

DATE	NEWS
30/01/05	It is anticipated that the <b>Loch Bhrusda</b> will remain in Oban for roughly 10 days while she undergoes her maintenance.
29/01/05	<p><b>Loch Alainn</b> arrived back at Largs today after her annual overhaul at Troon. <b>Loch Bhrusda</b> arrived in Oban for maintenance work and is currently berthed alongside the North Pier. <b>Loch Linnhe</b> is currently back on relief duties on the Eriskay crossing and will remain as such until the regular ferry returns. Meanwhile <b>Loch Bhrusda</b> will sail soon for Berneray in order to relieve <b>Loch Portain</b>.</p>
	
	<p>Loch Bhrusda at Oban today.</p>
28/01/05	<p>There may have been a possible problem with the <b>Hebrides</b> today. She was berthed stern first at Tarbert this morning. It was reported that a lorry was reversing onto her which could indicate a problem with her bow doors / visor.</p> <p>Some interesting reports recently have suggested that <b>Saturn</b> will be deployed on a secondary Arran crossing upon arrival of the new <b>Bute</b>. It seems due to her additional deck strength over her near sisters and the fact she is a slightly better sea boat she may be used to carry freight to and from the Clyde's largest island. Its possible she would be rostered on overnight sailings from Brodick on Arran and Wemyss Bay on the Clyde thus bringing freight closer to the capital of Scotland and distribution centres, it would also mean that the <b>Caledonian Isles</b> wouldn't have to shift berths to allow her into Ardrossan. This would also free up additional car space on day time crossings. More information and updates as and when they happen...</p>
27/01/05	<p>The CalMac terminal in Oban will be without power between the approximate hours of 0930 and 1530 today. Tickets can be purchased onboard the <b>Isle of Mull</b> and <b>Clansman</b>. For updates click the CalMac link above.</p> <p>We have received reports that the new <b>MV Bute</b> is to be launched at the Remontowa shipyard in Poland on February 9th. This will be the first vessel to be launched sideways since <b>Hebridean Isles</b> back in 1985. The 'Buteman' reports that Calmac are looking into the possibility of setting up a webcam arrangement for the launch. More details as we receive them.</p>
26/01/05	<p><b>Saturn</b> entered James Watt Dock at 11:00 today for her annual overhaul.</p> <p><b>Hebridean Isles</b> has settled into her <b>NorthLink</b> relief duties. She departed Stromness at 16:30 to arrive in Scrabster at 18:30. Her next scheduled sailing will depart Scrabster at 19:00 to arrive in Stromness at 21:00. A new Pentland Firth timetable will come into effect with the return of <b>Hamnavoe</b> from drydock on Friday 4th February.</p> <p><i>Loch Class Update:</i></p> <p><b>Loch Alainn</b> is due for sea trials tomorrow at Troon. <b>Isle of Cumbrae</b> is also due on sea trials now scheduled for Friday at Rothesay, if all goes well with <b>Loch Alainn</b> tomorrow. <b>Loch Ranza</b> arrived back at Gigha yesterday afternoon which freed up the <b>Loch Linnhe</b> to proceed to Oban for a overnight berth. <b>Loch Linnhe</b> should arrive in Barra later tonight after departing Oban around midday today. She will relieve the <b>Loch Bhrusda</b> for maintenance and allow her to sail to Oban for further engine works. After which she will go to sound of Harris to relieve <b>Loch Portain</b> for annual overhaul on the Clyde.</p>
25/01/05	<p><b>Coruisk</b> is now at Rothesay for the Bute run as <b>Saturn</b> arrived at Gourock today at 13.15 coinciding with <b>Juno's</b> Arrival. After discharging her passengers and vehicles, <b>Juno</b> moved to the 'wires' and <b>Saturn</b> took up the 13.20 sailing to Dunoon. The two ships changed over again for the 14.20. Presumably then <b>Saturn</b> departed for Garvel Dry Dock, Gourock and her annual overhaul. <b>Lord of the Isles</b> is reported to be in Canada Dock, Liverpool tonight for her annual overhaul.</p>

24/01/05 **Largs - Cumbrae** service notice: Due to mechanical difficulties, **Loch Tarbert** is unable to sail, the **Disruption:** service has been temporarily suspended. For updates click the CalMac link above. *Update:* They hope to make a 12:30 sailing from Cumbrae. *Further Update:* **Loch Ranza** was later carrying out the Cumbrae crossing but she herself was delayed at Cumbrae Slip this afternoon after suffering a failure in her ramp hydraulics. Passengers were unable to disembark until repairs had been carried out and the ramp was able to be lowered. Presumably **Loch Linnhe** is covering at Gigha???

**Hebridean Isles** is using the old P&O ferry berth at Scrabster for her stay as the gangway at Stromness apparently doesn't fit. Passengers are being escorted along the pier. She has a NorthLink master on as pilot **Hamnavoe** left soon after her 2030 arrival last night.

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23/01/05 **Hebridean Isles** arrived in Scrabster this afternoon for a quick berthing trial before sailing across the Pentland Firth to Stromness where she arrived at 17:00. She will be relieving for the **Hamnavoe** while the latter is away in Denmark for her annual overhaul. **Isle of Arran** is covering the Islay routes while the regular vessel is away and will take up service with a 15:45 sailing from Stromness to Scrabster. Following completion of repairs and relief duties, **Isle of Mull** and **Clansman** respectively are back in service on their normal routes to Mull, Colonsay, Coll, Tiree and the Outer Isles. **Coruisk** was out for a run today and was seen in the Toward area before heading back to Gourock. It is expected that she will take over the Wemyss Bay - Rothesay route from **Saturn** on Tuesday early afternoon.

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22/01/05 **Lord of the Isles** is currently on Mull roster with **Isle of Mull** still at the railway pier. **Clansman** noted inbound in Sound of Mull at 1400. No sign of **Isle of Arran** who is due to relieve **Hebridean Isles** at Kennacraig soon to allow her to go to Orkney to cover for NorthLink vessel **Hamnavoe**. It is possible **Isle of Cumbrae** is due to re-launch on Tuesday, having been out of the water recently at Ardmaleish Boatyard, Bute.

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21/01/05 **Isle of Mull** has been sighted outbound passing Gourock this morning at 09:25. She was later sighted (approx 10:30) 'playing' in Loch Long before heading back down the Firth at 10:55. At 11:15 she is currently awaiting the Dunoon boat to depart before loading crew cars at Gourock. **Isle of Mull** later arrived in Oban approximately 22:00 and berthed at the railway pier secondary berth. **Caledonian Isles** has also been sighted outbound passing Gourock at about 10:30 this morning. She was reported to have swapped with **Clansman** on the Arran roster around 15:30.



CI and IoM at Gourock Today in a Historic Photo - The half sisters have only met together once before.

20/01/05 **Caledonian Isles** is due back at Ardrossan sometime tomorrow (Friday 21st January). This will allow the **Clansman**, who is currently covering on the Arran crossing, to head back up to Oban and help with **Isle of Arran** and **Lord of the Isles** set up at the moment. **Lord of the Isles** is expected at Birkenhead on Monday 24th January for overhaul.

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19/05/05 You can now watch the LIVE positions of NorthLink Ferries near Aberdeen via a Free Subscription to **AIS Live**.

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18/01/05 As the gales return we are advised of multiple disruptions. The 0820 ex Brodick was diverted to **Disruptions:** Gourock, with a bus departing Ardrossan to transport foot passengers to the ferry. Today's 0900 and 1400 sailings from Berneray to Leverburgh, and the return crossings at 1010 and 1510 will not be running. The captain of **Hebridean Isles** advised that this morning's sailing to Port Ellen was diverted to Port Askaig. The morning sailing from Rathlin to Ballycastle was cancelled, with a decision due this

afternoon as to whether the later sailing will run. The 1530 sailing from Oban to Castlebay and Lochboisdale is cancelled and finally (for now) the Small Isles will not be seeing the ferry today.

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17/01/05 Researchers at Southampton and Highlands & the Isles universities believe last week's severe storms would become more frequent and stronger in future. During the storms, the ferry network were severely disrupted with many routes not running. They are calling for bigger ferries to combat the problem of cancelled sailings due to high waves.  
More story  
at: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/scotland/4180365.stm>



Loch Alainn in Garvel (Troon) Dry Dock Today. Brian Climie

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15/01/05 **Coruisk** was unable to get into Wemyss Bay this morning, she is now heading up to Gourock to berth. Elsewhere, the Sconser - Raasay service has been suspended until further notice. Check with Calmac or local ports for further details. This afternoon **Coruisk** was unable to perform her 1515 sailing from Rothesay due a high tide at Wemyss Bay. She left the Bute pier to lie in Rothesay Bay but had to return to offload a passenger who had failed to disembark upon her arrival from Wemyss Bay. For information and pictures of **Muirneag** at present, visit [Larne Ferry Web](#).

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12/01/05 Again, appalling weather conditions have meant that all but one **Hebridean Isles** sailing to Islay and one **Clansman** sailing to Arran (from Gourock) were cancelled. This included ALL CalMac and **NorthLink** sailings.

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11/01/05 We have reports that **Loch Alainn** apparently made her way to Ardrossan on Sunday. She tied up at berth 7. It is possible she may have been heading for Troon overhaul but today's Clydeside has discussion about no facilities at Troon. We will update as and when we receive any additional information. *Update:* **Loch Alainn** was on her way for annual overhaul to the dry-dock at Troon (now operated by Garvel).  
Due to bad weather and a large wave hitting the bridge she had to seek shelter at Ardrossan. She has now however arrived in Troon and is dry-docked. **Muirneag** is due to be dry docked at Birkenhead, Liverpool for inspection any any repairs needed after her slight grounding yesterday. She is reported to be there for Friday.

**Disruptions:** For the first time in many many years, the entire CalMac network has been shut down due to the appalling weather conditions hampering operations on the west coast of Scotland...

Most of the fleet stations assessed the weather this morning and a few ventured out but most stayed tied up for passenger safety.

Due to continuing severe weather conditions across Scotland there are multiple major disruptions and cancellations to ferry services on the Clyde and Western Isles. For full details click [here](#).



Clansman battling the weather trying to make it from Gourock to Ardrossan this morning.

**NorthLink: Cancellations Affecting All Routes.** **Hjaltland** arrived in Lerwick at 07:30. Her 19:00 from Lerwick to Aberdeen has been cancelled for safety reasons. The scheduled departure from Lerwick to Hatston (Kirkwall) and Aberdeen on Wednesday 12th January is currently under review. The next scheduled departure from Kirkwall (Hatston), the 23:45 sailing to Aberdeen on Wednesday 12th January is currently under review. **Hamnavoe** arrived Stromness at 13:30. The 16:30 sailing from Stromness and the 19:00 sailing from Scrabster tonight have been cancelled. The 03:45 sailing from Stromness and the 06:00 sailing from Scrabster on Wednesday 12th January have also been cancelled. All other sailings on Wednesday 12th January are under review. Further information will be available at 07:30 on 12th January. **Hrossey** arrived in Aberdeen at 06:45. Due to forecast adverse weather conditions, and in the interests of passenger comfort and safety, the scheduled 19:00 sailing of **Hrossey** from Aberdeen to Lerwick has been cancelled. The scheduled 19:00 departure from Aberdeen to Lerwick on Wednesday 12th January is currently under review.

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10/01/05 **Muirneag** ran aground this morning at 04.30 but the high tide floated her off about an hour later according to Isles FM. Coastguard say there is no apparent damage but she will be inspected before she leaves again. Apparently she had gone out and was turning back owing to bad weather when she went aground just outside the harbour. It is possible she won't sail for the next two nights due to her touching rocks. Any more info we receive we will update this page.

**Disruptions: Ardrossan-Brodick Service:** Please be advised that the 0820 sailing from Brodick will be diverted to Gourock. All passengers intending to travel to Brodick to be at Gourock for 1015. The 1105 sailing from Brodick and the 1230 sailing from Ardrossan have been cancelled.

**Sound of Harris Service:** Due to technical problems the 0915 sailing from Berneray and the 1025 sailing from Leverburgh have been cancelled. For updated on these situations, please use the link to CalMac above.

**NorthLink: Cancellations affecting Pentland Firth Route:** Due to the adverse weather forecast and in the interests of passenger comfort and safety the 09:00 sailing from Stromness and the 12:00 sailing from Scrabster have both been cancelled. The 16:30 sailing from Stromness will be reviewed at 12:00.

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09/10/05 **Isle of Arran** could not make her call at Barra due to the severe gales in the Minch once again.

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08/01/05 Due to the ongoing storm over the northern half of the UK the following disruptions are in effect.

**Disruptions:** Today's 0645 service to Coll and Tiree was cancelled. The Tarbert - Portavadie service is suspended until further notice, the 0820 sailing from Brodick was diverted to Gourock, with the 1350 sailing from Arran and return then being cancelled. The Fionnphort - Iona service has been suspended until further notice, as has the Tayinloan - Gigha service. Due to tidal conditions the 1515 sailing from Rothesay and 1600 from Wemyss Bay have had to be cancelled. The 1630 from Rothesay and 1730 from Wemyss Bay were then cancelled due to the adverse weather. Today's Small Isles sailing has been cancelled, as have the 1500 from Rathlin and 1600 from Ballycastle. The lunchtime sailing from Tarbert - Lochranza and return was cancelled, as is the 1500 ex Tobermory and 1545 ex Kilchoan. The Sound of Barra crossing at 1710 from Ardmhor and return from Eriskay, as well as the 1330 from Berneray and 1440 from Leverburgh on the Sound of Harris service are all cancelled due to severe weather in the Outer Hebrides, and tonight's 1745 sailing from Lochaline, returning from Fishnish at 1810 will not be running.

A revised timetable will be in operation tomorrow (Sunday) for MV Hebrides' sailings: 0730 Tarbert - Uig, 0930 Uig - Lochmaddy, 1200 Lochmaddy - Uig and finally 1400 Uig - Lochmaddy - Tarbert.

**NorthLink:** Due to adverse weather conditions the arrival time of **Hjaltland** into Hatston may be delayed upto an hour.



Brenda Corlett (ex Pioneer) alongside in Gibraltar This Morning - Pictures By Daniel Ferro

Other News: P&O Irish Sea's **European Highlander** has run aground at Cairnryan in the very heavy winds affecting the West Coast of Scotland and North East England at the moment. She is expected to be pulled off by tugs later tomorrow morning. Her fleet mate is currently operating the crossing to Ireland solo.

07/01/05 **Brenda Corlett** (ex **Pioneer**) is now confirmed to be alongside in Gibraltar. There is a current **Webcam** focused on her, she is just visible on the right. The Port of Gibraltar has her listed as the following: *Arrival: 03 Jan: 10:33 Flag: BLZ To: CAPE VERDE Purpose: Bunkers; Stores; Water Call Sign: V3XM*



Brenda Corlett alongside in Gibraltar

**Coruisk** has just appeared at Wemyss Bay (12:30) from Gourock seemingly light. Juno has also just arrived there fully loaded and appears to be heading to Rothesay.

**Muirneag** has been in Stornoway all day while **Isle of Lewis** trying to catch up on lost time from yesterday. She left Ullapool at 05:30 this morning after being storm-bound there last night therefore running late all day. **Isle of Arran** eventually made it into Castlebay on Barra this afternoon after the extremely bad weather had made the crossing to the other isle unreachable for a few days. As far as we are aware the stricken cargo vessel that is currently seeking refuge in Castlebay after her cargo shifted in the winds is not affecting berthing at the ferry terminal.

**Disruption:** **Coruisk** will depart from Rothesay at (08.45) sailing to Gourock due to tidal conditions at Wemyss Bay. The (09.30) and (11.00) departing Wemyss Bay and the (10.10) and (11.45) departing Rothesay have been cancelled. For further information please contact local Caledonian MacBrayne port or use the above weblink.

06/01/05 **Lord of the Isles** has been operating on the Oban - Craignure Roster while the **Isle of Arran** is operating the Tiree crossing. However bad weather again seems to be hampering operations.

**Isle of Mull** is moving from James Watt Dock to Inchgreen repair quay for repairs to bow door area, Repairs to be carried out by North West Ship Repairers from Birkenhead. Garvel dry-dock is full at the moment resulting in her move. To repair the damaged bow area they have constructed scaffolding to give them a platform to carry out the repairs.



