

DATE	NEWS
	News Commenced 31/08/03
31/08/03	<p>After finishing her additional weekend sailings at Dunoon in co-ordinance with the Cowal games, MV Pioneer performed a farewell cruise from Gourrock to Tighanbruiach. Sailings on the Clyde have now returned to normal</p>
30/08/03	<p>MV Coruisk has now entered Garvel dry-dock in Greenock for repairs. Calmac have also announced that following her final cruise to Tighnabruaich tomorrow, MV Pioneer will return to the Mallaig-Armadale service until MV Coruisk has been fully repaired. An extension on her safety certificates was made which means she will be allowed to cover for the damaged vessel.</p> <p>MV Loch Linnhe is currently operating the Tarbert-Portavadie service, MV Loch Riddon has returned to Largs with MV Loch Tarbert back at Lochranza.</p> <p>Calmac have this weekend been implementing their extra sailings arranged for the Cowal games. This has seen the Juno, Jupiter and Pioneer on the Dunoon run with Saturn at Rothesay.</p>
29/08/03	<p>Sources suggest that it is in fact MV Isle of Cumbrae that is operating the Lochaline-Fishnish service, with MV Loch Tarbert on the Tarbert - Portavadie run and MV Loch Riddon on the Lochranza-Claonaig service.</p> <p>MV Coruisk has nearly completed her journey to the Clyde for repairs following her accident.</p>
28/08/03	<p>MV Pioneer observed on the Wemyss Bay -Rothesay run today.</p> <p>Rumours suggest that MV Loch Linnhe is currently operating the Lochaline-Fishnish service due to the absence of MV Loch Fyne (currently covering at Mallaig). MV Bruernish is most likely operating the Tobermory-Kilchoan service for the time being.</p> <p>MV Loch Riddon has been observed at Lochranza, suggesting that MV Loch Tarbert has either broken down or is covering in the western isles.</p>
26/08/03	<p>Yet more problems have struck the new Skye ferry M.V Coruisk this week. On Sunday, 21 passengers and a handful of cars were left stranded on the vessel as she came into contact with rocks near the entrance to Mallaig Harbour and lost a propeller. She limped back to port and was immediately removed from the service. The incident has caused havoc on the crossing to Armadale this week, and delays are expected to continue. Sources have told us that MV Loch Fyne has been sent up to Mallaig to provide a basic service for the people of Skye. The only alternative for people crossing with their cars is to travel a further 100 miles north to the Skye bridge at Kyle of Lochalsh, but this journey can take up to two hours. We will keep you informed as events unfold.</p> <p>Incidentally, this is not the first time that Calmac have had headaches with this service. In 1998 MV Iona had to be withdrawn from the service at the start of the summer season as she did not meet new regulations which were implemented for vessels of her kind. MV Lord of the Isles was due to take over but only at the end of the season when she herself was replaced by the new MV Clansman at Oban. Calmac had to use the loch class vessel MV Loch Dunvegan as a stop-gap. She was regularly assisted by one of the island class ships because she had nowhere near enough capacity for the service. However, she coped valiantly and managed to keep a ferry link open between Skye and the mainland.</p>

Hopefully the problems at Mallaig will not effect Pioneer's final cruise this coming Sunday.

