



Issue 24 | September 2021

# RPOAS news

The magazine for the Retired Police Officers' Association Scotland

## Zoe

The Orkney  
Drugs Dog





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# RPOAS news

## Editor's Comments

### POLICE TREATMENT CENTRE OPENS ITS ARMS TO RETIRED OFFICERS

None of us are getting any younger, so if you have still to sign up to the PTC, don't miss the opportunity on offer during September and October for immediate eligibility for treatment - subject to assessment. (See pages 6, 7 and 8 for Graeme's update).

We all have a book in us! Successfully completing the process and getting published during the restrictions of lockdown is an incredible achievement. Congratulations to members Alasdair J. Malcolm and Jack Simpson who did just that! (Pages 21 & 22).

It's understandable that Branch activity has been greatly subdued over the past 18 months but Lanarkshire and North East Branches have enthusiastically set the ball rolling again with their latest news on pages 16 and 17. It's encouraging to see colleagues and friends getting together. Hopefully, more of us manage to meet locally over the coming months.

In this issue we bid a sad farewell to three huge characters: Bill Berry MBE, Alex Grant and Sandy Marr BEM. The affection for these old friends is all too evident in the heartfelt tributes penned by former colleagues. Geoff, David and Ken share their memories on pages 10, 11, 12, 23, 24 and 25.

And finally, 4 May 2021 marked the centenary of the brutal murder of Inspector Robert Johnston (pages 26 and 27). May he and all those who have passed away over recent months (pages 30 and 31) rest in peace and may those left behind know the comfort and support of friendship.

Until our February 2022 issue, take care.

Best wishes.

**Lesley Struth**  
Editor

Email [magazine@rpoas.org.uk](mailto:magazine@rpoas.org.uk)

*(The RPOAS News magazine is now available as a PDF which can be viewed on our website at [www.rpoas.org.uk](http://www.rpoas.org.uk). If you are happy to receive the magazine in this format in future, please let your Branch Secretary know. A reduction in paper copies of the publication will secure a significant saving for the Association).*

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Front cover image:

Zoe the Orkney Drugs Dog.

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### RPOAS Branches:

Argyll | Ayrshire | Central  
Dumfries & Galloway  
Renfrew & Dunbarton | Fife | Glasgow  
Lanarkshire | Highlands & Islands  
Lothian & Borders | North East | Tayside





# PRESIDENT'S UPDATE

Friends and Colleagues,

**It gives me great pleasure to speak to you as President of RPOAS, an organisation that has been dear to me since my retirement from 'real life' policing in 2009. Sometimes it seems so long ago but at other times it seems like the blink of an eye, but I guess life is like that for most of us. One thing for sure is that I am honoured to take up the post and give it my all for the next three years. I am heartened by the composition of the office bearers around me, all of whom I have known for some time.**

We have my 'new' Vice President Derrick Cronie from Highland & Islands, a new Treasurer from my own branch in Tayside, Shona Beattie, and true stalwarts in Lesley Struth from Central Branch, our excellent Magazine Editor, and Jim Duffy, our Executive Secretary, who hails from Glasgow Branch. At this point I would also like to mention Jim McBrierty who has agreed to support me in the Honorary President role for which I am truly grateful. Jim's record as president will be obvious for all to see and he has taken the RPOAS forward in so many areas, some of which I will turn to later. But I have learned so much from him and I am confident that collectively our team will continue to focus on our members, our strategic direction and will try getting back to 'normal' business as soon as we possibly can. There is one other person I want to mention with special appreciation and that is Tracy McKenzie our RPOAS Administrator who is the go-to person for all the branches, for all the members and indeed for us 'newbies' as we focus on improvement and development.

I will at a later juncture speak more of Tracy's key role in the Transition and Wellbeing project (see page 15) which will be launched in September. But in the meantime, I would



encourage you to revisit my entry in the previous magazine in February 2021 if you want a reminder of just how much work has been undertaken and what has been achieved in bringing the project to fruition. This will indeed allow us as an organisation to support our members in so many ways.

What a year this has been. I suspect that almost every one of us has been affected by COVID in some way. Whether that has been in family loss or suffering. Whether it has been in having difficulties accessing vital services or whether it is simply not being able to be close to those we love so dearly. I am sure you all know what I mean. However, I think you will all now have re-evaluated what is really important in life, and friendship will be high on that list.

Our purpose...

*"In support of our key constitutional aims, to promote our members' general welfare and enhancement of life and, in addition, extend this support to partners and immediate dependents."*

...has never been more important, our vision could not be clearer and our values have and will continue to stand the test of time. This is a truly great organisation made even better by the volunteers and tirelessly hard-working committees throughout Scotland. I thank you all on behalf of our circa 6500 members for your support and fortitude and look forward with excitement at the possibilities and partnerships we can realise over the next three years.