Isle of Mull's slight bow damage

05/01/05 Today's sailings to Rathlin Island, Iona, Gigha, Eriskay, Portavadie, Lochranza and Lochaline have been **Disruptions:** cancelled until further notice. Please contact local offices for information on sailings. The **Lochnevis's** sailing to Muck and Eigg have been cancelled. The 0845 sailing from Oban to Lismore had to return to Oban, the next scheduled sailing to Lismore is at 1445, depending on weather conditions. The 0915 sailing from Berneray and the 1020 sailing from Leverburgh were cancelled. The rest of today's sailings may be disrupted. **Coruisk** and **Juno** are currently at Gourock after being diverted from Rothesay. Sailings depending on weather. **Coruisk** being used due to her having stabilizers for better passenger comfort. She is due at Rothesay at 1300 for a return run to Gourock, weather permitting! The **Isle of Lewis's** sailing to Stornoway from Ullapool has been cancelled until further notice. The **Hebrides** sailings from Harris to Uig and Uig to Lochmaddy have been cancelled until further notice. For further information on any of Caledonian MacBrayne's sailings today, please contact the local port or see [www.calmac.co.uk](http://www.calmac.co.uk)

**Isle of Cumbrae** left Rothesay this afternoon and has gone to Ardmaleish for her annual overhaul.

Updates: **Caledonian Isles** and **Coruisk** continue to use Gourock as there base for sailings today as the weather in the firth continues to be very choppy. **Caledonian Isles** has reportedly just left Brodick (13:40) to join fleet mate **Isle of Mull** in Garvel Dry Dock, Gourock and her annual overhaul. **Clansman** has also been reported leaving at 13.50 for Gourock. **Coruisk** will depart Rothesay for Gourock at 15.45 - this will be last sailing off the day for that route.



Caledonian Isles leaving Gourock Today

Updates: **Clansman** has just been seen off Rothesay at 1530 inbound to Gourock, from Brodick. She has relieved **Caledonian Isles** on the Arran Run. **Juno** has now been seen sailing back down to Rothesay. **Coruisk** has also been seen sailing back up to Gourock. **Caledonian Isles** is currently lying at the mouth of Loch Long (16:00) waiting to berth at Gourock, **Clansman** must be berthing first.

Updates: **Isle of Lewis** is making her run back to Stornoway at her usual time 17:30. **Hebrides** is expected to do her run to Uig tomorrow morning. **Isle of Arran** has again been operating on the Mull run and did not make Colonsay due to bad weather. **Lord of the Isles** lay alongside North Pier in Oban all day, so presumably she did not do Tiree or Barra. Again due to weather and heavy SW gales. **NorthLink:** Due to the adverse weather conditions, and in the interests of passenger comfort and safety, the 16.30 sailing from Stromness and the 19.00 sailing from Scrabster on 05.01.2005 and the 03:45 from Stromness and 06:00 from Scrabster on 06.01.2005 have been cancelled. Please note that the 09:00 sailing from Stromness on 06.01.2005 is under review. Further updates on this sailing will be available from 07:30

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04/01/05 This morning's 0820 sailing from Brodick and the return from Ardrossan at 0945 were cancelled due to **Disruption:** high winds preventing **Caledonian Isles** approaching Ardrossan. High winds also saw **Lochnevis** stormbound at Mallaig all day, unable to carry out either Armadale sailing or her run to the Small Isles. The Tarbert - Portavadie service was suspended until further notice, as were sailings between Berneray and Leverburgh on the **Loch Portain**. The **Loch Bhrusda's** 1710 to Eriskay and 1815 to Ardmhor have also been cancelled. **NorthLink:** Due to adverse weather conditions and in the interest of passenger comfort and safety the 16:30 sailing from Stromness and the 19:00 sailing from Scrabster on Tuesday 4th January and the 03:45 sailing from Stromness and 06:00 from Scrabster on Wednesday 5th January have been cancelled. Also due to the adverse weather forecast the 09:00 sailing from Stromness and the 12:00 sailing from Scrabster on Wednesday 5th January are under review. A further update will be available at 07:30 on 5th January from NorthLink.

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03/01/05 **Loch Tarbert** arrived in Oban at 2pm today, berthing well round the Railway pier where the fishing fleet normally occupy. She is on her way back to the Clyde after annual relief duties.

**Brenda Corlett** (formally **Pioneer**) appears to have departed Gibraltar for Africa. Updates to follow.  
*Update:* Apologies for the earlier confusion. We have just received news from Gibraltar confirming that **Brenda Corlett** left the east anchorage this morning and sailed into the port (of Gibraltar) at about 10:30. She is due to be in port for reportedly docking. This will include more stores and bunkers for her next leg of her voyage to Africa. She may also be receiving structural upgrades and modification to allow her to operate in her new role as a warm climate car ferry.

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02/01/05 **NorthLink** has confirmed its schedule for the dry-docking of its passenger ferry fleet for annual maintenance in Denmark.

**Hamnavoe** will be out of service from Monday 24 January until Thursday 3 February, with **Hebridean Isles**, on charter from Caledonian MacBrayne, standing-in to operate the Stromness-Scrabster route during this time.

**Hrossey** will depart for dry dock on Sunday 20 February, returning to service on or around Tuesday 1 March, with **Hjaltland** proceeding to Denmark on her return. **Hjaltland** is scheduled to be in dry dock for eight days and normal service is expected to be resumed by Thursday 10 March.

Between Sunday 20 February and Wednesday 9 March, therefore, the Aberdeen – Kirkwall – Lerwick route will be served by one vessel only, which will travel north one day and south the next. The company's freight service will be increased during this time to ensure daily cargo operations continue throughout the dry dock period.

Passengers already booked to travel on sailings affected by the dry dock schedule will be contacted by the company to allow transfer or refund of reservations.

For full details on the Lerwick-Kirkwall-Aberdeen service please see [www.northlinkferries.co.uk](http://www.northlinkferries.co.uk)

**Jupiter** assumed the role of Dunoon ferry, taking over from **Juno** this morning. **Juno** was then sighted heading down to Wemyss Bay to take over from **Saturn**, which then sailed to Gourock and took over the Dunoon service from 1820. Elsewhere, in the Western Isles the **Clansman** was operating the Oban - Craignure sailings while **Isle of Arran** took the afternoon sailing out to Castlebay and Lochboisdale. **Lord of the Isles** spent the day lying at Oban's Railway Pier.

#### **Pioneer Update:**

**Brenda Corlett** arrived around 11:00am today at Gibraltar and is currently awaiting a berth at the port. Her next step will be the west coast of Africa.



[Enlarge Image](#) (© AIS Live)

**Disruption:** **Gourock - Dunoon** service: Due to technical problems, today's sailings between Gourock and Dunoon are cancelled until further notice. For further information please contact local CalMac port. [www.calmac.co.uk](http://www.calmac.co.uk) **Update:** Sailings now resumed from 11:20

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01/01/05 **Isle of Mull** is reported to now be in James Watt Dock following her collision with **Lord of the Isles**. No indications on how long she will be there are available as of yet.

DATE	NEWS
21/02/05	<b>Bruernish</b> was on <b>Eigg's</b> roster to Lismore today.

Read **Bute's** Launch covered by '[The Buteman](#)'

20/02/05	<p><b>Clansman</b> was having her new windows fitted today. It is the centre bridge wing window which is now longer than the two at the side of it. The starboard one was done by 3pm today. Her lifeboats are resting on the dock side.</p> <p><b>NorthLink:</b> It appears that the <b>Hjaltland</b> is the NorthLink ship dry docking first - She left Lerwick today light for Frederikshavn and <b>Hrossey</b> is currently on service to Hatston and Lerwick. They switch over around March 1st.</p>
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19/02/05	<p><b>NorthLink:</b> The <b>Hrossey</b> will depart for Denmark Tomorrow (Sunday) for her annual overhaul. She is expected to return to service around the 1st of March. During this time there will be no passenger replacement for the <b>Hrossey</b> on the Aberdeen-Kirkwall (Hatston) - Lerwick route, with the ship travelling North one day and South the next. The <b>Clare</b> and <b>Hrossey</b> are however expected to step up the freight sailings to relieve the pressure. When the <b>Hrossey</b> returns from Denmark, the <b>Hjaltland</b> will then be relieved to attend her annual overhaul. This will see the ship out of service from the 1st to 10th of March.</p>
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18/02/05	It is noted today that the current spare vessel, <b>Isle of Arran</b> will be used on the Gourock - Dunoon crossing during the Bute Jazz festival which runs annually from 28th April - 2nd May 2005.
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 "[Fresh Talks to Avert Ferry Strike](#)"

17/02/05	<p><b>Clansman</b> today in Dry Dock. It appears she is getting a refit to her observation lounge and her bridge wing windows are being lengthened. As well as other things onboard, externally she is mainly just receiving paint work attention.</p>
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14/02/05	<p><b>Loch Portain</b> departed Lochmaddy today at 07:00 and will sail overnight to Jura where she will berth at Craighouse until Tuesday morning when she will arrive at Garvel for her annual overhaul. <b>Clansman</b> was due at Canada Dock, NW Ship Repairers, Birkenhead today and duly arrived there at 07:00 this morning and moved into Dry Dock later in the afternoon. <b>Lord of the Isles</b> is due to take the 09:30 ex Oban for OIS in lieu of yesterday's sailing.</p>
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Clansman Today... ..testing her Equipment... ..and entering Canada Dry Dock

13/02/05

**Coruisk** appears to be heading upriver presumably for Gourock. The wind seems to be hampering operations on the Bute crossing. One of the Streakers is on the Dunoon run at the moment. **Caledonian Isles** is currently stormbound at Brodick at the moment with a possibility she may sail later this afternoon. **Hebrides** and **Hebridean Isles** were also stormbound today. **Isle of Lewis** is to do a special 17:35 Ullapool - Stornoway (in lieu of Saturday 12th) **Clansman** is due to for Liverpool and her overhaul at 15:00 tomorrow.



**Juno this morning making her way in the gales**

**Juno** remained on the Dunoon roster until 16:10 and then proceeded to the James Watt Dock. **Saturn**, newly released from overhaul was able to make for Wemyss Bay for a 12:15 departure for Rothesay. **Jupiter** was then free to sail for Dunoon and offer a service between the rostered times for three and a half hours from 11:50. She took over the Dunoon roster at 16:20. **Jupiter** departed for Dunoon at 20:15. The tide was so low that passengers had to embark via the linkspan as the gangway could not be fitted on to the upper deck.

**Disruptions:** Gales are affecting the following crossings with cancellations on all following: Lochmaddy - Uig - Lochmaddy, Rathlin - Ballycastle, Wemyss Bay - Rothesay, Colintraive - Rhubodach, Sound of Barra, Portavadie - Tarbert, Sconser - Raasay. For up-to-date information check the CalMac link above. **NorthLink:** Cancellations affecting Pentland Firth Route: **Hamnavoe** is currently berthed in Stromness. Due to adverse weather conditions and in the interest of passenger comfort and safety the 09:00 sailing from Stromness to Scrabster and the 12:00 sailing from Scrabster to Stromness have been cancelled. The 16:45 sailing from Stromness to Scrabster and the 19:00 sailing from Scrabster to Stromness will be reviewed at 12:00. **Update:** **Hamnavoe** is still currently berthed in Stromness. The 16:45 sailing from Stromness to Scrabster has been delayed until 18:00 with an estimated arrival time of 20:00 in Scrabster and the 19:00 sailing from Scrabster to Stromness has been delayed until 20:30 with an estimated arrival time of 22:30 in Stromness.

12/02/05

Heavy gales in Oban are causing berthing problems for all ferries using the area. **Clansman** was sighted circling the bay while **Isle of Mull** was pinned to the pier unable to move for a while, she eventually got off allowing the **Clansman** to arrive and unload by her stern. **Isle of Mull** went out by the north channel to circle allowing the **Clansman** to depart and try to dock at the fuel berth, this failed and she left for Craignure. **Isle of Mull** then re-berthed bow in and took 40mins to get off the linkspan again due to high winds. She eventually turned right around on the spot out in the bay to correct her self. **Hebridean Isles** is reported to be stern only loading for Islay at the moment which suggests a possible problem with her bow visor, updates to follow...

11/02/05

**Eigg** is due at Corpach on Monday for her annual overhaul.

10/02/05

**Lord of the Isles** is now back in Oban along with **Clansman** and **Isle of Mull** after her extensive external refurbishment. **Clansman** is due in Liverpool Canada Dock, North West Ship Repairers at Birkenhead on Monday for her annual overhaul at Birkenhead. **NorthLink:** Due to the continued poor weather the afternoon sailings (16:45 from Stromness and 19:00 from Scrabster) have been cancelled. This means the **Hamnavoe** was only able to make one return crossing from Stromness Today.

09/02/05

**MV Bute - Launched in Poland this afternoon. [Click here to watch the movie.](#)**

Elsewhere, **Hebridean Isles** has resumed service on the Islay crossings, allowing **Isle of Arran** to return to Gourock this afternoon. Presumably she will lie there either until she is needed on relief elsewhere in the network, or she goes in for her annual overhaul (possibly with **Loch Portain...?**) And as the weather closed in over the Western Isles, disruptions were announced. The lunchtime Sound of Barra return sailing was cancelled due to tidal conditions. The evening sailing was cancelled

due to deteriorating weather conditions. The following sailings were also cancelled: 1700 ex Raasay, 1800 ex Sconser, 1745 ex Lochaline and 1810 ex Fishnish. The Fionnphort - Iona crossing was also subject to short notice cancellation due to the weather in the Sound of Iona.

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08/02/2005 **MV Bute to Launch in Poland**



Caledonian MacBrayne's new vessel for the Wemyss Bay-Rothesay service, MV Bute, will be launched in Gdansk, Poland on Wednesday, February 9. The launch will take place at 1400 local time, 1300 UK time. Part of the traditional part of the launching ceremony will be the placing of a Scottish one pound coin under the keel of the new vessel as she is slipped into the water at the Northern yard of the Remontowa Group which has been building the new ship. MV Bute will hit the water sideways and the builders are arranging to cover the event live with a web cam. CalMac Chairman Dr Mills said: "The yard has promised a spectacular launch and while MV Bute will still not be in her full company colours, the event promises to be spectacular. It will also involve a Scottish contingent from Gdansk and the yard is keen that they show the event as widely as possible to let the people of Wemyss Bay and Rothesay in particular see something of what they are about to enjoy." If you wish to watch the launch live via the webcam, the technical arrangements are as follows:

<http://www.remontowa.com.pl/html/calmac/calmac.htm>

Please note that the yard has advised that "because of low bandwidth of cellular connection the broadcast won't be fluent".

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07/02/05 This evening's 1715 sailing ex Ullapool and tomorrow morning's crossing at 0715 from Stornoway have been cancelled because of poor weather conditions. Likewise, this evening's 1710 from Ardmhor and 1815 from Eriskay are also cancelled.

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06/02/05 **NorthLink:** The **Hamnavoe** is back in Stromness Today. The **Hebridean Isles** is expected in from Scrabster this evening where she will unload and depart for the Western Isles. The **Hamnavoe** will resume service Tomorrow with a 6:30 sailing from Stromness to Scrabster. Monday the 7th will mark the beginning of the new Scrabster - Stromness timetable which has been delayed due to the overrun of the **Hamnavoe's** dry dock period due to engine problems. The new timetable is basically a reversal of the old timetable with a 6:30, 11:00 and 16:45 from Stromness and a 8:45, 1:15 and 19:00 from Scrabster.

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04/02/05 The **Hebridean Isles** has cancelled the 03:45 from Stromness and the 6:00 from Scrabster due to bad weather.

Locals in Harris have once again objected to Sunday movements by CalMac. This time it doesn't refer to the repositioning of The Hebrides on a Sunday from Lochmaddy to Tarbert, but the Leverburgh-Berneray service. There was talk of one return sailing per day in the summer months but this idea has been abandoned for another year...



Lord of the Isles repair patchwork underway at the moment in dry dock

 **"Ferry Union Threatens Strike Move"**

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03/02/05 Notice has been given of disruptions on the Sound of Harris route next week. On Tuesday 8th and Wednesday 9th February, the 1110 ex Berneray and 1220 ex Leverburgh will not run. Likewise the 1220 ex Leverburgh and 1430 ex Berneray on Thursday 10th, Friday 11th and Saturday 12th February are cancelled due to tidal conditions in the very shallow Sound of Harris. Check the external link above for further information from Calmac. **Loch Portain** currently remains in charge of the route, although by then she may have been relieved by **Loch Bhrusda** when she goes off for her overhaul.