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- 24/08/03 Mallaig to Armadale service will not operate on Monday (25th) due to technical problems. An alternative service will be restored as soon as possible.
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- 22/08/03 Caledonian MacBrayne has confirmed that MV Coruisk will resume her schedule on the Mallaig to Armadale route with the 1820 sailing from Mallaig tonight (Friday), returning from Armadale at 1845. The timetabled service will resume tomorrow (Saturday), departing Mallaig 0840. Caledonian MacBrayne apologises to customers for the inconvenience caused while MV Coruisk was out of service due to technical difficulties.
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- 21/08/03 An announcement from Calmac regarding new ferries for Wemyss Bay - Rothesay is imminent. "Calmac are about to issue their plans for 2 new vessels for the Rothesay route - they will carry 60 cars each, and allow the Juno and Jupiter to be withdrawn."
(Update by S.H. as A.H. is away)
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- 20/08/03 MV Pioneer will make her final journey as part of the fleet on Sunday, August 31 with a special sailing from Gourock to Tighnabruaich returning to Gourock via Burnt Island in the Kyles of Bute, East Kyle, and Rothesay Bay.
(Update by S.H. as A.H. is away)
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- 20/08/03 Pioneer's final sailing has been announced as the 31st of August, she has now arrived back on the Clyde after covering the Mallaig - Armadale route.
(Update by S.H. as A.H. is away)
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- 19/08/03 Caledonian MacBrayne confirms extra sailings for Bute Games. They will be operating increased frequency through extra services, within the current timetable on the Wemyss Bay to Rothesay route for the period covering the weekend of Bute Highland Games (August 23) and the Island Motorcycle Invasion Rally. Ships proposed for this service - Juno, Jupiter, Saturn, Alicat, Pioneer.
(Update by S.H. as A.H. is away)
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- 16/08/03 Sadly, Pioneer's 'Westering Home' cruise was cancelled due to technical problems encountered by the new Coruisk at Mallaig, it is unclear when this will resume if at all. However her final sailings will be on the Clyde with the Highland Games and two special charters yet to be announced. The Isle of Lewis 1400hrs departure for Ullapool sailed at 1458hrs. She "broke down" on Wednesday morning and was relieved by Clansman until the 1045hrs departure from Ullapool on Thursday when she returned to service with her starboard engine only managing to maintain half revs.
(Update by S.H. as A.H. is away)
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- 13/08/03 Tomorrow will be Pioneer's last sailing to Skye, as Coruisk is to be officially named (by Baroness Michie) at Armadale shortly before taking over the service in the afternoon. Pioneer will then be prepared for her cruise to Oban on Saturday, which will mean an emotional farewell for the people of Mallaig and Skye who the Pioneer has served so faithfully for much of her career. Good luck Pioneer!
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- 10/08/03 Coruisk is due to leave Gourock on Monday 11th for Upper Clyde piers again, and on to Campbeltown overnight. Then direct to Mallaig on Tuesday for berthing trials on Wednesday.
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- 09/08/03 Ali Cat was back on the Rothesay service again today, doing trials for her period on the service during the upcoming Cowal Games.
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- 09/08/03 Coruisk has now received the Calmac red and black funnels and her aesthetics have been greatly improved! Well done Calmac!
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- 07/08/03 It has been reported that Coruisk will receive the Calmac trademark red and black funnels by the end of the week.
- Pioneer, Calmac's most popular vessel will sadly be leaving for pastures new in the not too distant future. Where...we do not yet know, but Calmac have decided to give her the send off she deserves by arranging some special sailings this month. The first, on Saturday August 16th, will see Pioneer sail from Mallaig to Oban via Tobermory and Staffa, and the following day she will sail from Oban to Ardrossan via Islay. She will then be held in reserve until she will ferry passengers to Bute for the Highland games (23rd and 24th). Her final sailing will be shortly after Cowal games weekend, on the last weekend of August, where she will be stationed at Gourrock. For more information, contact [Calmac](#)
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- 06/08/03 Ali Cat was observed at Wemyss Bay earlier this week performing berthing trials during one of her quiet periods. This is because she is expected to operate from Wemyss Bay to Rothesay on Cowal Games day when all 3 of the streakers will be most likely be on the Dunoon run.
- Coruisk, Calmac's new ship built for the Mallaig-Armadale service has arrived on the Clyde from the shipyard where she was built (Appledore, Devon). She is currently undertaking berthing trials on the upper Clyde where she is going to work each winter when the summer only service to Skye is not operating.
- This is the new Fleet news page, updated every day by the news editor - enjoy!

DATE	NEWS
10/09/03 - 31/09/03	(Archive Unavailable - Uploading at a later date)

- 09/09/03 MV Coruisk will be leaving dry-dock on the Clyde tonight, en route to Mallaig. If all goes smoothly, MV Pioneer will return to the Clyde for a stint on the Rothesay run.
- Also, MV Hebridean Isles is likely to be returning to the Orkneys in January to cover for Hamnavoe's winter overhaul.
- MV Isle of Cumbrae and MV Loch Linnhe are not likely to swap back to their designated routes before winter, as they will most likely be required to cover for overhauls.
- MV Caledonian Isles had to divert to Gourrock today after an unexploded bomb was found in Ardrossan.