Yours sincerely,

**Matt Hamilton**  
RPOAS President  
[presidentrpoas@outlook.com](mailto:presidentrpoas@outlook.com)



# SECRETARY'S UPDATE

**As many of you will have experienced throughout your service, the reality of life is that the Job Description bears no resemblance to the role you thought you were taking on. Since taking on the role of Secretary I have now organised and planned for two Annual Meetings and two cancellations. No one said it was going to be easy and they weren't kidding. The pandemic and the restrictions which accompanied it have been difficult and demanding and like many people I was wondering where and when it would all finish. Thankfully there appears to be light at the end of the tunnel but we can never take things for granted as there have been many sudden and unexpected changes along the way.**

In an attempt to keep the membership updated the AEC have held a number of Zoom meetings which have been quite successful. As we have been unable to have our Annual Conference for the last two years we have made the decision to have an enlarged Zoom meeting involving the AEC, the Branch Secretaries and two members from each branch on the 16th September 2021 so that we can all get together and be introduced to the new President and his deputy.

Our 2022 Conference is pencilled in for Friday 8th April, subject to any changes which may or may not take place. This will be the 75th anniversary of the Association and as such, it's an occasion that should be marked in a special way to reflect the pride and camaraderie that has been fostered over the years by the many men and women who have come and gone and for those who will hopefully follow us into the membership. Any ideas on how this special occasion can be marked would be most welcome for consideration.



The travel Insurance scheme remains in place but understandably during the pandemic there has been little demand for the cover. This is now beginning to change but it is likely that the travel market and the travel insurance business will never be the same again and we must wait and see how the market place adapts and how it affects our members. Those of you with Travel insurance through NARPO will probably be aware that the insurance provider has indicated that they will no longer provide cover from 2022 so like many organisations the search for a new provider is ongoing.

Please remember to visit our website and keep up to date with the information that can be found there. If you have something to sell or bring to the attention of the members then this may be a route you want to consider. Remember it's about more than just details of funerals, important as they are.

Keep well and stay safe!

**Jim Duffy**  
Executive Secretary

# RPOAS LOTTERY



**The RPOAS private lottery is drawn monthly, with prizes ranging from a top prize of £200 to several £25 prizes, with added bonus draws throughout the year.**

Winning numbers are published on the RPOAS website on or around the 16th of each month and winners receive their cheques in the post after this. A minimum of 50% of gross income is distributed back to members in prizes. The funds remaining after prize allocation are used for running costs of our organisation. The subscription fee for 1 set of numbers is only £12 per annum, but members can easily take out

more sets of numbers to have more chances to win and support the RPOAS.

If you are not already a member and would like to join the RPOAS private lottery, application forms are available to complete on our website – [www.rpoas.org.uk](http://www.rpoas.org.uk) under Members Benefits then Lottery, Application. An application with full details will be emailed to you. You can also contact me direct on

Email – [adminasst@rpoas.org.uk](mailto:adminasst@rpoas.org.uk) with your name and membership number.

**Tracy McKenzie**  
RPOAS Administrative Assistant





# UPDATE FROM THE POLICE TREATMENT CENTRES



With a second closure of both our Treatment Centres due to Covid-19 on 8 January this year until 26 April, it has certainly been a strange and unique year so far. Normally our Centres only close their doors to patients for two weeks in the year, over the festive season, and not much has stood in the way of that routine for many decades. As an organisation we have had to accept the restrictions and the need for closures, and then find our way to best deal with them and continue to provide a service to our serving and retired officers, firstly during the closure period, and then as the Centres open their doors once again.

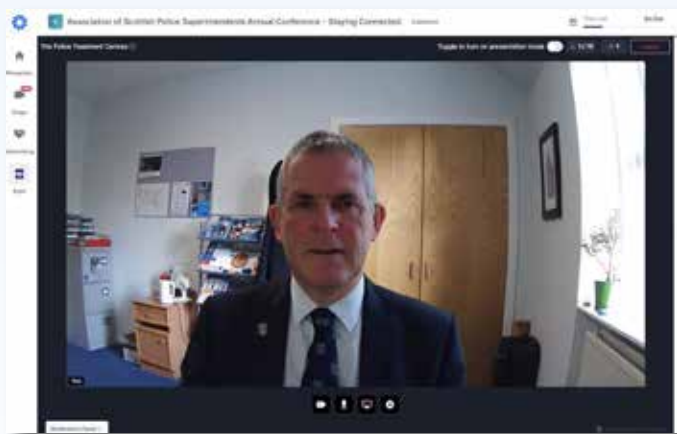
We are currently running all our programmes but still have a reduced capacity to allow for social distancing. Although these restrictions will continue for a short while to come, we are working towards getting back to full capacity as soon as possible. Face masks are still required indoors in the main public thoroughfares and all clinical staff are still wearing full PPE while treating patients. We very much look forward to being able to operate at full capacity once again, treating serving and retired officers, including those who now find themselves suffering from Long Covid.

Despite the initial lockdown in 2020 for nearly six months, we were still able to make a considerable impact last year by treating 1,288 patients, providing over 600 hours of virtual consultations, twenty hours of Physio Hotline and giving 120 patients access to our Mental Health App, Thrive.

We have had to develop new ways of working during the pandemic, some of which will remain in full after all restrictions end, while others will hopefully return to

previous ways of working. As a Donor Recruitment Officer, I have attended several 'Virtual' conferences, have given regular inputs to new recruit cohorts as far afield as the West Midlands, 'virtually', and have also given virtual presentations to Pre-retirement seminars. It is wonderful that modern technology has allowed this to happen, but I confess it is with some degree of pleasure that I have started attending Police Scotland Pre-retirement seminars once again 'in person', as nothing beats that personal face to face contact.