**NorthLink:** As earlier reported the return of the **Hamnavoe** from her overhaul in Denmark will be delayed. She is 24 hours behind schedule after the vessel developed a main engine fault shortly into her return journey home last night. Repairs are ongoing and the vessel is expected to depart for Shetland sometime this evening, returning to service (Stromness-Scrabster) on Saturday morning. The new Pentland Firth timetable (which was due to begin on Friday) will now come into effect on the vessels return. The **Hebridean Isles** will continue to hold station in the absence of the **Hamnavoe**. *Update:...* Looks like the earlier report that the **Hamnavoe** would be sailing to Lerwick from Denmark tonight were inaccurate. It actually looks like she will be leaving the shipyard on Friday returning to service sometime late in the weekend or the start of next week.

02/02/05 **NorthLink:** There are unconfirmed reports the the **Hamnavoe** has suffered major engine trouble whilst on her annual overhaul in Denmark. It is reported that a piston liner in one of her main engines is the cause of the problem. If the reports are true then this will undoubtedly cause a setback to the Thursday/Friday return date and consequently the radically changed new timetable which is proposed to start on Friday 4th February. No doubt the complete story will filter through shortly, so watch this space... For the time being the Pentland Firth route is being kept open by the chartered **Hebridean Isles**.

01/02/05 It has been confirmed that following the introduction of **MV Bute** this summer, the staker **Saturn** is to be redeployed as second vessel on the Ardrossan - Brodick route for a ten week trial period. The upgraded vessel will provide three additional sailings each day and will carry up to 40 cars and 250 passengers on each crossing. This will be in addition to the regular timetable operated by **Caledonian Isles**.  
The Greenock Telegraph today printed a photograph of the new **Bute** under construction in Poland. She is currently built to her upper deck level although she is yet to have the bridge and twin funnels added. The photo shows her hull's underwater layout, similar to that of **Coruisk**.

DATE NEWS

31/03/05 Gourock - Dunoon sailings this morning have been noted as 'passenger only' suggesting a problem with one of the Streakers or linkspan. More updates as and when.

26/03/05 The summer timetable has begun, with all vessels where they should be. **Hebrides** returned from overhaul, letting sister **Clansman** back to Oban. **Clansman** now on Coll-Tiree roster, while **Lord of the Isles** on Barra-Lochboisdale roster.

**Isle of Arran** now based at the wires until she is required at Islay. She is seen here today at the wires having general maintenance.



Isle of Arran at the wires, Gourock.

24/03/05 **Eigg** is still on the Jura service after early accounts of her return to Oban. **Clansman** Should be returning to Oban today, as **Hebrides** left Birkenhead on Tuesday night for Uig. The Summer Timetable is due to start tomorrow morning.

**Lord of the Isles** will make the Barra-Lochboisdale sailing this afternoon for her to be in position for the start of the timetable. **Clansman** will be in Oban ready for the Coll-Tiree sailing on Friday morning.

**Isle of Arran** moved from JWD this morning to Gourock. She then underwent trials at both Gourock and Dunoon Breakwater for the up



Eigg Departing Port Askaig for Feolin.

and coming cover of the **Streakers**. She was sighted around 16:10 at Dunoon undergoing various manoeuvres. She duly completed these trials and returned to the wires for completion of her Overhaul. **Hebrides** returned to Tarbert, Harris last night (Wednesday 23rd) for completion of her overhaul. She then made for Lochmaddy this morning to relieve her twin sister, **Clansman** so she could return to Oban.

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23/03/05 **Loch Alainn** returned to Largs this morning from the wires, Ready for Friday morning. **Isle of Cumbrae** is no longer at Largs, **Loch Tarbert** was still covering at lunch time before the **Loch Alainn** returned. **Loch Tarbert** will presumably return to Lochranza ready for Friday. **Caledonian Isles** will make a positioning run on Thursday night for the start of the summer timetable on Friday morning. She will return from Brodick to Ardrossan after Thursdays sailings. This is non-book able run, but she will carry passengers and Vehicles.



Loch Alainn en-route to Largs.

**Isle of Arran** was receiving her final touches to her overhaul today, and testing of lifeboat and FRC systems in JWD.

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22/03/05 **Loch Linnhe** is now back on the Tobermory - Kilchoan route while **Raasay** is back in Oban as the spare vessel. Eigg is now reported to be back on her own station at Lismore. **Isle of Arran** moved from the JW Dry Dock to the Wet Dock sometime this morning which suggests that her annual overhaul is nearing completion. **Loch Alainn** is reported to be at the wires, Gourock possibly making her way back to Largs to resume her service.

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21/03/05 **Coruisk** is now reported to be on her way back to Mallaig to begin her summer timetable. **Loch Alainn** is still reported to be in JWD tonight. During the day she underwent Ramp trails in the dock itself. Meanwhile both the ~~**Loch Tarbert**~~ and the ~~**Isle of Cumbrae**~~ appear to be at Largs covering for her. **Correction**, **Loch Tarbert** was lying at inside berth on cover NOT with **Isle of Cumbrae**.

**Other News:** Western Ferries **Sound of Scarba** underwent betting trails at Dunoon's new linkspan today. It is reported that the **Isle of Arran** will be undergoing trails at the new linkspan on Thursday after she appears from JWD and her overhaul.

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19/03/05 **Loch Alainn** will be moving to Largs tomorrow about midday allowing the smaller relief vessel **Loch Tarbert** to return to Rothesay for a few days.

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17/03/05 **Isle of Cumbrae** was scheduled to go from Rothesay to Tarbert, on Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> March, to relieve **Loch Riddon**, which would then go to Largs, leaving both vessels in place for the start of the summer timetable on 25th. However due to mechanical problems **Isle of Cumbrae** is due to travel to Tarbert, today, to relieve **Loch Riddon** which will then head for Gigha to relieve **Loch Ranza** which is suffering from engine problems and is thought to be returning to the Clyde for repairs.

 **"Ferry Deal to go to RMT Executive"**

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16/03/05 **Coruisk** sailed from the wires at Gourock to join **Loch Alainn** in JWD where she will be having her gangway docking 'ears' removed prior to sailing to Mallaig ready to take over the summer Armadale service. **Coruisk's** ears are extensions to her superstructure to allow her to use the new passenger gangways on the Clyde. They have to be

removed to allow her to operate in the extreme tidal conditions at Mallaig - her summer roster.

**Eigg**, back from her overhaul at Corpach, is now located at Port Askaig on relief for the Council-owned **Eilean Dhuira**. **Bruernish** continues to cover on the Oban - Lismore route.



Coruisk's 'ears' being removed.

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13/03/05 Following damage sustained on Thursday in the gales, **Loch Alainn** was taken out of service and made for JWD for repairs by Garvel. **Loch Tarbert** was sent over from Rothesay to take the Cumbrae sailings this afternoon.

Elsewhere, low tides were affecting certain routes, with disruptions on the Sound of Harris and Fishnish - Lochaline crossings for a time.

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11/03/05 We have just been notified that the **Isle of Lewis** will remain in Ullapool from now until Monday morning and the **Muirneag** will not sail until Monday due to very heavy swells expected in the Minch. The Tarbert-Uig serviced by the Clansman is expected to run on Saturday as timetabled.

**NorthLink:** Due to the continued poor weather in the North the **Hamnavoe** is not making any more sailings Today (11/03). The next scheduled sailing is Tomorrow (12/03) at 9:00, however this sailing is currently under review. The **Hamnavoe** did make a return trip from Stromness this morning. Due to the conditions she has been forced to berth stern first at both Scrabster and Stromness, normally stern at Scrabster and bow at Stromness.

**Other News:** This months **Ships Monthly** (March) features an article on Hamnavoe's current Master. The NorthLink skipper Robert Johnston gives an interview to the Magazine which is available in all good stores.

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10/03/05 Due to engine problems with **Loch Riddon**, the Tarbert - Portavadie service is suspended until further notice. Check with the local CalMac office or on the external link above for updates on this service.

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07/03/05 **Hebrides** arrived at A&P Birkenhead today for her annual overhaul. She is one of the first vessels to use the newly refurbished Monks ferry dry dock for refit by North western ship repairs.

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06/03/05 **Loch Fyne** today covered on a freight run for the **Bruernish** who is in turn covering for **Eigg** on the Lismore roster. **Bruernish's** crew is unable to see over tall HGV's unlike her modified sister **Eigg**. **Loch Fyne** carried two wagons across to the island in a special sailing for her smaller fleet mate. **Eigg** continues to be on the slip at Corpach for her annual overhaul. Her web url and Gaelic name are now being reapplied. It would appear she will be off the slip in the next few days.



Loch Fyne in Oban Bay.

**Clansman** has now departed the Mersey after completing her annual overhaul.

**Bute** now has her bridge and funnels in place and her fitting out is now underway at her ship yard.

**NorthLink:** Apart from the odd cancellation and the refit schedule there have only been a few minor things to cover at the moment. NorthLink Freight ships in Aberdeen have been using the 3rd linkspan operated by Nor Cargo at Mathews Quay. This is due to a problem at the Eurolink after the **Hascosay** came into contact with it. One slight oddity today (Mon 7th) in that the **Clare** is at Hatston in place of the **Hascosay**. The **Clare** also covered the **Hascosay's** Monday Orkney visit last week also.



Bute's Bridge in Place.

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04/03/05 It is expected that **Juno** will be leaving JWD for Gourock later this morning. Following trials, she will berth at the wires where **Isle of Arran** has been for the last few weeks.

**Isle of Arran** will be heading for her own overhaul later today.

It is anticipated that **Juno** will re-enter service on Tuesday, and as she is the final streaker to complete her overhaul, **Coruisk's** turn of duty on the Clyde will be complete for the winter.



Eigg nearing the end of her current overhaul.

**Eigg** is nearing the end of her current overhaul at Corpach, fleet mate and spare Oban vessel **Bruernish** has been maintaining her rota while she sits half in / out of the slip way due to her bridge extension.

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02/03/05 The centre bridge window on **Clansman's** wing is now the same length as the side two. She was refloated today and is now gleaming, receiving the finishing touches to paintwork in Canada Dock, Liverpool. It is likely that the **Hebrides** is to take her annual overhaul on the Mersey after she is relieved by the **Clansman**. Back on the Clyde, **Loch Portain** has completed her overhaul and has been towed back from drydock to the adjacent JWD to join **Juno**.

**NorthLink:** **Hrossey** sailed for Denmark at 09:00 on Tuesday and **Hjaltland** arrived back at 09:20, Tuesday. **Hascosay** is due to sail to Denmark next Tuesday. All sailings to / from Denmark are for annual overhauls.

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01/03/05 We have heard that upon her return from her overhaul in Birkenhead, **Clansman** will sail straight for the Outer Hebrides so as to relieve her sister **Hebrides** for her trip to drydock. We are not sure where she will be docked, but has previously used Garvel on the Clyde.

DATE	NEWS
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29/04/05	We have been told that <b>Lord of the Isles</b> was off duty yesterday because of bow-thrust problems. She returned to service ready for the 1700 sailing to Colonsay this afternoon. <b>Isle of Arran</b> has now finished relieving <b>Clansman</b> and sailed at 0500 this morning for Lochboisdale and Castlebay, in lieu of yesterday's missed sailings due to the weather conditions. She returned to Oban during the afternoon and handed over service to the repaired <b>Lord of the Isles</b> . <b>Clansman</b> is now back in service and running as per her roster, having been to Coll and Tiree this morning and going out to Castlebay this afternoon. <b>Isle of Mull</b> spent last night at Craignure as there was no berth for her at Oban.
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28/04/05 **Clansman** appears to have returned to Oban yesterday still out of service. She was this morning missing from Oban once again. Strong winds have led to suspensions of the following services: Oban - Tiree - Barra, **Clansman** was unable to berth at Tiree and is returning to Oban, Ardmhor (Barra) - Eriskay suspended for the rest of the day, Kennacraig - Islay cancelled with the situation to be reviewed at 1500, no sailing to Muck today, Fionnphort - Iona and Tobermory - Kilchoan services suspended until further notice, Sound of Harris lunchtime sailings cancelled, Tayinloan - Gigha, Tarbert - Portavadie and Lochranza - Claonaig sailings all suspended until further notice.

*Update:* The Mallaig - Armadale service has now been suspended as well.

It looks like there may be a problem with **Lord of the Isles**. She moved over to the North Pier and was tied up, out of service. Oban webcam then showed Calmac crew in high-viz yellow jackets inspecting the port side of the vessel.

**Isle of Arran** was spotted entering Oban Bay at around 1440 and we assumed she would be going to the berth, however she has since vanished and we are not sure what, if anything, is taking the 1510 to Lochboisdale.

*17:00 Update:* **Clansman** entered the bay and unloaded her missed Tiree sailing traffic and has since departed. (Her whereabouts were not known but she was back at the Railway Pier by 1915.)

*Further Update:* **Isle of Arran** returned to the pier shortly after 1620 and has just left the linkspan to sit out of the way in the middle of the bay as **Isle of Mull** returned from Craignure. She was back at the linkspan by 1805 and subsequently loaded with traffic for a slightly delayed 1800 to Craignure, passing a slow-moving **Isle of Mull** and also **Clansman** returning to Oban. It is also reported that some of the crew of **Lord of the Isles** were taken off to crew **Isle of Arran**.

Meanwhile, the next batch of cancellations include: the Sconser - Raasay 1700/1730 return sailing from Raasay and the remaining sailings on the Lochaline - Fishnish route.



Isle of Arran sighted canting in Oban Bay today at 14:40.



IoA cants while IoM arrives.

27/04/05 **Clansman** looks to have sailed from Oban, destination unknown, possibly back in service although **Isle of Arran** appears to be still in Oban having recently done a Coll / Tiree roster. H.M. Customs & Excise cutter *Sentinel* is at Oban North Pier now. **Bruernish** was on the Lismore run as normal timetable today. No indication to what's happening on the Tobermory-Kilchoan crossing with the absence of a vessel but it is probable that the **Loch Linnhe** has returned from relief duties at Raasay to resume her summer timetable. **Eigg** is at her Oban berth.

*Update:* **Clansman** appears to be now berthed at Craignure possibly for a few days to recover from her recent status.

**NorthLink:** Passenger Figures Keep Climbing for NorthLink [Read More](#) (external link)



Clansman in a grey Oban today.

26/04/05 **Clyde:**

**Loch Ranza** is slipped at Ardmaleish. **Juno** was reported at the wires this AM. **Eigg** has now entered the Clyde estuary on her way to JWD for repairs. Also, **Juno** has returned to the Dunoon run. At around 15:00 **Isle of Cumbrae** responded to a mayday rescue of 3(?) sailors from a upturned dinghy 1 mile NE of Tarbert harbour. They launched their fast rescue boat and escorted the sailors into harbour. The coastguard thanked the Captain and his crew for all their efforts.

**Western Isles:**

**Isle of Arran** was reported on the Dunoon run this morning but appears now to be in Oban near the linkspan having arrived at around 16:00 hours. Correction to earlier report: **Isle of Arran** was berthing stern in at Gourock and not Dunoon. **Clansman** is in Oban currently and appears to be inoperable. **Isle of Arran** seems to have been sent to cover for her. More updates to follow...

Crossing News: CalMac urges passengers travelling to the Bute Jazz festival to use the Colintraive ferry if possible to help relieve strain on the two main Bute ferries.

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25/04/05 **Clyde:**

**Isle of Arran** has taken over the Dunoon run today, reason unknown, starting with the 1620 ex Gourock She is berthing bow-in at Dunoon and stern-in at Dunoon. The staker, **Juno**, is sitting at the wires It is unsure how passengers are being loaded at Dunoon. **Loch Striven** has just left Ardmaleish Slip and is on her way to [presumably] Raasay where she can replace **Loch Linnhe** which will in turn allow **Bruernish** to take over the Lismore run. **Loch Ranza** is expected to arrive tomorrow, so work can get started on her. Services are continuing with **Isle of Arran** on the Dunoon roster, and **Juno** at the wires.

**Western Isles:**

The 1645 ex Oban and 1745 ex Lismore ran today, using **Bruernish** as a relief vessel. Service during these times only runs on a Tuesday and Friday. It is assumed that the 1600 and 1800 ex Tobermory and 1645 and 1845 ex Kilchoan did not run to allow this to take place. This crossing could be solely to allow service vehicles and / or stranded vehicles to move, or could be a temporary occurrence, however, there is no confirmation as of yet. Also, **Eigg** has not yet returned to Oban from her venture south.

