glenfinnan Viaduct, made famous worldwide by the Harry Potter films the Viaduct attracts thousands of tourists. Viewers also learn that an archaeologist discovers a star map beneath the spectacular

CROSSWORD



- Across**
- 7 Nibble (6)
 - 8 Bob, for one (6)
 - 9 Woman of rank (4)
 - 10 Furnace shellse for calcining (8)
 - 11 Fruit bun (7)
 - 13 Wanting (5)
 - 15 Inside info (5)
 - 17 Infectious disease (7)
 - 20 Shape with opposite sides equal
 - 21 Pond organism (4)
 - 22 Oil or water worker (6)
 - 23 Detach (6)
- Down**
- 1 Veneer (6)
 - 2 VCR insert (4)
 - 3 Thin and slippery (3-4)
 - 4 Bite (5)
 - 5 Resting place for patients (8)
 - 6 Confused (6)
 - 12 Chinese dish (4,4)
 - 14 Required (7)
 - 16 Stick together (6)
 - 18 Seasonal drink (6)
 - 19 Receipt listings (5)
 - 21 Yearn for (4)

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION



Robert in lockdown

ROBERT ROBERTSON

robert.d.robertson@hotmail.co.uk



I count myself very lucky to have made it home to the Highlands for Christmas before the increased restrictions came in. It now looks like I will be home for the foreseeable future until the regulations are eased again.

Rather than dwelling, though, on the unprecedented Christmas restrictions, I thought I would use this week's column simply to tell a story of a controversial Christmas present.

I have never been particularly good at buying suitable presents but this year, for my Mum and Dad, I thought I'd really cracked it. I recently experienced cooking in an outdoor pizza oven. You

prepare the dough and the toppings, put some pellets in the machine, and (within two minutes) you've got an incredibly tasty pizza.

Mum and Dad have been making use of their "log shed" in the garden regularly this year. It's only got three walls so allows them to sit outside with friends while social distancing but warmed by a fire pit and a chiminea. A pizza oven would be the perfect addition to the set up - or so I thought.

A number of weeks before Christmas I decided it would be better ordering it to the house in Fort William (rather than my flat in Glasgow) to avoid having to cart it up the

road in a car already filled to the gunnels with all my washing for my mum!

I decided, therefore, to tell my mum about the present, on the condition that she could keep it a secret from Dad, and warn her of its imminent arrival. She was extremely excited and very grateful.

In fact, the phone call couldn't have gone any better. Until her nervous giggle began. "What are you laughing at?" I asked her. "Well, I may have recently mentioned to your father that I quite fancied a pizza oven for the log shed and he told me that he thought it was a ridiculous idea and that in no

circumstances should I order one! So I'm delighted you've decided to order one as it means I'll get my pizza oven after all!"

Oh well, I thought, at least 50 per cent of my parents will be happy.

I am actually writing this article just prior to Christmas to account for the festive schedule; so I do not yet know how the big Christmas morning reveal of the pizza oven will go down with my Dad - for whom Christmas Day is also his birthday. I will let you all know in my next article - if I live to tell the tale! I can only hope he enjoys turkey pizza.

By the time of my next

Highlands and the stage on TV



pinnacle of the Old Man of Storr on the Isle of Skye which starts the mission to discover the origins of humankind in Ridley Scott's 2012 film Prometheus.

Michelle Pfeiffer is filmed at the Quiraing and the Fairy Pools in Skye in Stardust, Mel Gibson's Braveheart rebellion was filmed in Glen

Nevis, and scenes in Rob Roy were filmed in Glencoe with the Three Sisters mountains often in the background.

The programme also reveals Eilean Donan Castle was the headquarters of the warlike Clan MacLeod in the cult fantasy Highlander. It also featured in romantic comedy Made of Honour,

while the Highland Games in Made of Honour was filmed at Dunvegan Castle on Skye.

The opening battle scene in the film Highlander was filmed at Buachaille Etive Mòr and Buachaille Etive Beag at the entrance of Glencoe, and the 1953 film The Kidnappers, set in a Scots colony in Cape Breton, was filmed in Glen Affric.

The classic Scottish comedy The Maggie introduced the Crinan Canal and Islay's Bowmore and Port Askaig to international cinema audiences.

Other film locations that feature include Mull in the 1945 classic novel, I Know Where I'm Going and When Eight Bells Toll, and Iona in art house film Iona, which gave Sorcha Groundsell her first major acting role.

Entrapment, with Catherine Zeta Jones and Sean Connery, was filmed at Duart Castle on Mull, and a scene for the popular family classic Ring of Bright Water was filmed a few miles outside Oban - the house where Bill Travers' character lived is still nearby.

Cinema Gadelica was produced by Caledonia TV for BBC ALBA and is available on the BBC iPlayer for until January 21.

article, of course, we will have waved goodbye to 2020 - a year to forget for many. Hopefully, next year, live events can return in some capacity and this column can go back to reviewing them rather than telling daft stories about pizza ovens.

Until then, I wish all readers a good new year when it comes and a safe, healthy, and happy 2021.

Robert was looking forward to spending Christmas Day with his parents in Fort William... but how did his gift to his parents go down with his dad? Find out in next week's Oban Times!



M'ALBA

MY ALBA

DIARDAOIN 31 an Dùbhlachd THURSDAY 31 December

- 17.00 Prògraman Chloinne - Children's programming
- 18.55 An Là - News
- 19.00 Ceolas- A Cheilidh Mhor (rpt)
- 19.30 NEW An Gobha - The Last Blacksmith
- 19.50 Celtic Connections (rpt)
- 20.00 Oidhche Challainn le Robert Robertson (rpt)
- 21.00 NEW Ceol na Loidhne
- 22.00 Cinema Gadelica (rpt)
- 23.00 NEW Siud agad e! 2020
- 23.30 Ceilidh na Bliadh'Uire 2020

DIHAOINE 1 am Faoilleach FRIDAY 1 January

- 17.00 Ceilidh na Bliadh'Uire 2020' (rpt)
- 18.30 An Là - News
- 18.35 NEW Iorram - Boat Song
- 20.05 NEW Sgoil Bheag Mu Dheireadh
- 21.00 NEW God Save the Quine
- 22.00 Mach a Seo : Na Fir-chilis (rpt)
- 23.00 Peat & Diesel - From the Barrow to the Barrowlands (rpt)

DISATHAIRNE 2 am Faoilleach SATURDAY 2 January

- 16.00 Prògraman Chloinne - Children's programming
- 17:55 An Là - News
- 18.00 NEW Scottish Premiership - Hamilton v Motherwell
- 19.45 Rùn-dìomhair Cheannais (rpt)
- 21.00 NEW Iron Women - Boireannach Iarainn
- 22.00 God Save The Quine (rpt)
- 23.00 Siud agad e! 2020 (rpt)
- 23.30 Peat & Diesel - That's the way we do it! (rpt)

DIDÒMHAICH 3 am Faoilleach SUNDAY 3 January

- 16.00 Prògraman Chloinne - Children's programming
- 17.55 An Là - NEWS
- 18.00 A' Bhliadhna 2020 (rpt)
- 19.00 Alleluia (rpt)
- 19.30 Iorram - Boat Song (rpt)
- 21.00 Dystonia - Beatha air Fhiaradh (rpt)
- 22.00 NYZSY (rpt)
- 23.15 Twin (rpt)

DILUAIN 4 am Faoilleach MONDAY 4 January

- 17.00 Prògraman Chloinne - Children's programming
- 19:00 Dealbhan Fraoich (rpt)
- 19.30 Speaking Our Language (rpt)
- 19.50 Earrann Eachdraidh (rpt)
- 19.55 Earrann Eachdraidh (rpt)
- 20.00 An Là - NEWS
- 20.15 Port-Druthag Bheag Eile (rpt)
- 20.30 NEW Garradh Phadruig
- 21.00 Eilean Chanaigh (summer on Canna) (rpt)
- 22.00 Solas - Margaret Fay Shaw of Canna (rpt)
- 22.30 An Sgoil Bheag Mu Dheireadh (rpt)
- 23.20 Dhan Uisge (rpt)
- 23.30 Siud agad e! 2020 (rpt)

DIMÀIRT 5 am Faoilleach TUESDAY 5 January

- 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 Na Tiristich (from Tiree with Love) (rpt)
- 21.00 NEW Lipodemia - Sgeulachd Lorna

- 22.00 Eilean Chanaigh (summer on Canna) (rpt)
- 23.00 Solas - Margaret Fay Shaw of Canna (rpt)
- 23.30 Alleluia! (rpt)

DICIADAIN 6 Am Faoilleach WEDNESDAY 6 January

- 17.00 Prògraman Chloinne - Children's programming
- 19.00 Dealbhan Fraoich (rpt)
- 19.30 Speaking Our Language (rpt)
- 19.50 Earrann Eachdraidh (rpt)
- 19.55 Earrann Eachdraidh (rpt)
- 20.00 An Là - News
- 20.30 Leugh Mi (rpt)
- 21.00 Sulaisgeir: an t-Sealg (rpt)
- 22.00 Tradfest (rpt)
- 22.30 An Gobha: The Last Blacksmith (rpt)
- 22.50 Dhan Uisge (rpt)
- 23.00 Ceol na Loidhne (rpt)

DIARDAOIN 7 am Faoilleach THURSDAY 7 January

- 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 An Lot- An Glasadh (rpt)
- 21.00 NEW Na Gleidheadairean
- 22.00 Ceol Duthasach (rpt)
- 23/50 Dhan Uisge (rpt)



BBC.CO.UK/ALBA | BBC.CO.UK/IPLAYER

Co-bhanntachd eadar MG ALBA agus am BBC | A partnership between BBC and MG ALBA

HIGHLAND FASTENERS LTD

Wishing our customers a very happy, healthy and safe 2021. We look forward to serving you.

Wednesday 30th Dec - 7.30am - 5pm

Thursday 31st Dec - 7.30am - 1pm

Monday 4th Jan - 7.30am - 1pm

Closed Jan 1st, 2nd, 3rd

Normal hours resume from

Tuesday 5th Jan: 7.30am - 5pm

Highland Fasteners Ltd, 23-25 Stevenson Street, Oban, Argyll
01631 570584 e-mail sales@highlandfasteners.com

TO PLACE YOUR ADVERT IN THE OBAN TIMES:

TELEPHONE: 01631 568000
Lines open: Mon to Fri 9am- 5pm
E-MAIL: adverts@obantimes.co.uk
Please remember to give your name, address, postcode and phone number.

Sponsored by NFU Mutual Oban.
Call Euan Warnock and Donna MacDougall on 01631 567 036 for your insurance needs.



E S Warnock, D Cluckie, C J Hushwaite & G R MacLean an appointed representative of The National Farmers Union Mutual Insurance Society Limited (No. 111982).

Around the markets

United Auctions, Stirling, Sunday December 27: sold 7417 prime sheep, comprising 6664 new season lambs selling to average 219.42p and 753 ewes and rams.

New Season Lambs (6664) – Harviesmailing (BTex) £124.00; Groan (BTex) £123.00 x2, £121.00 & £120.00; Ballechin (BTex) £120.00; Groan, Newton of Crathie & Hallhill (Tex) £119.00; Victoria (Tex) £116.00; Isle Cottage (Tex) £115.00; Little Raith (Blue Tex) £110.00; Pittenkerrie (Suf) £112.00; Easter Ochtermuthill (Suf) £109.00; Little Raith (Suf) £108.00 & £107.50; South Flanders (Suf) £107.00; Colony (Chev) £103.00; Westwood & Victoria (Chev) £102.00; Wardhead & Meadowfield (Chev) £101.50; Sauchrie Mains (Mule) £99.50; Easter Craigduckie (Mule) £95.50; Drumtee & Easter Buckleyvie (Mule) £95.00; South Hill of Drips (Cha) £97.50; Glenfernate (BF) £96.50; Pittenkerrie & Glenfernate (BF) £96.00; Pitcairn (BF) £95.00; Dunruchan (BF) £94.50.

New Season Lambs (6664) – Wardhead (Tex) 295.00ppk; Hallhill (Tex) 277.00ppk & 261.00ppk; Carse of Trowan (Tex) £261.00ppk; Harviesmailing (BTex) 282.00ppk; Ballechin (BTex) 273.00ppk; Harviesmailing & Groan (BTex) 267.00ppk; Tay & Torridon (Cross) 246.00ppk; Lathockar (Chev) 240.00ppk x2 & 232.00ppk; West Mains (Chev) 231.00ppk; Lathockar (Chev/Mule) 229.00ppk; Cairntack (Chev/Mule) 224.00ppk x2; Easter Ochtermuthill (Suf) 237.00ppk; Meikle Camoquhill (Suf) 229.00ppk; Newton of Crathie (Suf) 228.00ppk; Milnbank (Blue Tex) 231.00ppk; Newton of Crathie (BF) 224.00ppk; Croftintygan (BF) 222.00ppk; Allanfauld (BF) 221.00ppk; Drumtee & Remony (Mule) 215.00ppk; Newton of Crathie (Mule) 214.00ppk.

Ewes (753) – Hatton Knowe (Tex) £160.00; Nethermill (Tex) £150.00; West Lundie (Tex) £148.00; Allanfauld (Tex) £147.00; Over Finlarg (TexX) £138.00; Nethermill (TexX) £134.00; Newton of Collesie (Cont) £130.00 & £123.00; West Lundie (BTex) £117.00 & £115.00; Broadleys (BFL) £115.00; Over Finlarg (Cha) £111.00; Cranshaws (Suf) £110.00; Nethermill (Suf) £106.00; Wester Kepdowrie (SufX) £97.00; Muirend (SufX) £96.00; Hill of Errol (Chev/Mule) £96.00; Over Finlarg (Chev) £92.00 & £89.50; Pittenkerrie (Chev) £89.00; Over Finlarg & Nethermill (Mule) £90.00; Highholm (Mule) £88.00; Newton of Collesie (Mule) £86.00; Coulshill (BF) £78.00; Over Finlarg (BF) £76.50; Gannochy (BF) £74.00; Newton of Crathie (BF) £72.50.

Tups – Coulshill (Tex) £140.00; West Mains (Tex) £129.00; West Lethans (Tex) £122.00; West Lethans (BTex) £104.00 & £102.00; Madrissa (Suf) £89.00; Wester Coldrain (Cha) £88.00; Kerry Cottage (BF) £73.00

NFUS welcomes EU trade deal but it is not all good news

The announcement that a trade deal between the UK and the EU has been agreed just days before the end of the transition period is a great relief to Scotland's farmers and crofters and the wider food chain.

Since the EU referendum four-and-a-half years ago, NFU Scotland has been resolute in its belief that a 'no deal', and the introduction of swingeing tariffs on key agricultural products would have been a disaster for the sector.

The detail of the deal, contained within a 2,000-page document, must be scrutinised and receive parliamentary approval. It does offer a platform for trade with the EU, but it is unlikely to be frictionless. Trade will inevitably involve significant levels of bureaucracy, additional cost and delays, particularly in early January whilst new systems at the borders bed in.

In addition, the decision by the EU to grant third country listing status to the UK on December 23 and approve exports of meat, dairy and other products of animal origin is seen as crucial. Scottish red meat exports to the EU alone are worth more than £80 million.

However, the trade deal has failed Scotland's internationally recognised seed potato industry. From January 1 it will not be possible for Scottish seed potatoes to be exported to the EU. As an EU member state, Britain exported around 30,000t of seed potatoes, worth £13.5 million, to mainland Europe each year and the majority of these were high-health stocks grown in Scotland. There is also significant trade with Northern Ireland that is now at risk, although great efforts have been made by the seed potato trade to export earlier to beat the December 31 deadline.