Not all of our constituent forces invite us to attend pre-retirement seminars and often officers do not manage to attend those that are run by their force. Therefore, we are going to trial our very own virtual pre-retirement information sessions by Microsoft Teams. By the time you read this we will have run our first two events, but others are scheduled up until November this year. They will be short 30-minute presentations on the benefits of signing up in retirement and how to go about doing so. If you know any officers approaching retirement, or any retired officers who are not signed up but who would like a little extra information, then please tell them to check out the dates on our website.



Despite being able to present remotely to many new recruit cohorts, it has still proven to be harder to get them to sign-up to the PTC when not attending in person. Many new officers have slipped through the system without fully getting the opportunity to access our services. As a result, we are going to run a major National Recruitment Campaign this year during the months of September and October 2021. This will be for all our constituent forces, and also for retired officers. Any officer, or retired officer, signing up

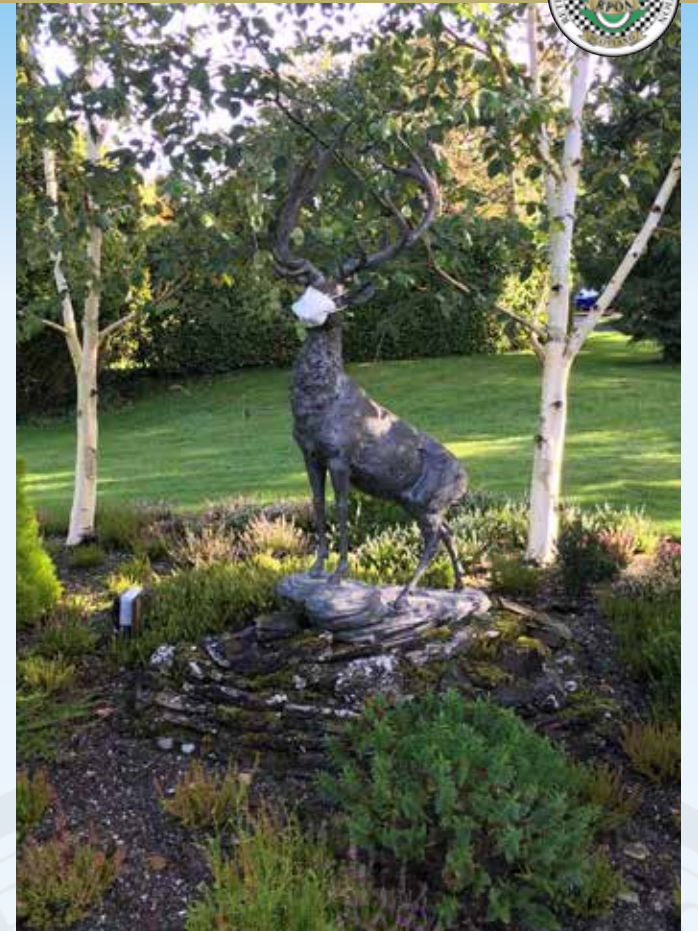
to the PTC during those months will receive an amnesty from our usual 12 month restriction before being able to apply for treatment, and instead will be able to access our facilities and services straight away, subject, of course, to current waiting times. So, for any retired officers who think they would benefit from some physio and rehab treatment, sign-up during September and October for just 65p a week and immediately submit an application form for treatment.

Retired officers can also now sign-up directly by Direct Debit on-line through our website. Just visit [www.thepolicetreatmentcentres.org](http://www.thepolicetreatmentcentres.org), click on 'Sign-up' on the home page, and then on the next page select 'Retired Officers' and the on-line form will be there.

And finally, I am glad to announce that weekend Bed and Breakfast is again available at both our centres. Harrogate is booking up for the year very fast but there are still vacancies available at Castlebrae, and what could be nicer than a short stay at Castlebrae in this gorgeous weather that we are enjoying as I write this. Let's hope the weather is still the same when you read it!

My thanks to all the retired officers and RPOAS branches who have continued to support us during these difficult times and hopefully I will get to see you all, in person, in the not-too-distant future.

**Graeme Addison**  
DEO



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## UPDATE Orkney Drugs Dog Zoe

As you will be aware from the last Issue, I am the Orkney Drugs Dog Zoe. Lesley has kindly asked me to do a little update of what we have been up to over the last 6 months or so.

Firstly, I'd just like to thank Lesley for the treats she sent me after the last article, they were delicious, but Dad restricted me to only a few a day. He says I must watch what I eat unless I might get overweight! Doesn't he know it's rude to mention a lady's weight?

Dad said that due to a nasty bug that was going around we had to limit what we were doing over the last year, which saw a lot of repetition in what we were able to do due to social distancing and very restricted numbers of people travelling to Orkney and not being able to visit people's houses. The good news for me and bad news for others, is I am still getting my ball in the mail sorting offices quite often, so I must still be doing something good. I am having to work a little harder for it now though. I think people must be aware that I go in there as they keep trying to test me by wrapping things up a lot more. But I'm still getting my ball, so I win!