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24/04/05 **Isle of Arran** continues to keep us guessing, she is now back at the wires at Gourock. **Loch Striven** still on the slip at Ardmaleish – not sure what is happening there. **Loch Riddon** is at Gigha, covering for **Loch Ranza**, which is due to be slipped once **Loch Striven** is launched. **Loch Ranza** is currently sitting at the outside berth at Largs. No more additional news of **Eigg** today.



Loch Ranza at Largs with Loch Alainn behind (Photo: Mary Neill)

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23/04/05 **Eigg** has left Oban en route to JWD for repairs with engine problems. This means there is currently no Vehicle ferry to Lismore until **Bruernish** is free to move south from Tobermory. **Raasay** is now at the wires (Gourock). **Loch Striven** is confirmed to be at Ardmaleish. **Isle of Arran** has now moved back to Rothesay. Reason unknown but possibly more berthing trials or overspill for some event.

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22/04/05 **Clyde:**

**Isle of Arran** returned for yet more berthing trials at Wemyss Bay today, but berthing bow in before returning to the wires at Gourock. It appears her berthing trials are over. **Raasay** is heading up to, presumably, Gourock, and, at time of reporting (approx 2030), has passed Wemyss Bay terminal.

**Western Isles:**

There was no Lismore Service today. **Eigg** is currently out of action at Oban. As previously thought **Bruernish** is NOT on Lismore run. Passengers only are currently having to go via the Port Appin - Lismore ferry.

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21/04/05 **Clyde:**

**Isle of Arran** was doing berthing trials at Wemyss Bay, possibly for the upcoming Jazz festival and moved to Rothesay, where she is now berthed. **Isle of Cumbrae** arrived at Tarbert this evening, from Rothesay. The **Isle of Cumbrae** is due to take over Portavadie service from 08:00 tomorrow, thus freeing up **Loch Riddon** to depart Tarbert in the morning for Gigha, to relieve **Loch Ranza** that is coming back to the Clyde to be slipped at Ardmaleish to have a Voith unit repair carried out. We believe **Loch Striven** is now slipped at Ardmaleish, Bute - we will try and confirm this in the morning. Once **Loch Striven** is repaired we believe she is to head back to Raasay and allow the **Loch Ranza** use of the slipway at Ardmaleish.

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**Western Isles:**

This morning's 0900 Oban - Tiree - Barra sailing did not sail, as a result of engine problems (reportedly a cracked cylinder lining) on the **Clansman**. Barra traffic was rescheduled onto the 1510 sailing to Lochboisdale on **Lord of the Isles** this afternoon. After unloading at Lochboisdale, she will then make an additional crossing to Castlebay before picking up her roster with the 0900 sailing from Lochboisdale to Oban tomorrow. It is hoped that Tiree traffic will be carried on a special extra sailing this evening, if the **Clansman** is fixed. See Calmac's disruptions link above for up-to-date details. There was no Lismore service until 1045 ex Oban today, all other sailings (0845 ex Oban and 0945 ex Lismore) were cancelled.

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20/04/05 **Loch Striven** is due at the Ardmaleish boat yard tomorrow morning to receive attention to her recent fault. The 16:45 from Oban to Lismore did not run, neither did the 17:45 ex Lismore service. Reason unknown, but following the deployment of **Bruernish** on the run recently it appears **Eigg** may be having technical difficulties. It is unclear what, if any vessel is currently on the Lismore run due to the fact that **Bruernish** has had to make a move for emergency service at Tobermory to cover for **Loch Linnhe**.

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19/04/05 **Loch Riddon** is at Tarbert to cover for **Isle of Cumbrae** who has been slip'ed at Ardmaleish to get a leak fixed. There also appears to be problems with either the **Coruisk** or **Loch Nevis** at Mallaig as due to technical problems a sailing has been cancelled. Sailings now seem to have resumed at Mallaig.

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18/04/05 **Loch Striven** has gone to Stornoway for repairs following problems over the last couple of days. **Loch Linnhe** has sailed north to Raasay to cover the timetable there and **Bruernish** has sailed up the Sound of Mull to cover on the Tobermory - Kilchoan crossing until the **Loch Striven** has been repaired and the vessels can return to their normal duties.

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17/04/05 **Bruernish** was deployed on the Lismore service today. Reason unknown. **Lord of the Isles** abandoned her call to Coll / Tiree due to adverse weather conditions today and headed back to Oban. **Loch Striven** appears to be having technical difficulties at Sconser.

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15/04/05 **Raasay** is reportedly currently lying at the old naval pier at Fairlie. She was assumed to be either at Largs, Rothesay or Gourock to tie-up as Clyde small vessel.

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11/04/05  Service Disruption: Lochaline - Fishnish Service. Due to slipway damage and low tides, the 14:25 from Lochaline and the 14:50 from Fishnish sailings have been cancelled today. **Eigg** was unusually using the large vessel linkspan in Oban this morning to unload her traffic from Lismore. The linkspan was reportedly touching the water as she withdrew from the berth. No indications why this was although it could be tide related making large / low vehicles exit / entrance difficult at the slipway. **Saturn** was having mechanical problem this morning. As a consequence the 06:30 ex-Rothesay and 07:15 ex-Wemyss Bay sailings were cancelled, but normal service were resumed after the 08:00 sailing ex-Rothesay.

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10/04/05 One of the Island Class Vessels (either **Raasay** or **Bruernish**) is currently lying in Largs marina. Its is assumed it is Raasay as she was last sighted on the move. Confirmed reports to follow. *Update 18:00*: Confirmed Island Class at Largs is **Raasay** recently arrived from Oban.

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09/04/05 Low tide related disruption: **Caledonian Isles'** 6pm sailing from Ardrossan on this evening couldn't berth at Brodick due to a lack of water at the pier. **Caledonian Isles** cruised Brodick Bay for a short while before berthing successfully at the second attempt. Later sailings ran 30 minutes late. First time I can recall this happening in 13 years of travelling to and from Arran comments a SoC reporter.

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08/04/05 **Loch Alainn** has this morning left Millport Pier bound for Largs to pick up her duties on the 10:15 run out of Largs. She spent last night at the pier due to high winds and another low tide. The Stornoway ferry has been cancelled all day again, like yesterday due to high winds. **Raasay** has just passed **Clansman** off Craignure heading for Oban 15:21. **Loch Fyne** is subject to disruption due to low tides and her first sailing

should be 14:25. There also seems to be some heavy congestion at Oban at the moment with **Isle of Mull** using the Linkspan with **Clansman** circling near the Bay entrance. She in turn was followed by the **Lord of the Isles** who hung around nearer Lismore waiting for **Clansman** to emerge again. **Isle of Arran** was sighted inbound up the Clyde heading for Gourock around 14:00.

**NorthLink:** Both Today's 06:30 (Stromness - Scrabster) and 08:45 (Scrabster - Stromness) have also been cancelled. **Hrossey** only departed Hatston at 07:45 this morning and is expected to arrive in Lerwick at 13:30. The adverse weather did not affect the South bound **Hjaltland** due to the following sea.

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07/04/05 Due to high winds and rough seas, the following sailings were cancelled, Mallaig-Armadale, Ullapool-Stornoway, Tarbert-Portavadie and the Small Isles. The following services are back on, Oban-Mull, Lochranza-Claonaig, Lochaline-Fishnish. Certain sailings have been cancelled on the Lochaline-Fishnish and the Sound of Harris due to low tides, contact local offices for more information on these sailings. The **Clansman** had to proceed from Tiree to Barra via the Cairns of Coll rather than Gunna Sound due to the rough weather, this has delayed her by approx 2 hours. The **Isle of Arran** spent last night at Colonsay, and possibly tonight as well and then she is due to return to the Wires. **Isle of Lewis** braved the Minch in the high winds only to turn back after safety was put first. **Muirneag** is not expected to make her overnight freight run.



Recent storm damage to Eriskay breakwater.

**NorthLink:** Due to the strong North winds over the last few days there have been serious disruptions to Northlink's services. **Hamnavoe** made a Stromness - Scrabster sailing this Morning, however she returned from Scrabster without any paying passengers or cargo. She then made no further sailings.

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06/04/05 The port of Eriskay has been reported to have major structural damage to the breakwater after the storms last January. The winds were reported to reach 130mph, no wonder it was damaged. Photo's to come soon as Dave returns from his trip north. **Lord of the Isles** has returned to service after completing repairs to a continuing fault to her stabilisers. She replaced **Isle of Arran** this afternoon after the **Arran** arrived in from Barra. **Lord of the Isles** taking the Port Askaig run this evening. **Isle of Arran** then moved to the fuel berth to prepare for her return to the Clyde. She may stick around at Craignure to make sure the stabiliser fault doesn't re-surface on the **Lord of the Isles**. **Isle of Arran** relieved **loti** from Sunday until Today, I was very fortunate to be returning to Oban from Tiree on Sunday, and was able to travel on the **Arran**. This vessel re-deployment shows the great capability the fleet has to cover when a breakdown occurs, with minimal disruption to the timetable.



Isle of Arran arriving at Tiree.

**Clansman** was sighted in the sound of mull on route to barra on Sunday with her new windows in her bridge. These help to make her bridge look more balanced, and help the skipper have better visibility while berthing. They have been lengthened on her bridge wings only.



Clansman in the Sound of Mull.

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03/04/05 **Loch Tarbert** is at the Largs outside berth out of service still following her recent technical problems. **Loch Riddon** is covering at Lochranza. **Isle of Arran** is thought to be covering for **Lord of the Isles** at Oban (*Update: arrived at 17:25*). **Eigg** is back at Oban after her stint on charter at Islay. **Lord of the Isles** was sighted this morning at the railway pier in Oban out of service resulting in the **Isle of Arran** going out to Tiree. **Lord of the Isles** was later noted at 16:10 making her way 'light' out past Kerrera towards Craignure. More updates to follow as and when.

02/04/05 Once again the Lochranza - Claonaig service is off until further notice. This is due to mechanical problems again.

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01/04/05 Due to mechanical problems with the **Loch Tarbert**, sailings between Lochranza and Claonaig have been suspended until further notice. Check with the link above for further updates.

*Update:* It would appear that sailings have now been resumed on the Kilbrannan Sound crossing (time 1350)

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DATE	NEWS
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28/05/05	Adverse weather conditions have forced the cancellation of sailings on the following routes: Berneray - Leverburgh; situation to be reviewed at 1130, Lochmaddy - Uig; 0730 sailing postponed until further notice, Mallaig - Small Isles, Mallaig - Armadale; sailings to be reviewed frequently, Lochranza - Claonaig; 0930 round trip cancelled and situation to be reviewed at 1015. See the external link for full details.
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27/05/05 Caledonian Isles was using the old Irish berth for her evening arrival. We are not sure of the reason for this but she was reported running approximately an hour late.

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26/05/05 This morning's 0700 sailing from Ardrossan to Brodick was cancelled due to adverse weather conditions. For further updates on the day's service, see the external link above

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23/05/05 NorthLink: It seems NorthLink have switched the role of the freighters. Clare is at Hatston, Orkney this morning with the Hascosay at the Euro Link in Aberdeen. The Clare will sail for Aberdeen this evening with presumably the Hascosay sailing for Lerwick.

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21/05/05 Suilven, a past Caledonian MacBrayne ferry celebrated her first year in service with Suilven Shipping this week. After a migration from Scotland to the warmer waters of New Zealand she later joined her current operators on a Ro-Ro Role in Fiji. For more information and too take a look at the fantastic condition her current owners are keeping her in, visit [Suilven Shipping](#).

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19/05/05 "Bute Now Due in July" The official naming ceremony for MV Bute had been due to take place on Friday, June 24, with the vessel entering service later that day, but a Caledonian MacBrayne spokesperson told us on Monday that the vessel's arrival in Scottish waters was going to be delayed. Read more and view latest pictures from the online [BUTEMAN](#).

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#### Other News...

It has been confirmed that the Brenda Corlett (ex Pioneer) has started service with her new owners. The "Service started May 2005, sailing from Principe to Douala, Tiko, Calabar, Malibo, sailing times and schedules have yet to be regularised." quotes the website. For More Information visit the site [here](#).

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18/05/05 Due to adverse weather conditions, the Loch Tarbert was unable to make her scheduled sailings at 1825 from Lochranza and returning from Claonaig at 1900.

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17/05/05 Isle of Cumbrae was reported back on the Tarbert roster this afternoon.

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15/05/05 Loch Dunvegan is back in service at the Kyles of Bute. Isle of Cumbrae has been assisting the Loch Alann on the Cumbrae run. Loch Riddon still holding the fort at Tarbet-Portavadie. Isle of Arran was covering Hebridean Isles on the Islay run, as the latter required maintenance. It is still TBC if Isle of Arran is still on the run, or if the Hebridean Isles has resumed service. Isle of Arran is due to join the Islay service on Friday 20th of May, as the second vessel on the Route. To see the times of this service, please consult the timetable.

Lochnevis took an additional sailing from Mallaig to Rum and back this afternoon.

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11/05/05 **Isle of Cumbrae** is now on relief duties at Colintraive, having been relieved at Tarbert by **Loch Riddon**. **Loch Dunvegan** made her way to Gourock today for a berth at the wires. She will be entering Garvel dry dock for work on one of her Voith units.



IoC and Loch Riddon at Tarbert  
on changeover 10th May

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09/05/05 **Loch Ranza** is now back home on service at Gigha. **Loch Riddon** should be in Campbeltown by now, having departed Gigha this afternoon.

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08/05/05 **Loch Ranza** is due to depart Largs for Gigha on Monday am, weather permitting to relieve **Loch Riddon**, which is due at Tarbert on Tuesday pm.

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07/05/05 **Loch Linnhe** is now back in service at Tobermory as of this morning which allowed **Bruernish** proceeded to Oban lay-by berth.

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06/05/05 **Loch Striven** should be back at Raasay by now, with **Loch Linnhe** due in Tobermory tomorrow at some point. Both movements are still TBC at this stage. **Loch Ranza** should be off the slip by now and acting as second boat at Largs until Monday am – providing there is no problem with replaced Voith unit. Then (on Monday am) she is to head back to Gigha and relieve **Loch Riddon**, which in turn will relieve the **Isle of Cumbrae** at Tarbert. This would then allow **Isle of Cumbrae** to relieve **Loch Dunvegan** on the Colintraive - Rhubodach crossing on Wednesday. **Loch Dunvegan** will apparently then proceed to either Gourock wires berth or JWD overnight and be dry docked in Garvel on Thursday, although we're not sure what the reason for this is.

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04/05/05 **Loch Striven** was at Largs this morning at 10:00. She had vanished by 14:00 presumably on her way back to Raasay.

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03/05/05 **Loch Ranza** was slipped at Ardmaleish today, following **Loch Striven** returning to the water.

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02/05/05 **Isle of Cumbrae** has broken down resulting in the Tarbert - Portavadie Service being cancelled until further notice. **Loch Ranza** currently lies at the outer berth at Largs pier, when not being used to assist on the Cumbrae crossing. **Loch Linnhe** is at Raasay (sighted 31/04/05) while the **Loch Striven** remains on Ardmaleish Slip. **Saturn** on the Rothesay roster had capacity problems and had to leave a number of cars and lorries, all of which were conveyed on a later sailing. **Isle of Cumbrae** resumed service about mid-morning at Tarbert to Portavadie after engine repairs. **Saturn** was required to do an extra sailing from Rothesay tonight at 19.45 to clear traffic from the Bute Jazz Festival.  
*Some Late News In:* While **Lord of the Isles** took the 17:00 to Colonsay on Friday night, **Isle of Arran** sailed to Port Ellen for an overnight berth before crossing to Kennacraig on Saturday morning.

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DATE	NEWS
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28/06/05	<i>The new Bute was spotted off the front at Gourock at 22.45 this evening, presumably headed for the pier (or perhaps JWD.)</i>
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22/06/05	<i>From 'The Buteman': "Work began on moving Rothesay pier's new gangway into place on Sunday, with foot passengers boarding and disembarking the ferry via the car deck." More on this article on The Buteman's website <a href="#">here</a> (external link).</i>
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21/06/05 We have received UNCONFIRMED reports that the Bute may be leaving Poland tomorrow for a possible direct 3-4 day crossing to the Clyde. Any further updates or confirmed reports will be posted as and when we receive them.

Two late comers for the 19:00 Craignure departure tonight on board Isle of Mull were quickly ushered to the Lochaline ferry Loch Fyne which abruptly made a 180 degree turn mid crossing to pick them up for the last crossing from the Island for the day.