- 05/09/03 Calmac are likely to be advertising the sale of MV Laig Bay (flitboat at Eigg) shortly, as the slipway and pier near completion.

- 03/09/03 MV Pioneer left the Clyde today for Mallaig, where she will resume services to Armadale. MV Loch Fyne is expected to be back at Lochaline shortly. MV Isle of Cumbrae was observed at Tobermory today. MV Loch Linnhe is still operating the Tarbert-Portavadie service.

DATE	NEWS
25/10/03	Lord of the Isles started the day at the railway pier in Oban later doing a 14.00 to Craignure. She will then will change over with Clansman there and will do the 17.00 with clansman berthing there overnight and will depart 10.30 Sunday morning for Stornoway. Isle of Lewis is due at Aberdeen on Monday morning.

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- 22/10/03 Progress is well underway with MV Lochnevis, currently in Garvel dry dock. MV Coruisk departed this afternoon for Ferguson's Shipyard in Port Glasgow for clutch repairs.
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- 19/10/03 MV Saturn transferred from Rothesay to Dunoon run this afternoon, swapping places with MV Juno (weekly roster changes are common for the streakers)
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- 18/10/03 MV Lochnevis due to depart for the Clyde tomorrow at 07.00 for Garvel from Craignure. MV Hebridean Isles due at Kennacraig tonight 17.45 having left dry-dock, ready to begin the 12.50 roster tomorrow. MV Isle of Arran will remain berthed at Kennacraig till 12.00 Monday then sailing to Stornoway via Port Askaig.
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- 14/10/03 Caledonian MacBrayne new vessel announcement...
- Caledonian MacBrayne has welcomed confirmation by Minister of Transport, Nicol Stephen MSP, that it is to receive funding from the Scottish Executive for a new ship to service the Wemyss Bay to Rothesay route.
- The new ship, which will cost £8.75million, will carry 62 cars and 450 passengers on CalMac's busiest route, and will enter service in 2005. Tenders will be placed later in the year for the order to build the ship, which will replace one of the current Streakers servicing the route.
- CalMac Managing Director Lawrie Sinclair, said, "The company is always delighted to be building new ships. Having introduced two others already in 2003, this is a welcome addition to the fleet. The Streakers have served us well and are now coming to the end of their working schedules. The new ship will be ideally suited to commuter traffic. The increased capacity will open up the island of Bute to many more people, and make the Central Belt more accessible to island residents."
- The new ship will carry nearly twice as many cars as the Streakers (36) and around 450 passengers. Mr Sinclair added: "This is the first step towards the development of a 21st century ferry service for the Wemyss Bay to Rothesay route. The new ship will effectively bring the island of Bute closer to the mainland, connecting the two communities. With better access to the rail and road network, I hope that the integration of services will lead to even more people using the route. We will obviously be delighted to see the traffic grow."
- As part of the consultation process involved in bringing the new ship design to fruition, CalMac will be conducting local meetings and the company is currently planning a questionnaire which will establish customers' aspirations for on-board facilities. Mr Sinclair said: "It is important that everyone appreciates at the outset that there is 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, so quickly after getting our two new ships into service this summer."
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- 13/10/03 Hebridean Isles has floated out of Garvel Dry-Dock today unaided and is due to resume service shortly.
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- 11/10/03 Lochnevis is due at Garvel Dry Dock for overhaul on Monday 20th of October with Pioneer covering her. The Coruisk is due to take up the Mallaig - Armadale service on 2nd November. Before that she may appear up at Mallaig for berthing trials.
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08/10/03	Isle of Lewis, Muirneag and Loch Portain didn't sail on Monday 6th owing to gales. Muirneag didn't sail Tuesday night either.
07/10/03	Isle of Lewis made the return trip from Ullapool to Stornoway today but couldn't return owing to 'trouble with the port engine' At this moment they don't know if she'll be able to make her crossings tomorrow.
04/10/03	Loch Nevis will dry dock on the 19th October for about two weeks. Pioneer will cover the combined Small Isles / Mallaig- Armadale service.
01/10/03	MV Ali Cat will be out of service for a single sailing on Friday, October 3. The following sailing is cancelled: Friday 3 October: 1745 ex Gourock and 1815 ex Dunoon. This change to the advertised timetable is to allow essential planned maintenance to take place.
DATE	NEWS
30/11/03	Loch Dunvegan was spotted heading outbound towards Toward Light, not sure yet if she is going to Rothesay first or straight to Colintraive. Coruisk's 13.20 ex Gourock and 13.50 ex Dunoon have been cancelled due to technical problems today.
28/11/03	Coruisk operated the 15-20 to Dunoon yesterday but the same sailing today was operated by AliCat.
27/11/03	Jupiter Launched 30 years ago today - Happy 30th Birthday!
23/11/03	Muirneag is back in the water at Wallsend, she didn't appear to have her name on the bow or the Calmac web address, she is due to leave around the 26th.
22/11/03	The Isle of Mull due in the Mersey on Sunday at 17.00 going to Birkenhead for overhaul. Currently she is staying at Craignure tonight, leaving there at midnight and then sailing to Birkenhead arriving at 17.00hrs where she is picking up the pilot and then sailing further up the river from where the Isle of Lewis was overhauled to a different dock.
21/11/03	Isle of Lewis returned to Service today on her regular Ullapool - Stornoway route after her annual overhaul allowing the Clansman to head back south.
19/11/03	The Sound of Harris ferry (Presumably Loch Portain) was out of service yesterday and part of today due to a technical fault.
17/11/03	Reported today was PIONEER's Radar spinning in JWD for a while, perhaps she's patiently awaiting a turn to be out in the open waters... Caledonian MacBrayne has confirmed that the Uig/Tarbert/Lochmaddy service will resume with a normal timetabled service commencing 0730 ex Lochmaddy on Saturday 15 November.