NFU Scotland has created a step-by-step Brexit preparedness resource for members to ensure they have made all necessary preparations. To view, visit www.nfus.org.uk/policy/brexit.aspx



FARM GATES (UK) LTD
FARM GATES (UK) LTD

For more information or to place an order please send Farm Gates (UK) Ltd a message or call:
Ronnie Finney 07789 276354
Email: farm.gates@yahoo.com

SPECIAL OFFER EXTENDED FOR THIS MONTH

MOBILE SHEEP SYSTEM
ON SALE FROM £1695 + VAT
(RRP from £3400 plus VAT)

The system is easy to move and erect where required and can be easily modified to suit your requirements

MAIN FEATURES:

- Made from high-tensile steel
- All hurdles are 8 railed x 970mm high
- All hot-dipped galvanised finish
- 3000mm (3m) long
- Includes all joining pins/stakes

OPTION 1
10-foot race and 8-foot holding pen
£1695 + VAT

Comes with a 10-foot holding pen and 10-foot race, 2x 2 feet swing gates and all joining pins/stakes included. Our system will safely hold 100 fully grown sheep (approx.)

PARTS LIST:

- 10 x 3m (8 railed) sheep hurdles
- 12 x Joining pins/stakes
- 2 x 2 feet swing gates



OPTION 2
20-foot race, 100-foot holding pen
£1975 + VAT

Comes with a 100-foot holding pen and 20-foot race, 2 x 2-foot swing gates and all joining pins/stakes included. Our system will safely hold 150 fully grown sheep (approx.)

PARTS LIST:

- 14 x 3m (8 railed) sheep hurdles
- 12 x joining pins/stakes
- 2 x 2-foot swing gates

MOBILE CATTLE SYSTEM
FROM £1850 + VAT
Crush Gate optional extra £599.00 + VAT.

As standard, our Mobile Cattle System comes with a 60 feet holding pen and 20 feet race, 1 sliding gate and all joining pins/stakes included. Our system will safely hold 45 full grown cattle (approx.)

The system is easy to move and erect where required and can be easily modified to suit your requirements. Also ideal for TB testing and the cattle sliding gate gives full control of the livestock from outside the race and stops the race from spreading out.

MAIN FEATURES:

- Made from high-tensile steel
- All hurdles are 6 railed x 1.75m high
- A funnel is incorporated into the race-way
- All hot-dipped galvanised finish
- 3000mm (3m) long
- 20-foot race
- 60-foot holding pen. Includes all joining pins/stakes
- Total 200-feet of penning

PARTS LIST:

- 10 x 3m (6 railed) cattle hurdles
- 12 x joining pins/stakes
- 1 x sliding gate

NATIONWIDE DELIVERY £100 + VAT ON ALL ORDERS OVER £1500 PLUS VAT.

S&S SERVICES



Full stock list available on our website
www.sandsservices.co.uk
T 07831 808702 or 01292 880080
Finance packages available.

To find out more about the NFU Vehicle Discount Scheme call John Spicer at S&S Services on 07831 808702 or 01292 880080



HAY & HAYLAGE
timothy, ryegrass or meadow

STRAW
barley, wheat or oat

Guaranteed **FINEST QUALITY** round 4 x 4's, small conventional & all Hesston-type bales. Prompt delivery by lorry & trailer or smaller rigid vehicles for **PART LOADS** to most areas INCLUDING ISLANDS.



DAVID CAMERON
Agricultural Merchant, Drymen
07979 816211
01360 660323

One telephone call could save you &&&'s especially on **HEAVY** small bales of choice green hay.

WHY PAY MORE ELSEWHERE ?

SHAVINGS
Top class best value bales, small or large flake - unmatched spread cover

SAWDUST
Premier white or coloured heavy bales

CROSS CODE

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

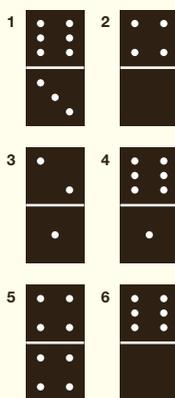
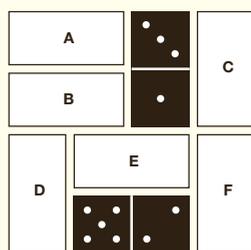
ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ

| | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|----|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|----|----|----|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 |
| 14 | B | | | | | R | | | | I | | |

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 ten famous ballet dancers past and present.

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

General Knowledge Crossword

Who? Why? How?
When? Where?

ACROSS

- Cylinder containing a vacuum in which high-energy electrons strike a metal target (1-3,4)
- Tribal conference amongst Native Americans (6)
- Peer or aristocrat, a person of title or status (8)
- Force one's presence or views on another (6)
- Ancient Greek order of architecture (5)
- Money for financing corruption (5,4)
- Adjective relating to the third president of the USA (12)
- Hawk that feeds on the larvae of bees and wasps (5-7)
- Insect of the order Odonata (9)
- Piece of equipment for separating lumps from powder (5)
- Asphyxia, cessation of breathing (6)
- Instrument for altering electrical resistance (8)
- Neck feather or hair of birds and animals (6)
- Curtain hung over a doorway (8)

DOWN

- Place described in Coleridge poem where Kubla Khan decreed the building of a 'stately pleasure-dome' (6)
- Reddish-brown colour (6)
- Act of wilful betrayal (9)
- Alloy of copper and zinc (5)
- Slang word meaning speed or vitality (5)
- Colloquial word for a crime mystery story (8)
- Exerting or maintaining power or authority (8)
- Colourless rock-forming mineral (6)
- Covered with soft light materials (6)
- Rhizome of an iris prepared and used as perfume (5-4)
- One of Daniel's companions miraculously saved in the fiery furnace (8)
- Verse to aid memory (8)
- Vessel for boiling water (6)
- Soft maggot, especially one used as bait in fishing (6)
- Town in Surrey near Epsom (5)
- British or obscenely coarse person (5)

| | | | | | | | |
|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 |
| | | | | | | | |
| 9 | | | | 10 | | | |
| | | | | 11 | | | |
| 12 | | | 13 | | | | |
| | | 14 | | 15 | | 16 | |
| 17 | 18 | | | | | | |
| 19 | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | 20 | 21 |
| 22 | | 23 | | 24 | 25 | | |
| | | | | | | | |
| 26 | | | | 27 | | | |
| | | | | | | | |
| 28 | | | | 29 | | | |

WORD WIZARD

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

BALDRIC

- A fragrant, medicinal resin obtained from certain trees;
- A warrior's belt or shoulder sash for supporting a sword;
- A fine, close-woven straw used for making hats.

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?

| | | |
|--------------|----------|-----------|
| 1 [] ' - | 2 ABC | 3 DEF |
| 4 GHI | 5 JKL | 6 MNO |
| 7 PQRS | 8 TUV | 9 WXYZ |

Spaces and any punctuation marks are represented by 1.

| | | |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. items with a blade 529 616 693 717 225 735 177 673 556 717 473 333 717 247 767 717 298 431 324 437 125 363 371 564 331 423 175 283 716 224 383 122 966 381 293 | 2. haircuts and hairstyles 289 928 813 736 241 752 481 685 538 126 626 837 128 624 371 262 123 344 831 268 332 681 784 331 373 235 625 712 739 128 812 376 126 767 697 | 3. Sesame Street characters 835 591 666 783 717 674 821 268 681 866 126 868 148 917 645 391 672 271 843 147 682 417 724 743 132 961 376 431 244 124 731 356 612 275 539 |
| 4. things you sit on 786 651 527 176 321 864 538 128 744 661 232 622 413 566 712 526 538 123 317 824 717 683 331 847 663 123 624 154 381 794 641 242 471 723 353 | 5. types of collar 243 573 216 682 433 188 785 363 251 527 351 522 681 782 631 871 787 482 612 726 818 893 361 783 319 464 126 683 784 253 174 478 162 632 746 | 6. singles by Robbie Williams 787 736 318 747 746 415 381 631 368 378 246 196 812 634 371 783 326 915 683 544 481 645 536 648 617 234 612 263 919 681 566 916 317 625 135 |

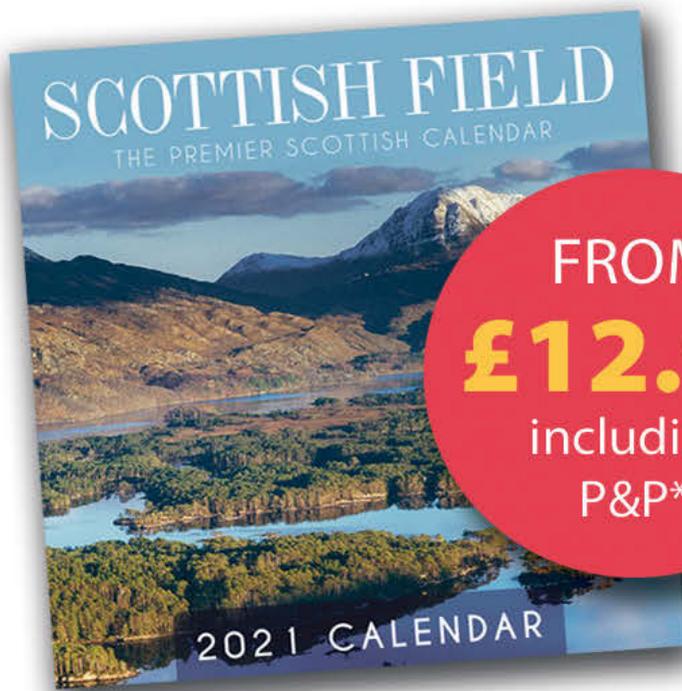
TOTALISER

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 | 16 | +4 | -2 | ÷3 | TIMES ITSELF | ÷9 | +10 | 1/2 OF THIS | +9 | -3 | ANSWER |
| LEVEL TWO | 44 | ÷2 | ÷11 | x8 | x2 | 3/4 OF THIS | +9 | ÷11 | TIMES ITSELF | TIMES ITSELF | ANSWER |
| LEVEL THREE | 71 | x3 | -48 | +91 | √ OF THIS | 5/8 OF THIS | TIMES ITSELF | -30 | 40% OF THIS | ÷7 | ANSWER |

The Ideal Gift

SCOTTISH CALENDARS 2021



FROM
£12.99
including
P&P*



FROM
£8.99
including
P&P*



FROM
£8.99
including
P&P*

Enjoy Scotland at its best all year round with our selection of stunning calendars. To see all the images from our 2021 range visit:

www.scottishcalendars.co.uk

* additional P&P charges will apply to EU/ROW

ORDER ONLINE at www.scottishcalendars.co.uk

or call us on **01778 392014**

OR POST ALL ORDERS to: Wyvex Media Subscriptions, FREEPOST RUAC-JUXA-GYAU
Warners Group Publications plc, The Maltings, West Street, Bourne, Lincolnshire PE10 9PH

PUBLIC NOTICES

Dalmally Agricultural Society AGM
21st January 2021,
7.30pm
By Video Conference
As we are not permitted to hold our AGM in the usual way, we will be holding a video conference via ZOOM.
Please contact traceypeedle@hotmail.com if you would like to join the video conference.

FIRST REGISTRATION OF A CROFT
Mairi Holmes has registered the croft known as and forming 1 Upper Carnach, Lismore and Appin 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 23 August, 2021.
Details of the registration can be found at www.crofts.ros.gov.uk/register/home. The croft registration number is C7321.

FIRST REGISTRATION OF A CROFT
Sheila Helen MacQueen Ogilvie has registered the croft known as and forming 1 Airds Bay, Ardchattan and 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 13 August 2021.
Details of the registration can be found at www.crofts.ros.gov.uk/register/home. The croft registration number is C7291.

Argyll and Bute Council
CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR REFUSE AND RECYCLING ARRANGEMENTS
Oban and Lorn
Refuse and recycling collections due on Friday 25th December will be collected on Saturday 26th December.
Refuse and recycling collections due on Friday 1st January will be collected on Saturday 2nd January.
Commercial glass collections due on Friday 25th December will be collected on Sunday 27th December.
All other days will be collected as normal.
Moleigh recycling and civic amenity site will be closed on 25th/26th December and 1st/2nd January.
Mull and Iona
Refuse and recycling collections due over the festive period will be carried out on the normal scheduled day(s).
Glengorm recycling and civic amenity site will be closed on 25th/26th December and 1st/2nd January.
Tiree, Coll and Colonsay
Three glass collections due on Friday 1st January will be carried out on Wednesday 30th December.
All other refuse and recycling collections due over the festive period will be carried out on the normal scheduled day(s).
Gott Bay recycling and civic amenity site will be closed on 25th/26th December and 1st/2nd January.
Coll refuse collection due on Saturday 26th December will be carried out on Sunday 27th December.
Colonsay refuse collection due on Saturday 26th December will be carried out on Wednesday 23rd December.
Information is also available on the Council website.
To find out more about living and working in Argyll & Bute visit us at:
www.argyll-bute.gov.uk
Comhairle Earra - Ghàidheal agus Bhòid

Argyll and Bute Council
PLANNING

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

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

| Ref. No. | Proposal | Site Address |
|--------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 20/01837/LIB | Alterations to existing parking and vehicular access and conversion of redundant tower to accommodate accessible toilets and installation of sewage treatment plant | St Conans Church And Adjacent Parking Area, Lochawe, Dalmally, Argyll And Bute, PA33 1AH |
| 20/02189/PP | Use of land for siting of 2 pods for holiday let purposes, erection of storage shed, installation of sewage treatment plant and associated works | Land Between Ceo Mara Croft And Brolas, Taynuilt, Argyll And Bute |
| 20/02198/PP | Erection of dwellinghouse, detached double garage and formation of vehicular access | Keil Farm (Plot 2), Land North Of Craig Lora, Keil Gardens, Benderloch, Argyll And Bute |
| 20/01836/PP | Alterations to existing parking and vehicular access, conversion of redundant tower to accommodate accessible toilets and installation of sewage treatment plant | St Conans Church And Adjacent Parking Area, Lochawe, Dalmally, Argyll And Bute, PA33 1AH |
| 20/00331/PP | Change of use from agricultural storage unit to a smokery for seafood products | Surnaig Farm, Lagavulin, Isle Of Islay, Argyll And Bute, PA42 7DX |
| 20/02154/PP | Erection of dwellinghouse, installation of septic tank and formation of vehicular access | Land South East Of Arivoulchallum, Port Ellen, Isle Of Islay, Argyll And Bute, PA42 7DD |

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 Councils website. Customers are requested to use electronic communication where possible during the coronavirus pandemic as our ability to process postal mail is restricted.

To find out more about living and working in Argyll & Bute visit us at:
www.argyll-bute.gov.uk
Comhairle Earra - Ghàidheal agus Bhòid

GO DIGITAL YOU CHOOSE
ENJOY ENJOY
BOTH THE OBAN TIMES AND LOCHABER TIMES PAGE TURNER EDITIONS
PLUS PLUS
14 YEARS OF ARCHIVES
ACCESS ACCESS
BREAKING NEWS AS IT HAPPENS ON OUR WEBSITE

NEVER MISS AN ISSUE
WITH OUR NEW CONTINUOUS CREDIT CARD PAYMENT

AWESOME DEAL
THREE MONTHS FROM £6.99
ONE YEAR FROM £24.96
*recurring payment option via credit card

SUBSCRIBE AT WWW.OBANTIMES.CO.UK/SUBSCRIPTIONS

FIRST REGISTRATION OF A CROFT
Dr Donald Angus MacInnes, Dr Duncan Calum MacInnes and Dr Duncan James MacInnes have registered their croft 5 Ardfenaig (apportionment only), Ardfenaig, Kilfinichen and Kilvickeon, C7365 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 10 August 2021.
Details of the registration can be found at www.crofts.ros.gov.uk/register/home. The croft registration number is C7365.

FIRST REGISTRATION OF A CROFT
Dr Donald Angus MacInnes, Dr Duncan Calum MacInnes and Dr Duncan James MacInnes have registered their croft 6 Ardfenaig (apportionment only), Ardfenaig, Kilfinichen and Kilvickeon, C7366 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 10 August 2021.
Details of the registration can be found at www.crofts.ros.gov.uk/register/home. The croft registration number is C7366.

Oban Times PUBLIC NOTICES
Oban Times PUBLIC NOTICES
Oban Times PUBLIC NOTICES
Oban Times PUBLIC NOTICES

RECRUITMENT

CATTLEMAN
The Rannoch Trust seeks Cattleman for a small herd on Rannoch Moor.
Permanent post; good accommodation; other estate duties.
Experience with cattle essential.
Apply in writing to:
Lord Pearson of Rannoch, Rannoch Barracks, Rannoch Station, Perthshire, PH17 2QE
or by e-mail to:
lordpearsonofrannoch@gmail.com;
giving references and experience with cattle [essential].