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20/06/05 We are getting a report that Bute has been possibly sighted from Norfolk Line's Dawn Merchant in the English channel..

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16/06/05 NorthLink: The engine problem with the Hamnavoe was repaired this Afternoon allowing the ship to return to full power and therefore the normal crossing time of 1 hour 30 minutes. She arrived at Aberdeen at 08:30.

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16/06/05 STEPHEN GIVES GREEN LIGHT TO NEW OBAN LINKSPAN



Transport Minister Nicol Stephen today gave the go-ahead for CalMac to begin work on a new £3 million ferry access ramp at Oban pier.

The Minister approved CalMac's application for a harbour revision order which will give them the power to build a second linkspan at the pier. This will increase the pier's capacity, minimising delays and improving access to the islands. The decision follows a public local inquiry held in February into the proposals.

Mr Stephen said:

"Oban is one of the west coast's busiest ports serving Coll, Colonsay, Mull, South Uist and Tiree. These islands are currently served by a single linkspan which is due for replacement in the next few years.

"Good quality ferry links are vital to our island communities which is why I have decided to give the go-ahead to a new second linkspan. This will increase capacity and reduce congestion, particularly during the busy summer months.

"I understand the views of the objectors but I am satisfied that their concerns can be addressed by CalMac. I have asked the company to work with local fishing interests and others who use the harbour to ensure appropriate vessel management measures."

As part of the overall project the Scottish Executive will also be providing support for CalMac to provide covered elevated passenger walkways connecting the new terminal with each of the ferry berths.

1. The proposed second linkspan is an adjustable steel lifting bridge, constructed alongside the pier, for the purpose of allowing road vehicles access from the pier to a car ferry at all tide levels. The linkspan and associated works total nearly £3 million investment.

2. CalMac is the harbour authority for Oban pier. Under the terms of the Harbours Act 1964, the authority must apply for a Harbour Revision Order to grant them the power to build and operate the new linkspan.

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15/06/05 NorthLink: The Hamnavoe has Today suffered a problem with one of her two main engines. The ship is currently operating the Scrabster Stromness route with only one engine. The crossing time is therefore increased to 2 hours from the regular 1 hour 30 minutes. At this stage there is no indication what the problem is or when it will be resolved.

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13/06/05 *Saturn* today undertook a berthing trial at Wemyss Bay, lying bow-in at the linkspan so as to test the controversial, newly-constructed passenger gangway. Shortly after she backed out and tied up again stern-in so she could resume her timetable.

10/06/05 An artist impression of the new Wemyss Bay to Rothesay ferry, **Bute**, was released today. This shows what she is going to look like. She is the 70 metres long and 15.3 metres wide. With a speed of 13/14 knots, she will complete the crossing in 30 minutes, with a turnaround time of 15 mins. The inside resembles the **Coruisk**, with a main lounge at the front looking forward, the galley in the middle with seating at the rear and toilets. She has an open end, with also an open after deck, which is covered over for passenger to sit outside, but not get wet. She has twin funnels, and a visor for future drive through service. Also on the upper deck she has seats, and a walk round to the front of the ship. and a couple of decks above is the fully enclosed bridge, resembling the **Hebrides**. She has a car deck height of 5.1 metres, and is able to take the new 60 seater coaches and the latest 42 tonne lorries. She has azimuth propulsion, similar to the **Coruisk**, and she is also fitted with Stabilisers which will help greatly when crossing in the usual winter weather on the Clyde. She is currently on trials in Poland and will hopefully be named on Friday 1st of July in Rothesay, she will then go on a brief cruise with 200 or so invited guests. She will then take up the service later that evening.



MV Bute Impression.



W'Bay's New Gangway.

Wemyss Bay's new gangway is coming along at a great pace, over the last 6 weeks it has been assembled. This has been designed to fit all vessels, from the **Streakers**, to **Lord of the Isles**. But the main purpose was for the gangway to fit the new **Bute** at all states of the tide. It is a robust, covered in, design similar to Oban Gangway. Another advantage is that the gangway will fit **Coruisk** when she is relieving on the Clyde, without her having to have her wings added to her everytime she wants to work on the run. Rothesay are also to receive a Brand new Gangway, but it has not been assembled yet. These two gangways are costing a total of around £250,000. This is a worthwhile price as it gives a great advantage to people, especially old people when boarding, as the vessel can be very high in water. There is also a new ticket office at the bottom of Wemyss Bay pier for passengers to buy tickets, check times etc.

05/06/05 **NorthLink: Hascosay** will depart for Denmark today for engine repair work in dry dock. It is expected that the **Clare** will cover for her freight run.

 01/06/05 **NorthLink: 'NorthLink Charity Cruise Raises £1,600 for Lerwick RNLI'**. As part of Lerwick Lifeboat Day (Saturday, 28 May 2005), NorthLink welcomed onboard more than 250 passengers for the RNLI cruise, raising over £1,600 for the charity. In what has become an annual event, MV **Hrossey** departed Homlsgarth Terminal, Lerwick, at 1430hrs for a trip around the isles of Bressay and Noss, before returning into harbour at 1530hrs. During the cruise, passengers were treated to an exciting display involving the local lifeboat. Including the contribution made by NorthLink's cruise, the total raised by this year's Lerwick Lifeboat Day was over £4,500. Jane Leask, NorthLink's service manager in Lerwick, said: "NorthLink was only too happy to provide the use of MV Hrossey and her crew for this worthwhile charity event. The charity cruise has become a popular part of Lerwick Lifeboat Day and we are delighted to assist Lerwick RNLI with their fundraising."

27/07/05 Following successful repairs to her forward Voith unit, Juno returned to service on the Gourock - Dunoon crossing at 1120. This evening Ali Cat was able to return to her usual duties.

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24/07/05 The Wemyss Bay - Rothesay service has been operated on a one-ship basis today using Bute which indicates a problem on the streaker. Jupiter was berthed at the wires receiving attention. Tomorrow's 0630 sailing from Rothesay has been cancelled due to further mechanical problems. See the external link above for more details.

Juno is due at Troon dry-dock tomorrow to receive repairs on one of her Voith units. It is believed that she has lost a blade from one of her units, hence the underwater inspection by divers a few days ago.

Elsewhere, Loch Buie has had her Voith unit repairs completed and left Troon for trials before proceeding up to Largs to collect crew cars and was reported to be making for Campbeltown for an overnight berth. It is assumed she will return to Fionnphort tomorrow to return to service.

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22/07/05 Juno was inspected by divers at Gourock in the last couple of days and as a result is to be taken out of service at 0920 on Monday morning (25/07) for 'essential repairs' which are expected to last until Wednesday. While Juno is out of service, Ali Cat will be seeing service on the main Gourock - Dunoon roster, maintaining a passenger only service, although her own normal peak sailings will be suspended until Juno returns to service and she can resume her own timetable.

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20/07/05 Loch Buie will Dry Dock at Troon today for repairs to her Voith Unit. It is also noted that the fleet is at 100% capacity with no Spare units available.

Update: Loch Buie passing Saltcoats @ 15:15 en route to Troon.

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19/07/05 Loch Buie is heading south down the west side of Kintyre heading for Campbeltown tonight. She will then make for the Clyde for repairs to her voith unit. It would appear now that Loch Linnhe is on the Iona station and both Raasay and Bruernish at at Tobermory manning the Kilchoan crossing. It is interesting to note that all Island class vessels are now currently in active 'service'.



NorthLink: The Scottish Executive is expected to announce contract details of the revised Northern Isles contract later today.

NorthLink took over the contract in October 2002 from P&O Scottish Ferries, however in April 2004 NorthLink's financial difficulties forced Scottish Executive to put the service out to a re-tender process. It has been reported that £63 million of public money has been spent to keep service afloat since NorthLink's initiation in 2002. The shortlist of the companies invited to tender for the six-year contract is thought to be among the details released today, which is thought to include a sole bid from Caledonian MacBrayne. Therefore, watch this space....



Breaking News...

Ferry operator Caledonian MacBrayne (CalMac) has welcomed confirmation that it is one of the ferry companies confirmed by the Scottish Executive as short listed to tender for the Northern Isles lifeline services contract.

The current operator of the Northern Isles service, NorthLink Ferries, which took up the service in 2002, is jointly owned by Caledonian MacBrayne Ltd and the Royal Bank of Scotland (RBS).

NorthLink and CalMac in May 2004 initially submitted separate expressions of interest as part of the re-tendering process. However, since then, and following a review of its future investment criteria, RBS has decided not to continue its involvement as a shareholder in NorthLink beyond the duration of the current contract. However, RBS will remain as the owner of the ships.

CalMac will now lead a bid for the operation of the service by means of a wholly owned company. CalMac will therefore proceed as the sole shareholder of the new operating company, with the successor to the

current NorthLink business continuing under its own management and infrastructure.

CalMac's Managing Director Lawrie Sinclair said: "CalMac is wholly committed to the NorthLink business and the communities served in the Northern isles. I now look forward to putting in place a strong team which will begin the process of submitting what I am confident will be the successful bid."

Today's announcements will have no effect on current operations in the Northern Isles or employment and NorthLink Ferries will continue to operate the lifeline services while the tender process unfolds.

CalMac's services on the Clyde and in the Outer Hebrides will also not be affected in any way by today's announcement.

Lawrie Sinclair said: "The outcome of the Minister's meeting in Brussels yesterday has offered further clarification on the State Aids tendering process for the Clyde and Hebridean routes. CalMac welcomes the clarity and the outcome adds further impetus to our preparations for tendering which have been under way for five years and more. Our staff should be assured that we are now geared up to mounting the strongest possible bid for the services and I am confident we will be best placed to win the competition."

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- 17/07/05 NorthLink: The Hamnavoe carried out an additional early morning sailing from Scrabster to Stromness today to accommodate the large volume of freight generated by the visiting circus. The circus is in Stromness for the local gala week and it is expected to leave Orkney for Shetland via NorthLink at the end of the week. The large volume of freight is then expected to sail directly back to Aberdeen via NorthLink once again.
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- 16/07/05 It appears that ex CalMac ferry Pioneer (now renamed Brenda Corlett) has had her Lloyds registry suspended as of 01/02/2005 due to a Overdue Survey. More [Here](#). (external link).
- 
- 15/07/05 It is reported that Loch Buie has a problem with one of her Voith units and is to return to the Clyde for dry docking and repair. To allow Loch Buie to return to the Clyde, it is expected that the following movements will take place -  
Raasay from Fairlie to Tobermory  
Bruernish from Oban to Tobermory  
Loch Linnhe from Tobermory to Iona  
Because it is the height of the season, it is assumed they intend to run both Island Class vessels at the same time to cope with demand. You may wish to view the Oban and Campbeltown webcams to keep track of vessel movements.
- Latest news on movements: Raasay will be spending tonight in Campbeltown en Route from Fairlie to Tobermory. She is expected to continue her voyage tomorrow.
- 
- 14/07/05 It appears that Saturn has started her new roster today between Ardrossan & Brodick. Further Updates to follow...
- Other News:  
SoC will Join a united 2 minuet Silence at 12:00GMT to remember those who were caught in the London bombings on the Underground and on the Bus last Thursday.
- 
- 12/07/05 Due to mechanical problems, the 0710 sailing from Rothesay was cancelled. It was reported that Bute has been taking the secondary roster sailings. Saturn has also been undertaking berthing trials at Ardrossan in readiness to begin her new role. A CalMac shore worker was noted painting on berthing marks under the captains supervision today. This should make berthing a lot easier at the Terminal.

Terminal News:

Ardrossan terminal was today being used for filming a programme. For a period the area was re-named Calais - Something not far off in this heat!

11/07/05 **Bute** entered service this morning on her new route; Wemyss Bay - Rothesay. This afternoon, **Saturn** was observed passing Hunterston on her way down to Ardrossan, ready to take up her new role as second ferry for the Ardrossan - Brodick route. First Day Service Pictures [Here](#).  
FROM CALMAC: CUSTOMER INFORMATION



Saturn heading for Ardrossan



Saturn at former B&L berth, Ardrossan

MV Bute Open Day

Caledonian MacBrayne's newest addition to the fleet the "MV Bute" will be open to the public for viewing at Rothesay pier at the following dates and times:

Thursday 7th July, 1600 – 1800hrs

Sunday 10th July, 1400 – 1700hrs

We look forward to welcoming you aboard.

10/07/05 **NorthLink**: Extra sailings have been provided by NorthLink on the Aberdeen - Kirkwall (Hatston) -Lerwick route to help transport the extra passengers travelling to Shetland for the Island Games. "Day Time" sailings were provided which was a strange sight at Kirkwall. Normally the ships only arrive and depart in the late evening when it is dark.

09/07/05 Those interested in the current situation with **Bute**: She has been undergoing trials at Wemyss Bay and Rothesay with berthing, passenger gangway alignment and vehicle trails. She has completed there all very well as far as we can tell. She will begin to take up her first passenger / car sailings sometime next week.

01/07/05 **Bute** has just past Inverkip on the Clyde heading for Wemyss Bay at 10.15am.

Ferry operator Caledonian MacBrayne has formally named its new ship to service the Isle of Bute at a ceremony at Rothesay. MV Bute arrived on the Clyde earlier this week. After successfully completing familiarisation work, she was formally named MV Bute by Mrs. Marjorie Bulloch from Rothesay, wife of the Deputy Lord Lieutenant of Argyll, Lyn Bulloch.

Funding of up to £8.75million for the new ship was announced in October, 2003, by Minister of Transport, Nicol Stephen MSP. The ship is due to enter service on the Rothesay to Wemyss Bay service next week.

Speaking at the naming ceremony at Rothesay, CalMac Chairman Dr Harold Mills said: "We are all delighted to welcome the new ship into the Caledonian MacBrayne fleet. While the new MV Bute is the seventh ship on the Clyde to have the name, this new ferry will mark the start of the latest generation of car ferries on the Clyde. This is an important step towards the development of a 21st century ferry service for the island of Bute. It is vitally important now that all the relevant organisations come together to improve the infrastructure to enable us to operate at maximum efficiency. That means having a new linkspan in place in Rothesay as quickly as possible. Until that happens, MV Bute and her sister ship, which we hope to order soon, will obviously have to operate as side-loaders."

Dr Mills has a special connection with the name MV Bute as he served in the late fifties on the previous MV Bute as an Assistant Purser to well known Rothesay Purser Peter Shaw.

MV Bute will carry up to 60 cars - nearly twice as many cars as the 38 carried by Streakers currently operating on the Clyde, and 450 passengers on CalMac's busiest route.

CalMac also took the opportunity today to launch the latest in a series of books on historical aspects of their operation by Ian McCrorie. "Sea Routes to Rothesay" was launched as the new ship took a party of 250 invited guests on a cruise to Cumbrae and back.

The new book is available from the Marketing Department at Gourock (priced £6) and will be on sale through the CalMac website [www.calmac.co.uk](http://www.calmac.co.uk), which also has further details of MV Bute and her operating services.

When the new ship enters service next week, MV Saturn will be released to operate on the Ardrossan to Brodick route, providing additional sailings during the summer.

DATE	NEWS
31/08/05	Loch Bhrusda suffered some sort of technical problem this morning and missed her 0920 sailing. With the problem sorted the vessel re-entered service and was reported running approximately 40 minutes late. Her afternoon sailings will be running to timetable.
29/08/05	Northlink: Due to the weather conditions in Orkney this Morning the Hamnavoe has cancelled the 11:00 from Stromness and the 13:15 from Scrabster. The next scheduled sailing will depart Stromness at 16:45.
25/08/05	Clansman was once again loading via her bow ramp upon her return to Tiree this evening. Saturn finished her duties as second Ardrossan - Brodick ferry this afternoon, bidding farewell to Caledonian Isles with a blast on her horn off Brodick. She then returned via the Largs Channel to Gourock, awaiting her next turn of duty over the weekend, spending Friday with Juno on the Gourock - Dunoon run, operating as second vessel. On Saturday all three streakers will operate a 20 minute service to Dunoon, with Bute going solo at Rothesay. Sunday will see Juno take up the second Rothesay roster with Bute while Saturn will take over as main Dunoon ferry, operating with Jupiter. After this it is expected that Jupiter will become spare for much of the rest of the season.
23/08/05	An unseasonal spell of bad weather has swept across Scotland through the day and a number of routes have seen some disruption. Saturn had her additional Arran sailings cancelled although Caledonian Isles is reported to be running as normal. The evening sailing to Port Ellen was diverted to Port Askaig, meaning tomorrow's 0945 to Kennacraig will instead sail from there as opposed to Port Ellen as timetabled. Lord of the Isles remained in Oban, her 1530 to Lochboisdale and Castlebay being cancelled. As a result her return sailing tomorrow morning will not run. For disruption updates see the external link above. Back on the Clyde, Bute was observed at Gourock for bunkering and using the linkspan while Juno was away to Dunoon. Loch Riddon was also at Gourock for a time this afternoon and was then reported to be at Rothesay by 1600.  Northlink: The race for the Northern Isles contract is beginning to gather momentum with representatives from both V-Ships and Caledonian MacBrayne visiting the Northern Isles this week. Both Companies are though to be on a fact finding assignment, contacting customers and islanders about the current service. Meanwhile the Hamnavoe berthed stern into Stromness today probably in preparation for the forecasted high winds. In bad weather it is easier for the Hamnavoe to berth stern at Stromness and bow at Scrabster which is the opposite from the usual arrangement.