15/11/03 CORUIISK was spotted doing a series of sharp turns (definitely NOT for the fainted hearts!) before heading off to Dunoon, presumably for further berthing trials today.

CORUIISK should eventually start 'normal' sailings next week. Also Saturn's refit has possibly been delayed for a short time.

14/11/03 Today CORUIISK was at the wires, Gourock, doubled up (two sets of ropes at each mooring point). At 1505, just before Saturn arrived from Dunoon she 'singled up' her mooring ropes and landed her gangway. She gave all the appearance of a ship about to sail. presumably to make the 1520 sailing. Saturn duly arrived, unloaded, and indistinct commands came over Coruisk's PA system. Saturn loaded, and sailed for Dunoon, and Coruisk's gangway was positioned again. Her ropes were then 'doubled' again. The new Clyde ferries to replace the 'Streakers' will, apparently, not be CORUIISK styled, but bigger versions of the present sisters..

13/11/03 Loch Buie prepared to go on the slipway at the Ardmaleish Boatyard.

CORUIISK made a scheduled trip to Ferguson's for further belting adjustments last night. She was back in service again today for a few runs.

11/11/03 MV CORUIISK will leave Gourock at 12:20pm today on first service run on the Clyde.

CORUIISK yet again didn't appear yesterday in service. It seems that the new belting is causing problems at Dunoon and that she will head back to Ferguson's on Wednesday for more repairs. The vessel cost £8.2 million and could not operate on the route for which she was built, has not earned her owners a penny since late August. She has had numerous alterations carried out to appearance and functions.

Yesterday 10/11/03 saw the start of the temporary revised route for the Uig Triangle. The new route sees the Hebrides operating out of Ullapool instead of Uig as there are slipway repairs at the latter. She will be running with her sister the Clansman who is covering for the Isles of Lewis who is currently on the Mersey for annual overhaul.

09/11/03 Confirmation of the first sailings of CORUIISK

Mon, Wed Fri 1220 / 1320 / 1420 / 1520 ex Gourock

Tues & Thurs 1220 / 1320 / 1520 / 1820 / 1920 ex Gourock

08/11/03 Reported in today's Herald that Calmac are to abolish the position of Purser on their vessels. *Ships of Calmac* have yet to confirm this with details but will keep you informed as soon as we know.

