



Retired Police Officers' Association Scotland

| December | 2020

CENTRAL BRANCH

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CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

Well, it's a true saying – 'how time flies'. It's December already and not much has been achieved by me since I last wrote.

We did manage a few days away, to Kyleakin on Skye. Not much had changed since our last visit about fifteen years ago, except we had lovely weather this time round. We stayed at a little hotel in the village and toured each day from there. We visited most of the tourist places we were interested in and the roads were fairly busy, considering the COVID regulations. We didn't do much walking, as the hospital physio insisted I used crutches, due to my hip pain.

My wife Gwen has been busy over the past few months, helping to give our church a makeover by doing all the gloss painting, often when there is no-one else present. (The doors are locked and she has her phone!!) One day, when I was at home busy (reading

the paper), Gwen phoned in a bit of a panic. She had been painting a skirting, then stood up, banging her head on a newly cut rail. Being brave, she went to carry on when large drops of blood landed on the dust sheet. The only thing she had to stop the blood, was the dirty rag she was using with her painting. She ran through to the kitchen and got a clean tea towel from a drawer. She phoned me. I hurried down to assist, and found her with blood on her head, face, the floor, in the sink and the chair she was sitting on. I should never have told her I had a medal for First Aid! Gwen had a deep cut, just about half an inch long, but looking quite deep. I mopped it up as much as possible, and at that point, her brother Duncan appeared. Between us, we made the professional decision that she did not require further medical attention. I was going to tell her to carry on painting but thought better of it!

For the past couple of years or so, I couldn't walk much without the aid of a stick and latterly, crutches. I had been getting treated for displaced nerve endings in my spine, causing pain in my hip, groin and knee. It got to the point about the end of September, every move I made, clicking sounds emanated from my hip, accompanied by severe pain. I was forced to get an appointment at our Medical Centre and luckily I saw a new doctor and within five minutes, he decided to send me for an x-ray which showed that the ball on the femur was badly damaged and scraping the socket



in the pelvis (crepitus). Within a few weeks, I had an appointment to have 'major surgery, to replace the hip, at Forth Valley Royal Hospital. This was due to take place on 4 November 2020, and I had started self- isolating.

Well, 4th November has come and gone and I am the happy owner of a new hip. The surgeon described the old one as *radiographically, very severe arthritis*. No wonder it was giving me so much grief! The operation itself seemed okay to me, but I later learned that my heartbeat was all over the place and I was on oxygen all through the op. They also found a small clot on my right lung. I can just hear the comments!! However, it was in my previously damaged lung and blood thinning drugs are sorting that out.

I was in a four bed ward with two other guys, an older man from Killlearn and one the same age as me from Callander, who was getting a knee replacement. The staff were first class and looked after us day and night. We were due to be discharged on 7 November but ended up there until 11 November. I had told Gwen not to come to pick me up till I gave here the word however, she misheard me, and arrived about 2.0pm. I was released about 5.30pm! I phoned and told her to 'stand-by', but she said she was already in the car park!

Things were going okay until the early hours of the following Saturday, when I was experiencing very severe pain in the new hip area and had to get an ambulance back to hospital. I waited on

a trolley/bed in the emergency department for a couple of hours, while the weekend biz went on. At one stage, there were TEN police officers present, looking totally bored, and obviously waiting on doctors to sign their custody cases in or out. I escaped again on the Sunday, following an x-ray and some other checks. At the date of typing this (26 November), my recovery is going very well and I feel the relief of moving about without pain or the very annoying clicking.

In our little enclave here, apart from myself, we have Ian Taylor (ex Strathclyde who with his wife Sandra, joins us on lunches), and now, David McGregor, a Detective Inspector in Forth Valley Division at Stirling. David is the son of former PC Colin McGregor! Small world.

Sadly, we have lost some former colleagues recently, Bill Porter, my sergeant at Stirling when I joined in 1965, Kenny Haston who moved to Spain with his wife Elaine only last year, David McPherson, who worked with me in Balfron, Innes Rose, who was sergeant in Kilsyth when I was there in the 60's, Jimmy Graham and Stuart Ballantyne. We are thinking of their families.

Earlier this month Doune member Alistair Cordiner lost his beloved wife Ann. Our sympathies are extended to Alistair and his family at this difficult time.

Hopefully, this terrible virus will be beaten in the not too distant future and





we can resume socialising once again. Just think of all the lunches we have missed!

In the meantime, look after yourselves.

Happy Christmas and best wishes to all.