19/08/05 Clansman took this afternoon's Oban - Craignure sailings while Isle of Mull took the scheduled Outer Isles sailing. This allowed Clansman to sail from Oban at 2000 after her last arrival from Mull, bound for Tiree where she will collect livestock and then return in the early hours.

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15/08/05 Raasay is presently in dry dock at Corpach. (See [www.scottishboatyard.co.uk](http://www.scottishboatyard.co.uk) - external link) She will undergo sea trials either end of next week or beginning of following week. Then it is presumed Canna will be relieved by Raasay so that she can go to Corpach for annual overhaul.

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14/08/05 Jupiter has suffered some sort of mechanical problem and as a result the 1300 ex Wemyss Bay sailing and 1345 ex Rothesay sailing are not running today.

Other News From ClydeShipping...

The new Calmac "Hong-Kong" gangway costing about £500,000 for Bute at Rothesay and only commissioned a few weeks ago, is due to be scrapped within about 2 years.

When the route goes to end-loading at Rothesay, access to the ferry will be via a new bridge to be built from the upper floor of existing pier buildings directly onto the ferry.

Passenger access to the pier buildings will be down the centre leg of Rothesay Harbour, beside the old weighbridge. A new footbridge will be built to connect this leg onto the existing pier.

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11/08/05 Unusually the Clansman returned from Barra to Tiree this evening and berthed bow-in at the linkspan to load up vehicles for Oban. Normally she berths stern-in at all her island ports and then bow-in at Oban, although this evening it looked as though she would be going stern-in at Oban.

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04/08/05 Clansman is still out of service with mechanical problems and as a result Hebridean Isles has taken the 0900 service to Tiree and Barra. The sailings on the Islay service marked as 'additional' in the timetable will therefore presumably not sail as Isle of Arran will be covering the main roster. See the external link for updates as they are made available.

Update: Clansman returned to service and sailed from Oban this afternoon (approx 16:00 TBC). She made for Tiree where she shared Gott Bay with Hebridean Isles which was returning from Barra. Clansman was first to the pier where she unloaded the relief ferry's crew cars before loading Oban-bound traffic and then moved off to sit out of the way. Hebridean Isles then came to the linkspan and unloaded her vehicles before loading her crew cars and sailing for Port Askaig, ready to resume her normal duties tomorrow. Clansman then returned to the pier at Scarinish and loaded the remaining Oban-bound cars dropped off by the relief vessel. (Thanks to Alan Neill for his first hand account!)

It is unclear whether Clansman will require further attention in dry dock in future weeks - there are reports that the rudder repairs are a short-term solution.

In other news the contract for the other new Rothesay ferry, Bute's sister vessel, was again awarded to a foreign yard. It is interesting to note that they describe the Bute and her sister-to-be as having a deep draught of 5 metres. Calmac have also confirmed that tendering is shortly to begin for the new 24-car ferry which is to replace Loch Riddon on the Largs - Cumbrae route. The mention of the 24 car capacity would suggest the end result being something not too dissimilar to Loch Alainn, although time will tell...

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03/08/05 Clansman was unable to perform her 0600 sailing to Coll and Tiree due to mechanical problems. We have had reports this is due to rudder trouble although these are not confirmed. She has spent the day lying at Oban Railway Pier. It is not as yet known if she will be able to take tomorrow's 0900 sailing to Tiree and Castlebay. As a result there were significant changes to the timetables today involving Hebridean Isles performing an Oban - Coll - Tiree - Barra - Oban sailing following her arrival in Oban from Islay and Colonsay. Lord of the Isles made an extra call at Coll on this morning's crossing from the Outer Isles to Oban and her Castle Cruise was then cancelled this afternoon. Instead she sailed for Colonsay and then

proceeded direct to Tiree and will return to Oban shortly before 0100. With Hebridean Isles playing relief vessel, the scheduled sailing from Port Askaig to Kennacraig has been replaced with the Isle of Arran on a 2030 service from Port Ellen. For up-to-date information, see the external link above to Calmac's website service notices page...

DATE	NEWS
29/09/05	<p>Northlink: In predicable fashion the Hamnavoe has been using the Stromness linkspan Stern on for around the last week due to the persistent high winds. Switching the berthing operation actually changes the crossing times slightly for the route. If Bow first at Stromness and Stern at Scrabster (normal operation) the Stromness Scrabster leg is slightly longer as the vessel has to turn in each harbour, while no turning is required on the return leg.</p> <p>Meanwhile, representatives from Caledonian MacBrayne are in the Northern Isles this week to finalise consultation details prior to submitting its bid to run the Northern Isles ferry service. The closing date for submitted bids are to returned to the Scottish Executive by November 1 2005.</p>
28/09/05	<p>Loch Riddon was spotted at Gourock , having spent last night there out of the weather. Raasay is apparently now in service on the Tobermory - Kilchoan service for the remainder of the summer timetable and then for the winter. There were no sailings on the Kilchoan route today due to technical problems and service is expected to resume from 1400 tomorrow.</p> <p>Clansman is due to arrive at Garvel Dry Dock tomorrow morning for what are believed to be rudder repairs. Isle of Arran will be covering Clansman's normal duties although there will be changes to the timings of her sailings as a result of her slower speed (see external link above for affected sailings). The Caledonian Isles was off this afternoon due to the passing storms.</p>
24./09/05	<p>Loch Linnhe appeared at Troon for repairs earlier this afternoon. It appears she suffered damage from a rope getting tangled earlier in the week. Presumably the Bruernish is still covering the Kilchoan crossing in her absence.</p>
20/09/05	<p>Bruernish is still in charge of the Tobermory - Kilchoan crossing. Loch Linnhe was spotted heading down the Sound of Mull by a passenger on Clansman in bound from Barra. The smaller ferry was overtaken off Craignure and is on her way for repairs.</p>
16/09/05	<p>Northlink: It is apparent that the chartered freight vessel Clare is suffering from a main engine problem. It is thought that the problem was discovered en-route from Aberdeen to Lerwick on Tuesday night. As a result the vessel did not sail from Lerwick on Wednesday night. This meant there was no freight cover for Hjalmland sailing from Aberdeen to Lerwick last night which seemed to cause a bit of a stir with the very senior management of the company with even the Chief Executive overseeing the progress of loading and departure. The Clare did sail from Lerwick eventually and arrived in Aberdeen around 4 am this morning. At this time the Hascosay was still on the Euro Link linkspan awaiting departure. When the Hascosay departed the Clare was then free to use the Euro Link. The Mathews Quay linkspan is currently not in service.</p>
15/09/05	<p>Loch Linnhe was spotted moored at the buoy in Tobermory Bay, out of service while Bruernish was taking the Tobermory - Kilchoan sailings.</p>
14/09/05	<p>Northlink: The Hamnavoe has reversed her berthing operation due to the high winds over Orkney at present, i.e. Stern at Stromness and Bow at Scrabster. Due to these winds the Hamnavoe arrived in Stromness almost an hour late (from her 8:45 Scrabster departure) as she could not get alongside the pier at Stromness.</p>

13/09/05 Loch Linnhe was out of service today with technical problems. The external link above advised that a relief vessel will be taking the service up from 18:00 this evening. We assume this means an Island Class ferry is being taken up to Tobermory this afternoon to start relief work.  
Elsewhere, adverse weather means that Muck is not receiving a visit from the Lochnevis today.

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07/09/05 Northlink: Freight Ships

The Freight Ships started the Livestock season this week. Zebu Exepress arrived in Lerwick on Tuesday and will sail from Lerwick on Wednesday and Saturday, Kirkwall on Monday and layover for a day on Friday in Shetland. On Wednesday 14th she will do a special sailing from Unst.

Hascosay has switched rosters with Clare, seeing her sail from Aberdeen to Shetland on Wednesday and Friday and Kirkwall on Monday. She lays over in Lerwick on Saturday, sailing south on Sunday. Clare does the reverse, laying over in Aberdeen on Saturday and sailing on Sunday to Kirkwall, then in the early hours of Monday on to Shetland before returning south on Monday evening.

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02/09/05 According to Calmac's website there appear to be problems on Juno this morning and she will be taken off the Wemyss Bay - Rothesay service at 1215 for repairs. Despite Jupiter being available but out of service, the Bute will be operating the route on her own through this afternoon.  
Jupiter sailed from Gourock to Rosneath where she has tied up for winter lay-up.

Travellers to Oban are being advised to allow for delays whilst getting through the town to the ferry terminal due to roadworks currently underway. Sailings aren't delayed for late arriving vehicles.

On two Fridays this month, 9th and 30th, the Clansman will be operating an amended timetable on her return from the Outer Isles, leaving Castlebay at 1850 and calling at Lochboisdale (2020-2030) and finally arriving in Oban at 0130. This is to cater for livestock movements.

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01/09/05 It is anticipated that the following will happen on the Clyde with regards to operations over the coming months: Jupiter is being laid up until March next year at Roseneath. Coruisk will run the Gourock - Dunoon winter service using the new Dunoon linkspan. Juno, in January will also be laid up until the summer season. The New Upper Clyde vessel will enter service next year joining her sister on the Rothesay run.

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DATE	NEWS
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30/10/05	Loch Tarbert relieved the Isle of Cumbrae on the Tarbert - Portavadie / Lochranza winter timetable this morning.
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28/10/05	Isle of Lewis is unable to sail tonight due to adverse weather conditions in the Minch, the Stornoway to Ullapool sailing at 13:45 and the Ullapool to Stornoway at 17:15 have been cancelled.
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25/10/05	Lochnevis has left the Garvel Dry Dock and taken her place in the adjacent James Watt Dock near Lord of the Isles. There are only a few minor jobs to finish (including painting the word 'Caledonian' in white on her hull). Lord of the Isles is due in the dry dock in the next few days.
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24/10/05	Lord of the Isles has arrived in the James Watt Dock, pending her annual overhaul. She has been carrying out MES (marine escape system) tests and has had her escape chutes deployed for crew training. Isle of Lewis is storm bound in Ullapool and did not make the 17:15 sailing. She will sail from Ullapool tomorrow morning at 04:30.
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22/10/05	Chartered Small Isles relief ferry Ullin of Staffa was involved in the rescue of two fishermen off Eigg today after they abandoned their burning fishing boat Kalbarri. The chartered ferry picked the two crew members up from their inflatable liferaft before they were then airlifted by the coastguard helicopter to hospital on Skye. Regular Small Isles ferry Lochnevis is currently out of service undergoing her annual
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overhaul.

Loch Linnhe is now lying at Gourock's wires berth having sailed up this afternoon. It is rumoured that she will be taking over from Isle of Cumbrae on the winter Tarbert - Portavadie crossing until she goes to relieve Loch Ranza at Gigha. Presumably Loch Riddon will then take the Tarbert - Portavadie run.

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17/10/05 Both Juno and Bute are running to normal schedules again this morning following earlier technical problems.

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16/10/05 Juno was off service for much of today due to a breakdown - she spent most of the day tied up at Rothesay. She was back in service in time for the last couple of sailings. The reason for the breakdown is unclear as of yet, but the usual Sunday morning changeover between the Streakers didn't take place and the Saturn remains on the Gourock-Dunoon run where she spent last week. Bute coped manfully on her own during the Juno's absence.

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15/10/05 Northlink: There have been several disruptions over the last 2 week in the Northern Isles due the high winds. The Hamanvoe on the Scrabster Stromness service has missed sailings while the Hrossey and Hjaltland have both arrived late at there respective ports of destination. The NorthLink freight vessel Hascosay was utilised by the Streamline Shipping Group at the week end to ship 55x6 metre containers from Kirkwall to Aberdeen. Most of this cargo was loaded onto the weather deck of the Hascosay which was the result of Streamline's container ship handling an unusually large oil related cargo out of the Shetland Isles. Meanwhile, and breaking news in the North. Irish Ferries (one of the three bidders tendering for the Northern Isles contract from NorthLink Ferries) have announced that they no longer have an interest in tendering for the contract. The exact details of this decision are at present vague. However this development leaves only two potential invited tenders for the contract: Caledonian MacBrayne, and V Ships.

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12/10/05 Bruernish is now on the Tobermory - Kilchoan crossing. Raasay was seen from Lord of the Isles leaving the Sound of Mull and proceeding round Ardnamurchan Point bound for Mallaig where she is due to relieve Lochnevis from Friday afternoon. (Picture of Raasay to be added shortly). Lord of the Isles made only the outward call at Colonsay this evening. Upon leaving Port Askaig she returned directly to Oban, her master giving the poor weather forecast as the reason for no call at Colonsay on the return leg.

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09/10/05 Heavy weather hit again today forcing Lord of the Isles to abandon her Coll and Tiree sailing, having made only the outward call at Coll. Clansman cancelled her afternoon sailing to the Outer Isles and will instead be sailing at 0530 tomorrow morning. Isle of Mull came off the Craignure crossing this afternoon to be prepared for a private charter this evening. The Oban - Craignure sailing was taken by Isle of Arran. The evening sailing to Colonsay was cancelled although Isle of Arran will carry out a single journey to Colonsay before continuing on to Kennacraig tomorrow morning.

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07/10/05 Isle of Arran arrived back in Oban Bay at 0745 this morning having completed her last relief run for Clansman which returned to service yesterday.

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05/10/05 The Isle of Lewis was unable to sail this morning due to technical problems. She later sailed at 14:26, 40 minutes late.

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04/10/05 Northlink: The deadline for completed tender bids to operate the Northern Isles lifeline ferry service has been put back by one month. Bids must now be submitted to the Scottish Executive by December 1st 2005. The initiation of the new contract is however still set to start from April 1st, 2006.

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02/10/05 Loch Riddon left Gourock wires earlier today and made her way back up to Largs where she was reported to be lying at the outer berth. Presumably she will be seeing out the summer timetable as second ferry at Cumbrae, assisting Loch Alainn at peak times before going off on winter relief duties again.

DATE	NEWS
30/11/05	<b>Isle of Arran</b> is now at her temporary berth at Fairlie where she will await further use as spare vessel over the winter and her eventual overhaul.



Isle of Arran at Fairlie.

**CalMac Press Release:**

**CalMac submits Northern Isles Tender bid**

Ferry operator Caledonian MacBrayne (CalMac) believes it has submitted a compelling case to be awarded the contract for the provision of lifeline ferry services to the Northern Isles from next April.

CalMac, which has 150 years of experience providing lifeline ferry services on the West coast of Scotland, is one of the two contenders to operate the services.

A wide-ranging series of consultation meetings were held in Orkney and Shetland with key customers and agencies on the islands as part of CalMac's preparation for the bid which was submitted to the Scottish Executive in Glasgow today (Thursday, December 1, 2005).

Managing Director Lawrie Sinclair said that the Company's consultation meetings had enabled CalMac to identify solutions to the key service issues. He said: "We identified very early on in the consultation process that the management of cabins and livestock handling were the key areas which had to be developed. We have now developed potential solutions for both scenarios and we believe these solutions are of a nature and quality that they will enable a successful bid to operate the Northern Isles service. CalMac's bid is based on our consultation meetings which showed that we appear to have the support of both island communities in terms of the way we have managed the operation, raising customer care service standards and addressing any issues which might have appeared. We will strengthen the operation in key areas and bring innovative solutions to bear in areas which have been difficult in the past."

CalMac is not in a position to publish the details of the bid submission at this stage as there may be a further round of meetings with the Scottish Executive before decisions are made. Mr. Sinclair said: "I hope that the communities of the Northern Isles will appreciate that this is still a highly competitive situation and there are very good reasons for us protecting the integrity of our bid. Much of what we are proposing must remain confidential while this early stage of the bid process is completed and once we are in a position to reveal the details of what we are planning, and what our solutions are, we will be very happy to do so. Meantime, we would appreciate it if we could retain a degree of commercial confidentiality in the circumstances."