CONDITIONS OF ACCEPTANCE FOR ADVERTISEMENTS

YOUR attention is drawn to the following terms and conditions which relate to the placing of advertisements in all publications owned by Wyvex Media Limited. Parties to this agreement are the Publisher, Wyvex Media Limited Limited on the one part and the Advertiser on the other part. The Publisher publishes newspapers, magazines, books and provides advertising space therein or provides for the delivery of advertising materials to the public within these publications.
1 Advertising copy shall be legal, decent, honest and truthful and comply with the British Code of Advertising Practice and all other codes.
2 The Publisher does not guarantee the insertion of any particular advertisement.

3 The Publisher reserves the right to cancel or alter the advertisement by giving reasonable notice.
4 An order for an advertisement shall be deemed to be made on acceptance of the advertisers' order by the Publisher whether placed by telephone, mail, fax or in person.
5 Cancellation of display advertising must be received by the Publisher before the publishing deadline, failing which, the publisher reserves the right to invoice the customer in full for the whole cost of the advertisement.
6 The parties submit to the jurisdiction of the Scottish Courts and Scots Law. In the event of any dispute or action by the Publisher to recover payment from an advertiser, it is agreed that matters will be settled in the Oban, Argyll Sheriff Court or such other Court as the Publisher may choose.
7 The Publisher shall not be liable for any loss or damage occasioned

by any total or partial failure (however caused) of publication or distribution of any newspaper or edition in which any advertisement is scheduled to appear. In the event of any error, misprint or omission in the printing of an advertisement or part of an advertisement, the Publisher will either re-insert the advertisement or relevant part of the advertisement, as the case may be, or make reasonable refund or adjustment to the cost. No re-insertion, refund or adjustment will be made where the error, misprint or omission does not materially detract from the advertisement.
8 Errors must be notified to the Publisher in writing within fourteen days of publication. In no circumstances shall the total liability of the Publisher for any error, misprint or omission exceed the amount of a full refund of any price paid to the Publisher for the particular advertisement in connection with

which liability arose or the cost of a further or corrective advertisement of a type and standard reasonably comparable to that in connection with which liability arose.
9 The Advertiser/Advertising Agency agrees to indemnify the Publisher in respect of all costs, damages or other charges falling upon the publication as the result of legal actions or threatened legal actions arising from the publication of the advertisement in any one or more of a series of advertisements published in accordance with copy instructions supplied to the publication in pursuance of the Advertiser/Advertising Agency order.
10 Adverts under the value of £75 must be paid on acceptance of order by the Publisher. All advertising on a credit basis must be agreed with the Publisher in advance.
11 Payment of any invoice raised by the Publisher will be due 15

days from the date of invoice or as otherwise directed on the invoice. In the event of non-payment the Publisher may charge late payment interest at a rate of 2% and this is chargeable on a daily basis from the due date until the bill is paid. In addition the Publisher may charge a late payment levy of £10 as an administration fee. In the event of late payment the Publisher reserves the right to disallow any discounts given and to raise an additional invoice for the discount which will be treated as though it has been raised with the original invoice.
12 A request to insert an advertisement assumes acceptance of our conditions.
Published by Wyvex Media Limited, P.O. Box 1, Oban, PA34 4HB, Tel: (01631) 568000 www.obantimes.co.uk and registered as a newspaper at the Post Office. <http://termsandconditions.wyvexmedia.co.uk>

S&S SERVICES SUBARU ISUZU

SCOTLANDS NO1 SUBARU AND ISUZU DEALER



THE ALL-NEW ISUZU D-MAX



**LOG YOUR INTEREST FOR AN EARLY BIRD DISCOUNT
CALL S&S TODAY 01292 220080**

**S&S • SUPPORTING THE PEOPLE OF
ARGYLL FOR OVER 30 YEARS**

ISUZU D-MAX *BLADE*
**FULLY LOADED FOR
LOADS LESS**

NOW ONLY £245 PER MONTH*

ISUZU D-MAX *UTAH*
**READY TO
PULL
ITS WEIGHT**

NOW ONLY £215 PER MONTH*

ISUZU D-MAX *XTR*
**GET XTRA FOR
EVEN LESS**

4x4 OF THE YEAR 2020
4x4
BEST OFF-ROAD

FROM ONLY £275 PER MONTH*

**Government
MOT extension
update.**

Call our
Approved
Service
Centre
today!

ARE YOU BOOKED IN?

01292
880080

FANTASTIC OFFERS ON PRE-REG PLATES. CALL FOR MORE DETAILS.

HEATHFIELD, AYR KA8 9SX

TEL: 01292 880080 or JOHN: 07831 808702



WANTED 4X4S FOR CASH



WANTED ALL 4X4'S & COMMERCIAL VEHICLES

We buy for retail, breaking and export so no matter the age or condition we can make a cash offer. Young or old, all makes and models, engine problems, farm used, accident damaged, mot failures etc.

**WON'T BE BEATEN ON PRICE,
FAST PAYMENT AND COLLECTION.
TEL: 07789 855381**

WANTED

All types of 4-wheel drive vehicles & pickups, Landrovers, Toyota, Mitsubishi, Kia, Ford and MOT failures, non-runners, etc. Will travel and collect.

T: 07546 788945

WANTED

All touring caravans and motor homes, campers etc, high mileage, MOT failures or damp, all considered, any make or model, will travel.

Tel: 07546 788945



WANTED

For immediate cash payment and free collection. All types of 4x4 vehicles, double cab & single cabs pickups. Shogun landrover defenders, Isuzu, Landcruiser, Navara, L200 Toyota Hilux, Discovery, any vehicle considered old or new. Any condition running or not. High miles, rotten chassis, or over heating top. so any condition. Price paid without any hassle we also buy motorhomes touring caravans and commercial vans and trucks.

**Tel 07703490572
or email balgowan4wd@gmail.com
ask for Robert**

MOTs • Servicing • Repairs
All makes of vehicle serviced and repaired.

Munro's of Oban, Lochavullin Ind. Estate, Oban PA34 4PL
Tel: 01631 564463
Email: munrosofoban@aol.com
Web: www.munrosofoban.co.uk

NEW CAR INDEX

SUZUKI
Gordon Motors
UK Dealer Of The Year 2014
Comrie Rd, Crieff, Perthshire
PH7 4BQ
Tel.01764 652125
Delivery throughout the West
www.suzuki.co.uk/gordonmotors

W.D. Semple
www.wdsemple.com
Inveraray Shore Street
Tel.01499 302150
Lochgilthead
Highbank Park
01546 606767/ 606272

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

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

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

CLASSIFIEDS

OBAN BLINDS

Vertical Blinds • Roller Blinds
Blackout Blinds • Venetian Blinds
Free Measuring and Estimating Service

Vast range of Domestic and Commercial blinds
Telephone: Donald Cameron
07979 826614
Email: oban.blinds@hotmail.co.uk

METALS WANTED

JW METALS
WANTED
**Copper, Brass, Lead,
Batteries and all types
of Cable.**
Competitive prices paid.
Tel: 07761 584443

DIGITAL PHOTO EDITING

Turn OLD PHOTOS Into NEW MEMORIES

Breathe life into your old photos & slides. Preserve the family album or create a personalised DVD Movie with soundtrack.

Find out more about our Digital Scanning & DVD services.

**Contact: Colin on 07886661458 or
email colin@thedigiman.co.uk**

100% Secure COVID-19 Process

Fourteen years of digital archives

Available to Digital subscribers



TIMBER KIT HOMES & CONSTRUCTION

MACLEOD
CONSTRUCTION LIMITED

- TIMBER KITS
- WINDOWS & DOORS
- AGGREGATES
- PLUMBING & ELECTRICAL
- JOINERY & REFURBISHMENT
- CONSERVATORIES
- SCAFFOLDING

www.macleodconstruction.co.uk
Tel: (01546) 602989 • Email: sales@mkmacleod.co.uk

DEATHS

MACEWAN - Peacefully at Etive Care home on December 20, 2020 Peterina MacEwan (Rina) beloved wife of the late Alex MacEwan and the late Tony Pew. Much loved mother of Rosemary, Audrey, Carolyn, and stepmother to Rae and the late Sandy. Cherished Granny and Great Granny. Funeral and cortege arrangements will be displayed by window cards.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

BUCHANAN - Ann and family would like to thank family and friends for their kind expressions of sympathy following their sad loss of Archie. Many thanks to those who paid their respects by lining Archie's final route to Achnaba Cemetery. Special thanks to Rev Willem Bezuidenhout for his visits, graveside message and support. Many thanks to Ian MacInnes of D & A Munn for his caring advice.

MACLEAN - Margaret and the family of the late Ian MacLean would like to thank all family, friends, former colleagues

and neighbours, near and far for all their support at this very sad time. The generosity and kindness of the whole community in their words of comfort, cards, messages, mass cards and flowers has been overwhelming. Special thanks to the ECCT team for their care of Ian. To Monsignor James MacNeil for his spiritual comfort. To Catriona at Hamish Hoey & Sons for an excellent and professional service. To Angus MacColl for piping at the Church and the graveside. To Petals for the beautiful flowers and to the Falls Of Lora for lunch. Many thanks to all who came to pay their respects on the day. Moran Taing.

MEMORIAMs

FERGUSON - In loving memory of my dear mother Jessie, who died on January 2, 2011.

As it dawns another year Thoughts of you are always near.

Also remembering ones gone before and after.

- Anne (daughter)

HAY - Mary née Beaton, Iona, died December 31, 2014.

Never more than a thought away.

- Kate, Elaine and families.

LAMONT - In loving memory of my very dear husband Willie who passed away so very suddenly on New Years Eve 2005.

Missing you more Always in my thoughts.

- Inserted by Mrs M Lamont

MACLELLAN - Precious memories of Christopher on the 30th anniversary of him being called to Heaven on January 1, 1991.

Our brightest star in the sky. Loved forever.

Mum, Dad, Craig and Calum.

McKINNON - Treasured memories of my dear husband Charles McKinnon who died December 28, 2005. Also my dear mother Catherine Brown who died July 26, 2001.

We cannot halt the hand of time

Or live again the past

But in our hearts are memories That will forever last.

- Inserted by May, Colonsay

THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK

*'The Lord is my Shepherd'
'Even if I go through the deepest darkness I will not be afraid, for You are with me. Your Shepherd's rod and staff protect me' (Psalm 23).*

The Psalmist certainly knew tough and challenging times.

He, like many people today, had first-hand experience of finding God's loving care and protection provided just at the right time, often in surprising ways. While the ways of the shepherding seem far removed from our lifestyles, we do know about 'deepest darkness', isolation, illness, bereavement, helplessness, uncertainty of jobs and finances, of schooling, problems with relationships, mental health and so much more.

Now, further restrictions bring thwarted plans, dashed hopes, confusion and unexpected change.

Christmas this year has been different and New Year celebrations are being swept away.

Is there anything of hope



and comfort; anything to learn about wholesome living in this experience?

The real meaning of Christmas and of new beginnings with God, remains unchanged, despite the challenges of our present social, commercial and political circumstances.

Two millennia ago, angels spoke to bewildered shepherds, bringing the message of not fearing, and of God's love for all people.

They heard the Good News

that God was coming in Jesus, to be among people, to be with them in every human predicament. Jesus comes to share every experience, being helper, comforter, guide through the unknown, and the light for each day's journey.

With this truth in our hearts, we can step out into 2021 without fear, affirming the Psalmists words, 'The Lord is my shepherd, I will not be afraid, for You are with me'.

We face the future with hope, if we see God's life and care around us, if we recognise the fingerprints of His love in the huge things, like the wonder of medical science; in the development of tests and vaccines, in the small everyday surprises, in the opportunities to bring support, listening time and care to others, and in finding our needs supplied.

We can know that God of new beginnings is with us. We can accept His offered gifts of peace and hope for our living.

Reverend Carol Leech

FUNERAL DIRECTORS

MANSON & MACBEATH
FUNERAL DIRECTORS



Chosen for
Our Care...

Tel (24 hour): 01397 701110
Inverloch, Fort William, PH33 6NB

Your Leading & Only Locally Owned Funeral Directors in Lochaber

MEMORIALS

Stokes Memorials

Serving Argyll and the Highlands & Islands for over 35 years
Established 1973 - Fraser Downie, Master Sculptor

- New and traditional memorials.
- Additional lettering.
- Cleaning and renovations.
- Pet memorials.
- Work carried out in any cemetery.
- Free estimates and advice.
- House signs.

312/314 Argyll Street, Dunoon • Tel/Fax 01369 702162 • Email: fraserdownie.43@gmail.com

Greenlees & Son

— FAMILY FUNERAL DIRECTORS —

We believe in fair funeral pricing, our graveside and crematorium services are only
£895.00 + disbursements.
No hidden fees and no money ever asked for upfront.

"Our Family looking after your Family"

- Proprietor Scott A. Greenlees Dip. FAA



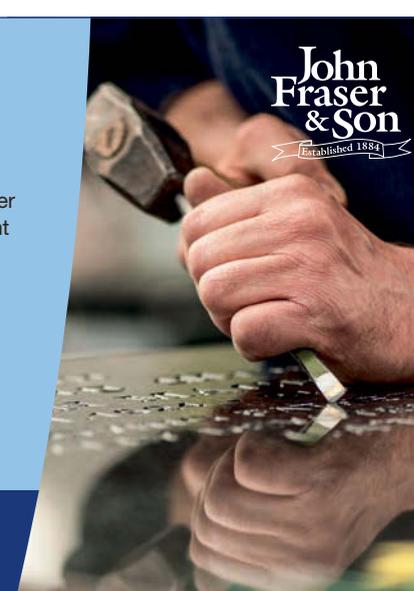
Tel. 01397 719 600 — 24 hour service
Kilmallie Road, Caol PH33 7AR
www.greenleesfunerals.co.uk

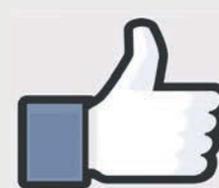
The largest stock of memorial headstones in the Highlands

Our family have offered personal, professional funeral services to the Highland community for over 135 years. Our large stock of memorials in different granites means that turnaround time is minimised. Prices start at £750 and include unlimited lettering, design, flower vase, installation at any cemetery in mainland Highlands, VAT and the cemetery fee. Bespoke options and restoration are also available.

Memorial garden open to visit:
John Fraser & Son, 17-29 Chapel Street, Inverness, IV1 1NA

Please contact the team by calling **01463 233366** or emailing info@johnfraserandson.com
Visit www.johnfraserandson.com





like us on facebook

www.facebook.com/obantimes

TRIBUTE: Donald John MacDonald, editor of STV North

STV's political editor, Bernard Ponsonby, published the full tribute this extract is taken from on the STV website, on 25 December.

The family and friends of Donald John MacDonald, who died yesterday [December 24] at the age of 60, have been left utterly bereft by his sudden passing and his friends and colleagues at STV heartbroken that the soothing presence of an empathetic boss and the sound judgement of a talented journalist is no more.

There are occasions when words can't be found. Shock has a habit of strangling articulacy as well as an ability to rationalise. This is one such occasion.

For 36 years, DJ – as he was near-universally and affectionately known – was the granite anchor of news and current affairs coverage in the North-east of Scotland.

STV News presenter Norman MacLeod said: 'He was a loyal friend, mentor and respected colleague for over 30 years.'

Donald, who belonged to South Uist in the Western Isles, didn't start out life with broadcasting in mind.

He was a seminarian at St Mary's College, Blairs, in Aberdeen from 1974-1977 but a vocation to the priesthood was not to materialise. His trade of the spiritual and a potentially austere life for a more conventional existence would be journalism's eventual gain. He completed his school studies at the Nicolson Institute, Stornoway the fol-



lowing year, before going on to Aberdeen University where he graduated with an honours degree in political studies. He joined Grampian Television in 1984 and initially worked as a reporter for North Tonight as well as the Gaelic programme Crann Tara. He brought to them boundless enthusiasm and a trademark Hebridean lilt.

