



RPOAS
CENTRAL BRANCH
JUNE 2021 NEWS



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CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

The end is nigh – apparently - at least as far as most Lockdown restrictions are concerned. It's been a pretty tough time for many and it's good now, to be able to meet up and hug – where appropriate!

I've been able to take my almost new hip for daily walks, when it's not raining, and can generally manage between one and two miles each day. A few weeks back, I managed more than three miles, but came a cropper while walking along the banks of the River Allan. I came to a rather wide and long farmer's drainage ditch and it was either add an extra quarter mile onto my already long walk or yes, jump across it. I wasn't certain I could make it - and I was correct! My feet got wet, up to my knees! After plodding along and up through a muddy field, I gave up and phoned Gwen. Who said cell phones are unnecessary? She came and rescued me, and was most impressed (not) at the mess I was in.

She alleges my feet were muddy up to my shoulders, (but she is inclined to exaggerate!)

Other than my walks and car getting a recall, the only exciting thing has been getting a haircut. It was so good to be able to get outside, I was going to the car wash twice a week. This was made necessary by being in the flight path of some rather large birds.

Sadly, on 8 May, we lost our oldest member, when David Pitcaithly (94) passed away. He had been unwell for the previous few months. His granddaughter Sarah, who is married to serving Police Officer Duncan, provided the Obituary. The funeral took place on 24 May, at Falkirk Crematorium. All forty seats were filled, with Inspector Marie White representing Police Scotland, and I attended on behalf of the Branch.

We hope to start looking at lunch dates again soon. We'll keep you updated.

When Lockdown was coming towards the end, some of our local teen hooligans started to come out to play again, in the Laighhills Park, across the river from our home. Well after dark and into the early hours, we could see bonfires appearing and a lot of shouting, yelling and whatever other shenanigans they could think of. There was also minor damage being caused around the town.



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Obviously, some of the locals were getting a bit anxious, especially as the Fire and Rescue Service were apparently called out about sixteen times during the period. So much so, that one of their officers attended at the local High School and addressed the whole assembly.

Police Scotland were on the ball, and we even saw two Mounted officers in the park, which caused some excitement. Things appear to have calmed down a bit, and the kids are shouting and yelling much quieter.

The weather was pretty good in April, but May has been a bit of a washout. Today, it's 26 May, and we have had EIGHT days without rain! I think California is calling. Or maybe Nice? We've had some excellent holidays in both places and long to return some day. Not this year though, and probably not the next either. We can dream though, can't we?

Best wishes,

Bill Culbard

Chairman

BRANCH COMMITTEE

Chairman **Bill Culbard**
Vice Chairman **Moira Dunn**
Secretary/Treasurer **Lesley Struth**
Alex Macmillan, Audrey McLeod, Mike Mill and Ian Wright.

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SECRETARY'S UPDATE

PLEASE NOTE MY NEW E MAIL ADDRESS:

[**lascentralbranch@gmail.com**](mailto:lascentralbranch@gmail.com)

Welcome to the June newsletter. Thank you to everyone who has contributed.

A wee update on my health. My knee is completely done in and I, along with many thousands of other poor souls, am languishing in agony on the NHS waiting list. They are currently dealing with patients from 2019. As I was added in January 2021 after unsuccessful keyhole surgery in November 2020, I face a lengthy wait!

POLICE TREATMENT CENTRE

Good news, the PTC has now re-opened. If you have not yet signed up to the monthly payment scheme, it is not too late. The sooner you do so, the



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sooner you will be eligible to apply for treatment. Go to the PTC website and follow the links.

ANNUAL FEE

THANK YOU TO ALL MEMBERS WHO HAVE RECENTLY PAID THE ANNUAL FEE OF £12 previously deducted at source annually in July.

If you believe that 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.

NEW MEMBERS

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 Committee member Mike Mill. There are members' benefits on offer on our

website which include Travel Insurance, an employment page, a bi-annual Association magazine, Members' Private Lottery, as well as important pension updates and news of former colleagues who have passed away across the twelve Branches. 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.

BEST WISHES TO Mike Kiely and family and Caitriona and Alex Macmillan. You are in our thoughts.

CONDOLENCES to the family and friends of life members David Pitcaithly and Colin Thomson who sadly passed away recently. Both gentlemen were enthusiastic members, supporting our lunches and outings. Colin was an enthusiastic member of the Branch Committee until 2009; indeed, it was he who first proposed the lunches for members/families/friends about 12 years ago, and what a huge success they proved to be (until lockdown).