Bill Culbard

Chairman

CONTACT INFO

Chairman: Bill Culbard

Mobile 07792890648

E mail b.culbard@yahoo.co.uk

Vice Chairman: Moira Dunn

Mobile: 07754316778 or E mail:

mo60du53@gmail.com

Secretary/Treasurer/Editor: Lesley Struth

Mobile: 07825957429 or E mail:

lascentralbranch@gmail.com

Membership Fee enquiries:

Mike Mill

Mobile: 07548551216 or E mail:

mikemill233@gmail.com

MIKE HAS KEPT HIMSELF OCCUPIED DURING LOCKDOWN

This is not a Clarion call to our members to attend RPOAS meetings or to become involved in Committee work but an explanation of my role in the Committee and why I have made contact to members concerning relative payments to the Association.

It is only in the last three years that I started attending RPOAS meetings, mainly AGMs and a visit to

Randolphfield hosted by Inspector Marie White. I was quite amazed to see my old colleagues, some I had not seen in many years and must admit I had difficulty recognising them. How time changes people after life in the Police. I met with Willie Clark, who has since unfortunately passed, but talked about the time I was in Falkirk and how we sorted out the Fishing show each year. What a man. Never thought I would see big Tam R with a beard and my old partner in Falkirk JLO, (now name change to something quite fancy) Willie, now AKA our Chairman Bill Culbard.

Finally, an old mate who I first knew, although I am sure he did not know me at that time, at the Otter Club, Falkirk, Jimmy Lindsay. Not changed a bit and I am sure he is getting younger.

I have also helped out transporting older members to Branch events – they used to drive me in my younger days. While a Cadet in Stenhousemuir, I 'worked' with Les Cumpstey. Never saw him at all in my later service until I drove him and his lovely wife Jean – who sadly passed away during lockdown – to a lunch in Torwood. I think he must be about 112 by now but he is still sharp. Only kidding, Les.

At the last AGM, I saw the difficulty being experienced by the Secretary in pulling together all the various aspects of our local Branch and thought I might be able to assist. As a result, I volunteered as a Committee member, was proposed and duly appointed. I really had no intention of taking any active part before then.

I was asked if I would encourage membership and assist Lesley - who was acting as both Secretary and Treasurer.





One of my tasks was to look at the membership annual fee payments. I did not realise how difficult a task it was to become.

After our first committee meeting in January the dreaded virus enveloped us all. Due to Data Protection. I had restricted access to members' past payment details. In fact, I had limited knowledge to most aspects of RPOAS.

Contacting members by e-mail was challenging as I could not fully explain the limited information I was working with. I know I upset many members by suggesting their fees were in arrears and their subsequent replies reflected that. However, explanations of the changes in Banking details and payment methods appear to have proved beneficial and I am now in a better position of understanding the Branch workings. We are now in a much healthier financial state and I thank members who have responded to me.

I take this opportunity in our Newsletter to encourage members to participate in future activities – when we can have them again - in any small way and perhaps encourage other retired colleagues to join our Branch and meet up with former colleagues. It is well worth it and totally rewarding.

Mike Mill

SECRETARY'S UPDATE

PLEASE NOTE MY E MAIL ADDRESS:

lascentralbranch@gmail.com

Welcome to the December newsletter. Thank you to everyone who has contributed. Special thanks to Mike Mill

for his diligence in pursuing outstanding fees and also for holding the fort whilst Chairman and I were undergoing surgery in November and recuperating thereafter. Promotion definitely on the horizon, Mike!

DONATION

Bill Porter's family have kindly intimated that they wish to make a donation to the Branch in memory of their father. This will be arranged in 2021. Bill was one of our most loyal and oldest members and he thoroughly enjoyed every lunch and outing in the company of his old chums. We will miss him.

RPOAS POCKET DIARIES 2021

Some diaries have already been distributed in A Division by Mike Mill. Unfortunately, I have not been mobile for the past 6 weeks or so following surgery, therefore the B Division diaries have not been delivered as planned.

POLICE TREATMENT CENTRE

If you have not yet signed up to the monthly payment scheme, it is not too late. The sooner you do so, the sooner you will be eligible to apply for treatment. Go to the PTC website and follow the links. If you require a printed form to apply to become a donor/receive treatment, please contact Chairman Bill Culbard who has a supply. Like many of our members, Bill has benefitted from treatment recently and speaks very highly of the facility and its care for retired officers.

The Police Treatment Centres have reopened and members attending have reported positively on their stay, even with the various social distancing measures which are currently in place.





ANNUAL FEE

THANK YOU TO ALL MEMBERS WHO HAVE RECENTLY PAID THE ANNUAL FEE OF £12.

Please check and ensure you are using the new account shown below.

If you currently have membership fees outstanding and you would like your membership to continue, please get in touch in the first instance with

COMMITTEE MEMBER MIKE MILL on mikemill233@gmail.com

PAYMENT OF ANNUAL FEE –

The Branch's TSB Bank Account details are -

Account No 82075363

Sort Code 87-64-01

If you have set up a Standing Order with your bank for your annual fee or the RPOAS lottery, do check that it is being deducted annually and not monthly. Lottery is also £12 and is deducted in December and can be confused with your Branch fee.

