

‘The Christmas just past was the most successful yet and we got 400 toys donated to us.

‘It is the public generosity that makes it the great success it is.

‘There were also 300 parcels which we donated to the appeal so last year we had a total of 700 parcels to distribute.’

The carol service, organised by the Salvation Army in Oban started four years ago and is now a well-attended annual event.

Connie said: ‘McTavish’s very kindly donates the premises and the mince pies.

All the money raised at the service goes to a different local charity every year.’

Throughout the rest of the year the work of the Salvation Army is never done. Members conduct services at residential and nursing homes throughout Lorn.

They also sell the Salvation Army newspaper, War Cry (established 1879) on Thursdays and Fridays at the town’s supermarkets.

And Captain Connie has made a name for herself on the air waves with her Captain’s Hour on Oban FM.

She said: ‘Captain’s Hour will be going for three years in May. I’ve been amazed at the number of people who tune in. There is one man in Dalmally who drives his car up a hill to get a reception every week.’

The corp’s newest senior soldier Elsie Dunlop said: ‘I never knew the Salvation Army existed until Connie came here and a few poeple in Oban feel the same way as me.

‘She put Oban on the map and there wouldn’t be an army without her.’