David Pitcaithly was our oldest member and one of my personal highlights in RPOAS was undoubtedly making the acquaintance of this remarkable man, for otherwise, being several decades his junior, we would never have met. The Branch last enjoyed David's company on 16 March 2020 at the Older Member's Lunch at Torwood but thankfully, Jim Lindsay managed to pay a few visits to Hodge Street when we learned of David's failing health. Thanks, Jim, for



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faithfully accompanying David to lunches for the past few years while you were still a youngster yourself! These occasions were so immensely enjoyed by David.

RPOAS WEBSITE

Remember to visit the website regularly to check out updates, past magazines and the all-important Obituary page which carries details of members of all twelve Scottish Branches who have passed away.

RPOAS NEWS MAGAZINE

The next issue is due out in August 2021.

LUNCHES FOR OUR OLDER MEMBERS

ARE YOU INTERESTED IN GETTING OUT AND ABOUT AGAIN?

To date, due to Covid 19, we have missed our lunches in December 2020 and March 2021. Our last meeting was on 16 March 2020.

I have been at Torwood Garden Centre on four occasions recently and consider it to be an extremely safe venue with every necessary precaution in evidence.

I enquired with the restaurant manageress about the possibility of holding one of our regular lunches for members over the summer months and she confirmed that we would be most welcome, provided we visited on

one of the quieter days, Monday or Tuesday, and were seated at small separate tables, not our usual large group table.

Please let me know what your own personal thoughts are and whether you would feel safe meeting old colleagues at such a venue. If we have sufficient interest, we can think about going ahead. Additional tables are set up in the sunshine and can be used during fine weather.

GOLFING NEWS

Now that restrictions are being lifted and we're mostly in level 2, it's time to think about golf again.

Until now, our golf outings have always been held on a Monday. Unfortunately, my child-minding duties now mean I can no longer play on a Monday or a Tuesday. If outings are still to be held on Mondays, I will be unable to attend and will stand down from my role as organiser.

The purpose of this message is to find out if members would attend outings on a Wednesday, Thursday or Friday?

Please let me know if these suggested days are suitable for you. If sufficient numbers are able to attend, I will try to arrange an outing in July or August.

Best wishes,

Malcolm Roy
mlclmroy@aol.com



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

Hello Everyone,

Hope you are all keeping well and safe.

Some good news for a change, since I wrote back in February I am pleased to say that the majority of front line response officers have now been vaccinated and things are looking up. The NHS agreed that they would contact us if they had vaccines that would be going to waste at the end of the day, rather give them to our staff than throw them away, and through this scheme we have quickly managed to get a good proportion vaccinated. This has meant the world to our officers who, of course, were worried about taking the virus home with them. Morale has improved significantly.

Over the last couple of weeks as things have started opening up we have seen a significant drop in Covid related calls to house parties and the like, so again indications are we are starting to get back to normality bit by bit. We had a fair bit of youth related anti-social behaviour in Kings Park, Stirling over the last month or so and some targeted policing seems to have sorted that out. Kids just want to be out seeing their friends so hopefully now they can do so, instances like these will reduce.

Our operational planning department has noticed an increase in applications for future events too, which is definitely an indication that people are planning for the future. There is, of course, still a huge amount of planning going into the Climate Change event in Glasgow in November as this will impact our resources beyond anything we have seen before.

A few lucky officers have been selected to go to Cornwall in June to police the G7 summit on a mutual aid basis - funnily enough, we had a huge number of volunteers for that event!

Policing of the elections recently also went well and without issue.

We have a new Detective Superintendent in the Division; Joyce Greenhorn joined the command team on Monday. I believe she was legacy Central having spent a proportion of her career in the Forth Valley area and I am sure she will bring good things to our CID and Public Protection departments and the wider public.

Of course, despite the pandemic, crime has not gone away. It has remained but certainly pulled our resources in different directions. We were chatting in the office the other day and someone made an observation that some probationers (or student officers as they are now called), have been in their roles for over a year and have never experienced policing a variety of



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things that would be classed as your 'bread & butter' type incidents, like pub fights, your frequent town centre shoplifters and the clubs kicking out at 3 a.m. with all the interesting scenarios that brings. Policing has certainly been very different over the last year and a half – the good news is of course that those officers have another 34 years left to experience all of these delights!

I met with Bill (Culbard) yesterday, it was good to see him and have a catch up although the occasion was not the happiest or preferred - sadly we met at the late David Pitcaithly's funeral. It was a very well attended funeral (within the restricted limits) and he had a very good send off!

Bill assured me that as soon as restrictions allow arrangements will be made for some luncheon events, albeit that probably won't do much for Bill's recent weight loss regime which seems to be working wonders for him! Hopefully we're are not too far off from that now.