REMEMBER LIFE MEMBERS ARE EXEMPT FROM PAYMENT.

NEW MEMBERS

Welcome to all our new members. It's good to have you as part of the Branch in touch once again with former colleagues.

Are you in touch with colleagues who are not members of RPOAS? Please send on an application form to them. These can be obtained from any member of the

Committee. There are members' benefits on offer on our website which include Travel Insurance, an employment page, an Association magazine, Members' Private Lottery, as well as important pension updates and news of former colleagues who have passed away. The more members we have, the stronger our voice when lobbying for pension rights, etc. **For only £12 a year, it makes sense to join.**

September CPI Published

The ONS have now published the Consumer Price Index {CPI} for September 2020 which shows an increase of 0.5%. As a result, Police Pensions will increase by 0.5% as of April 2021.

BEST WISHES TO

Mike Kiely who is currently in Falkirk Community Hospital. We are thinking of his family at this difficult time.

Archie Orr who has been discharged after 7 weeks in hospital following a broken hip.

RPOAS NEWS MAGAZINE

The next issue of the magazine should be distributed in February 2021.

AGE SCOTLAND

Members can call the Age Scotland helpline on **0800 12 44 222** for information and advice.

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BACK IN TIME

Towards the end of 1814 the Commissioners of Supply for Stirlingshire agreed to “strengthen” the police of the county. One hundred and fourteen were appointed as constables and were given the following instructions:

1. You are now appointed a Constable for the County of Stirling with all the powers known in law to that office.
2. But in a special manner as a Conservator of the peace the duty expected at your hands is to promote and encourage a vigorous police in that part of the County in which you reside.
3. All public or other houses within the parish of your residence harbouring travellers and strangers you will particularly attend to and you are enlisted at all times to visit such houses.
4. All idle vagrants or disorderly persons who can give no good account of themselves and are without evident means of livelihood you are entitled to apprehend and carry to the nearest Justice of Peace or Magistrate for examination and you are to inform the procurator fiscal of the district against every Householder within your parish harbouring or entertaining such persons.
5. When any robbery, theft, murder or other flagrant crime has been committed or attempted, you are to take the

most prompt and vigorous measures in your power (to raise the hue and cry if necessary for assistance) for apprehending the perpetrators, and carrying them before your nearest magistrate for being dealt with as the law directs.

6. It is the bounden duty of every person to aid and assist you in the execution of your duty and those who decline to do so when called upon you will not fail to report forthwith to the procurator fiscal of your district.
7. Every person you apprehend you should touch with your baton in the king's name and let them know they are your prisoner.
8. You shall be paid for your personal expenses as also for your assistants for every offender you carry before a magistrate and who shall be committed and you will afterwards receive a suitable reward for every person of your securing and committing who shall be brought to trial for robbery, murder, theft or other capital crime.

Allan Meek

THE ‘GOOD OLD DAYS’ – A DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVE

Lesley has kindly asked me to write a few words for inclusion in the newsletter.





Clearly Covid is causing a severe lack of interesting news stories if an article from me is being considered! I'm not sure many of you will know me, but you will certainly know my dad, Duncan Brown, who for the majority of his career worked in Aberfoyle.



Kay Almeida and Duncan Brown

I am also married to a serving officer, Mervyn Almeida, and we have 2 boys, Duncan aged 12 and Neil aged 8. I often think of how different it is for children of serving officers growing up these days than it was when I was young, and to

that end, Inspector White suggested that some stories from my perspective growing up as the daughter of an officer may be worth including. I've been told I have some funny stories, but I think anything sounds funny to people after they've had a few gins! That said, I do like to think that I have inherited my dad's excellent sense of humour and storytelling ability, so here we go, a few wee anecdotes.....

We used to live above the Police Station in Aberfoyle. One of the first times I realised that being the daughter of a policeman was going to be 'interesting', was when the office was shut one day when my dad was out, and a member of the public on a day trip came and knocked on the door of the flat, demanding that she be let in to use the toilet, as the public toilets were closed, as was the police station. My mum politely refused, and then was told that 'she had to let her in'. Those of you who know my mum won't need me to tell you that the member of the public was swiftly sent away with her tail between her legs.....

I hadn't long learned to ride my bike and was riding it along the main street one day when I lost control and ran over the foot of a member of the public. She was not best pleased and demanded that I take her to my parents. Mum was working, so I took her to the police station, where she told my dad that the child of a police officer should know better than to run over somebody's foot..... (because clearly we get special training that you don't get if your dad isn't a cop!)