Calmac intend to operate M V Coruisk on several of their Gourock / Dunoon services from Monday 10th November. M V Saturn will operate the main timetable from Sunday 9th onwards but will be replaced by Coruisk on several services each day. Coruisk's services will be subject to alteration but she is expected to operate the 1220, 1320 and 1420 sailings ex Gourock with their returns 30 mins later from Dunoon plus some others which are not specified at the moment. It is expected that Coruisk will take over the service entirely from Monday 17th November when Saturn goes off for overhaul. Please note that the above is subject to alteration at short notice.

06/11/03 The Loch Linnhe due out on trials on Wednesday 12th she will the go on to the Iona service to let Loch Buie to come town for her overhaul

05/11/03 MV Coruisk is at James Watt Dock tonight to free the Top Wires berth at Gourock for MV Juno to lie overnight instead of the linkspan berth. Contractors will tonight install a large Trelex fender in the linkspan berth to aid alignment to vessels using the berth.
The work was scheduled for Tuesday night but due to MV Coruisk being unable to enter the dock due to adverse weather conditions yesterday is being carried out tonight.

MV Pioneer moved from Greenock Custom House Quay to James Watt dock for lay up this afternoon.

MV Saturn transferred over to Gourock-Dunoon service this afternoon, MV Jupiter was observed at Wemyss Bay.

04/11/03 MV Pioneer arrived on the Clyde late this afternoon, bound for Gourock. However, after offloading crew cars there she proceeded to Greenock Custom House Quay where she berthed due to high speed winds. It is believed to be her first ever time there, and the first time a Calmac vessel has used the Quay since MV Iona in 1985, when she left Lamont's drydock only to suffer immediate mechanical problems and needed somewhere to berth quickly. .

MV Caledonian Isles diverted to Gourock this afternoon instead of her usual mainland terminal at Ardrossan.

It is likely that MV Loch Riddon is currently covering on the Colintrave-Rhubodach service whilst MV Loch Dunvegan is in drydock, though this is still to be confirmed.

03/11/03 Due to adverse weather conditions M V Pioneer has been forced to seek shelter overnight at Kennacraig. A decision on her future progress to Gourock will be made tomorrow morning. Pioneer is expected to discharge crew cars and other equipment at Gourock before berthing at James Watt Dock.

02/11/03 Loch Dunvegan headed for the James Watt Dock this morning, a week early for her annual overhaul.

MV Isle of Lewis arrived at A&P drydock, Birkenhead today for her annual overhaul. MV Clansman is currently covering on the Lewis service. MV Muirneag's sailings are unaffected.

01/11/03 Pioneer completed her Small Isles relief sailings today, and found Loch Nevis waiting for her on her arrival back at Mallaig. She now heads back to JWD for lay up, so today MAY have been her last passenger sailing (its a big may where Pioneer is concerned!). She is due in Oban tomorrow, and is expected at Gourock about 5pm on Monday, before heading to JWD.

DATE	NEWS
29/12/03Not much happening folks I'm afraid! Keep the updates coming in, Regards, News Team.

28/12/03 CORUIISK seems to have a new position of her navigation lights. They appear to have been heightened, possibly because of the side ramp.