The veteran journalist Craig Millar recalled: 'He was a super-enthusiastic reporter who would interview everyone he could possibly think of who was connected to a story, which made his packages a mammoth length.' In broadcast journalism, coming in way over your allotted time is a constant source of tension between producers and reporters. With a wry smile, Miller added: 'It used to amuse me when as a producer he would tell a reporter - "keep it tight".'

DJ carried himself with the air of a man of quiet yet perceptible faith. He brought something of the clerical temperament to the business of dealing with people. Whether someone was in front of the camera or a technician – the people who really make TV work – or an office junior,

he treated everyone the same. He was a proper egalitarian in having respect for everyone. Grampian Television, based at Queens Cross in Aberdeen, was an extended family who laughed and cried together while making television and DJ was a much-loved part of it.

The station attracted a devotion among the viewers of the North and North-east of Scotland that in turn led to enormous ratings. In tone, mood and style, the schedule accurately reflected the distinct nature of the people the station served.

DJ can be said to be a figure of some historical importance in helping to define Grampian TV's legacy and carrying the torch for its ethos into the STV era. By the mid-1990s he had moved to producing and would later become the editor of news programmes for STV North. The strength of his contribution was in knowing his news patch intimately. His easy-going manner and infectious enthusiasm drew loyalty from those he managed and his ability to think more widely and deeply meant that he was taken seriously by the great and the good whenever they had occasion to come calling. He brought sound judgement and an unflappable manner to the news business and was tenacious in pursuit of what he considered editorially pertinent. He believed that it is the responsibility of the broadcaster to never sensationalise or cause unnecessary offence in the reporting of tragedy. His great human qualities were

central to ensuring the output never revelled in the tawdry.

His heart never left South Uist but he became an adopted Aberdonian. His Hebridean background informed his grounded view of people and the world.

Away from STV, he was a staunch ally of Mental Health Aberdeen, his concerns a natural extension of a personality

that was always keen to understand and help. Little wonder that First Minister Nicola Sturgeon referred to him as 'a wonderful human being'.

No one knew him better than Rachel Innes, a colleague for more than 35 years. Perhaps the most poignant of all of the words of the last day belong to Rachel.

She said: 'We are all the better

for having known him and will never be the same without him'.

DJ had a full and very rewarding career even if his life's work in the business of being a good man was far from finished.

It is perhaps only in death that his non-television family will know the extent of the lives he touched. They should be proud of all that he achieved but prouder still of who he was.

FUNERAL DIRECTORS

McLELLAN

FUNERAL DIRECTORS






John
Calvin
Peter
Amanda

Over 86 yrs of Funeral Experience from our Compassionate Team

Established 1923. Quality Funeral Care in Lochaber
Welcoming Function Rooms for Memorial Gatherings
Flexible Viewing Times for Families & Friends
Burial and Cremation Services. All Faiths & Celebrant
Direct Cremation with Unique Memorial Service Option

Other Services Include: The Lochaber Funeral Plan - Peace of Mind for the Future. Headstone Design & Renovation. Bereavement Care.

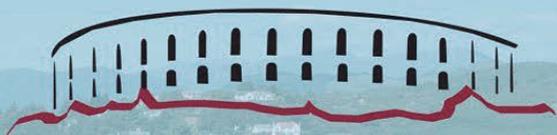


DUDLEY ROAD, FORT WILLIAM PH33 6JB
01397 702128 (24 HRS) WWW.MCLELLANFUNERALS.CO.UK



QUALITY CARE SINCE 1923

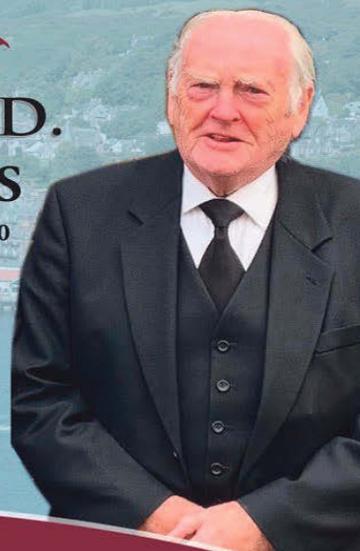
FUNERAL DIRECTORS



D&A MUNN LTD.

FUNERAL DIRECTORS

Owned and run by Ian MacInnes & Son | Est. 1880

24 hour Family Run Business

D&A Munn Ltd,
Breadalbane Street, Oban, PA34 5NZ

Tel: 01631 562562
Email: ian@munns-oban.co.uk




CHARITY DONATIONS

WE ARE MACMILLAN. CANCER SUPPORT

Working towards a time when every person in Scotland has equal and ready access to the best information, treatment and care for cancer

Fundraising Office
Macmillan Cancer Support
PO Box 24040 Edinburgh EH3 1DZ

Tel 0300 100 0200

In memory of Dawn Joyce

THE DOVE CENTRE

By Oban Hospice
Donations always gratefully received

24 Stevenson Street Oban PA34 5NA

Tel: 01631 561315

www.obanhospice.org.uk @obanhospice



CANCER RESEARCH UK

Together we will beat cancer

Help bring forward the day when all cancers are cured

DONATE TODAY:

Treasurer, Cancer Research UK Oban & District, Glenside, Polvinister Road, OBAN, PA34 5TN Tel: 01631 564420



Registered with FUNDRAISING REGULATORS
Cancer Research UK is a Registered Charity in England and Wales (2059484), Scotland (SC041660) and the Isle of Man (1033)
Registered address: Cancer Research UK, 2 Redman Place, Stratford, London E20 1JQ

MARIE CURIE CANCER CARE

Oban & Lorn Fundraising Branch

Donations always gratefully accepted

Please contact
Marie Curie Care
Mannin, 2/5 Lismore House
Station Road, Oban
01631 571009



Seasons greetings from the sporting community – part 1



Oban Hospice chairman David Entwistle, centre, recorded a hole in one on the sixth at Taynuilt Golf Course in November.

Taynuilt Golf Club

'Seasons greetings to all our members and best wishes for a happy 2021.

'2020 has thrown up lots of challenges for the club but our members, old and new, have been supportive and we have welcomed many new members to the game of golf.

'Many rounds have been enjoyed on our fabulous course which has given some

respite from the pandemic. We have really appreciated the professional coaching offered by Craig Lee and Heather MacRae and look forward to their return visits.

New season

'We also look forward to welcoming members, member's guests and visitors by the time the new season begins in March 2021.'

Oban Otters

'Oban Otters has had the longest dry spell in its 45-year history, with seven months out of the pool due to Covid restrictions.

'The club ran online dry-land fitness training with help from Joe Wicks and encouraged swimmers to run, cycle and generally stay active.

'Getting back into the pool in early November was a major achievement. New procedures were implemented by Covid officer Emma Boyle and head coach Amanda Coates, with essential support from Atlantis Leisure and Scottish Swimming.

'We've ended the year on a high with a virtual Argyll and Clyde Championship, with each club doing their races in their own pool and combining the results to find medal winners. We had some personal bests and hopefully some medal winners.

'Club chairwoman Moira Logan's message to Oban Times readers is: 'Swimming is a fantastic sport for mental and physical health and no

matter what your goals are, get in the water and swim.

'The pool at Atlantis needs swimmers to stay afloat, so book in and enjoy the fab new changing rooms and swim in whatever way is right for you.

'Season's greetings to everyone.'

Isle of Seil Golf Club

'Best wishes and thanks to all members, sponsors - the Oyster Bar and Enviro-centre - visitors and supporters during this year of Covid restrictions.

Our course is in great condition enabled by our volunteer greenkeepers, led by Mark McDougall and the tractor shed mechanics.

New forward tees - blue for beginners, juniors and less able - along with a reinstated ladies red tees course led to an increase in membership and visitor numbers.

Most competitions, some primary school coaching and all social events were cancelled with exception of the following 9-hole stableford

competitions: Winter League and Wednesday Winter 2019/20 - John Taylor; Summer League 2020 - Gordon McKenzie; Graham Hunt Trophy (Wednesday Summer) - Mark McDougall; Ian Fullerton Charity - Mark McDougall (Autism Aware UK chosen).

2021 is our 25th anniversary and we hope to welcome everyone to celebrations and to the return of competition and social golf starting with the Ne'er Day 9-hole stableford, noon start. We will also be going online with scottishgolf.org in 2021.'

Oban Lorne RFC

'Oban Lorne Rugby Football Club wishes all their members and the wider community a good New Year.

'2020 has been very challenging for everyone but our wee town has shown great community spirit and resilience.

'Oban Lorne will be back in 2021 for a fresh start and is looking forward to welcoming you all back to the clubhouse.

Take care of each other and stay safe over the festive break.'



Abi Evans in action.

Abi Evans

'2020 started with a knee operation which kept me out of the 6 Nations.

'The whole 7's season was cancelled but the Women's Allianz Premier League is up and running and it's great to be playing again.

'Scotland has much to look forward to in 2021 with the Women's World Cup in New Zealand - if we get through qualifying - and the 6 Nations as well as a full 7's season.

'I hope 2021 sees all sports flourishing again and I wish everyone all the best for 2021.'

Let The Oban Times share your sporting news by emailing fscott@obantimes.co.uk or by phoning 07467 819373.



ORDER IN-STORE, BY PHONE OR ONLINE

COME AND VISIT OUR BATHROOM SHOWROOM

THE BATHROOM SHOWROOM
CITY PLUMBING SUPPLIES

the-bathroom-showroom.co.uk

TEL: 01631 567640



Thanking all customers for their support this year and wishing everyone an enjoyable festive season

Festive Opening Hours

29th to 31st December : 8am-12noon

1st-5th January : Closed

Reopen as Normal from

5th January

LOCHABER TIMES

& OBAN TIMES

No 8544

Thursday 31 December, 2020

www.lochabertimes.co.uk

95p



HAPPY New Year

Wishing all our readers and advertisers a happy, healthy and prosperous New Year



Dean Cameron, second right, wearing the Santa hat, and some of his supporters spent four minutes 'soaking in' the cold in a very chilly Loch Linnhe to raise awareness and money for mental health charities. For the full story, turn to page four. Photograph: Iain Ferguson, The Write Image.

Mallaig Harbour Authority flags up abandoned scallop gear danger

Mallaig Harbour Authority hit out last week over discarded scallop lines and lanterns, which were causing problems for local fishermen.

'Fishing is the reason Mallaig exists and has become one of the most heavily regulated industries. Fishermen can sometimes get a bad press, but for them as for many others, it's been a challenging year,' said the authority.

'For our local sprat boats, it was made even more so on December 17 when they were put in a dangerous position after their nets became entangled in old scallop lines and lanterns which were an early attempt at farming scallops and had been abandoned 20 years ago.'

'Apart from the risk to the crew and vessels, there's the huge frustration and financial cost of having to come ashore and disentangle and mend the nets before they could head back out.'



Sealed ships part of Corpach expansion

by Mark Entwistle
mentwistle@obantimes.co.uk

Specially-designed cargo ships with sealed holds to prevent dust pollution would pump alumina for recycling into large silos at Corpach port as part of possible plans by Lochaber smelter operator Alvanice Aluminium.

Alvanice, a member of Sanjeev

If approved, the recycling plant would replace the consented scheme for an alloy wheel factory...

Gupta's sustainable industry leader GFG Alliance, recently announced a £94million

investment package in a new recycling and casting scrap aluminium facility that will double aluminium production at its Fort William plant.

The plan, if approved by Highland Council, would see the recycling plant replace the already consented scheme for an alloy wheels factory on the smelter site, which has since been shelved due to the

downturn in the worldwide car industry. To support the developments, Alvanice is also proposing what it described as 'significant upgrades' to the port at Corpach to improve efficiency of material flow.

But this has already sparked consternation among Corpach residents, who have spent years complaining about pollution and disturbance from the

existing operations of the local harbour.

Just recently, the Lochaber Times reported on complaints of clouds of carbon dust being washed into the loch's waters during the loading of a vessel with carbon anodes from the smelter.

Before Christmas, Kilmallie and Ardour Community

Continued on page two.

Wishing all customers and friends a very Happy New Year
- from the team at Mathesons

mathesons
FURNISHINGS

In line with government restrictions, we remain temporarily closed and will reopen when allowed.

We are still able to help you with your furnishings needs, please contact us using the following details:

01631 565195 | 07930179249 | info@mathesons.co.uk | mathesons.co.uk



LT

Sealed ships and silos are all part of possible expansion to Corpach port

Continued from page one.

Councils held a joint session to quiz representatives from Alvançe and Corpach port operators Boyd Brothers and others on what future developments at the port might hold.

Brian King, chairman of Alvançe British Aluminium, explained Alvançe's thinking behind using the port at Corpach, although he made clear no firm decision had yet been made on which port would be the best option, if indeed a port was eventually chosen as the optimum solution to the company's needs.

Saying the alloy wheels plant was not feasible at this point and has been shelved 'possibly forever', Mr King said: 'What we have been doing is looking at alternative plans to guarantee the future of the business and to protect existing jobs and create some more jobs. We've come up with another plan to

produce another product from the smelter.

'It's called billet, which basically is aluminium cast into a shape akin to a telegraph pole, typically eight metres long and round, and five to 12 inches in diameter or bigger.

'There's growing demand

'There is growing demand as it's used in all sorts of ways'

because it's used in all sorts of ways; it forms a lot of car body chassis and is also used in the aero industry.'

However, Mr King said investing such a large sum in the project meant the business had to be 'de-risked', with the main concern being the disruption of local rail services primarily due to bad weather.

At the moment, the alumina used by the smelter is shipped from Ireland to Blyth on England's east coast where there is a closed former smelter site.

'The problems caused by the weather is a big risk we need to manage, so that is why we want to bring the alumina closer to where it is needed and so are looking at a port close to the smelter,' explained Mr King.

'We have been looking at Corpach and other places in order to find the best place to do that.'

Mr King said the sort of vessels being envisaged for the task were between 3,000 and 4,000 tons and fully enclosed. Once alongside the quay at the port, the alumina would be pumped ashore.

'You plug a pipe into the ship and pump the material ashore, so there is no dust or other environmental impact,' he added.

Alasdair Ferguson, group managing director of Ferguson Transport and Shipping, which has its headquarters in Corpach, wanted to know if Corpach port did indeed eventually prove to be the logical choice, what were the critical barriers to it being used.

Acceptable

Mr King replied: 'Being the least obtrusive to the local community as possible, recognising that anything we do is going to be high profile, so keeping that to a limit. Basically we want to do something which is acceptable more than anything else.'

'But whatever we do is probably something people would rather sooner do without and I accept that, but we are trying to run the business for the greater good, ensure the work we do is easily controllable and access is something else as well.'

Commenting to the Lochaber

Times afterwards, chairperson of Ardgour Community Council Samantha Thomson, said: 'It was encouraging to hear that Alvançe intends to use a modified, sealed vessel with alumina pumped to silos ashore.'

'We have no idea how intrusive that might be, but the concern for us, as always, is any light, noise, air, habitats and loch pollution that developments might cause, intended hours of operation and how any changes to the port or Eilean nan Craobh would affect our view or lifestyle.'

'We look forward to learning how Alvançe and Boyd Brothers intend to improve things and welcome open lines of communication with the community.'

John Hutchison, acting chairman of Kilmallie Community Council, added: 'We found out that the deep water harbour

study that started in 2018 has evolved in to the Corpach Port masterplan.

'I hope the masterplan will cover the entire area and that it gets into the public domain soon.'

'Many of the operations in the area are complementary and the community council has long been keen to see more integration of transport modes.'

'Alvançe will be running a public consultation on its proposals towards the end of February so between now and then we encourage all parties to make the best of potential integration and publish the masterplan.'

'We see great potential for HIE [Highlands and Islands Enterprise] and Highland Council planners to lead the process to make this happen.'

'Fundamentally though, we need to see an improvement in the current situation.'

WISHING ALL A VERY HAPPY NEW YEAR FROM ALL AT BID4OBAN.



REMEMBER TO SUPPORT LOCAL THIS YEAR!

#ScotlandLovesLocal #Loveoban #ObanMinded

If you would like to know more, have questions or want to get involved in delivering activities.