Back in the days before the Police service centre, if dad was coming back up for dinner to the flat, he'd transfer the police phone up to the house. I often answered the phone in the flat saying 'Aberfoyle Police, how can I help' ! We went through a period where the phone used to ring constantly for an hour from 6:30 am. It was people trying to enter a competition for a radio station in Cornwall, and number was only 1 digit different from the police phone number. We were bombarded every morning for a week, and it made the local press in Cornwall, finishing with my dad being on the radio taking part in the competition and being interviewed about getting woken up every morning.....

One of the funniest things I remember from growing up was the goings on from the Forth Inn Discos, which took place opposite the police station. Often the noise would wake me, my brother and sister up. Those of you who remember these discos will know that there were a lot of arrests, and a lot of fights, with my dad, Sid Fraser and Ian Ramsay having to go in and often fight with the people they were trying to arrest to get them out and into the back of the van or across to the station. Often, some people would run away in the dark, sometimes hiding in the hedges. They probably thought they were clever. Unfortunately, they hadn't bargained on my mum looking out the window of the perfectly elevated police flat and shouting to the officers to tell them where the punters had hidden! Team work indeed!

Myself and my sister shared a bedroom that was directly above the police cell. I remember one night when dad was off, and somebody was in the cell making so much noise it woke us up. My dad got out of his bed, ran down the back door to the office (in his boxer shorts as I recall). I have no idea what was said, but there was not another peep coming from the cell the rest of the night!

As you get older, one of the main perks of having a policeman for a dad and living in a rural area is the blue light taxi! Something that nobody would get away with these days thanks to CCTV and social media! Many a night I was picked up either by my dad or some other kind soul on shift from Callander who would come in and pick me up at the end of Dumbarton Road and take me home. Saved a fortune on taxis!

On the flip side, as you get older you also become fair game. I remember once driving home from a night at the Fubar as I had work the next morning, and being stopped just outside Thornhill by 3 police cars from Callander who boxed me in, and left me sitting in the car for 15 mins before they all got out and stood at the side of the road laughing for pulling such a prank on me!

I have many more stories, not sure all suitable for this newsletter, and I don't want to bore you all to tears. Suffice to say, I think my experience of growing up in the police family will be very different to the experience that my kids have, and that makes me a little bit sad, but I also feel fortunate to have experienced





everything that I did. I hope this finds you all well, and that it's provided the little bit of light relief that I think we all need during these strange times!

Kay Almeida

BACK TO THE PRESENT TIME AND AN UPDATE FROM

**INSPECTOR MARIE WHITE OF
POLICE SCOTLAND
FORTH VALLEY DIVISION**

Greetings from Division,

I hope you are all well and managing to stay safe!

It's been a turbulent few weeks here. We have seen a spike in Covid cases again and that has certainly hit our front-line officers which has had a huge impact on resources. A number of officers have now tested positive and it seemed to happen all at once. At one point we were having to send full shifts home then trying to backfill cover. This was down to positive testing but also down to NHS Track and Trace counting everyone on one shift as one bubble, meaning if one person tested positive all of the other officers have had to isolate for 14 days as we could be 'super spreaders'. We deal with the most vulnerable in society at times so I understand the rationale but it's not made it easy to manage resourcing. I think last week were up to about 110 officers absent which for a small Division was a huge amount all

within 7 days. We have managed as we do of course, one positive of now being part of a larger organisation has been the redeployment of officers with mutual aid and at one point we had officers covering from Edinburgh, Fife and Dundee. This presented some challenges but none that we couldn't get over. Luckily, of those officers who have tested positive none have taken it too badly either so that is another huge positive, although a very anxious time for everyone.

What it has shown me, however, is how fast this virus spreads. We think the transmission was mainly likely to be through 'touch point' transmission rather than close contact. It's amazing how many doors, kettles, computers, etc. we touch without thinking twice about it and given the spike we have had in cases covering various different shifts this seems to be the cause. We had cases in each of the three Police Offices – it started in Alloa, spread quickly to Stirling Office and before we knew it, it was in Falkirk, all within 48 hours or so.

This week we are still slightly feeling the effects of the spike but gradually people are returning to work and I am hoping we have managed to contain it a little better. Still, there is no room for complacency; masks are being worn at all times, even in the office public spaces and we are still handing out sanitiser by the gallon. We are trying to make sure that we limit 'touch point' areas as much as possible with stricter cleaning regimes.





What was amazing was how we adapted quickly to the lack of resources with officers from all over the place being drafted in but, also how our response model quickly changed. We had agreement that we would only attend 'priority' calls during the worst of it and the new THRIVE process kicked in well with the new centralised Resolution Teams taking a large proportion of our calls and dealing with them over the 'phone at first point of contact or scheduling appointments for less urgent calls.

