

MORE than 33 years after leaving Argyll, Malcolm Black has recently returned to the area after a long and successful career in education.

Born and brought up in Tobermory on Mull, Malcolm attended Oban High School as a youth, and was instrumental in setting up the Oban High School Former Pupils Association (OHSFPA) nearly 50 years ago.

Malcolm said: 'In the 1950s the catchment area of Oban High School was much more extensive than it is today, with all the larger islands and small towns having their own high schools - and rightly so, a truly wonderful inheritance from Strathclyde Regional Council.

'Apart from groups at Glasgow University and Jordanhill, or one or two Glasgow infirmaries, most of the former pupils were widely scattered, and the chances were remote of meeting each other in the groups we had enjoyed on our return visits home to Tiree, Mull, Islay, Lochfyneside, Tyndrum, Skipness, Kinlochleven, Morvern or Ardnamurchan.'

Malcolm explains how the association was formed: 'Thinking it would be a good idea to have an organised reunion, I set the ball rolling in autumn 1956 by writing to the Rector, John Maclean, to seek his advice and support. He responded by making contact with several former pupils widely distributed throughout the Glasgow, or in the modern idiom, West of Scotland community. In addition he charmed recently retired Principal teacher of English, George Milne

## Back to his roots after 33 years

to act as our guiding mentor. 'He immediately quashed the idea that we were setting up a club. It was an association. With such attention to detail, it took us until June 1957 to produce our constitution, which I don't think has been invoked to solve any dispute in the last 50 years.'

As well as Malcolm, who represented University students, those involved in the first year of the association were Rev Angus Mackin-

non (Islay) Minister of St Columba's and the first Chairman, Kenneth Macleod Oban - first secretary, Donnie MacDougal Oban who was first treasurer, Colin Palmer Morvern, John Ralston Oban, John Smith Tobermory, Tommy Ness Oban, Mrs Edgar Oban/Islay, Alastair Ogilvie Tobermory, Ishbel Macleod/

Lloyd Tobermory, Anna MacDougal Islay representing Jordanhill students.

The programme for the first year included a beetle drive, whist drive, ceilidh, dance and a day trip to Oban. The venue's were Mrs Edgar's house in Hyndland or the Highlander's Institute, but nowadays an annual dinner and dance is held in Glasgow.

Malcolm recalls: 'After our student days and much travelling, in 1966 my wife Dorothy and I attended a dinner in the Berkley Restaurant next to the Mitchell Library. Of the 26 at the table, we were the youngest by almost two decades.'

It was several years before Malcolm heard of the OHSFPs again, and he says he was delighted