Thankfully this last six months has seen a big increase in the number of people moving about and visiting Orkney, which means the time has been a bit more exciting as I get to meet them at the ferries and planes again. But what is it with all these people taking trays of Krispy Kremes back with them from Aberdeen? It's so unfair, Dad won't allow me to have any. Doesn't he realise I am part Labrador! I am looking forward to being nosy around people's houses again now that we are getting to do more.

Dad has been taking me to Inverness now that we can travel again, and I have been put through my paces conducting the required training days and for annual licencing. It is good having a change of scenery and different places to get my ball too. I think Dad enjoys the time away as well and we get to walk around the forests when not working.

Over the next few months, we will be visiting community groups and schools again, so that Dad can talk to people about what I do and the reasons why I do it as well as the effects that drugs can have on individuals and the local community. We haven't been able to do this over the last year, so I am looking forward to meeting all the nice people again and being able to show them what I can do. It's all the attention I get afterwards that I enjoy most though.

I really enjoy our walks on the beach when not working, but I still won't go swimming. Dad has said he's going to buy me some water wings, as I only like to paddle! He tells me I should be doing a doggy paddle at least. He laughs at me for not swimming, so I drop my toy in the sea and refuse to go and fetch it, so he must get his feet wet and cold going to fetch it for me. Who has the last laugh now?





# A Salute to Bill Berry MBE

## A True Gentleman!

**Bill had a most exclusive career come working life that just never seemed to fizzle out. So wide-ranging in fact, that somewhere along the line, you were probably proud to have been associated with him several times over.**

This tribute details extracts of his police connected life, for those who were privileged to share, enjoy, and treasure his companionship over the last sixty years or more.

### His Early Years

Born in Aberdeen in 1936, Bill grew up on a farm in Blairdaff by Monymusk, Aberdeenshire. He left school aged 15 and was employed by Cluny Estates as a kennel boy and trainee gamekeeper. He then moved to Findrack Estate, near Lumphanan, to become an Under Keeper. In 1953 the Laird arranged for Bill to join the Scots Guards and this served to chart out the rest of his life.

Bill served with the 1st then 2nd Battalion and was retained as an instructor following basic training. From there he served with BAOR, at Dusseldorf, then in Kenya during the Mau Mau Rebellion Campaign. Identified as a natural sportsman; he was part of the Guards rugby and football teams, and whilst in Germany, he trained in Austria with the ski team and was introduced to judo. During home leave in 1957, he applied to join Aberdeen City Police, stepping into the next chapter of his life.

### A Uniform of Change

Bill joined Aberdeen City Police and worked various beats and Districts but didn't venture into any departments. This was in view of his dedication to the sport of Judo, which



he initiated into the force as early as 1959.

In 1983 he moved to his final post as Grampian's Federation Secretary. Bill had joined the Aberdeen City Police Joint Branch Board in 1967 along with Alex Gowll (far left). When



Alex was appointed General Secretary in 1983, Bill took the post until he retired in September 1987. The status of the Federation at that time, and its many improved conditions of service police officers enjoy, were due in no small part to Alex and Bill. They did sterling work and were a credit to both Forces.

During his service Bill received a Commendation from Chief Constable Alex Morrison as well as being mentioned in Orders several times. When on duty one evening in Torry, he was alerted by a passer-by that a young boy had fallen into the River Dee. Bill ran to the scene, dived in, and rescued him. At Torry Box, the Inspector turned up and saw he was soaked through. Nonetheless, he instructed him to go home and change, then return and finish his shift! In 1975, whilst off duty, he saw two men he recognised as 'known poachers' carrying a box which he suspected might contain

salmon. He saw them enter the rear door of a nearby hotel. He summoned assistance and the men were apprehended and charged with a contravention of the Salmon and Freshwater Fisheries (Protection) Scotland) Act. Four salmon valued at £21 were recovered. One of the men was subsequently sentenced to three months' imprisonment.



### "Judo is a Sport"

Bill started the Police Judo Section in 1959. It flourished in no time and soon boasted a well attended Junior Section. He represented the Force on numerous occasions at events throughout the UK and Europe.

In 1985, along with Ronnie Watt, Bill set up the Aberdeen Sports Council, and was outstanding in bringing people together, promoting both Sport and Martial Disciplines. Bill became Chairman and would regularly present medals to those who had excelled in the martial categories, including Karate Federation events.

Bill was awarded the Scottish Samurai Award in 1996. In 2001, he was instrumental in helping the Sports Council set up the 2001 World Championships in Aberdeen and was an ambassador for the city.

Bill, then a 7th Dan, was outstanding and was awarded the Order of the Scottish Samurai, Great Shogun, with an equivalent OSS (Enduring under pressure) Dan to his Judo.



In 2005, he was honoured with an MBE in recognition of 45 years involved in Judo. The following year, he was admitted and received as a Free Burgess and Guild Member of the Burgh of Aberdeen for his dedicated work in sport and judo.