The THRIVE process is where a team of officers classify calls. It stands for:

Threat

Harm

Risk

Investigation

Vulnerability

Engagement

The officers in the Resolution teams assess all of the above factors and decide if it requires Police attendance. Some calls are absolutely Police calls, but others that perhaps are around Social Care or Vulnerability they then try and divert to other agencies, thus cutting down the amount of calls for front line officers. This has had a positive impact and we are starting to see officers getting more Crime focussed calls allocated; however, we still have a huge amount of Mental Health and Vulnerability calls to

deal with so there is still room for improvement.

The other thing that came just at the right time were the Mobile Working Devices which now all front-line officers have. They were rolled out at the beginning of the pandemic and they really have been a positive step forward. Officers no longer need to come into Police offices to put on Crimes, etc; they can do it from the car or at scene from their allocated mobile 'phones. They can do their own PNC checks, upload photographs directly from an incident and take statements on it that within the click of a few buttons are available for CID officers to view from the office. It has stopped officers having to come into Police Offices, thereby again limiting the potential Covid spread.

Another positive use of technology has been the use of laptops and virtual meetings. Some officers have been given laptops and now can dial into video meetings rather than having to attend in person. This has been great for partnership meetings where at a touch of a button Police can have a virtual meeting with partners such as NHS, Prisons, Drug Support teams, Social Work and the like. It has meant that people can do everything they used to but quicker, meaning officers who are more at risk (perhaps due to a medical condition or pregnancy) can still contribute from home if need be. This has been positive and I can see it being a game changer moving forward, with less travel, etc. and a better, more productive use of time.





We have also been lucky in that crime levels have fallen to an extent. The shutting of the pubs has clearly had an impact. There is no night-time economy so to speak so no need for officers to stand outside pubs at closing time etc - which has been helpful! Some of that traffic has certainly moved to calls to house parties but all in all, the pubs shutting has been a good thing for policing. I know that's not something you want to hear if you are a pub owner or landlord, but it's certainly made a difference and I suspect the NHS have seen the same. If it continues there will be a few officers grateful they don't have to get the 'long johns' on for the winter to stand out in the freezing cold waiting for the pubs / nightclubs to spill out. I am sure that the NHS have benefitted too which is more important. Things have certainly changed, that's for sure.

I spent my evening last night putting up Hallowe'en decorations as the kids were desperate to do something which is 'normal'; however, trying to explain to them that they can't go 'trick or treating' was difficult and then I thought maybe the decorations weren't the best idea. My little girl asked if Santa had been cancelled too.... "Let's hope not" I said - although the wicked side of me was tempted to say yes, so I could save a fortune!

Anyway, I know that the impact of this has been greater for many of you than it will have been for me and many. I have seen the impact it has had on people who can't visit family in hospitals or attend funerals and the like and I know it's

tough. I am hopeful we are through the worst of it!

I will finish off by wishing you all the very best, stay safe and don't forget to drop me a line to let me know how you are doing if you want to.

Best Wishes...

Marie

DAVE AND LEWIS: A RENDEZVOUS WITH EVEREST



PART 2

Day 4

Namche Bazar to Pangboche 3930m

Worth mentioning is 'Napali Flat'; this is the peculiar description of climbing UP only to descend DOWN again and cross a river or gorge, only to go UP again. You get the picture - Flat it certainly is not!

The trek climbs out of Namche (again) and you can see the path snaking away up and down the valley towards the Tengboche Monastery, 3875m on its hill. It is a cracking day but a devilish hill is encountered before Tengboche, even from this distance. As Davy and Lewis





puff though villages, up and down river valleys, they approached the hill. The weather is fair at the bottom but dull and grey at the top. It has been raining and the path is becoming slick as light is fading. It has been a long and very tiring day.



One of the interesting characters on the paths

Paradise Lodge (shown below) may not be exactly that; however, it is paradise to get inside as darkness sets in. The room is beginning to set the scene. 2 beds with little space to place kit. Any wet kit simply will not dry. Again, trekkers are blessed with a sit down loo but are perplexed as to why there is a massive oil drum filled with water until they work out that it is to flush to loo when it freezes. Oh? Did we mention that you are not allowed to put loo paper down the loo? It goes in a bucket beside the toilet.



The restaurant is one massive room (setting the scene now for the rest of these “Tea Houses”). In the middle of the room there is a stove with the flu pipe running through the wall. If standing beside the thing it is quite warm, otherwise body heat will need to do it. It is burning dried Yak dung and no doubt what we leave in those buckets beside the loo too. In any event a lungful of the smoke is not advised as it is utterly vile. Our kit must be dried inside our sleeping bags. Davy and Lewis are roughing it now.

Day 5

Pangboche to Dingboche, 4410m

On this day the trekkers are blessed with the weather. As they go up it is noticeable that have left forest, passed through scrub trees and up ahead the trees have stopped and grass is visible. Grass, with the most magnificent mountain growing out of it.