Please contact us on 01631 569915 or email info@bid4oban.co.uk, address: 43 Stevenson Street, Oban

Oban Business Improvement District
www.bid4oban.co.uk




Eigg brewery team delighted at 'breath-taking' response to plea

The Isle of Eigg Brewery project team had managed to raise the initial £125,000 investment it needs to build Scotland's first community-owned micro-brewery earlier this month, writes Mark Entwistle.

And hopes were high that by yesterday (December 29), the final target date for the appeal, a further £65,000 will have been gathered in.

The team behind what is planned to be the UK's most environmentally-friendly brewery want the extra cash to allow them to incorporate additional environmental elements into the project.

'The response to the campaign is breathtaking,' said Stu McCarthy, The Isle of Eigg Brewery's founder and brewer.

'Almost 400 people have bought a community share. Their backing means they want Eigg Brewery to bring positive change to our community and environment and I can't wait to get started.'

'Achieving our initial target so quickly really ups the pace that things can happen. Before, it was about creating the actual brewery building. Now it's about how much greener our



brewery can become and how fast. There's huge potential.

'Further investment means we can invest in an electric van for transporting our beer on Eigg and to the mainland - at the same time creating Eigg's first electric vehicle charge point for fellow islanders' cars.'

'The additional £65,000 investment also means we can start growing hops on Eigg, increase our solar battery capacity and explore re-usable bottles sooner.'

Mr McCarthy added that the success of the Brewdog brewing story has shown that people want environmental business: 'While Brewdog are doing an amazing job on a macro-scale, we wanted to explore doing

similar on a micro-scale.'

The Isle of Eigg, 12 miles off the Scottish mainland, is famous for its community land ownership and its unique renewable energy system powered by wind, water and sun.

Mr McCarthy continued: 'People have invested in the Isle of Eigg Brewery because of what it is offering socially and environmentally. They see the wider good that can come about. I'm very proud to be a part of what can happen when people come together.'

The brewery plans to produce beer using 100 per cent renewable energy, with the raw materials produced supporting local farming and Eigg's tree nursery.

FSB says tier four means firms need more support

The head of the Federation of Small Businesses in the Highlands and Islands (FSB) has warned that the sudden jump from tier one to four will have a massive impact on Lochaber firms, writes Mark Entwistle.

David Richardson, FSB development manager for the Highlands and Islands, told the Lochaber Times of his concerns in the wake of the latest coronavirus regulation changes.

'For the many Lochaber businesses struggling to recover after what has been a very poor year, the sudden leap from level one to level four will come as a complete shock,' said Mr Richardson.

'Not only will incomes plummet once again - or dry up altogether - but many will have significant stock holding problems. Numerous businesses were left with excess stock during the spring/early summer lockdown, a problem that recurred when restrictions were reintroduced in October, and now it's happening again from Boxing Day.

'Moreover, there are serious implications for employment - Highland job-seeker numbers have already increased by 98 per cent since March - and last but not least, delayed school reopenings present a significant problem for working couples.

'There are limits to how much loss and stress our small, independent businesses can take, which is why FSB Scotland is calling for government to ensure that announcements on new restrictions are accompanied by information on how affected businesses will be supported.

'Support must be made available to struggling business as and when they need it, not delayed for weeks while discussions take place about how best it should be targeted and managed.

'But we all have a part to play, for in supporting our local, independent businesses we are supporting our communities and the standard of living and quality of life that we all enjoy. Keeping trade local really matters.'

Onich Hotel hits back at 'not true' allegations

by Mark Entwistle
mentwistle@obantimes.co.uk

A Fort William hotel says it is 'shocked' by allegations that it was throwing out all of its live-in staff from its on-site accommodation on Christmas Day.

The management of the Onich Hotel posted a statement on its Facebook page refuting the claims after the online criticism from one particular individual sparked a torrent of accusations.

The woman posted: 'Onich Hotel in Fort William has just alerted all staff that they are closing on Christmas Day. We are all currently on the flexible furlough scheme and have just been told that we are all to leave the live-in premises on Christmas day during a no-travel pandemic.

'The issue is - majority of the staff are not from the UK and this is their accommodation.



They are saying that we aren't necessarily being sacked but we won't be on furlough and won't be allowed to live on site and they do not know when they will reopen. This is diabolical to those who have nowhere to go.'

But the hotel quickly hit back, saying in an official statement: 'We were shocked to read the allegation on FB about the treatment of foreign

staff at our hotel. We are closing the hotel for guests at midnight on the 25th - as per the guidelines - and informed guests that they have to vacate the premises on or before that day.

'The on-site management briefed the staff on the above and was NOT meant for staff who are on-site. It is worth noting that we did keep foreign staff who had nowhere to

The Onich Hotel was at the centre of a controversy over retention of staff during the latest lockdown.

Photograph: Iain Ferguson, The Write Image

go during the last lockdown in March while the hotel was closed and looked after them.

'We are committed to looking after the well-being of all staff and those who are in accommodation and will continue accommodating them. This has been our position all along well before this post was published.'

When contacted by the Lochaber Times on Friday to verify the situation with regards to the staff, a hotel spokesperson: 'No, we have not asked the staff to vacate. Not true and we have housed foreign staff and looked after them during the last closure in March. The briefing was about guests having to vacate and it got misconstrued.'



Kebabish
Of Oban Enjoy Life, Enjoy Kebabish!

SERVING HYGIENIC & HEALTHY FOOD TO THE OBAN COMMUNITY SINCE 2007

UNABLE TO GO OUT THEN LET US BRING THE FOOD TO YOUR DOOR STEP.

PIZZA • CURRIES • KEBABS BURGER • CALZONE • MUNCHY BOXES

**ICE CREAM, CAKES, SHAKES, SUNDAE,
HOT WAFFLES, HOT BROWNIE, SLUSHES SOFT DRINK**

**THERE'S A DEAL FOR EVERYONE TO ENJOY, AT THE BEST
PRICES THIS TOWN HAS EVEN SEEN GUARANTEED!**

HAPPY NEW YEAR TO ALL OUR CUSTOMERS

Open till late and delivered to your door, fresh, tasty and hassle free!

99 George Street, Oban Tel: 566885, 563900 Order online www.kebabishoban.co.uk / Like us on 

LT

Kate Forbes welcomes landmark law for victims of sexual offences

The constituency MSP for Skye, Lochaber and Badenoch has welcomed a landmark law which means that victims of sexual offences can request a forensic medical examination without having to report a crime.

The Forensic Medical Services Bill was passed unanimously by MSPs at the Scottish Parliament this month.

The new legislation places a duty on health boards to give victims direct access to trauma-informed, person-centred forensic medical examination services and to retain certain evidence where a victim is undecided about reporting to the police.

The Bill included a successful amendment from Johann Lamont MSP, which Kate Forbes MSP also voted for, that will allow the survivors of rape and sexual assaults to pick the sex of the person



examining them after an attack. Ms Lamont's amendment passed by 113-9, with one abstention.

Ms Forbes said: 'This is a very important bill, which I hope will prove to be a source of support for rape survivors.'

'I cannot begin to imagine the trauma and fear of providing forensic evidence after a heinous crime like rape. The changes made by this law have been widely welcomed.'

'One of the most consistent points made by survivors during scrutiny of this bill was the need for women to request a female to carry out any of the necessary procedures. I'm glad that request is now enshrined in law.'

READMORE
www.lochabertimes.co.uk

MSP's concern over rising drugs crisis

by Mark Entwistle
mentwistle@obantimes.co.uk

The scale of the drugs crisis across communities in Lochaber and elsewhere in the wider Highlands and islands means a radical rethink is required to tackle what is a human rights emergency.

So says David Stewart, Scottish Labour MSP for the Highlands and Islands, who has called for a change of political and policy direction to end the stigma of drug use and to save lives, as figures last week revealed record levels of drug deaths in the region.

The data published last week showed that another 39 drug-related deaths occurred last year in the Highlands and Islands following on from 67 deaths in 2018.

Scotland continues to have the highest drug-related death



rate in Europe and a rate almost 3.5 times the UK rate as a whole.

Scottish Labour has now called for an end to the stigma towards people who use drugs problematically and has demanded a national response to the public health emergency.

Commenting, Mr Stewart,

who is also shadow public health spokesperson, said every drug-related death was an avoidable tragedy and the Highlands and Islands were not immune from this issue.

'The scale of the crisis in communities across Argyll and Bute, Lochaber and the wider Highlands and Islands

Commenting, Mr Stewart, pictured, who is also shadow public health spokesperson, said every drug-related death was an avoidable tragedy and the Highlands and Islands were not immune from this issue.

means a radical rethink is required with a joint effort from all political leaders to tackle this human rights emergency,' he said.

'People who misuse drugs and their families need urgent action. Safe consumption facilities and increased rapid access to residential rehabilitation are vital and could happen today.'

'All political parties must put their heads together and work towards saving lives to help Scotland's recovery community thrive.'

TRADITIONAL STEAK PIE FOR NEW YEAR'S DAY

Recipe

Brought to you by BID4Oban

Melt-in-your-mouth beef stew topped with a flaky puff pastry lid is a family favourite any day of the year, but especially the first day!

You will need:

Large Pot
Mixing Bowl
Pie Dish – We used a round 22cm (8.5inch) tin

Ingredients:

- 800g Diced Beef Stewing Steak (Approx 2lb)
- 2 tbsp Plain Flour
- 2 tbsp Olive Oil/Butter
- 2 Large Roughly Chopped Onions
- 500ml Beef Stock
- 35ml Worcestershire Sauce 1 tbsp Tomato Puree
- 1 tsp Dijon or wholegrain Mustard
- Salt and Pepper to taste
- Make life easier for yourself and by ready made puff pastry (375g)

Method

Toss the beef in seasoned plain flour.
Heat your pan and oil/butter, once hot add the onions and cook until soft.
Once the onions are soft add the beef to brown it for a couple of minutes. Once browned add the stock, Worcester sauce, tomato puree, mustard and seasoning.
Bring the mixture slowly to the boil and then cover and reduce to a gentle simmer for 2.5 hrs,



stirring occasionally.

Once the sauce has thickened and the meat is tender, tip the mixture into a pie dish, $\frac{3}{4}$ full. Preheat your oven to 180°C or 356°F, approx gas mark 4.

Cover the top of the pie dish with the rolled puff pastry, use your thumb or a fork to push down or crimp the edge of the pastry along the rim of the dish, helping to seal the mixture and the flavour in.

Make a hole in the centre of the pie to allow steam to exit during cooking.

Place your pie into the preheated oven for roughly 30 mins or until the pastry has risen and is golden brown.

Serve with fresh greens and buttery mash. Yum!



Dean Cameron (Santa hat) and some of his supporters spent four minutes in the loch 'soaking in' the cold to raise awareness of an money for mental health charities.

Photograph: Iain Ferguson, The Write Image.

Dean and friends brave chilly loch to highlight mental health

Keeping ahead of Covid restrictions, a group of brave swimmers took to the cold waters of Loch Linnhe in Fort William last week to help increase awareness and raise money to help combat mental health issues, writes Mark Entwistle.

Leading the big splash is local plumber and inspirational podcaster 26-year-old Dean Cameron, who launched his own '12 Cold Days of Christmas' challenge, swimming in the loch for four minutes each day, finishing on Christmas Day.

Despite facing heavy,

chilling rain almost every day, Dean took to the water wearing only underwear and trainers, although on this particular occasion he climbed into a special Santa Claus 'mankini', much to the amusement of his fellow bathers.

He said: 'Today was all about having a laugh and involving as many people as possible in the challenge, but the underlying message is that mental health is a real problem, especially among young men.'

'I myself have faced depression but fortunately came

out it, others I know have not been so lucky, with some taking their own lives. The point of my challenge is to further raise awareness of just how widespread this problem can be, while also raising money to help local charities who are dealing with it.'

Online donors and sponsors have already splashed out more than £2,000, twice Dean's original target, and he was on course to reach £2,500 by Christmas Day, when he promised once again to don his mankini for a final swim off the remote Sanna beach in Ardnamuchan.



Oban Business Improvement District

www.bid4oban.co.uk



The Croftless Crofter

NIC GODDARD

fort@obantimes.co.uk

The winter solstice and Christmas are behind us and a new beginning is rapidly approaching as we look forward to 2021

As the bells chime midnight at the turn of the year from 2020 to 2021 we will be saying goodbye to one of the strangest years many of us have ever lived through.

While last minute press conferences and newly introduced tiers and lockdowns mean none of us are making any sort of plans, we have much confidence in writing in ink on our calendars - I like so many others will be taking comfort in the natural world continuing to provide more or less what I expect.

Lots of us have reconnected with nature in many ways this year, whether getting outside for permitted exercise, trying out wild swimming, learning how to identify the birds visiting our garden, or getting our hands in the soil and growing fruit and vegetables.

Having lived off grid for seven years, where our light, heat and power all relied on natural resources that were at their most scarce in the mid winter, our family celebrated the winter solstice just as much as Christmas.

Just as we developed family traditions around selecting, chopping down and bringing home a Christmas tree and creating festive wreaths from gathered natural materials, we also marked the solstice with a bonfire outside, candlelit sharing of our gratitude to nature and watching the sun set and then rise on the shortest day and longest night of the year.

2020 marks our second winter living in a house connected up to electricity and central heating, but I still took my first

cup of tea outside at first light and watched the sky brighten (too cloudy all day to actually see the sun itself) and we gathered outside around a bonfire with candles and sparklers to light up the longest night, while watching the Great Conjunction of Saturn and Jupiter as the clouds finally lifted and the sky cleared.

The days have grown shorter and now start to stretch a little each day, the weather has grown colder and we have had first frosts and snowfall. The bracken has died back and the grass has stopped growing, the trees lost their leaves and a carpet of acorns festooned the ground beneath the oak trees where we live.

Our chickens have stopped laying and several of them have gone through their annual moult, losing most of their feathers and looking very forlorn before growing back a whole new coat of glossy healthy feather and down to see them through the winter.

The sun hangs low in the sky, casting shadows on the ground and streaks in the clouds that you only ever see at this time of year. Yet at the same time as the world seems to have gone to sleep, with the last of the migrating geese disappearing south across the skies in great noisy V-shaped formations, so comes the promise of things to come.

Good things, hopeful things, things worth waiting for. My spring bulbs are pushing through the earth already, tiny green spikes of leaves promising bright flowers in the weeks and months ahead.



A seed catalogue arrived in the post this week prompting me to start thinking about what I want to sow and grow in the coming year.

In creating the photographic calendar for 2021 I spent a couple of hours looking through pictures of the year passed, a year I would have sworn had been filled with little other than cancelled plans, postponed hopes and facemask covered socially distanced events.

And I found all sorts of memories that made me smile. Small victories, tiny appreciations and minute blessings which just like the extra minute or two each day of daylight we are starting to see all offer hope for the year ahead.

Spring bulbs are already starting to show their green spikes of leaves promising bright flowers in the weeks ahead.



Young man dies following Christmas Eve crash on Harris

A 29-year-old man has died after the vehicle he was driving was involved in a collision on the Isle of Harris on Christmas Eve.

Police Scotland attended the incident which took place on the A859 south of Ardhaisaig, around 9.05am on December 24 following a crash involving one vehicle.

James O'Donnell of Leurbost, Isle of Lewis, was pronounced dead at the scene.

Police Sergeant Kate Park of the Road Policing Unit in Dingwall said: 'His next of kin have been made aware and our thoughts are with them at this difficult time.'

The road was closed for a spell while police carried out an investigation.

Enquiries into the circumstances of the crash are ongoing.

Anyone who was in the area and witnessed the crash is asked to contact Police Scotland on 101, quoting 0718 of 24 December.

Fire service issues festive firework warning

The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) is warning of the dangers of using fireworks in private events over the festive period.

With many public events cancelled due to Covid-19, families and communities are being reminded that using fireworks in gardens and common areas can have devastating consequences. Improper use of fireworks can cause serious injuries, distress pets and neighbours and impact on the work of Scotland's emergency services.

Deputy Assistant Chief Officer Alasdair Perry, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service's Head of Prevention and Protection

said: 'With public events unable to go ahead, we may see people hosting private events in their gardens to mark the festive season and perhaps New Year's Eve.'

'However, we must warn communities that fireworks are explosives at the end of the day, and if not used properly their use can cause life-changing injuries.'