Best wishes

Marie

NEW LIFE MEMBERS FOR 2021

The following members are due to celebrate their 80th birthday in 2021, becoming life members of the Association:

John Ferguson { Larbert } (August)

Jim Lindsay (June)

David Murray (May)

Colin Oliver (December)

Jim Paton (February)

Lance Rattray (May)

Congratulations to all of you. In normal times we would have looked forward to inviting you to the Older Members' Lunch in March and the Christmas lunch in December. Who knows what lies ahead for all of us this year.....hopefully we will meet at some point soon.

SPECIAL BIRTHDAY





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Life member Frank Duffie celebrated his 90th birthday in March 2021.



Thanks to granddaughter Hannah for sending on a photograph of the family celebrations.

Best wishes to all members celebrating a birthday over the summer months.

HOLIDAY

I will be away enjoying some sea air with my dog until 21 June. Please contact Branch Chairman or Committee member Mike Mill (details at the top) if you require assistance or wish to pass on any news in my absence.

Thanks.

All the best.

Lesley



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OBITUARIES

FAREWELL TO.

JOHN ADAMSON

John passed away in hospital on 9 March 2021 at the age of 75 years.

Our sincere sympathy to his family on their loss.

DAVID PITCAITHLY **1926 – 2021**



David was born in Grangemouth to James and Elizabeth Pitcaithly on 14 August 1926. He was the eldest brother to James, Douglas, William, Elizabeth and John.

When David left school he joined the Scots Guards and in November 1947 at the age of 21 he married Susan. The same year, after being demobbed, he joined Stirling & Clackmannan Police.

He was appointed Detective Constable in 1951, being promoted to Detective Sergeant in 1955 and then Sub Divisional Inspector of Larbert and Stenhousemuir in 1964.





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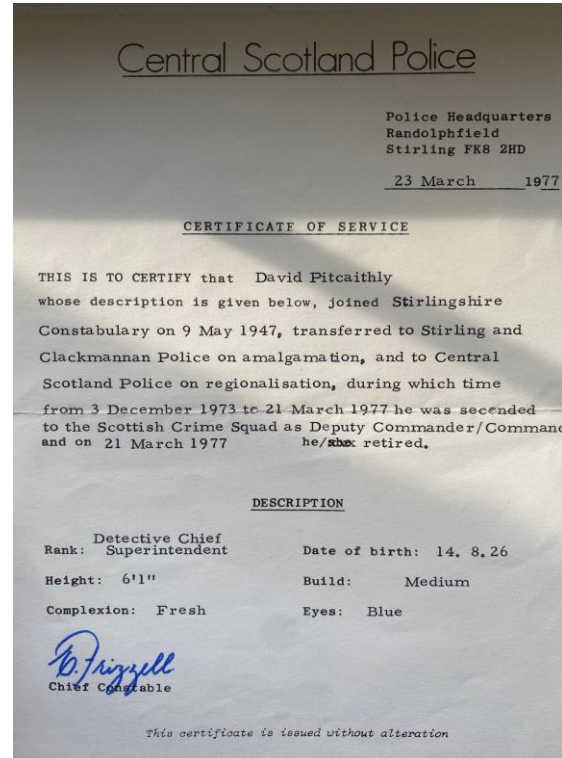


In 1966 David was seconded as Director of Studies at the Scottish Police College and after two years, he was promoted to Detective Inspector and head of CID.

In 1970 he was appointed Deputy Commander of the Scottish Crime Squad and in 1975, Commander. That same year saw Regionalisation when the force became Central Scotland Police.

David retired in March 1977 with the rank of Detective Chief Superintendent. He joined Scottish and Newcastle as the group security advisor.

David's career was important to him, but even more important was James Euan, known as Euan. Euan was David's only son born on 30 April 1954. In later years he wished he had been able to spend more time at home while Euan was growing up, but the demands of work had made that impossible.



David's son Euan married Mary in 1980, and ever the generous man, David sat at the bar all night buying everyone drinks. The only trouble being he always had one with them, which resulted in a very sore head the following day! Around this time David retired from Scottish and Newcastle. Everybody thought the workaholic would really struggle with retirement, but in fact he loved it and enjoyed fishing weekly and swimming daily, determined to stay fit and independent.

In 1988 he became a Grandpa to Sarah and met his match, as although they were best pals, he delighted in the fact she gave as good as she got! He loved visiting Euan, Mary and Sarah every Sunday and had a great laugh teaching Sarah how to fish when on her first attempt she caught more fish than



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him. Ever gracious in defeat, he put this down to beginner's luck!

His greatest sadness came when his son Euan passed away at the age of 46. It would be fair to say he was never the same again. He took some comfort from walking Euan's dog, Hamish, and he and Susan continued to visit Mary and Sarah each Sunday.

David lost his beloved wife Susan suddenly in May 2012 and the family worried how he'd manage without her but, ever the determined independent man, he did, only accepting more assistance from Sarah, Duncan and Mary with some reluctance when lockdown meant he had to be 'confined to barracks'.