- 19/12/03 HEBRIDEAN FERRIES - Oban 1525hrs today.
CLANSMAN departs for Lochboisdale 5 minutes early to allow ISLE OF MULL onto the linkspan on arrival from Isle of Colonsay and to load for it's 1600hrs departure for Craignure (Isle of Mull) while LORD OF THE ISLES lies alongside the Railway Pier "off roster". CLANSMAN is due to relieve on Kennacraig - Islay run to allow one of these vessels (HEBRIDEAN ISLES or ISLE OF ARRAN) to go for annual but yards are closed over the festive period so there's a bit of work-sharing at Oban. It now appears to Calmac that because of yet more objections from the Fishing Industry they may well have to abandon plans for Oban's second linkspan. This is bound to affect next summer's proposed timetable that would have allowed the three ships increased frequencies to the Isles. The 1530hrs sailing today of the CLANSMAN to Lochboisdale and Castlebay returning to Oban at 0540hrs tomorrow is the last overnight sailing of the Winter timetable - from Friday 9 January the return sailing from Lochboisdale will be at 0730hrs via Castlebay (0925hrs).
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- 18/12/03 It seems MV PIONEER is being mothballed and stripped of her Calmac internal fittings and is looking a very sad sight in JWD, could this be the end? More updates to come... *(Later Update, thanks to Derek Crawford:)* Way back in August PIONEER's crew all said that she was to be mothballed, ie having all windows and doors covered over with metal plates to completely seal the vessel up, with no crew on board bar a watchman. When she finally did arrive back in Greenock she was on 24 hour notice to sail and was active in sense of maintenance being carried and part of a crew was on board. Now it would appear that they have gone back to the original idea which, to put it mildly, is bad news. At a guess I would think the end is nigh...
- A report has come in about Alicat's incident, apparently she did not come into contact with anything floating in the water. One her own rudders came away from the assembly and contacted the propeller and consequently damaged the prop.
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- 17/12/03 Loch Alainn has left JWD Glasgow and was spotted heading for the Skelmorlie Channel to Largs at 1315h today.
- There seems to be some activity around Pioneers Berth in the JWD today too, further updates as they come in.
- The Lord of the Isles was rostered to complete Clansman's sailings yesterday, today and tomorrow, allowing Clansman time off at Oban. Lord of the Isles then has Sunday and Monday off at Oban. At 4.30pm today Clansman was still alongside the Railway Pier - Lord of the Isles went to Craignure with the 4.00pm departure and Isle of Mull was due back from Colonsay at 5.00pm.
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- 16/12/03 Coruisk is expected on the Rothesay service for Friday. Alterations are presently being made to the pier there and they are awaiting delivery of the new gangway. Coruisk is to have her belting modified again to allow her to operate on this service. It is possible that Coruisk's timekeeping may be slightly better on the Rothesay run. Her main problem appears to be when manoeuvring into the berth so the longer run between piers may allow her to catch up slightly.
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- 15/12/03 The Loch Tarbert is due to leave Largs today, probably because the Loch Alainn will be returning from her overhaul. The Loch Tarbert will probably just be sitting in Rothesay until needed.
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- 14/12/03 CORUIISK was spotted heading for Rothesay, probably on "Berthing trials" again. JUNO and JUPITER maintain the Wemyss Bay - Rothesay shuttle while SATURN (and presumably ALICAT) are on the Gourrock - Dunoon shuttle.
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- 11/12/03 ALI CAT was today spotted coming out of what looks like Garvel dry-dock - perhaps problem fixed.
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- 10/12/03 ALI CAT hit a submerged object off Gourock this morning, and this is the reason for her fouled prop and rudder. SATURN should be operating at Gourock today with CORUIISK taking up ALICAT's sailings. Unknown if CORUIISK will be taking cars or not. CORUIISK may also undertake berthing trials at Rothesay and Wemyss Bay as well today.
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- 09/12/03 SATURN seems to be operating without one of her side ramps, will update when more information comes in.
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- 6/12/03 The Loch Tarbert is covering the Largs run while the Loch Alainn is away. The Loch Riddon may be at Tarbert-Portavadie if the Loch Linnhe is at Sconser.
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- 3/12/03 MV Saturn left Garvel drydock this morning, and berthed in the James Watt Dock. MV Loch Alainn then took her place in the Garvel drydock.
There is a small rumour that MV Pioneer will be reinstated into the fleet for use as a spare vessel after an overhaul this winter. Watch this space.
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- 2/12/03 Launched Today 1984: at Ferguson's was the Isle of Arran. Loch Alainn is in James Watt Dock for her annual overhaul. Loch Riddon has been sent to replace her. Loch Tarbert was at Largs tonight, after docking she slipped into her overnight berth. Loch Striven may join the Loch Alainn and the Jupiter in JWD. After the Loch Linnhe was replaced on the Iona run by the newly overhauled Loch Buie, she sailed to Sconser to replace the Loch Striven (who is reportedly now heading for Timbercraft).
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- 1/12/03 On *Wednesday 3rd December 2003* the following sailing will replace the scheduled service:
Departing Mallaig at 1025hrs following that Muck, Eigg, Muck and back to Mallaig. For more information contact the Calmac Mallaig office on (01687)462403
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- 1/12/03 Saturn is currently in Garvel Dry Dock along with AliCat and Pioneer in James Watt Dock
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- 1/12/03 Loch Alainn was sighted inbound for James Watt Dock this morning, later to be seen heading back down towards Largs, will report further updates as they come in.