The following year, he was inducted into the inaugural

'Aberdeen Sporting Hall of Fame'. Bill was a Judo Team Leader at the 1992 Olympic Games at Barcelona and an Official at the 2012 Games in London. In the run up to the Glasgow 2014 Commonwealth Games, he had the honour of being chosen as one of 4,000 Scottish baton bearers and belied his years when he ran along Links Road to hand it over to the next bearer! His beloved Judo won an amazing 13 medals, more than any other competing sport.

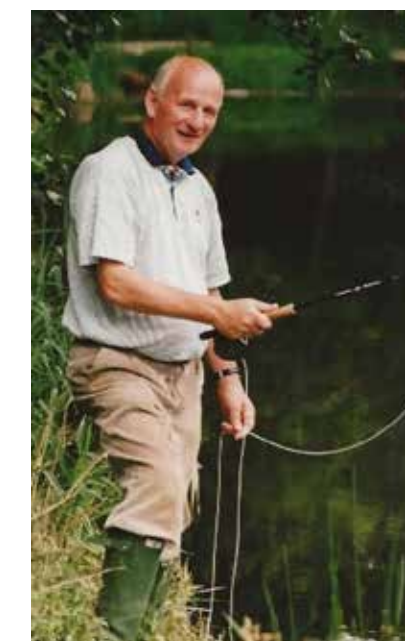
In 2016, he received a Lifetime Achievement Award by Club Sport Aberdeen, and Aberdeen Judo Club marked his 80th birthday with a presentation of a wee tippie by President Alistair Davidson.

He was a renowned stalwart of Judo in Scotland as Club Coach, North of Scotland Organiser, National Referee, and Senior Examiner, Judo in Scotland Chairman and Honorary Vice President.

British Judo emphasised his life's dedication to the sport.

*'From Aberdeen, during the late 1950's, gaining his 1st Dan in 1966. Bill was a stalwart of judo in Scotland, volunteering in many roles over his 60 plus years' judo career, including Club Coach, North of Scotland Organiser, National referee, Senior examiner, Judo Scotland chairman and Honorary Vice President, and representing Scotland as a member of the British Judo Association Council for over 30 years.'*

*"Bill was active in Police Service UK Judo, competing and achieving victory in the National Police Championships in the 1960's, in later years he continued to support the National Championships as Head Referee. During his competitive career he was also successful in winning the Scottish Judo Championships."*



### 'Retirement' appeared to be an unknown word!

In 1988, Bill began a new career at Police HQ with the newly formed 'Legal Documents Unit', working closely with the Procurator Fiscal's Office. He served with the unit until finally retiring in 2001.





He served as Vice President and President of North East Branch Committee and became National President from 2007-2010, thereafter Honorary President and Branch Representative until 2016. On standing down he said:

*"It has been a pleasure most of the time, and a privilege all of the time, to represent and support retired police officers and their dependants over the years."*

Bill continued to serve his local Committee until 2018 where his knowledge, experience, and enthusiasm was invaluable.

In 2012, in recognition of his 12 years of service on the Committee of the National Police Fund and the Police Dependants Trust, he was presented with an award by George Graham, Chief Constable of Northern Constabulary.

Not forgetting his famed military side, he served as Chairman of the Aberdeen and North East of Scotland Scots Guards Association for 28 years.

### Some of the Many Tributes

*"As Secretary of the Grampian JBB of the SPF 1983 – 1987, Bill assisted hundreds of officers with a caring, firm, and fair approach and was highly respected in police and government circles. As a police officer, Bill had a quiet authority and never raised his voice but no-one was ever in any doubt who was in charge. A quiet man who had much to brag about, but never did. A friend and mentor to many who will be missed by them all."*

Doug Keil, Scottish Police Federation

*"Bill was active in Police Service UK Judo, competing and achieving victory in the National Police championships in the 1960's; in later years he continued to support the national championships as head referee. During his competitive*

*career Bill was also successful in winning the Scottish Judo championships. Liked and admired by all who knew him, his quiet wisdom, calm demeanour and wry wit will be much missed by his many friends within the Judo family in Scotland, GB and further afield."*

Judo Scotland

*"Bill has been involved in Judo for over 60 years and has played a role as a referee, senior examiner, area organiser, and subsequently as Chairman of Judo Scotland. Bill has left a legacy that he and all our Judo family can be proud of."*

Rick Kenney, Judo Scotland Honorary Vice President and Executive Chairman Commonwealth Judo Association

*"Bill played a leading role in the development of judo in Scotland through his sterling efforts to promote the sport's growth at club level and through his involvement in coaching education and refereeing. He was particularly keen to get judo into the school's curriculum and did a tremendous amount with local education authorities to achieve this. His involvement with Police Sport did much to raise the profile of police judo in the UK."*

*On several occasions, he was able to bring the British Police Championships to Aberdeen. Bill never sought recognition or praise for his work; a true gentleman and great friend who will be greatly missed."*

Sports Director Colin McIver

Sadly, Bill passed away peacefully at his son's home in Monymusk on 15 February 2021.

Geoff Marston  
North East Branch



## Dedicated to saving & enhancing life

### An update from Dumfries & Galloway

The Dumfries vehicle and drivers taken outside the Dumfries and Galloway Council HQ in Dumfries. D&G member Gordon Little, a volunteer driver for many years, is shown at the far right.