'I would urge anyone considering purchasing fireworks to be well aware of both the dangers and the essential safety guidance.'

The SFRS has created a Fireworks Code to help keep communities safe.

DACO Perry added: 'If you are going to buy fireworks, then make sure it is from a reputable seller.'

'Always follow the instructions carefully and follow our firework code.'

'We want everyone to bring in the new year safely, so please do not take any risks as we say goodbye to a difficult year for all of us.'

The call has also been backed by the Scottish Government.

To view the fireworks code and find more information on how to stay safe around fireworks, visit, www.firescotland.gov.uk/your-safety/fireworks-safety.aspx

SUBSCRIBE

to Scottish Field and choose a
FREE bottle of
Glasgow Gin, Leith Gin
or Arran Malt*



The Perfect Christmas gifts for those that love all things Scottish



Save 25% on the cover price only £10.69 per quarter delivered direct to your recipients door.

Call 01778 392014 and quote Noell or go to scottishfield.co.uk/subscriptions

The award winning monthly glossy lifestyle magazine. Scottish Field brings you the very best interiors, antiques, gardens, wildlife, motoring and country news along side entertaining and informative writing. Get ahead of the field and Christmas wrapped up with a subscription to Scottish Field magazine

*Terms and conditions apply. For over-18s and UK-based subscribers only. Minimum one year subscription to Scottish Field. Offer ends 31 Dec 2020. While stocks last. Limited stock available, first come, first served basis. By claiming this offer, you agree that you are of UK legal age for purchasing and consuming alcoholic drinks.

for the facts drinkaware.co.uk

Shoebox couple blown away at appeal success

by Fiona Scott
fscott@obantimes.co.uk



Fort William-based Blythswood Care Coordinators Barbara and Kenny Mathieson are thanking their supporters and contributors after the 2020 Shoebox appeal ran by the national charity was declared a roaring success despite Covid-19 restrictions.

With the last lorry leaving a sorting station in Chatham, Kent on December 15, bound for Romania, the charity has sent 75,218 gift-filled boxes to eight countries in Eastern Europe this year.

Five hundred and 31 of those were produced and sent from Fort William.

'We want to thank everyone who has made that possible,' said Barbara, who along with husband Kenny has been producing charity shoe boxes for the past 30 years. 'We were absolutely blown away by the effort everyone put in this year despite the restrictions.'

'All our sorting processes and collections took place in lockdown and all the Blythswood staff and volunteers, as well as members of our own community



Four-year-old Ismedin one of the Blythswood shoe boxes.

up here in Fort William, have showed incredible commitment to ensure that people in need will receive these gifts.'

Fourteen lorry-loads were sent to Albania, Bulgaria, Hungary, Kosovo, Moldova, Romania, Serbia and Ukraine, where the gifts are being distributed in hospitals, orphanages, care homes, low-income communities and to homeless people.

Blythswood's head of projects, Finlay Mackenzie added: 'This year these gifts

are more important than ever. So many people in these countries have been hit by loss of jobs and loss of income remitted from other parts of Europe.'

One of the first boxes to be handed out this winter went to four-year-old Ismedin, in Gjakova, Kosovo, where 11 members of his extended family occupy a single-roomed dwelling.

Barbara added: 'These gifts mean so much to the families who receive them. One little girl was asked what she liked best about her box and she said "the smell of the soap".'

'We have a group of ladies who knit everything from small hats to blankets as well as people who contribute sweets and games. We also have a very special lady, Mrs Mary MacMillan, who has been doing shoe boxes for years. This year she covered and filled more than 100 boxes herself. Without people like them we wouldn't be able to do what we do and we are extremely grateful to everyone.'

For more information and to see videos of the families receiving their boxes visit blythswood.org.

VIEW FROM THE CHAMBER



Happy Almost New Year! While it's safe to say that although 2020 won't be getting a big send-off in the traditional way; it's definitely one year that we'll ALL be glad to see the back of!

Still, as we head towards a new and better year, it's a good time for the team at the Chamber to reflect on what we've achieved for our local business community in a topsy-turvy, unpredictable year!

Lochaber Chamber of Commerce immediately stepped up to support our business community, helping them to access help, keep them up to date with changes, and to raise their concerns with Scottish and UK government and Highland Council. We adapted what we do to offer online training, assistance, and networking for our members.

We launched a new easy-to-use contact tracing web app across our destination to provide businesses with a secure way of collecting contact details when people sit-in for food or a drink, called protect.outdoorcapital.co.uk.

The app is a simple, quick, and secure way for people to give their details for contract tracing and be confident in the way their information is being looked after.

As part of our Covid support project, we collaborated with local businesses and members Ben Nevis Distillery, The Highland Soap Company and Lamont Design to produce custom-labelled whisky bottle sanitiser dispensers. These were distributed to key businesses throughout Lochaber. We also produced 'Outdoor Capital of the UK' face-coverings that you'll see our members wearing throughout the area.

We also ran a successful 'Lochaber Loves Local' campaign across social and print media throughout the summer and autumn, producing inspirational videos featuring the huge range of Lochaber experiences on offer close to home; and it was great to see local people trying out new outdoor experiences and supporting local retail and hospitality.

We're delighted that our membership numbers have grown over the year and we look forward to helping our fantastic and resilient business community to make the most of 2021.

Wishing all our customers a

HAPPY HEALTHY SAFE NEW YEAR!

MACLEOD CONSTRUCTION LIMITED

WE WOULD LIKE TO THANK YOU FOR YOUR VALUED CUSTOM.

01546 602989 • sales@mkmacleod.co.uk • macleodconstruction.co.uk

PMG ENGINEERING SERVICES

Mobile hydraulic hose specialists, on site service covering, Oban, Campbeltown, Argyll, mid Argyll and the west coast.

24 HOUR CALLOUT 24/7 COVERAGE
Across Argyll and the West Coast of Scotland

info@pmg-services.com • www.pmg-services.com • 07766 513 585

Construction • Forestry • Quarry • Static Plant • Agricultural • Marine

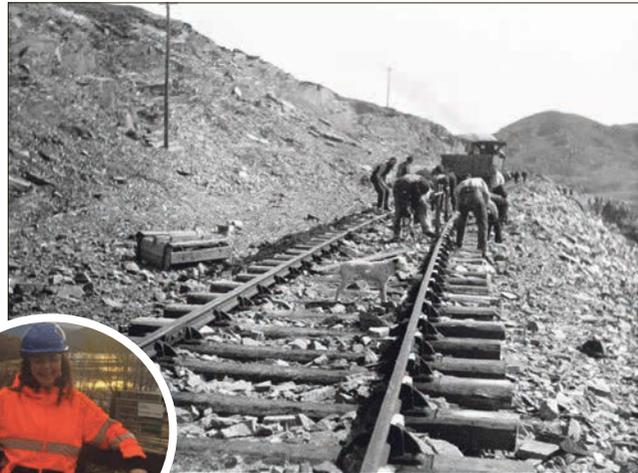
Lochaber musician Ingrid explores iconic rail line in BBC Alba programme

by Mark Entwistle
mentwistle@obantimes.co.uk

The line between Fort William and Mallaig is arguably the most spectacular railway in the world.

Earlier this month, we reported on a new book, Hege Hernæs, Building the Mallaig Railway – a photographer's story – compiled by Hege Hernæs of Glenfinnan Station, containing many examples from an amazing collection of 100 photographs capturing the railway's construction and which were unearthed recently in Cornwall.

Now, in a BBC Alba documentary, Ceol na Loidhne/Song of the Track, which is due to be broadcast tomorrow night (December 31) at 9pm, well known Glenfinnan musician Ingrid Henderson takes



up the story of how the railway came to be built.

She follows the route of the West Highland Line, construction of which started in 1897, in an attempt to discover what the photographs reveal about the lives and

people in Lochaber at the time of the line's construction, and attempts to discover the artist behind the lens. At the same time she will create new music to pay tribute to the railway and the people who built it.

For Ingrid, born in Mallaig, brought up in Fort William

and now living and working in Glenfinnan, the railway has always been present in her life.

Through this programme she travels the line stopping at stations along the route to find the places in the photographs – and look for inspiration to compose a new album.

Ingrid told the Lochaber Times: 'It's been fascinating to find out more about the building of the West Highland Line not only from this new photo collection which has come to light but also from the descendants of those who lived and worked beside the line all their lives.'

'It's allowed me to see my home area, of which I'm very proud anyway, through new eyes and inspired me to create new music in reaction to the images and personal stories from the line's construction.'



Left and above, two of the photographs unearthed, taken during the construction of the line; inset, Ingrid waits beside the line waiting to join the maintenance crew, and left, Ingrid working on the score for the documentary.

Railway photograph: Glenfinnan Station Museum.

—ADVERTISEMENT—

JANUARY SALE

- Dettol E45 Liquid Hand Wash: 1.25
- Paradox Omega Capsules 60PK: 4.99 (Half Price 60PK)
- Nivea Men Sensitive Post Shave Balm 100ML: 3.25 (Half Price 100ML)
- Zoflora Fresh Home Odour Remover & Disinfectant 500ML: 2.99
- Garnier Skinactive Micellar Rose Water Cleanser & Glow: 3.25 (Half Price)
- Head & Shoulders Classic Clean Shampoo 250ML: 1.79
- Simple Cleansing Facial Wipes: 2.99
- Oral-B 3D White Luxe Toothpaste 75ML: 2.49 (Half Price 75ML)

The festivities continue with January sales at Gordons Chemists

The longest month of the year is upon us and the only way to beat those January blues is to, not only treat yourself but, eagerly splash the cash on our fabulous January Sales as Gordons Chemists are back again with even bigger and better savings!

After the predetermined Christmas overabundance on gift giving, why not gift yourself with a special something or two? It's time to relax and unwind, you deserve it after all! Enjoy a post-Christmas cleanse with the Garnier Skinactive Micellar Rose Water for only £3.25 or get the Simple Cleansing Facial Wipes for just £2.99!!

Start the New Year fresh with Oral-B 3D White Luxe Perfection 75ml for HALF PRICE! Wash away the dreaded January Blues with Head & Shoulders Classic Clean 250ml for an outstanding £1.79! We know life isn't perfect, but your hair can be! Get that soft finishing touch with Nivea Men Sensitive Post Shave Balm 100ml for ONLY £3.25 – double the relief at just half the price!

We all know that 2021 will be the year of both health and hygiene so why not stock your cupboards with all of the cleaning supplies, toiletries and everyday essentials you could ever need? Keep your hands soft and sanitary with Dettol E45 Liquid Hand Wash for an amazing £1.25! Keep your home smelling and feeling fresh with the Zoflora Odour Remover & Disinfectant 500ml for a whopping £2.99! Keep your Omega 3, 6 & 9, along with your Vitamins D & E, topped up to the max with Paradox Omega Capsules 60pk for HALF PRICE – high in Omega but low in price!

Keep up to date with our FABULOUS weekly offers, competitions and exciting product launches, by following us on Facebook: www.facebook.com/gordonschemists. We've got lots of amazing deals coming your way and all of our stores remain open.

With 9 stores across Scotland, we have a store near you, or if you want to avoid the crowds, you can catch our outstanding deals online at www.gordons-direct.com

#SHOPLOCAL
SHOP ONLINE

GORDONS
CHEMISTS

WWW.GORDONSDIRECT.COM



LT

Review of the year



JANUARY: Three 'Edwardian' gentlemen, from left, Peter Wills, Andreas Glasow and Iain Staines, were among those who took to the chilly waters of Loch Shiel at Glenfinnan for the traditional New Year's Day swim. Photograph: Iain Ferguson



JANUARY: Fort William and the wider Lochaber area bore the full brunt of Storm Brendan, as gale force winds gusting up to 80mph and high seas lashed coastal areas. In Fort William that resulted in the popular Crannog Seafood Restaurant, above, which overlooks Loch Linnhe, being partially flooded. Thankfully, the damage was not as severe as the business has experienced in previous floods.

Part one: January to June



FEBRUARY: Duror Primary School staff and pupils were delighted to receive a £645 cheque from staff at the Ballachulish Co-op. The shop raised the money through its annual sale of books and raffle tickets. Every year, the shop chooses a different school to donate the money to. In return, the 10 Duror pupils talked about their favourite book and drew the front cover, which will be displayed in the shop.



MARCH: Community pharmacies and GP practices across Lochaber teamed up in a campaign to reduce the amount of medicine wastage. Thousands of patients require important medications, but each year in Scotland about £20 million of medicines is wasted. Fort William GP Dr Finlay Wild stressed more

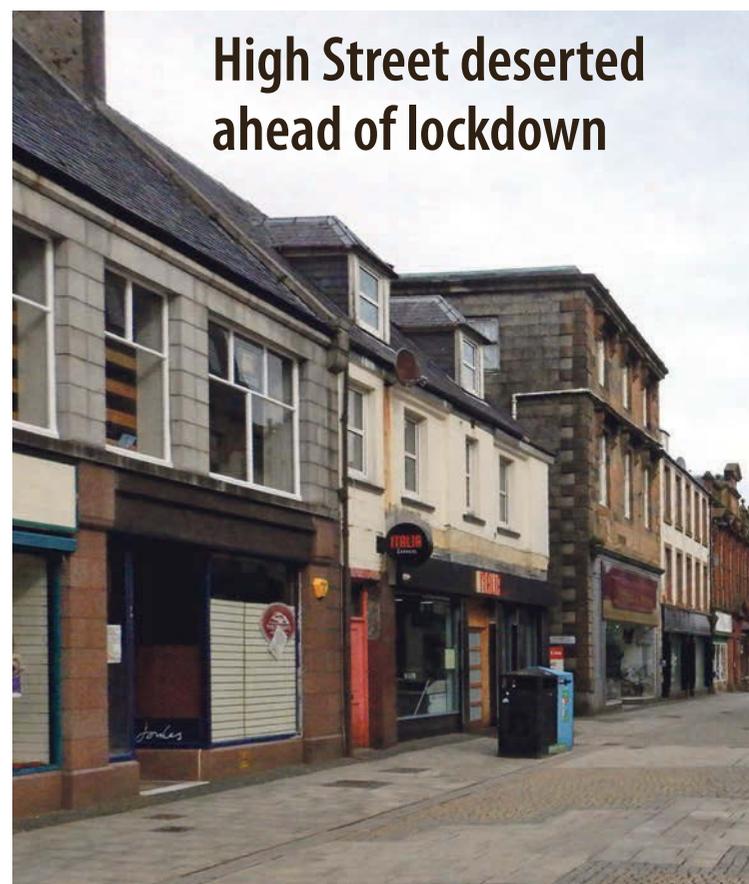
MARCH: Right: Fort William High Street on Saturday March 21 after all pubs and restaurants were required to close as a result of the coronavirus pandemic. Many other businesses had also done so for the safety of staff and volunteers.

At this point in the pandemic, all non-essential shops had closed, meaning only food retailers, pharmacies, hardware stores, corner shops, petrol stations, post offices, banks, newsagents and pet shops could remain open.



FEBRUARY: There was plenty of netball action at Lochaber High School when Fort William Falcons Netball Club hosted its first 'netballathon'. Players took part in four hour-long matches against teams from the Highland region, including the netball stars of the future from two talented Highland District U17s teams.

High Street deserted ahead of lockdown





Players Player of the Season 2019/20 Ross Gunn. Photograph: Iain Ferguson, alba.photos



Player of the Season 2019/20 Ryan Fyffe. Photograph: Iain Ferguson, alba.photos

APRIL: Fort William Football Club came up with a novel idea to announce two of its coveted accolades. Unable to hold its usual gathering because of coronavirus lockdown restrictions, The Player of the Season and Players Player of the Season were revealed on Facebook by former Celtic, Arsenal and Welsh internationalist John Hartson who added a personal message to Ryan Fyffe and Ross Gunn who won the respective titles.