Ama Dablam is 6858m and is everything that looks right about a mountain. It is slim and topped by a glacier and seizes the eye at all times. Behind Ama Dablam we can see the wall of Lhotse (worlds 4th Highest) and wee peaks of Everest. This is big mountain country. This is magnificent country.





Ama Dablam

Dingboche is not inhabited all year. It has a stone paved path through it with high walls and plastic pipes bring water down the hill. Each slab is irregular and at differing heights. Trip hazards abound. The Teahouse is dark, no ensuite and we roll our eyes.

Day 6

This was supposed to be a Rest/ acclimatisation day again. Some are heading for a peak above the village, Dave heads up the valley to the settlement of Chukhung 4730m while Lewis decides to stay and actually rest with coffee and cream cakes.

Heading up the valley Dave realises that he is now walking in arctic tundra. The group climb through a moraine and spot the settlement sitting under stunning mountains and glaciers. As they look at Island Peak in all its dazzling beauty they drink tea, lots of tea.

Back down in the village we all regroup and recount our stories after a stunning day.



One of our number is ill and has had to be taken on horseback to a European run aid station. It is clear that a number of others in the party have some sort of chest infection bug and that they too need to visit the doctor at the aid station the following morning.





Day 7

Dingboche to Dughla 4620m

This was a relatively short trekking day. Some take the high path, one the middle path and some the low path to Pheriche 4230m to see the Dr. Well - the place is well named – perishing! The snows of the high mountains give a freezer like edge to the wind as it sweeps down the valley.

Medical visit and more tea later the group are off up the gentle valley. Some of the easiest walking yet, but still hard due to the altitude and its effect on breathing and legs. As the group near Dughla we see a mass of white stone. This is a mile-wide mass of boulders flung out of the mountain when a glacial lake burst and washed away the mountain, and some of the village too we later found out.

There is not much in Dughla. The restaurant is warm and noisy. We have a short day ahead and the prospect makes for a nice feeling amongst the weary travellers.



Day 8

Dughla to Lobuche 4910m

A short day is in prospect. Some more of our group seem to be picking up the bug. Although a short day we have a couple of steep passes to get up through. On one of them we find many memorial cairns to climbers and Sherpas who have perished on Everest. Included in these we see names that we recognise from the Everest disaster of 1996 and dramatized on film. Cairns include those of Scott Fischer and Rob Hall. It brought the enormity of the toll taken by the mountain into focus.



Lobuche was soon in sight. A nice room overlooked the shallow river, massive moraine and the huge mountains behind. Soon our group were chivvied to meet in front of the tea house and marched off to climb the moraine. This was a massive lateral Moraine, a wall if you like, at the side of the famous Khumbu glacier. This is the same glacier that makes the famous ice fall that people see in the ascent films of Everest. Here it is not so dramatic. Instead it looks like a massive grey quarry covered in smashed stone with bits of blue showing through its vastness. The wind





was cutting and we retreat to the tea house. The tea house is busy and warm. One thing that is in general absence is alcohol as it does not help with AMS and is not recommended. Big day tomorrow.

Day 9

Lobuche to Gorak Shep 5140m to Everest Base Camp 5356m

This is a big day with an early start. Many in the party now feel ill but there is little choice but to plough on, especially when so near Everest Base Camp.

Climbing through the purgatory of shifting moraine we also share the underfoot shifting path with trekkers, ponies and the occasional Yak. Ponies and Yak are all that can operate at this altitude. It is magnificent, albeit hard work for our oxygen deprived bodies. A few hours of trekking and arrival at Gorak Shep, a cluster of tea houses built on moraine. We are right under Nuptse the 20th highest mountain. The glare is immense.



Nuptse as we arrive

After dumping our kit in a tiny dark room we head off wrapped up in layers of clothing for Everest Base Camp, carrying only essential items of water and cameras.



Gorak Shep is beside a glacial lake bed or in fact a frozen lake covered in grit. As we walk over it the temperatures are less than Bahamian.

Everyone has numerous layers on now, including full duvet jackets, hats, gloves, mitts. It is not warm, all are exhausted but not for stopping now. We fight through glacial moraine and then along a lateral moraine till we go down and out on to the actual glacier.

We reach Base Camp, or at least where Base Camp is in May.

It is perishing as one of our party strips off to his Australian swimming shorts. The rest of us jump around to keep warm for the photos.

We made it! Everest Base Camp.

Magnificent, freezing and exhilarating all at once.





The mountains form a solid wall of impossible steepness around us.



Lewis and Dave

Our exhausted group retreat to the dubious comforts of Gorak Shep.

The return is arduous and Dave is stopped in his tracks by the altitude as he crosses the FLAT lake bed. Lewis is struggling with a knee injury but presses on.