The origins of the Order of St John can be traced to an 11th Century hospital- the Hospital of St John in Jerusalem. In 1882 Queen Victoria made the Order a Royal Order of Chivalry which it remains with the Queen as its Sovereign Head. The Order of St John is supported by thousands of volunteers across the world who share its commitment to help people in sickness, distress, suffering or danger.

The Priory of St John Scotland was formed in 1947 and for more than 70 years it has helped improve the lives of people in need. This includes free comfortable patient transport, a lifeline for many people going through cancer or dialysis treatment every year.

National Projects include Mountain Rescue, Mountain Safety Training, Patient Transport, CPR Training, and provision of Public Access Defibrillators.

#### Chairman Michael Cook with D&G Voluntary Group Award in 2019.

Locally, we have been operating in Dumfries and Galloway for twenty-two years with two small local committees in Dumfries and West Galloway. In 2019 we were delighted to receive the Voluntary Group Award at the D&G Life Award in recognition of our charitable work.



Over the years our volunteer drivers have transported many hundreds of cancer patients, locally and to cancer treatment facilities in Edinburgh, Glasgow and Newcastle. In the past year alone and during covid-19 restrictions the vehicle based in Dumfries has transported 200 patients on 152 trips and driven over 20,270 miles.



St John Scotland Branch Committees throughout Scotland are establishing similar local patient transport initiatives.

Locally, the Dumfries Branch supports Moffat Mountain Rescue which is a vital initiative for our region. They have been coming to the aid of walkers, climbers, and members of the local community from toddlers to the elderly since 1969. The Nith Inshore Rescue based at Glencaple is also a group we support.

The West Galloway Committee Branch provides two high amenity beds and other facilities in the Galloway Community Hospital for patients requiring palliative care and their relatives. This Branch also supports the Galloway Mountain Rescue, based in Newton Stewart. This Branch has twelve volunteer drivers; however, due to Covid only five can volunteer at present.

Local Branches are also installing Defibrillators and had begun offering CPR training which has been put on hold due to covid-19.

Due to covid-19, we, like many others, have been restricted in what we can support and assist. We are, however, preparing for new opportunities.

Moving Forward, we are seeking to recruit volunteer drivers for local appointments as well as patient transfers to Edinburgh and Glasgow. Transport for Renal Dialysis patients is being investigated for the Dumfries area. This project will commence with an additional vehicle like the one illustrated when our volunteer driver base is sufficient. To deliver the Renal Dialysis patient transport and to reduce the pressure on existing Cancer patient transport volunteer drivers, we wish to recruit an additional fifteen volunteer drivers.

Unsurprisingly, these new and exciting opportunities mean that our local committees will also be looking to increase their membership. Have you some spare time to assist St John Scotland?

**Davie Hunter, Secretary  
Dumfries and Galloway Branch**

### LANARKSHIRE LIFE MEMBER DOUGIE ROUGH

On Sunday, 25 July 2021, we managed to catch up with new Life Member Dougie Rough at the Police Museum in the Heritage Centre, Cumnock.

Dougie was appointed to Lanarkshire Constabulary in 1965 and retired from Strathclyde Police, 'T' Division, Traffic Motherwell in 1995. He now lives in Prestwick.

He received his Life member Certificate from RPOAS Lanarkshire President Jim Manson and it was great to meet his daughter Gillian, her husband Jim and his two lovely granddaughters. Lang may yer lum reek.







# HEALTH MATTERS

## BOWEL SCREENING

**Bowel screening is offered to everyone aged 50 to 74 across Scotland.**

If you are 75 or over, **YOU CAN STILL TAKE A BOWEL SCREENING TEST** every **TWO** years. However, you'll need to **REQUEST** a new test kit each time as the Scottish Bowel Screening Centre won't send you one automatically.

Bowel screening involves taking a simple test at home every two years and posting it back. The test looks for hidden blood in your stools, as this **COULD** mean a higher chance of bowel cancer.

Bowel cancer is the third most common cancer in Scotland. It's more common in people over 50, especially men.

### REQUEST A BOWEL SCREENING TEST KIT BY PHONE OR EMAIL

You can ask for a test kit by contacting the Scottish Bowel Screening Centre by telephoning **0800 0121 833** or by email at [TAY.scottishbowelscreening@nhs.scot](mailto:TAY.scottishbowelscreening@nhs.scot)

It's simple. quick and private and could save your life!



## A No-obligation Free\* Home Visit Service For:

- Standard Wills
- Protective Property Wills
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- Pre-Paid Funeral Plans
- Family Protection Trusts
- Living Wills
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[www.will-scotland.co.uk](http://www.will-scotland.co.uk)

Email: [info@will-scotland.co.uk](mailto:info@will-scotland.co.uk)

\*Mileage charges **may** apply depending on location

For further information or to make an appointment

**Call us Free on 0800 990 3524**

**Mobile: 07947 603886**

## Power of Attorney A must have for EVERYONE

**No one knows what is round the corner  
Avoids the cost of a Financial Guardianship Order**

Debilitating accidents or illnesses can happen to **anyone** and **at any stage in life**, be it young or old.