APRIL: Economists were talking about 'green shoots' in the economy but at Lochaber High School, green shoots had already made a significant financial contribution to its polytunnel project. Teachers Iona Beagent, left, and Ruth MacCallum potted up a range of plants from catcni to vegetables and flowers, grown at the school, then sold them from outside the entrance, raising more than £250 in a morning. The proceeds went to buy compost and seeds for the project to continue next term. Photograph: Iain Ferguson, alba.photos



can be done to minimise waste. The campaigners issued a list of things people can do to help. Dr Wild, left, with Boots pharmacist Alina Tkaczewska and NHS primary care pharmacist Chris Cameron, with the pile of unused prescription drugs returned to the High Street store in just two weeks. Photograph: Iain Ferguson



MAY: By this month, Lochaber residents were really starting to feel the impact of the coronavirus lockdown. In a special interview with the Lochaber Times, local GP Dr John Wallace, pictured here outside Fort William health centre, spoke of how the pandemic was impacting the work of him and his colleagues. Photograph: Iain Ferguson, alba.photos



Also in May, Standard Bearer James Porter, left, and Fort William and District Royal British Legion Scotland branch chairman Hugh Macinnes marked the 75th anniversary of VE Day at the Commando Memorial, Spean Bridge. Photograph: Iain Ferguson, alba.photos



JUNE: The long-awaited reopening of McDonalds restaurants took place, including the one in Fort William seen here, after an easing of coronavirus lockdown measures. Photograph: Iain Ferguson, alba.photos



JUNE: Lochaber enjoyed some glorious summer sunshine. Among those putting the good weather to good use was the Lochaber Marie Curie Fundraising Team with its Etape Caledonia Challenge, a virtual challenge to cycle 85 miles in the month. Photograph: Iain Ferguson, alba.photos

Next week:
Review part
two: July to
December

LT

Blackford welcomes news of Broadford Primary funding

Best possible Christmas present for parents and children

Ross, Skye and Lochaber MP Ian Blackford has warmly welcomed news that Broadford Primary School on Skye has been prioritised for Scottish Government funding.

The primary school will be included in phase two of the Scottish Government's Learning Estate capital investment programme for new schools.

The move follows years of hard work and determination by parents and councillors, who were concerned about the deteriorating state of the 91-pupil school, which opened in 1975 and provides both English and Gaelic medium teaching.

'I am absolutely thrilled at the news that staff and children at Broadford Primary School will now have a suitable school premises to look forward to

going into each day,' said the SNP Westminster Leader.

'Anyone who has visited the school knows that changes were needed in order to provide a safe and productive environment for the children to learn in.

'It's the best possible Christmas present for the children, parents and everyone else who have worked hard to secure this result. Congratulations to all involved.'

Education Secretary John Swinney announced that Scottish Government funding, alongside local authority contributions to phase two of the Learning Estate Investment Programme, which will enable almost £800 million of investment across 18 local authorities, with Nairn Academy the only other school in Highland



Ian Blackford 'thrilled' at the news.

to be included. The programme will deliver digitally enabled, low-carbon schools and campuses, designed to be inclusive and welcoming places that meet the needs of the whole community. The investment will also boost the construction industry and help economic stimulus with creation of jobs.

Mr Swinney said: 'I am determined that our pupils have access to high-quality, up-to-date facilities that parents, staff

and children can be proud of. 'This next phase builds on our commitment and proven track record in replacing schools in the poorest condition so that more children or young people can be educated in high quality buildings and ensure equity of provision.

'Many of the projects will include wider community facilities and integration as part of the new school build or refurbishment. These facilities are so much more than just a school where children are educated, they are the centre piece of communities with links to the wider learning estate such as further education facilities and community libraries.'

He added: 'Scotland's construction industry has worked incredibly hard to deal with the many challenges presented by the Covid pandemic. This funding will help the sector, sustaining many jobs and providing a welcome boost to communities across the country.'

Islands MSP celebrates

by Mark Entwistle
mentwistle@obantimes.co.uk

ThunderPoint Publishing will next year publish a book by Na h-Eileanan an Iar MSP Alasdair Allan.

Any royalties from the book will be divided equally between the Western Isles Cancer Care Initiative and the Maimie Martin Fund, which supports the education of girls in Malawi.

ThunderPoint Publishing (originally based in South Uist) has announced it will be publishing Tweed Rins tae the Ocean by Mr Allan in the autumn of 2021.

The MSP has lived on the Isle of Lewis for 14 years, but Tweed Rins tae the Ocean, is about the place he comes from originally - the Scottish Borders.

The book follows a 100-mile, east-to-west-coast walk by Mr Allan and some friends, and

was researched on occasional weekends over the course of the last two years.

The book gently explores the history, literature and language of what Mr Allan, who grew up in the tiny village of Ashkirk near Selkirk, contends is the oldest national land border in the world.

The title of the book takes its inspiration from a line of the Burns song, Such a Parcel of Rogues in a Nation.

The journey described was the product of a challenge Mr Allan set himself, not just to walk the Border line, but to read a way through its literature too.

Cameron McNeish, author, broadcaster and mountain walker, who has written the foreword for Tweed Rins to the Ocean, commented: 'There is nowhere else in Scotland I sense an 'uncanny watchfulness' as intensely as I do in the Borders. It lurks on every

WIN £200 WORTH OF SHOPPING

TROLLEY DASH

COURTESY OF TESCO OBAN

ENTRY FORM

Name.....

Address

.....

Telephone

email

I have included my 4 tokens (please tick)

Your entry must be received by 10am Thursday 7th January. Send your entry to Oban Times, Trolley Dash Competition, Crannog Lane, Lochavullin Industrial Estate Oban PA34 4HB



We all spend far too much money over Christmas and New Year, so how great would it be able to fill your shopping trolley COMPLETELY FREE OF CHARGE in January?! Courtesy of our friends at Tesco in Oban, one lucky reader will win the chance to fill their trolley with up to £200 worth of goods (see T&C's for exclusions). All you have to do is collect 4 tokens over four weeks starting on 10th December, get them to us by 10am Thursday 7th January and you will be entered into a prize draw to win this fantastic trolley dash.

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

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

TERMS AND CONDITIONS
Winner must be at Tesco, Lochside, Oban, PA34 4HP for 9.30am January 18th. Excludes tobacco, lottery, baby food, non-food items and alcohol. Quantity limited to two per item. The winner will be given a hand held scanner to monitor spend to the value of £200.
We will protect your personal data. We only gather what we need for the requirements of this competition. Entry data will be deleted/disposed immediately upon the competition entry deadline and in a manner appropriate to GDPR regulations. Entrant's details will not be used for any other activity'.

DIGITAL SUBSCRIBERS
Digital subscribers who have an active subscription covering the period from December 11, 2020, to February 1, 2021, can enter the competition by sending their name, address and email address that they subscribe with to Oban Times Trolley Dash Competition, Crannog Lane, Lochavullin Industrial Estate, Oban PA34 4HB by 10am Thursday January 7. Only one entry per subscription permitted. Entrant must be able to attend the trolley dash in Oban on the January 18, 2021.



SP's new book Borders roots



Alasdair Allan pictured on the border at Carter Bar in the Scottish Borders.

hill-top, in every cleuch, and in every castle ruin, and Alasdair Allan has, almost magically, captured this essence of the Border.'

Seonaid Francis, editorial director of ThunderPoint, said: 'This absorbing book is a well-researched exploration

of the Border through history and literature; it is a warmly-written and entertaining book, bursting with humour and a deep-rooted love of the Border regions from which Alasdair hails.'

Mr Allan said: 'It should be no surprise that a book by

a politician about a political boundary offers occasionally opinionated views. However, I hope that the account of my walk from Berwick to the Solway Firth will be appreciated by anyone who likes dry humour and wet weather.

'The Border line has always been fascinating to me, not least because so many of my own family grew up, and worked the land there, often a matter of yards from the Border itself.

'The book tries to explain why writers (and bandits) down the centuries have been similarly fascinated. I hope this book will appeal to hill-walkers, and anyone else who is curious about how this line on the map came to be where it is today. Western Isles Cancer Care does great work in supporting people throughout the islands, and I am very happy to see the book hopefully support that work.'

Dog-fetch bingo entertains people with dementia

Fort William dementia support group is taking part in a ground-breaking project trialling innovative new ways to help Scots who are living with the condition during the pandemic.

Dementia Dog, a collaboration between Alzheimer Scotland and UK-wide charity Dogs for Good, uses specially trained dogs to help people with dementia and their carers.

During lockdown, the project had to find new ways to work with their clients to help them stay connected and reduce social isolation. An array of fantastic ideas included virtual therapy walks, online doggy bingo and physiotherapy sessions. Virtual dog bingo sessions take place through video calls with existing Alzheimer Scotland dementia support groups in various locations across the country.

So far they have delivered 70 group sessions and they have reached many more people online in a wider geographical



Dementia Dog Georgie takes part in virtual dog bingo sessions.

area than they would usually be able to.

To date the dogs have been Billy (four-year-old black Labrador/retriever) with Carla Haizelden and Georgie (a four-year-old golden retriever) with Julia Winters, who are both trained Dementia Community Dogs.

In the new year they will be training a pool of Dementia

Dog volunteers with their own trained pet dogs to help deliver virtual dog bingo sessions to help meet rising demand.

Community dog handler Carla said: 'Doggy bingo is very straightforward and easy to play. The players can watch Billy go and fetch a ball with a random number on it from a container. He passes it to me and I read out the number.'

'Although the dogs are all very well trained we do allow them to have their own personality so it's only natural that they sometimes get distracted and go off. There have been times during a game when Billy walks off to get my slippers or a toy instead of a bingo ball and that always gives everyone a bit of a laugh.'

'He also gets impatient and whines when I'm talking too much because he wants to get on with the playing game and pick the numbers.'

Dementia Dog also works with physiotherapists to offer virtual video exercise sessions tailored to clients' needs.

GO DIGITAL YOU CHOOSE **LAPTOP**

ENJOY

BOTH THE OBAN TIMES AND LOCHABER TIMES PAGE TURNER EDITIONS

PLUS

14 YEARS OF ARCHIVES

ACCESS

BREAKING NEWS AS IT HAPPENS ON OUR WEBSITE

NEVER MISS AN ISSUE WITH OUR NEW CONTINUOUS CREDIT CARD PAYMENT

AWESOME DEAL

THREE MONTHS FROM £6.99

ONE YEAR FROM £24.96

*recurring payment option via credit card

SUBSCRIBE AT WWW.OBANTIMES.CO.UK/SUBSCRIPTIONS

Love Whisky?

Take a look at the latest issues of **Cask & Still** magazines, and previous issues for **FREE** at:

issuu.com/caskstillmagazine

THE NEW APP FROM CASK & STILL MAGAZINE

#ScottishWhiskyTrail

START EXPLORING! DOWNLOAD OUR FREE APP TODAY

GET IT ON **Google Play** | Download on the **App Store**

CASK & STILL MAGAZINE

The Glenlivet Distillery

The Glenlivet Distillery sits in a wild and remote glen, its history laced with drama and intrigue. So in every bottle of whisky we make, we capture as much of the spirit of the glen as we can. We invite you to the heart of Scotland's whisky-making country, to explore the turbulent history of the whisky smugglers, delve into the intriguing mysteries of distilling and sample the golden magic that is The Glenlivet.

Address
The Glenlivet Distillery, Ballindalloch, Banffshire, AB37 9DB

Contact
Tel: +44 1340 821790
Email: theglenlivet.admin@pernod-ricard.com
Web: <https://www.theglenlivet.com/en-UK>

LT

Ballachulish and Barra take top small business awards

by Mark Entwistle
mentwistle@obantimes.co.uk

A Lochaber business has been given a national innovation accolade in the FSB Scotland Small Business Awards 2020.

As last year, the Highlands and Islands performed exceptionally well in the 2020 FSB (Federation of Small Businesses) Scotland Small Business Awards, with five of the 12 winners coming from this region.

This year's FSB Scotland Business and Product Innovation Award was won by Glencoe Activities, Ballachulish, and the Community Business of the Year Award has been won by Bùth Bharraigh, on Barra.

Originally an arable farm and transformed by the previous owner into a nine-hole golf course, the current owners of Glencoe Activities have expanded the course and diversified, adding a café, activity centre – including the Scottish Segway Centre – and, most recently, eight designer-led luxury lodges with hot tubs – RiverBeds.

The whole enterprise is owned and operated by Ossian Developments Limited, a fourth generation family business in Lochaber owned by the Young family.

The Business and Product Innovation Award is for bold, new business models and innovative products delivering dramatic results.

Judges look for busi-

nesses which either offer a ground-breaking product or service, or that are using an exciting new approach to improve or disrupt a traditional market.

Glencoe Activities' Laurence Young, said: 'The entire team is delighted to receive this national recognition – everyone now bounces around the estate with an even greater spring in their step.'

'The people within this family firm are renowned for each 'running the extra mile', and it's their creativity and enterprise that gives the real 'rocket fuel' to the innovation in the business. This FSB Award is a tribute that means a lot to them.'

'Our innovation was driven by a passion to completely re-invent hospitality. Sounds a tall order, yet four years of guest feedback and extraordinary business performance indicate just how successfully we have met this ambition.'

Development Director James Young, Laurence's son, added: 'There's been a complete re-brand and the essence of this is clearly spelled out in our new website, www.woodlands.scot

'Woodlands Glencoe focuses on providing memorably romantic breaks and adventures in a carefully nurtured and natural rural setting. Not only that, but we have acquired a 100-acre woodland on the North Coast 500 route, and Woodlands Ullapool is an innovation in the making.'

Callum Young, James' broth-

er, commented on another innovation realised over the Covid months: 'We have just opened a completely new accommodation concept, for SeaBeds re-invents hospitality all over again.'

'We now have five 'luxury lookout lodges', each with a breath-taking infinity hot tub. This business is doing its bit to help support the recovery of Scottish tourism and build Scotland's reputation as a global leader thanks to the warmth and style of our welcomes.'

Meanwhile, Barra-based Bùth Bharraigh took the Community Business of the Year award.

Bùth Bharraigh is a community hub and visitor information centre serving Barra and Vatersay.

This social enterprise also provides a route to market for island producers, showcasing and selling goods and services made by people from the islands.

It also sells wholefoods, craft materials and books, concentrating on filling in the retail gaps in this remote location.

Bùth Bharraigh's founder and manager, Sarah MacLean, said: 'We are delighted and honoured to have received this award for our volunteers and our community.'

'We opened our doors in April 2013 and we've been going strong ever since. Besides being a community shop, Bùth Bharraigh helps our community flourish by providing



Glencoe Activities' Laurence Young holds the award while surrounded by his family and, below, one of the luxury lodges at Woodlands Glencoe

islands suppliers with a route to market, and by acting as a point of contact for islanders, especially in the long winters.

'We also provide visitor information and we both help visitors find accommodation and signpost them to activities and events.'

'Volunteering, employment, training and work experience opportunities are also core to what we do, and, as a social enterprise, we support our islands producers and boost the economy by keeping money on the island. In 2019, research showed that every £1 spent in Bùth Bharraigh results in £2.58 for the economy of Barra and Vatersay.'

'Since the Covid crisis began in March we have been working on deliveries, sewing facemasks for the community, and doing whatever we can to help people through this difficult time.'

'We are looking forward to the future – to conducting more business online and to the new visitor season, and we also have a few hush-hush developments in the pipeline, so watch this space. This award has given us all – staff, directors, volunteers, and producers – a much-needed boost.'

Congratulating the two winners, FSB Highlands and Islands Area Leader Hamish



Fraser said the Highlands and Islands stood out from the crowd yet again this year.

'I am particularly delighted to be able to congratulate the two West Highlands and Islands winners, Laurence Young of Glencoe Activities and Sarah MacLean of Bùth Bharraigh, for doing so well,' he said.

'Businesses here must innovate and evolve if they and our region are to keep ahead of the game and, taken together, the Young family's ambitious, enterprising and exciting projects at Ballachulish represent outstanding examples of best

practice. Bùth Bharraigh has a vital role to play in sustaining one of our remotest and most fragile communities.'

Both the standard of living and quality of life enjoyed by everyone in the Highlands and Islands are dependent to a high degree on the strength and vibrancy of our communities, and just one glance at the Bùth's website shows that it is going above and beyond to maintain Barra's vitality.

'In fact, while you're looking at the website you might like to book a Barra holiday or buy some locally-made goods online.'