In its Annual Report and Accounts for 2004-5, published in September, CalMac reported an increase of 2.8% (144,000) in passenger carryings to 5.4 million and car traffic by 5.3% (55,000) to 1.1 million. The increases in traffic and general business performance saw the Company achieve its results with no increase in Deficit Grant from the £25.9 million received in the previous year.

30/11/05 **Isle of Arran** left Kennacraig this morning heading for Ardrossan to unload crew cars around entering Ardrossan Harbour at 12.50 She left within half an hour bound for Fairlie to be laid up until her services are next required.

**CalMac Press Realise:**

**CalMac confirms allocation of new ferry to Fergusons**

Ferry operator Caledonian MacBrayne has confirmed that the order for the new vessel to serve the Largs-Cumbræ Slip service will be built at Fergusons Shipyard in Port Glasgow.

The then Minister for Transport Nicol Stephen MSP confirmed on Wednesday, December 8, 2004 that he had approved tendering for the new vessel estimated to cost around £5.8million following the Executive's 2004 Spending Review.

Fergusons were confirmed as preferred bidder for the contract for the new vessel by the CalMac Board which met in Arran yesterday (Wednesday 30 November). Subject to final conclusion of the specification and terms of conditions, the contract to build the ship will be awarded to Fergusons and work will begin soon.

CalMac Managing Director Lawrie Sinclair said: "CalMac is delighted to have this confirmation of the new build details. As a former shipbuilder myself, I am absolutely delighted that a local shipyard has come out on top in the competition to produce the best options for building this new vessel. Negotiations will continue between ourselves and Fergusons to complete the detail of the contract and I am sure that these discussions will be concluded amicably and quickly. This is excellent news for the workforce at Fergusons. It is very good news for the Company and I am delighted that we are able to confirm the progress of this project which will enable us to proceed with the other planning which is required, improving facilities for the new vessel at Largs and Cumbræ Slip."

The ordering of this new vessel was conducted in accordance with EU public procurement procedures. CalMac's Technical Director John Kerr said: "Value for money, reliability and delivery were the key factors in awarding the contract to Fergusons. There were 9 expressions of interest in this contract originally from Germany, Poland, Norway, Italy and the UK. Invitations to tender were issued in September to 8 companies in the end. Five responded and the Fergusons option clearly offered the best value for the investment. The new vessel will normally carry 24 cars and up to 250 passengers and will be due for delivery in the Spring of 2007. Building will start as soon as possible."

Mr Sinclair added: "As with the building of any new vessel, it is important that everyone appreciates at the outset that there will be a fixed budget for this project and that we have to achieve best value for money, while producing the most customer-friendly ship possible. I am very much looking forward to getting the project up and running and delighted to be starting the building process up again in a local yard, at what is an extremely challenging time for both ourselves and Fergusons."

The new ship should enter service in the Spring of 2007, releasing one of the current vessels on the Largs-Cumbræ Slip service to improve the Oban-Lismore service."

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29/11/05 **Hebridean Isles** is now back at Islay after her annual overhaul. She will not be covering the Scrabster - Stromness station until the 09/02/06. **Isle of Arran** is due at Fairlie anytime for her overhaul and will be staying there until Christmas. **Isle of Cumbrae** is staying on the 2nd mull roster until 23/12/05 to cover for **Loch Fyne**, this has enforced a maximum deadweight of 38 tonnes for any HGV's on the crossing.

**Loch Buie** should be leaving Rothesay for Iona on Thursday. This will then free the **Loch Linnhe** to move to Sconser and relieve the **Loch Striven** so that she can go to Ardmaleish for her overhaul.

**Northlink:** The weather in the north has finally retreated and all NorthLink services are now back to normal. The **Hamnavoe** on the Scrabster Stromness route is finally now taking her normal westerly route through Hoy sound and into the Atlantic, rather than her more sheltered (longer) route through Scapa Flow and into the Pentland Firth.



Hamnavoe, Hoy Sound this morning.

28/11/05 **Loch Buie** is undergoing her final fitting out after her winter overhaul. She has moved to Rothesay inner berth while crew / shore staff apply the final touches for her return back to the Iona station. She is pictured with crew repairing her mast. **Isle of Mull** sailed into the Mersey under cover of darkness this morning and is now in dry dock at North Western Ship Repairers (Cammell Laird #4), in Birkenhead ready and awaiting her annual overhaul.



Loch Buie at Rothesay.

**Northlink:** It has been reported that NorthLink Ferries is under investigation by the Office of Fair Trading (OFT). The OFT visited NorthLink's offices in Orkney, Shetland and Aberdeen last week. An OFT spokesman confirmed: "This is part of the OFT competition act. There have been allegations that a cartel has been operating with regard to ferry freight services". However, no assumptions should be made that there has been an infringement of competition law. We are in no position to decide that until we have all the details and facts."

A NorthLink spokesman commented: "Our staff did everything possible to assist the OFT with their enquiries and NorthLink is cooperating fully with the investigation."

26/11/05 **Clyde:** It Appears that **Bute** spent last night at Wemyss Bay sheltering from the winds which were from a northerly direction. This would have left her buffeting against the pier at Rothesay.

**Loch Dunvegan** made her way back from Gourock to the Kyles of Bute to resume service. It is reported that **Isle of Cumbrae** will now sail for Lochaline and relieve the **Loch Fyne**. The **Loch Fyne** is apparently to go into dry dock with **Loch Alann** once the **Saturn's** overhaul is complete. We believe **Loch Tarbert** will return to service on relief duties at Cumbrae.



Bute at Wemyss Bay last night.

**Western Isles:** **Lochnevis's** 0915 departure from Mallaig was delayed until 1000 while she awaited train passengers due to a road being blocked at Arisaig. **Isle of Lewis** will only be making one crossing today due to the weather conditions. She departed Stornoway at 1000 and is due to arrive in Ullapool at 1245 where she will leave once traffic has been loaded. There will be an extra service tomorrow (Sunday) ex Stornoway 0715 and Ullapool at 1030. See link above for more information.

**Isle of Mull** returned from Colonsay to berth bow-in at Oban before vacating the linkspan to lie at Craignure overnight. She is due to leave early in the morning for her annual overhaul in Birkenhead. **Lord of the Isles** is now covering the Oban - Craignure crossing with **Clansman** on the Outer Isles and Coll - Tiree routes.

**Weather Disruptions:** There are continuing weather disruptions today. See external link above for more information.

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25/11/05 **Clyde:** It appears that **Caledonian Isles** has damaged herself berthing at Ardrossan tonight, she is currently awaiting assessors. If she is fit to sail she will depart at approx 2000 tonight. **Bute** did not take her 1945 sailing to Rothesay.

*Update:* **Caledonian Isles** sailed at 2200 for Brodick after an inspection.

**Western Isles:** There will be a 3 ship operation out of Oban tomorrow with a 0645 to Coll and Tiree, 0700 to Castlebay and Lochboisdale and 1400 to Colonsay. The Tiree boat will do the 1600 to Mull. The **Hebrides** is stormbound at Uig with her 0730 x Lochmaddy cancelled tomorrow, likewise the **Isle of Arran** is stormbound at Kennacraig.



Bow Damage to Caledonian Isles.

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24/11/05 **Northlink:** The **Hamnavoe** made one return crossing across the Pentland Firth this Morning and is now secured at Stromness until at least Tomorrow Morning due to the extremely high northerly winds in the Northern Isles at present.

Both the **Hjalmland** and **Hrossey** have also cancelled this evenings sailings from Aberdeen (including Kirkwall) and Lerwick. All Tomorrows sailings are also under review due to the forecast predicting a sustained wind speed.

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23/11/05 We are advised that the **Isle of Mull** will come off duty this coming Saturday evening and spend the night at Craignure. She will then head off to Birkenhead for her annual overhaul, with **Lord of the Isles** coming down from Tobermory to take up the Oban - Craignure run. **Isle of Arran** arrived at Port Ellen at 0820. **Juno** has now taken her place back on the Gourock - Dunoon run from the 1520 sailing this afternoon. **Saturn** came off duty and made her way to Garvel Dry Dock, which she entered at 1545 for her turn to be overhauled.

The master on **Isle of Lewis** has advised of likely disruptions due to the expected poor weather in the coming few days. See the above link for full details.

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21/11/05 **Juno** and **Loch Duvegan** left Garvel Dry Dock today and were towed into the adjacent JWD for the finishing touches to their annual overhauls. **Loch Buie** is now slipped at Ardmaleish on Bute for her overhaul. We have had a report that on completion of her overhaul at Aberdeen, **Hebridean Isles** will go to Scrabster for relief duties until early February 2006.

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20/11/2004 **Site News:**

With recent Media coverage **SoC** hit almost 900 unique visitors on the 14th - almost three times the amount we normally receive daily. There has also been a steady increase in viewers to the site recently seeing double the usual amount in the last few weeks. This month we are on track to receiving over 10,000 visitors - the first time we will achieve this huge figure. We hope new viewers enjoyed your visit and we look forward to seeing you and our regulars back onboard soon! Any **Comments or Questions** - as ever let us know!

*Steve Hurst, Site Editor.*

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19/11/05 **Clansman** has returned from the Lewis crossing following the return to service of the **Isle of Lewis**. **Lord of the Isles** will berth at Tobermory to free up room in Oban until the **Isle of Mull** goes for her annual overhaul.

**Other News:**

Former CalMac veteran paddler **Waverley's** 2006 season will start on Good Friday, 14th April.

As a celebration of the 60th Anniversary of her launch (in October 1946) she will operate a special end of season weekend sailing programme on the Clyde in October 2006 following her return from the normal Thames season.

There will be some other alterations to programme - more details later - see [links](#) for Waverley.

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16/11/05 **Coruisk** missed a couple of sailings today on the Rothesay route - the 0630 ex Rothesay and 0715 return, and also the 1430 ex Rothesay and 1515 return.

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15/11/05 **Other News:**

 **Muirneag's** storm ordeal from the 11/11/05 was featured in today's Daily Record and Glasgow Herald.

**Northlink:** Due to the **Hrossey's** late departure from Lerwick this Morning, she only arrived at Aberdeen at 14:40 and is scheduled for departure for Lerwick at 21:00. The vessel will probably arrive at Lerwick on time in the Morning due to her capable speed. The **Hjaltland** and **Hrossay** have a high reserve for speed so they can call in past Orkney and still arrive at the same time as the direct vessel heading in the other direction.

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14/11/05 **Lord of the Isles**, having left JWD a couple of days ago is apparently taking the Coll and Tiree sailings while Coll linkspan is closed for annual work & repairs. **Clansman** is either doing solely Outer Isles or lying spare somewhere presumably. She will then replace **Isle of Mull** when she goes off for overhaul on 28th Nov. **Bruernish** and **Eigg** are now using the North Pier berth in Oban as drilling work for new linkspan appears to be underway off the Railway Pier. **Loch Buie** was allowed to 'stretch her legs' today and had a bit play at Gourrock before returning at 09:30. It is reported that the **Clansman** is heading north to cover for the **Isle of Lewis** which seems to be having technical problems - any updates will be posted.

**Northlink:** Due to adverse weather the **Hrossey's** sailing from Lerwick Tonight has been rescheduled to depart at 06:00 on Tuesday 15th. The **Hamnavoe** made one return trip this morning but has cancelled all further sailings Today with Tomorrow's 06:30 from Stromness also under review.



[Police Investigate Ferry 'Attack'](#) (external link)

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13/11/05 **Hebridean Isles** arrived in Aberdeen at 1830 tonight for her annual overhaul, she was later sighted testing her life saving equipment. The **Isle of Arran** has been covering for her on the Islay roster as of the 12/11/05. Due to survey work being carried out for the new Oban Linkspan, **Isle of Mull** spent most of today at the Lighthouse vessel berth in the bay.



Hebridean Isles at Aberdeen.

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12/11/05 **Northlink:** Due to the poor weather conditions over the country last night and Today the **Hjaltland**, **Hamnavoe** and **Hascosay** have all suffered delays. The **Hjaltland** only left Hatston (Kirkwall) at 02:10 arriving Aberdeen 08:50 this Morning. The vessel also suffered a leak at the port boat deck access door which caused sea water to enter the upper foyer area on deck 6 and surrounding corridors, and into the reception area on deck 5. The **Hascosay** arrived into Aberdeen at 15:00 after a 19 hour trip from Lerwick. The **Hamnavoe** has cancelled both the 16:45 from Stromness and the 19:00 from Scrabster this evening.



Hjaltland's leaking door.

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11/11/05 **Disruptions** Severe weather has caused major problems today... **Lochnevis** was unable to carry out her Armadale and Small Isles sailings. **Loch Linnhe** saw her Iona crossings cancelled for the day. The Colonsay service and Barra and South Uist crossings were all cancelled, as was the Oban - Craignure service through this afternoon and the evening. At first the Wemyss Bay - Rothesay route was diverted to Gourock, with **Bute** and **Coruisk** seeking shelter out of the wind and joining the **Loch Buie** as she waits for her overhaul at Ardmaleish, although this afternoon the whole service was cancelled altogether. **Caledonian Isles** was initially diverted to Gourock early this afternoon but on her return to Brodick the service was suspended. The Sound of Barra and Sound of Harris sailings were cancelled. Even **Hebrides** was out of service this afternoon as conditions worsened in the Minch which also led the **Muirneag** into a very bad crossing having to take shelter off Stornoway unable to get into the harbour after 16 hours at sea. **Loch Alainn** had her last sailing at 1015 to Cumbrae and was then stormbound at Largs. For a while the **Saturn** was stormbound at Gourock and was then allowed out on a passenger-only service, resuming with cars this afternoon. **Raasay** remained stormbound at Tobermory through this afternoon and finally the **Hebridean Isles** missed her afternoon sailing to Islay.

With the weather due to worsen further still, it is possible that disruptions will continue into tomorrow. Check the external link above for up-to-date info!

**Northlink:** It is understood that the chartered freighter **Clare** has had engine problems this week and has missed a number of sailings, She arrived at 1000 on 03/11 in Aberdeen and sailed North tonight for the first time this week.(11/11)

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10/11/05 Mechanical problems on **Isle of Lewis** mean the 1030 from Ullapool and the 1345 from Stornoway are cancelled. As a result **Hebrides** is operating a special timetable today so that Lewis and Harris aren't cut off. Full details from the external link above. **Hebrides** arrived at Uig at 1610 and departed at 1646 for Tarbert, the sailing was delayed to accommodate the Ullapool - Stornoway traffic. ETA Tarbert 1815. Tomorrow's sailings look like they could be disrupted too. The Sound of Iona sailings on **Loch Linnhe** are also liable to disruption tomorrow. See external link above for updates.

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09/11/05 **Isle of Mull's** 10:00 ex Oban - Craignure and return have been cancelled due to technical problems. The next scheduled sailing is 1600hrs.  
*Update:* 10:45 **Eigg** dep Oban to Craignure with a van, car and about 20 passengers in place of the **Isle of Mull**.  
*Update:* **Isle of Mull** attempted her sailing to Colonsay this afternoon after what seemed to be repairs. However she was sighted returning to Oban a short while later presumably with the same fault.



IoM returning to Oban this afternoon.

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08/11/05 **Western Isles:**  
After last night's storm, Craignure gangway was damaged resulting in passengers boarding / alighting via the car deck ramps on the Oban - Craignure crossing. **Loch Linnhe** is now covering the Fionnphort - Iona duty allowing the **Loch Buie** to undertake her overhaul on the Clyde where she is currently lying at the wires (Gourock).  
**Clyde:**  
**Loch Riddon** appears to be on the Tarbert - Lochranza / Portavadie run in place of the **Loch Tarbert**. **Loch Dunvegan** has now joined **Lord of the Isles** and **Juno** for annual overhaul. **Bute** returned from overhaul and joined the **Coruisk** working Wemyss Bay -Rothesay.

**Northlink:** Due to the adverse weather forecast, the 0630 sailing of the **Hamnavoe**, from Stromness and the 0845 sailing from Scrabster, today have been cancelled. Later sailings will also be under review. During the recent high winds the **Hamnavoe** has been using both Scrabster and Stromness stern first. Freight has been reversed onto the vessel while cars are being turned inside the ship.

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07/11/05 **Isle of Lewis** is sheltering overnight in Ullapool from tonight's storm force weather rather than her usual Stornoway layover.