If something happens there is not a pause button you can press to put your life on hold. Bills still come in the front door and your affairs need dealt with in a timely manner.

You know yourself that if you pick the phone to speak to your bank for example then due to Data Protection laws the banks have to ensure they are speaking to the account holder. So if you cannot come to phone for whatever reason the bank will not deal with anyone else - including your family – **no exceptions.**

With a Power of Attorney **you keep control.** You choose the people you trust to look after your financial and welfare decisions.

If you do not have a Power of Attorney in place, whoever is looking after your affairs will have to go to court and apply for a Financial Guardianship Order – this will take at least 6 months and cost between £3k - £5k. This can all be avoided by appointing a person or persons YOU trust to act as your legal attorney(s).

**Contact us now for info & prices.**

## BREAKING NEWS • IMPORTANT LAUNCH

### TRANSITION & WELLBEING SEPTEMBER 2021

We are delighted to inform you that the Transition & Wellbeing Project is due to launch - from 1st September 2021. As you will be aware, this has been put on hold for over a year now due to Covid 19. But, over the past 6 months we have been BUSY, BUSY, BUSY!

- Our 11 Signposters started their training online in May 2020, via Zoom and Teams Meetings.
- So far there has been input from Lifelines Scotland, Maggie's and CRUSE Bereavement Care Scotland. With the training continuing in September to include input on Domestic Abuse and Dementia.
- We have had Team Meetings between the Signposters and our Co-ordinators – Laura Gibson, a serving officer with Police Scotland, and Anne Millar, a former senior member in the Welfare Department and Counselling Service for Lothian & Borders.
- Both Co-ordinators have presented at our Annual Conference in the past and you may have met them there.
- The Signposters will soon receive their official packs, mobile phones and ID.
- The Signposters will have access to a menu of organisations and contact details for them to help our members - YOU!

Finally, details of all our Signposters, Co-ordinators and SPOC – Single Point of Contact - will soon be on the Transition & Wellbeing page of the RPOAS Website – [www.rpoas.org.uk](http://www.rpoas.org.uk) There you will find the referral form required for you or your family member.

***Be assured you will be dealt with in the strictest confidence.***

Tracy McKenzie  
Single Point of Contact  
Transition & Wellbeing Email – [tracy@rpoas.org.uk](mailto:tracy@rpoas.org.uk)

**Matt Hamilton**  
RPOAS President





# RPOAS Around the Branches



## HIGHLANDS AND ISLANDS BRANCH

**SECRETARY: Dave Conner**

### A tribute to Morag Campbell DEATH OF POLICE MOTHER:

Morag Campbell has sadly passed away at the age of 88 years. She was such a lovely lady and so welcoming to all the extended police family whom she cared for on permanent or relief duty on the Island - there are so many who will be extremely saddened to hear of her passing.

It's hard to put into words how important she was to the police family over so many years but what she provided both in welcome and friendship made policing on Barra work. Morag's life and her legacy will live on in the hearts and minds of the community on Barra and many current and former NORCON Officers who had the privilege of living under her roof or knowing her.

My time on Barra was memorable for many reasons but none more so than the welcome and friendship shown throughout by Morag and the Campbell family.

Many of us worked with Shonnie and Donald in the Force and got to know the extended family.

Morag was the mother of 14 children, 25 grandchildren, 12 great grandchildren and an unknown number of NorCon waifs and strays.

She received a certificate for her services to Nor Con from former Chief Constable Ian Latimer which she always displayed with pride.

I am sure there are many out there who will have their own memories of Morag Campbell as quite simply her welcome and caring approach to permanent and relief officers made NORCON work for so many on Barra over many years.

NORCON has lost one of our own.



## LANARKSHIRE BRANCH

**Secretary: Henry Harper**

**The bright side:** in July 2021, President Jim Manson and I attended an Open Day in Greenock. We received a great reception, and the community involvement was a refreshing and exhilarating experience after so many months of necessary restrictions. A fun day was had by all.



## LANARKSHIRE BRANCH

Cont'd...

The following day, Jim and I had the pleasure of presenting Life Membership Certificates to eleven members. Being able to catch-up with a few of our 88 octogenarians was a pleasure and the reaction was very uplifting, as it was obviously very much appreciated. Lang may yer lums reek.

(Thanks to Police Scotland for their permission for these two events, Lanarkshire Police Historical Society for the use of the vehicles, Police Mutual for Insurance Cover, Brian James Trailers for the loan of an excellent trailer and Kerr & Smith Vauxhall, Cumnock for their continued support. It is very much appreciated).

All the best and stay safe, Henry

Email: [rpoas@henryharper.co.uk](mailto:rpoas@henryharper.co.uk)



New life member Jim Thomson



New life member Bill Walker



New life member Hugh Pillans



New life member Tom Cairns



New life member Ronnie Trotter



New life member Scott Forbes



New life member Charlie Young



New life member Charlie McArthur



## NORTH EAST BRANCH

**Secretary: Ron Findlay**

Branch activities are currently suspended because of the pandemic, but on 10 June 2021 we managed to hold our annual golf outing at Alford Golf Club. A total of 46 golfers competed for the Moira Allan trophy, which was won by Charlie Dingwall.