Food and warmth but everyone is still knackered, not helped by the fact that 10 of our 12 have this chest infection. I must add that this is in all likelihood brought by one of our party from Bonny Scotland and generously donated to the rest of us.

The best view of Everest is to climb a nearby mountain at dawn but only one of us is fit enough and anyway the start time is at 5am. The rest of us vote for another 2 hours in a warm bed.



OBITUARIES

FAREWELL TO

**David Duncan McPherson, Police
Sergeant No. 446**

1954 - 2020

David was born in Paisley on 24 March 1954. He was the eldest son of John and Helen McPherson and had a younger sister, Marlene. As a child, David mainly lived on a farm and was a real country boy. He loved playing in the farmyard with his sister and cousins. He was a Boy Scout and particularly enjoyed camping trips.

At the age of 16 David joined the Police Cadets. During this time he worked at Quarriers Homes, which he enjoyed and did outward bound courses, often reminiscing about times in Applecross. David became an accomplished cook on these trips as he didn't trust anyone else to do the cooking!

He joined Renfrew and Bute Constabulary based in his hometown of Paisley at the age of 18. His Police career continued mainly based in the Paisley area. He was Firearms trained and became a member of the Support Unit (The best of the best). Again, he had many stories about travelling around in a van waiting for "the call".

In the early 80's David joined Central Scotland Police. He worked in many areas of Central Scotland, Falkirk, Alloa, Stirling, Bannockburn, Balfron, Dunblane.



One his favourite postings was as Research and Development Officer. He was also very proud to be promoted to Sergeant.

On 14 March 2003, David retired after 30 years in the police and on his last day he went around all of the CSP stations and went to his daughter's school to raise money for Red Nose Day. Although having been retired for many years and doing other notable jobs, if anyone asked his profession, he always said he was a retired Police Officer.

At the age of 16 David trained to be a Skydiver. He mainly parachuted at Strathallan Airfield in Auchterarder. He loved parachuting and became an Instructor. He also travelled all over the UK doing displays and taking part in parachuting competitions which he particularly enjoyed. He spent many happy years parachuting, a hobby he shared with his sister, Marlene.

In 1994 he moved to Kippen and immersed himself in the community. Initially he was on the PTA at his daughters' school, then he moved on to

running the local Youth Club. He was on the committees of various community groups and projects.



After he retired from the Police he was employed by the Charity, Keep Scotland Beautiful, where he became the National Fly Tipping Prevention Officer for Scotland, another job he was very proud of.

David died peacefully on Wednesday, 14 October 2020. He is survived by his wife, Margo, son Duncan and daughters Katie and Amy, his son-in-law Thomas and his mother, Helen and sister, Marlene.

WILLIAM PORTER

1928 - 2020



Bill Porter was born on 27 November 1928 to James and Jessie Porter at Wallace Crescent, Brighton. He was one of six children; eldest brother to Betty, Jim, Jean, Bruce and Jessie.

Bill's dad was a steam train driver and Bill used to enjoy the thrill of riding on the footplate with his dad.

After leaving school, Bill worked in Brighton Picture House, also as a telegram boy and gas fitter before doing his national service with the military police in Hong Kong.

After demob, he joined Stirling County Police Force in 1948 and it was while he

was stationed in Lennoxton that he met the love of his life Margaret Gibson. They were married at Campsie High Church in 1952 and celebrated 65 years of marriage in September 2017.

They set up home in Stirling where Bill was stationed. In 1954 their son Jim was born, followed by Carol and Andrew.

Bill moved to Grangemouth in 1966, serving in the “Flying Squad” and CID in Falkirk.

Bill retired from the police in 1977 at the age of 50 years. He filled his time with a new career as a safety officer at the Whisky Bond in Grangemouth, and then for a Vet drug company delivering to Vets all over southern Scotland, before finally retiring to be with Margaret, to enjoy their grandchildren and the garden.

Being a Falkirk Bairn, Bill took an active interest in the local football team and would spend many an afternoon on the terraces at Brockville. In his latter years he attended less often, his final visit being at Christmas 2016 when he was 88 years of age.

Bill enjoyed family life and was always willing to help others, especially if there were 6” nails required! As was known he liked his chip shops and his children could navigate round Scotland following the trail of chip shops. This has been passed on to his grandchildren with great memories made. He could have been a millionaire if he invented the chip shop NAV!

He was involved with the Boy’s Brigade, as a Church Elder, and bowler, and spent many happy hours in the garden chatting to passers by. He liked to listen to others and also telling his stories. He enjoyed attending Church, the Men’s Fellowship and the RPOAS events fondly retelling stories of the criminals they apprehended over the years.

Bill was often described as a ‘gentleman’ and a ‘favourite uncle’ to those who knew him. He was also a devoted husband, father, papa and father-in-law.