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06/11/05 **Juno** is currently sitting at the wires (Gourock) awaiting her trip to JWD for Annual overhaul. **Loch Buie** was sighted emerging from the Kyles of Bute and then made her way up towards Gourock. We assume **Loch Linnhe**, now absent from Largs, has gone to relieve her at Iona. **Loch Dunvegan** also left the Kyles of Bute this morning after changeover with the **Isle of Cumbrae**, which left Rothesay at 0900 this morning.

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02/11/05 Having been relieved on the Tarbert - Portavadie crossing for the winter timetable, **Isle of Cumbrae** is now lying at the inside berth at Fairlie. **Loch Linnhe** also returned to her old haunts at Largs today. **Coruisk** relieved the **Bute** on the Wemyss Bay - Rothesay service, taking up the route with the 13:00 sailing from Wemyss Bay. **Bute** is currently in James Watt Dock. On Sunday the **Bute** should return to service when **Saturn** takes the Dunoon roster and the **Juno** goes off for her overhaul.

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01/11/05 **Northlink:** It is believed that the NorthLink charter of the  **Zebu Express** to cover freight duties has now ended. Freight rosters should now be back on track with the following deployments kicking things off:

DATE - DAY - HASCOSAY / CLARE  
31/10/2005 - Mon - AB - KI / LE - AB  
01/11/2005 - Tue - KI - AB / AB - LE  
02/11/2005 - Wed - AB - LE / LE - AB  
03/11/2005 - Thu - LE - AB / AB - LE  
04/11/2005 - Fri - AB - LE / LE - AB  
05/11/2005 - Sat - LE - AB / AB - LE  
06/11/2005 - Sun - AB - KI / Layover in Lerwick  
07/11/2005 - Mon - KI - AB / Layover in Lerwick  
08/11/2005 - Tue - AB - LE / LE - AB  
09/11/2005 - Wed - LE - AB / AB - LE  
10/11/2005 - Thu - AB - LE / LE - AB  
11/11/2005 - Fri - LE - AB / AB - LE  
12/11/2005 - Sat - Layover in Aberdeen / Layover in Lerwick  
13/11/2005 - Sun - AB - KI / Layover in Lerwick

AB = Aberdeen / KI = Kirwall / LE = Lerwick

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DATE	NEWS
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30/12/05 **Western Isles:**

Due to high volumes of traffic there will be an additional sailing from **Craignure - Oban** on Monday 2nd January 2006 at 1100.

The 1200 **Oban - Colonsay** sailing on Wednesday 4th January 2006 will operate the following revised schedule:- Depart Oban 1200, arrive Colonsay 1420, Depart Colonsay 1520, Arrive Oban 1740. (see external links above for more information)

29/12/05 Due to weather conditions **Loch Buie** was on 'Amber' alert today resulting in sailings likely to some disruption. The same applied for **Loch Bhrusda** on the Sound of Barra roster.

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28/12/05 **Western Isles:**

Due to technical problems the Fishnish - Lochaline roster is currently off service, the Chargehand is hoping to resume sailing at 1600 ex Lochaline. **Loch Linnhe** on her way from Skye is now covering at Gigha to allow the **Loch Ranza** to move to Fairlie to await her overhaul. Loch Striven is confirmed back in service at Raasay now.



IoA and Loch Ranza at Fairlie Today



**CalMac Confirms Money-Saving Move** (external link to BBC's Website)

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27/12/05 **Clyde:**

**Caledonian Isles** has suffered a flood in the starboard lounge and as a result it was coned off today. **Juno** is still on the Dunoon run. **Bute** and **Coruisk** changed rosters yesterday - **Bute** is now on 2a till next Monday. There will be no sailings on the Ardrossan - Brodick roster at 1230 and 1350 on 07/01/06 and 09/01/06.

**Western Isles:**

**Lord of the Isles** did the 0800 sailing from Oban this morning to Craignure in place of the **Isle of Mull**. Reason currently unknown.

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26/12/05 **Clyde:**

**Loch Fyne** was spotted arriving back at Largs at 1100, presumably to load crew cars ready to leave for Lochaline. She should be back in service on the Lochaline - Fishnish crossing in the next few days, allowing **Isle of Cumbrae** to return to the Clyde as spare vessel.



Loch Fyne arriving at Largs

*Update:* **Loch Fyne** is reported to have called at Lochranza this afternoon. She may have been carrying a dangerous load, which the **Caledonian Isles** could not carry.

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25/12/05 There are NO services operating today for both **CalMac** and **Northlink**. A limited timetable will operate tomorrow. (see external links above for more information)

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24/12/05 **Clyde:**

**Loch Fyne** is still lying at Fairlie's inner berth so it looks like she will stay there over Christmas

**Western Isles:**

As per yesterday's news both **Hebridean Isles** and the **Lord of the Isles** will depart at 0945, one sailing from Port Ellen and the other from Port Askaig both vessels bound for Kennacraig. (see external link above for updates).

**Other News:**

Today makes one year since **Pioneer** (now renamed *Brenda Corlett*) left the Clyde for her pastures new. She is reported to be settled down on her roster but a timetable has yet to be decided.

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23/12/05 **Clyde:**

**Loch Fyne** departed JWD today heading for Fairlie, on her way down the Clyde she made a brief stop over at Largs outer berth. **Loch Alainn** followed the **Loch Fyne** down from JWD to Cumbrae Slip where she resumed service, taking over from the **Loch Tarbert**.

**Western Isles:**

**Hebridean Isles** has suffered some technical problems and was unable to take the 1800 sailing from Kennacraig to Port Ellen. A bus was laid on for all the foot passengers to go up to Oban and the **Lord of the Isles** is sailing down to Port Askaig at 1930 this evening. The 0700 hour service from Kennacraig tomorrow will operate as per timetable and there will be an 0945 sailing from Port Ellen AND from Port Askaig presumably using both the **Hebridean Isles** and the **Lord of the Isles**. Normal service will resume at 1300 ex Kennacraig.



[Contest Narrows for CalMac Routes](#) (external link to BBC's Website)



Loch Fyne & Isle of Arran @ Fairlie

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22/12/05 **Saturn** suffered some engine trouble this morning with her gearbox so **Juno** took the Gourrock - Dunoon sailings.

**CalMac Press Realise:**

[CalMac Welcomes Oban Linkspan Go-Ahead](#) (external link to CalMac's Website)

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21/12/05 **Western Isles:**

**Lord of the Isles** was missing from Oban this evening, presumed to be back in Craignure to allow both **Isle of Mull** and **Clansman** to occupy the berths.

**Clyde:**

**Coruisk** was today back on the Wemyss Bay - Rothesay roster with the ex 1300 from Wemyss Bay along with **Bute**. **Saturn** is operating the Gourrock - Dunoon roster to allow the **Juno** to lay-up for the winter. **Loch Fyne** and **Loch Alainn** emerged from James Watt Dock and there annual overhaul today. **Loch Fyne** was later sighted out on trials retuning to JWD at 1400. **Loch Striven** departed Rothesay this morning bound for Raasay, she will make a stop over in a unconfirmed location en-route.



Coruisk passes Bute off Toward

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20/12/05 **Western Isles:**

**Lord of the Isles** returned to Oban as **Isle of Mull** regained her normal sailings. **Hebrides** suffered a snarled propeller today in Uig harbour. The debris which was apparently 'dumped' in the harbour got caught around her starboard propeller and she limped on one engine back to the pier where it was eventually removed by divers. See link below for more information.

**Clyde:**



Hebrides at Uig 21/12/05

**Coruisk** moved back to the wires (Gourock) after completing her annual overhaul. **Loch Striven** was out on trials from Rothesay today and is due to make fro Raasay tomorrow.

**CalMac Press Realise:**

**CalMac to Raise Illegal Dumping Issues at Uig with Highland Council** (external link to CalMac's Website)

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19/12/05 **Western Isles:**

**Isle of Mull** was out of service today with unknown bow damage, as a result the **Lord of the Isles** took her sailings including Colonsay. **Lord of the Isles** later vacated Oban in the evening to free up berths.

**Clyde:**

**Loch Striven** arrived back at Rothesay after her overhaul and is due to depart for her home waters on Wednesday 21/05/05.



Loch Striven at Rothesay Pier

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18/12/05 **Western Isles:**

**Lord of the Isles** berthed again tonight at Craignure to free up space in Oban while she is currently out of service.

**Clyde:**

**Coruisk**, currently in JWD was undergoing her annual overhaul with some work on her bridge mast being completed (see picture).



Coruisk at JWD

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17/12/05 **Western Isles:**

**Lord of the Isles** berthed tonight at Craignure to free up space in Oban while she is currently out of service. It is reported that **Laig Bay** has been sold from the fleet to a unknown owner in the Oban area.

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15/12/05 A change to the timetable for the Barra - Eriskay ferry **Loch Bhrusda** will be in operation on the 26/12/05. Intending travellers should note that this timetable replaces existing published times and is NOT an additional sailing. (see external link above for more information).

Caledonian MacBrayne today announced an invitation for a one year tender which involves the supply and crew of a vessel. The route is the Monday to Friday Gourock - Dunoon Passenger only roster (1A) run currently by the chartered **Ali Cat**. The three daily sailings will commence on the 1st April 2006 after **Ali Cats** current charter ends on the 30th March 2006. Interested operators are asked to submit there proposals to the company by 28th December 2005.

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13/12/05 **CalMac Press Realise:**

**CalMac respond to CNES Vice Convenor on MV Muirneag** (external link to CalMac's Website)

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12/12/05 **Coruisk** was sighted heading up Holy Loch this morning at 0920 where she stayed for sometime. She was making her debut call at Sandbank Pier up the Loch.



Coruisk at Sandbank Pier

The Following Extract from Clyde Shipping explains more:  
Following the example set by Western Ferries a couple of years ago, Caledonian MacBrayne have now elected to dry-dock certain fleet members every other year, instead of annually as before. This is permissible for vessels where the main propulsion units can be lifted out whilst the vessel remains afloat, and **Coruisk** is one such vessel. However, the MCA insist on having an underwater inspection carried out, by divers using video equipment, and can still require that a vessel is

dry-docked if there's any sign on anything untoward. Today, **Coruisk** was having an underwater survey carried out by Shearwater, the Sandbank-based commercial diving company, as part of her annual Passenger Certificate survey. Once this was finished, she left Sandbank and headed (via Gourrock) to the James Watt Dock where the rest of her overhaul will take place.

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11/12/05 It was noted this evening that **Bute** was berthed stern into Wemyss Bay necessitating a HGV to reverse onto her. Reason currently unknown.

WORK TO BEGIN SOON ON OBAN FERRY LINKSPAN  
The Press and Journal, Scotland 11:56 7-Dec-05

Work is to start on a £2.75million second ferry linkspan for Oban early in the new year. But ferry operators Caledonian MacBrayne said yesterday the facility, which will speed up ferry traffic using the busy port, will not be ready for operation until the 2007 season. A drilling rig in Oban Bay, which is competing with McCaig's Tower as a town landmark, has enabled bore holes to be dug to test the seabed in preparation for the linkspan structure. Hugh Dan MacLennan, CalMac's public affairs manager, said: "The rig is just parked there now, it has done the site investigation. It has been testing the floor of the bay for depth and mapping out what is there." "We are just concluding some negotiations with potential contractors, which should enable us to set a timeframe to the project. "Some work will be carried out early next year but it will not be completed for next summer, that is for sure, and we have given a commitment not to work during the summer. "The exact timeframe cannot be established yet but we would be looking to get it into operation for the 2007 season." Mr MacLennan promised that as soon as all the final details were available the company would be holding another meeting with fishermen and other pier users to give them a progress report. Various user groups objected to the original linkspan proposal because it will permanently reduce the berthing space at the pier. But the project, which CalMac says is needed to cope with the growing amount of ferry traffic at Oban, was approved following a public local inquiry earlier this year. Berthing space at the Railway Pier will be reduced while the linkspan work goes ahead and CalMac is trying to identify ways of limiting the impact on users. Mr MacLennan said when the project originally got the go-ahead: "You can't possibly build something like this without disruption, but what we have to try and do is to minimise the ferry disruption and the disruption to all the businesses that rely on the harbour." The company has agreed to dredge the harbour to give a deeper berthing space for fishing boats. Arrangements will be made for fuel facilities to be moved around the pier.

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10/12/05 **Isle of Mull** left Merseyside after her completed overhaul today around 1800 and is heading back to home waters in Scotland. She has had a internal re-vamp of her lounge area, the layout remains the same but a new carpet and curtains have been fitted. **Coruisk** will go into dock on Monday 12/12/05 for her annual overhaul being relieved by the **Saturn** who is now back in service after her annual overhaul



Isle of Mull's new lounge

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09/12/05 **Saturn** has been fitted with an additional passenger loading platform on her main deck to allow her to use the new walkways at all levels of tide. The new structure is fitted where the current gangway entrance used to be. It looks like a temporary / permanent (if it can be called that) structure.

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07/12/05 **Saturn** was sighted out on trails today clearing the channel at 1215 heading out the ToB. She headed for Wemyss Bay where she abruptly turned around and headed back up-river to complete her annual overhaul.



Saturn on trials today

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05/12/05 **Loch Alainn** and later **Loch Fyne** were both sighted heading up river towards dry docking at Garvel for their annual overhaul. Clyde Marines tugs *Beaver Bay* and *Biter* eased **Saturn** from Garvel dry-dock at 1345 and assisted her into JWD for final touches. **Loch Tarbert** has moved from lay-up at Rosneath to Largs to replace the **Loch Alainn**. Soon after the **Loch Alainn** arrived and entered the dry-dock at 1400. She was soon followed by her fleet mate **Loch Fyne** at roughly 1425.



Saturn being assisted into JWD

**Caledonian Isles** is due to go to Aberdeen for her annual refit & overhaul in a month (roughly around the 5th of January). Clansman will be standing in for her duty as per previous year. **Coruisk** has returned to normal service after her absence yesterday.

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04/12/05 At roughly 0800 **Coruisk** apparently suffered a technical problem with her engines. As far as we can gather this problem lasted for roughly a hour whilst she drifted towards Millport. As a result the Wemyss Bay - Rothesay service was slightly altered and the 1215 ex Rothesay & 1300 sailings ex Wemyss Bay have been cancelled. Later and apparently still suffering technical difficulties the route was operating a one vessel service with the **Bute** and the following sailings have been cancelled; Ex Rothesay 1515, 1645, & 1815 Ex Wemyss Bay 1300, 1600, 1730, & 1900. **Coruisk** appears to be in Rothesay tied up undergoing maintenance.



Jupiter and Loch Tarbert at Rosneath

**Jupiter** and **Loch Tarbert** are both at Gareloch for winter 'hibernation' until they are needed or their summer rosters have begun.

**Loch Striven** on her way for her overhaul on the Clyde, berthed last night at Tobermory.

03/12/05 **Loch Buie** left Rothesay late on Wednesday 30/11 and took over her own run between Fionnphort and Iona this morning. **Loch Linnhe** has gone to Raasay via Mallaig to relive on the Sconser crossing which has allowed the **Loch Striven** to head for her overhaul.

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02/12/05 **Loch Fyne** has arrived in Gourock ready for her annual overhaul at JWD. She is currently sitting at the wires berth while **Juno** is currently on the Gourock - Dunoon roster. **Isle of Cumbrae** is now relieving on the Lochaline - Fishnish crossing until just before Christmas.

#### **Reported in the Arran Banner - Saturday 3rd December**

'Ardrossan Pier struck by Arran Ferry'

Friday 25th November, MV Caledonian Isles was involved in a collision with the pier at Ardrossan

A spokesperson for Cal Mac said : 'Minor damage was sustained by the ferry after it hit the pier at Ardrossan on Friday afternoon. This was a weather related incident. The MV Caledonian Isles was virtually the only vessel in our fleet to sail on Friday because of the weather conditions.'

1640 sailing arriving in Ardrossan 'seemed to go nose first into the pier & took a chunk of concrete out of it'. This passenger quoted believed that the hull had been punctured above the water line leaving a hole the size of a golf ball.

The boat was welded at Ardrossan & all work was completed on site. The ferry eventually left Ardrossan & returned to Brodick at 10.50pm. The spokesperson continued: 'Sourcing welders contributed to the time factor as did thorough checks afterwards to ensure the repairs had been successful. The work was inspected by CalMac staff and MCA. This occurrence is nothing out of the ordinary. Ferries make contact with the piers on a regular basis. By Saturday everything was back to normal & it was business as usual.'