Bùth Bharraigh's Fiona MacLean, right, pictured with Naomi Robarts who works in the shop.

LT

LETTERS

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

Doggy bingo fun

We loved the sound of virtual dog bingo, which we learned this week is a fantastic way of helping people living with dementia during lockdown.

It may sound a bit far fetched, but the sessions take place through video calls with existing Alzheimer Scotland dementia support groups and, so far, 70 have taken place, providing plenty of laughs.

Community dog handler Carla told us: 'There have been times during a game when Billy - four-year-old black Labrador/retriever - walks off to get my slippers or a toy instead of a bingo ball and that always gives everyone a laugh. He also gets impatient and whines when I'm talking too much because he wants to get on with playing the game and picking the numbers.'

Congratulations

Well done to Glencoe Activities, in Ballachulish, and Bùth Bharraigh, on Barra, which both won awards at this year's FSB Scotland Small Business Awards 2020.

Glencoe Activities won Business and Product Innovation Award, while Bùth Bharraigh took home the Community Business of the Year award.

Wishing all our readers and advertisers the very best for 2021.

The editor welcomes letters of approximately 300 words in length for publication on this page. However we reserve the right to shorten, to amend or to refuse to print them. Names and postal addresses must be supplied, including on emails, to indicate good faith. A daytime phone number is also required for verification. Anonymous letters will not be printed. Please email: editor@obantimes.co.uk or write to: Letters page, The Oban Times, PO Box 1, Oban, Argyll, PA34 4HB.



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

At the Oban Times we endeavour to ensure that all our reports are fair and accurate and comply with the Editors' Code of Practice set by the Independent Press Standards Organisation (IPSO). We realise, however, that mistakes happen from time to time. If we have published anything that is factually incorrect, please email: editor@obantimes.co.uk; telephone on 01631 568000; or email editor@obantimes.co.uk. We will attempt to resolve your issue in a timely, reasonable and amicable manner. However, if you are unsatisfied with our response, you can contact IPSO by email: inquiries@ipso.co.uk. We will abide by the decision of IPSO.

Good use of our cash?

The report on the Piers and Harbours Asset Management Plan and Fees and Charges - 2021/22, submitted to the Argyll and Bute Council Harbour Board meeting of December 3, 2020 makes interesting reading.

At a time when budgets are tight, and councils have had to make hard decisions about where to cut services, it is difficult to understand why the council budget should be used to supplement the funding of dedicated ferry infrastructure for which CMAL should be responsible.

The Asset Management Plan allocates £10,335,000 for planned marine infrastructure works for the year 2021/22, of which only £1,255,000 is devoted to multi-use facilities. The remainder, £9,080,000, is mostly allocated to single-use ferry facilities, and a huge proportion of that is to provide overnight parking for CalMac ferries (to the exclusion of all other vessels); readers will have to make up their own minds about the merits of spending £4,050,000 for an overnight berth at Fionnphort, and £100,000 on a feasibility study for a breakwater at Lismore.

CMAL pay back around half of the £9,080,000 to the council through harbour dues for the use of council-owned piers, however that still leaves a whopping £4 million gap in the required funding.

If past experience of other CMAL projects is anything to go by, the planned 8 per cent increase in council harbour fees and charges up to 2028/29 is not going to cover it.

Fergus Gillanders, Kilmelford.

Closed borders

It was striking to note the restrictions between Scotland and England over the festive season, and to highlight that it was almost 70 years ago to the day that the border between the two nations was closed for the first time in 400 years.

That, of course, was due to the return of the Stone of Destiny to Scotland, when four student nationalists removed the ancient artefact from Westminster Abbey on Christmas Day in 1950.

The incident happened nearly seven centuries after the stone was taken from Scone by King Edward I during the Scottish Wars of Independence and placed under the monarch's chair in the abbey.

When news of the stone's removal broke, the authorities closed the border between Scotland and England. It was ultimately recovered from Arbroath Abbey, where Scottish nationhood had been asserted with the Declaration of Arbroath in 1320. It was returned to Westminster Abbey

Beachd Ailein

ALLAN CAMPBELL

ailean@obantimes.co.uk

"Siud i a' falbh 's tha chead mhòr aice!" Air starsaich bliadhna' ùr, agus a' gabhail beannachd le tèile! Mar a dh'èirich dhan mhòr-chuid aig deireadh na bliadhna 2020, tha mise cuideachd glè thoilichte gum bheil crìoch air bliadhna air am bi cuimhne air sgàth a' choròna-bhiorais.

Gu tròcaireach cha do dh'fhuiling a h-uile duine an tinneas, ach a dh'aindeoin sin cha deach aig duine san dùthaich air a buaidh a sheachnadh, eadar glasadh agus bacaidhean. Rinn sinn gàirdeachas ris an fhiosrachadh gun robh banachdach ùr ceadaichte, agus bu nàdarra dhuinn misneachadh fhaotainn à toiseach libhrigidh oirre.

Ach mar dhearbhadh air meud an t-srì a tha romhainn fhathast tha sinn a' dol dhan bhliadhna' ùr fo riaghailtean ìre 4 air tìr-mòr Alba, agus a' chuid eile de Bhreatann cuideachd a' neartachadh ìrean dìona gus sgapadh riochd ùr den bhioras a cheannachadh.

Tuigidh sibh gum bheil mi a' sgrìobhadh seo beagan làithean ro àm foillseachaidh, agus an-diugh tha fios air nochdadh gum bheil An Fhraing air aontachadh leigeil le làraidhean siubhal à Breatann a-rithist fhad 's gum bi dearbhadh aig dràibhear gum bheil iad saor bhon bhioras.

Tuigear an seòrsa sgàig a chuir naidheachd mun dreach ùr ghabhaltach seo den bhioras ann an ceann a deas Bhreatainn air Riaghaltas na Frainge, agus gu dearbh air caochladh dhùthchannan feadh an t-saoghail, agus cha b' iongnadh gun do dhùin iad a' chrìoch le Breatann. Ach cionnas, an dèidh eòlas fad faisg

in 1952. This action also coincided with attacks on postboxes in Scotland in a dispute over the title of the new British monarch, Elizabeth II, there being no Elizabeth I of Scotland.

Interestingly, it has recently been revealed that James Stuart, Conservative Secretary of State for Scotland recommended in 1953 the stone be returned to Scotland, but Churchill's government vetoed this seeing it as rewarding a small minority of hardline nationalists.

Alex Orr, Edinburgh.

Christmas gift like no other

None of us can deny that events in history can be literally life-changing. The current Covid-19

air bliadhna a' dèiligeadh ris an tinneas agus cuideachd a' deasachadh airson suidheachadh a dh'fhaodadh a bhith againn ma thig Breatann às an Roinn Eòrpa gun aonta malairt, a thug e trì latha de dheasbad mus deach aontachadh sgrùdadh a chur air dòigh dha na dràibhearain.

Tha Ministear a' Chòmhdhail ag aideachadh gun toir iad 's dòcha suas ri trì latha a' sgrùdadh agus a' gluasad trì mìle làraidh agus bhanaichean a tha glaiste ann an Dòbhair, ach tha labhraiche bho ghniomhachas a' chòmhdhail ag ràdh gum bheil an àireamh a tha glaiste nas fhaisge air deich mìle! Gun iomradh air a' chruadal aig an luchd-siubhal sin glaiste nan carbadan gun bhìadh neo goireasan ionnlaid na eile, agus nach fhaigh mòran aca a-nise dhachaigh airson na Nollaige, tha iomadh gnìomhachas beag an cunnart a dhol à bith leis nach eil bathair luachmhor dol a ruigeadh a cheann-uidhe! Buille eile bhon choròna-bhioras, agus tha mòran de na buidhnean beaga sin ann an Alba, ach 's e an tàmailt gun robh cothrom agus còir an dàil seo a sheachnadh.

Stiùireadh màirnealach luideach bho riaghaltas Lunnainn a tha air cosnadh mhòran eile a chur an cunnart! Ma tha nàire orra bidh iad-san cuideachd toilichte 2020 fhaicinn seachad!

Most will be glad to say farewell to 2020, surely not least those in government who wasted three days before taking action to enable traffic to flow from Dover, a delay which has put some SMEs in serious jeopardy. Coronavirus can only be partly to blame for any job losses!

pandemic is undoubtedly one of the most poignant and significant crises this world has ever known. Yet, while 2020 has been a difficult year, two words will fall from the lips of many people across the world this week: Merry Christmas.

The greatest event in history will again be remembered - the coming of Jesus Christ.

When we exchange gifts there's a love that motivates the action, but when we examine the love of God, it was unmerited, undeserved and unequalled. God offers us salvation today through faith in His Son, Jesus, when we repent and believe the gospel.

We sincerely wish every reader, near and far, a very happy holiday and a blessed new year.

Donald J Morrison, Inverness.

DEREK WILSON

CARRIERS LTD

DAILY SERVICE OBAN - GLASGOW

MULL, COLL, TIREE, COLONSAY, ISLAY

Building on 30 years of Service Excellence

Tel: 01631 562655 email: dwoan@gmail.com

Units 2/3 Crannog Lane, Lochavullin, OBAN PA34 4HB

Covid precautions
in place❖ Freight forwarding and
courier service❖ Furniture, appliances,
feed, automotive spares,
glass, building supplies,
etc.❖ "Won't ship to the
Scottish Highlands &
Islands?" Have your items
delivered via our
Glasgow depot!

DISTRICT NEWS



Braving rain and a hail storm as well as the cold water of Loch Linnhe, staff of the Belford Hospital in Fort William took a Sunday lunchtime swim recently to raise money for Lochaber Foodbank. Photograph: Iain Ferguson, alaba.photos

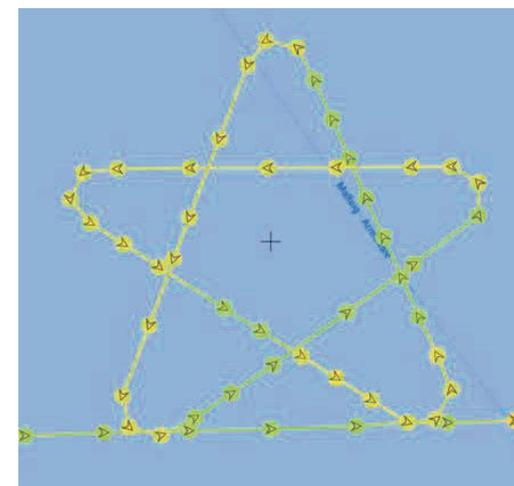
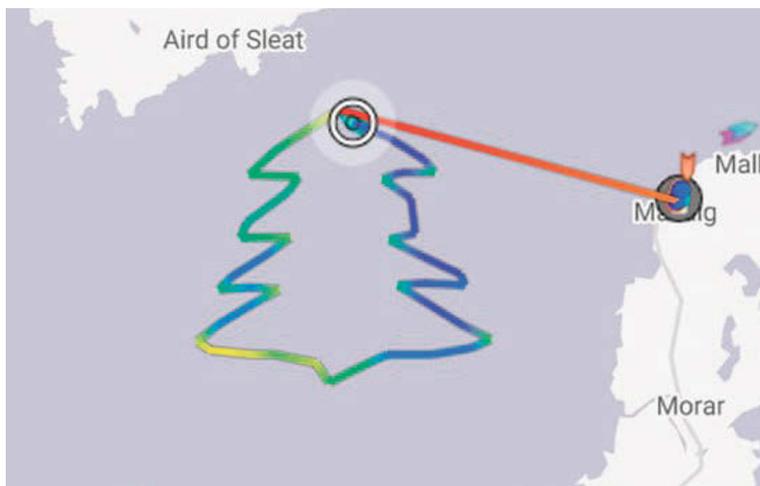


Lochaber High's Flo finally calls time on her school days

It was an emotional day at Lochaber High School last Wednesday when janitor extraordinaire Flo Dillon retired after working tirelessly to support pupils, staff and the school community for 31 years. A small farewell 'do', with S6 piper Andrew Orr, was held, but Flo insisted she should still be with the pupils at the secondary in Fort William, demonstrating the care and respect she has for them all. Photograph: Lochaber High School.

Vessels plot a bit of festive sea-seasonal cheer

Mallaig's lifeboat and the fish farm support vessel, the Ronja Commander, brought smiles to marine radar operators last week with a bit of fancy sailing skill. The radar track for the vessels showed some creative navigation, with lifeboat Henry Alston Hewat, which was on a training run, plotting a course that showed up on radar as a Christmas tree. Meanwhile the Norwegian-flagged Ronja Commander's skipper and crew managed a very creditable festive star, as can be seen from a copy of the radar plot.



The radar plot of the track of the Ronja Commander which brought smiles. Image: Marine Traffic.

WELL DONE TO EVERYONE THIS YEAR

Wishing festive greetings to all. Remember to check for Festive Slimming World recipes on the website.

WE WILL BE BACK IN THE NEW YEAR

GILLIAN 07796 040803

[slimmingworld.co.uk](https://www.slimmingworld.co.uk)



Seasons greetings from the sporting community – part 1



World bronze for Ben Dignan in the FIM Trial125 Championship in September.

Ben Dignan

'This year has been a strange one for everyone, with Covid challenges effecting the whole world.

'I was lucky enough, however, to be able to compete in the 2020 FIM World Trial125 Championship which took place across eight rounds in France, Spain, Andorra and Italy.

'It was my first year as a professional trials athlete, riding for the Vertigo Motors UK Team, and what a year it has been.

'I finished the season taking home the bronze

medal after competing against the world's best.

'My efforts are now focused on winter training, whilst hoping to secure a ride again for 2021.

'I would like to thank my mentor Alexz Wigg, my parents, my team and personal sponsors including local companies A N Fraser Joinery & Building Contractor, Gavin Cairns Roughcasting, Highland Leisure Sport, Inverness Taxis and All Round Signs for all their support which made this year possible.

'Season's greetings and all the best for 2021 to everyone.'

Lochaber Phoenix Boxing Club

'Like other sports, Lochaber Phoenix Boxing Club was badly hit - no pun intended - by Covid, although coaches and members quickly adapted by launching online training sessions with individuals and groups.

'We were quick to start outdoor training when allowed, with dedicated sessions on Caol foreshore in all weathers.

'Unfortunately we lost our two home shows, which give club boxers a chance to demonstrate their skills in

public but are also the main fund raisers which keep the club going.

'A move to a new larger gym at the end of 2019 meant finance was a serious issue, but a grant from the Scottish Government and understanding from our landlords ensured we kept going.

'Hopefully the future is bright, with a home show planned for April.

'Seasons greetings and don't forget our 'Boxing Day'.



Kate Forbes MSP with coaches and members of Lochaber Phoenix Boxing Club in August. Photograph: Iain Ferguson, alba.photos

South Lochaber Thistle

'Seasons greetings from everyone at South Lochaber Thistle.

'It has been a strange, difficult year and we thank the community for its continued support.

'We have been lucky to welcome new players and new sponsors, even in these darkest of days. We are extremely

thankful to everyone who has supported us in whatever way.

'We want to give back to the community. 'We loved taking part in Kinlochleven High School PE lessons during lockdown and have been delighted to see the number of young ladies attending our new U15 girls team as well as welcoming new woman's coach Vicki McNeil. The innovation of a club shop via Klass Klothung was another exciting develop-

ment. We continue to aim to create football from cradle to grave for everyone, regardless of age, gender or experience.

'As we return to regular training and friendly matches, we thank you all again and wish you the happiest of New Years.'

Right: South Lochaber Thistle founder and manager Alan Gray. Photograph: Iain Ferguson, alba.photos



Let The Oban Times share your sporting news by emailing fscott@obantimes.co.uk or by phoning 07467 819373.



ORDER IN-STORE, BY PHONE OR ONLINE

COME AND VISIT OUR BATHROOM SHOWROOM

THE
BATHROOM
SHOWROOM

**CITY
PLUMBING
SUPPLIES**

the-bathroom-showroom.co.uk

TEL: 01631 567640



Thanking all customers for their support this year and wishing everyone an enjoyable festive season

Festive Opening Hours

24th December : 8am-12noon

25th to 28th December : Closed

29th to 31st December : 8am-12noon

1st-5th January : Closed

Reopen as Normal from 5th January