David was delighted to give Sarah away at her wedding in April 2014, on the condition he didn't have to wear a kilt and Sarah remembers the hilarity of searching for a suit he was happy with as he didn't miss and hit the wall if he didn't like something. As you can see above they found something suitably dapper and he looked great.



You'll all know David was a hard nut to crack but when Sarah met Duncan Boyle, Duncan passed muster because he was also in the 'Polis'. They talked shop often and became firm friends.



David was thrilled to become a Great Grandpa to Libby in July 2019. He spent many hours rocking her and singing her to sleep with old Scottish classics, often forgetting the words and having to improvise. Libby didn't mind as she adored her Great Grandpa and drifted off to sleep to his dulcet tones. The last outing David managed was a trip to Orchil to show Libby off to his



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fishing pals. We're sure that David had concerns Libby would show him up at fishing like Sarah had, but at 18 months old, David was relieved that history did not repeat itself!



Inspector Marie White arranged for two local Falkirk officers to visit David on the occasion of his 93rd birthday in August 2019. The old stories were shared on that afternoon and David was thrilled to entertain both serving constables, along with Chairman Bill Culbard {pictured} and Secretary (behind the camera).

In October 2020, at the age of 94, having always been as sharp as a tack, David wasn't feeling his usual self and received the devastating news that he probably had 3-6 months to live. However, in true Pitcaithly fighting spirit, he battled for almost 8 months, until sadly, but peacefully, he passed away on 8 May 2021 with Sarah, as she had been throughout, by his side.

The sympathy of the Branch has been expressed to David's family. He will be much missed by his friends in RPOAS.



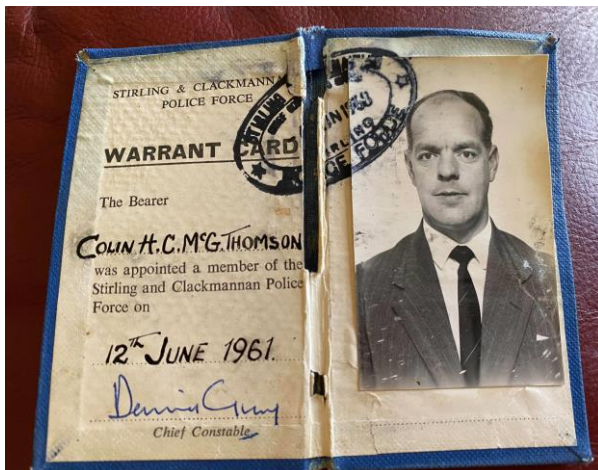
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COLIN THOMSON

1932 – 2021

Colin worked at the Seedhill dye factory in Paisley where he met his future wife Marion when they were both 18 years old. He went on to do his National Service aged 18/19 years in the RAF. He was posted both in Hong Kong and the North of England.



Dad

249 - shoulder number
June 1961 - Stirling (lived in Kings Park)
August 1962 - Alloa/Tullibody
1964 - CID Alloa
1969 - Lord Mayors Dinner @ Guild Hall
London representing the Police Federation
April 1974 - training dept Clifford Park
1978 - Inspector Randolphfield
1982 or 83 - Divisional office Randolphfield
1988 - retired

He joined Stirling and Clackmannan Police in June 1961. Served in CID, Training Department and retired as Inspector in Stirling. He was an active member of the Police Federation in

which he was Chairman for many years.

After retiring in April 1988, Colin and Marion enjoyed many years between Stirling and Florida, before returning to Scotland on a permanent basis about 18 years ago.

After his retirement he continued as a member of the Retired Police Officers' Association Scotland, serving as a member of the Branch Committee until 2009. It was Colin's initiative which saw Branch lunches begin for members and family and friends and Colin and Marion very much enjoyed these sociable occasions.



Colin attending a recent lunch for older members with David Pitcaithly in the background (left).



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Colin is survived by his loving wife Marion to whom he was happily married since November 1956, daughters Sheena and Norma and son Ian.

The sympathy of the Branch has been extended to Colin's family. Colin will be long remembered within Central Branch for his interest and close association with its activities. Members will also miss meeting Marion and Colin at our lunches.

CENTRAL SCOTLAND POLICE

Name COLIN THOMSON
Rank Sergeant No. ..249..

Is authorised to be issued with the weapon/s, as indicated below, in compliance with Force Orders.

This authority is only valid if the holder has fired a Classification Course within the preceding twelve months and attended a Refresher Course within the preceding six months prior to any issue of a firearm.

Weapons:

Model 10 Smith & Wesson Revolver



Date

ASST. CHIEF
CONSTABLE

M. Thomson
.....
Dep Chief Constable



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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.