Church Elder Bill {front, second from left} was presented with his 50 years’ long service certificate by Abbotsgrange Parish Church in Grangemouth in 2018.

When Kimberly Porter joined Police Scotland on 18 May 2015, she was following in the footsteps of her beloved grandfather Bill. At her Passing Out Parade at Tulliallan, there was no-one prouder than Bill.

In 2015, Bill and Kimberly featured in the RPOAS News magazine comparing their different experiences during their respective service years.



Bill reflected that the county cop was one of the best social workers within any area. The police were highly respected especially in the county areas where they were involved in every aspect of village life. Every officer was on first name terms with the locals and took part in many aspects of village life.

In his day competing with other forces in sports was an excellent way to make contacts within other forces and proved very fruitful for him.

Bill was not in agreement with every officer carrying a forearm because having previously served in the RCMP in

the Far East, he was used to carrying side arms and mechanical weapons.



Bill {left} with David Pitcaithly at a Branch lunch.

Bill thought the Police today are better protected recalling that all he had was a whistle and a baton.

Kimberly asked Bill what he would have done if he hadn't joined the police and he replied that if he hadn't been in the police he would have gone back to being a plumber.

Bill concluded by stating that it's not a job. It's more a way of life. Once you are a police officer, you are always a police officer.

Rest in peace, old friend.

{Loving memories from family}

INNES ROSE

1926 - 2020

For the information of members who served in Stirling and Clackmannan Police, my father retired Sgt Innes Rose passed on 12 November 2020 in Glasgow Royal Infirmary at the age of 94. A long life well lived.

Innes was born in Manitoba, Canada in 1926. The family returned to Scotland in 1935 and set up home at a farm in Cairnie, Huntly.



Innes joined Stirling Burgh Police in 1948 and was posted to Stirling. His brother late Sgt Jimmy Rose followed him a couple of years later.

Married in 1951, he moved to Lennoxton and occupied one of the Police Houses attached to the station, where both myself and my brother were born. He became life-long friends of the late Insp Jimmy Brown and his wife Marion, a former Police officer who retired on marriage.

Policing was slightly different in these days. Innes recalled a busy night where he and Jimmy had secured a couple of inebriated persons in the cells while they left and attended to another urgent matter. The persons in the cell became rather rowdy, waking up the children asleep in both Police houses. Marion politely asked them to be quiet. A solution was found in the form of a stirrup pump kept in the office for fire prevention. A few squirts of the pump through the cell door hatch and silence was restored. Local solutions to local problems worked. Changed days.

He later moved to Milton of Campsie and during that time he was a member of the Police dog section. At that time Kirkintilloch and Kilsyth were dry towns and people travelled in large numbers at weekends to visit licensed premises in Lennoxton and Milton of Campsie. In these times Police dogs accompanied handlers on patrol. Innes often said nearly all waiting to get the last bus home were jolly and friendly with just the odd one needing a reminder. That was where the Alsatian proved its worth. The command watch given, the dog bared his teeth, and the situation resolved with the person heading to the bus saying, I am no scared of you but feart of your dug. In these days patrol was done by bike and Innes regularly cycled round the many holdings in the area and could often be found at the village cross speaking to local people in the days when most people shopped locally.



A

move to Laurieston, Falkirk for about 18 months, then to Kilsyth on promotion to sergeant. He never lost his affection for the people of Lennoxton and transferred back to Lennoxton about 1969. Very much a community Police Officer, he was instrumental in setting up the Lennoxton Association which runs the local youth club, gala day, and activities for young people in the town.

His service in Stirling and Clackmannan Police ended in 1975 at regionalisation when he elected to remain in Lennoxton with Strathclyde Police. Transferring to Kirkintilloch, he retired in 1979. On retiring he worked as a gardener handyman at the Glazertbank Hotel, Lennoxton for a number of years.

His later years were spent in the garden and he received many visits from friends in Lennoxton and former colleagues.

He continued to work in the garden until March this year when poor health affected his ability to walk. Admitted to hospital in July, his health declined and he passed away peacefully at Glasgow Royal Infirmary on 12 November 2020.

Innes had a long active life, enjoyed remembering his happy days in the Police, and will be missed not just by family but by the communities in Lennoxton and Milton of Campsie who still, 40 years after retiring, referred to him as Sergeant Rose.

Bill Rose



LOOKING FORWARD

Hopefully, next year will be more positive for the Association and fingers crossed that our older members are at the front of the queue for a vaccine.

Please keep in touch and let us know how everything progresses in your area.

In the meantime, take good care during the winter months and stay safe.

HAPPY CHRISTMAS.

Editor's Note: The details recorded in this publication have been obtained from a variety of sources and while every possible effort is made to ensure accuracy this cannot be guaranteed. Where there has been some inaccuracy, please advise the Editor.