Other events in the pipeline this year, if restrictions allow, are our annual Memorial Service for those who died in the service of the police forces in the North East, and a celebration of the Branch's 50th anniversary, provisionally in the diary for 18 September and 8 October respectively.





## Bikeability Scotland Instructor

# Want to help the next generation of road users?

Glasgow City, and neighbouring Councils, are looking for cyclists with a passion for teaching young people to work with Primary Schools to deliver Bikeability Scotland on-road cycle training.

To participate you will initially attend a **free** accredited training day and volunteer to support delivery at your local school(s).

Skilled volunteers may be offered further **Continuous Professional Development** opportunities by their local Bikeability Coordinator to become a **paid Instructor Mentor** and lead delivery at multiple schools.

### In this role you will:

- Attend a free SQA training day
- Work alongside school staff and volunteers
- Give pupils skills and confidence
- Support your local school(s) and community

To register your interest with Glasgow City Council please email: [Baligh.Shaar@glasgow.gov.uk](mailto:Baligh.Shaar@glasgow.gov.uk)  
In neighbouring Local Authority areas email Cycling Scotland: [bikeability@cyclingscot.scot](mailto:bikeability@cyclingscot.scot)



## FROTH WITH YOUR COFFEE?



After my final working day in 2010, I met regularly with a few colleagues, to see how everyone was doing and to hear the latest gossip, benefits, jobs, etc. The meetings were arranged by 'phone or text and as the group expanded, contacting everyone became a more onerous task.

I had joined the well-known Facebook App by this time and as well as keeping up with family, it allowed me to keep up with many friends/colleagues. It was around this time I discovered that Facebook also allowed Groups, which could be set up easily with its privacy settings set so that only members could view the content being posted. It struck me that many of those in the 'coffee' group were also on Facebook, and it would be easier to arrange meetings through a group via the easy to use, in built 'event' to organise our coffee meetings.

From this **FROTH** (Fife Retired Officers, Talking & Having) group was born. And I was able to invite 'friends' on Facebook into the group. We easily arranged coffee catch ups with respondents ticking a box on the invite to say 'going', 'maybe' or 'can't go'. This made it easier to arrange pre-booked seating at the various hosteleries.

The group itself also started to include information on jobs available, good tradesmen recommendations, health updates, support available, and general information, tips and advice, all within the group. When a death is announced it can be comforting to the family to read some of the tributes that have been left on the notification from those that knew, worked or were friends with the deceased.



The group also started to expand and although I could only invite those in my friends' list to the group, others could invite their friends and others who just put up a bare profile to join the group, can search for the group and then I or my Admins can allow or block the request to join, ensuring that safety and anonymity of group members is maintained.

We ran an easy-going walking section and arranged weekly events in different locations, which also included a coffee stop! During lockdown we have organised Zoom meetings to keep those who participate in touch.

There are currently 277 members in the group and not all get involved but they like to see the information that is available. There are about 100 members who regularly attend events and to prevent those that don't wish to be involved getting all the event notifications, I started a sub-group called **FROTH ACTIVE** in which the 100 all participate in one or many events listed.

I feel that this has provided a great interactive information flow for retired cops and I also allow our Ex Police Support colleagues to join and be involved. This facility is so easy to set up that I would recommend it as it has proven to be beneficial and supportive, especially to those that may be alone or just need some contact.

The RPOAS does a grand job of notifying us of deaths or information pertinent to us and we have the benefit of a couple of Branch lunches a year, so I am merely looking to compliment the role of RPOAS and to make it more interactive. Being in the job gives us a special bond like no other and this allows you to contact those you have worked with over the years and still laugh at the same stories that you did way back when!

If you have a connection to Fife and want to join **FROTH**, search for it in Groups on Facebook and ask to join, whether you fancy a walk, coffee or Indian, or simply want to see what's going on in the retired Police community and can't be bothered meeting up, then feel free to become a member! It's free and you don't have to do anything but read!

**Dunc Ormiston**  
Fife Branch





# ALL OUR YESTERYEARS

Recently, RPOAS Lanarkshire Branch President Jim Manson was thrilled to accept an invitation from Police Scotland to take a trip down memory lane by revisiting his old beat in Glenboig, North Lanarkshire.



Jim, who retired on 9 June 1991, was the beatman in Glenboig from 1968 to 1972. As you may expect, Jim jumped at the opportunity and on 2 June 2021, he proudly donned his Strathclyde Police uniform (it still fits!) to accompany two Police Scotland Community Constables on a walking tour of the area.

Jim at the time of his retirement in 1991.

He must have made some impression on that community back in the day as many turned out to welcome him back and rekindle some old memories!



Jim Manson (centre) 'on duty' again in June 2021 with P.C. John Fleming (left) and P.C. Simon Finlay (right) of Police Scotland.

Jim was also made very welcome by the current team of Community Officers at Cumbernauld Police Office and he shared many stories with them, giving them the benefit of his experience and knowledge of the Glenboig area.

Jim attended with his 'neighbours' at Glenboig Life Centre where around 18 Glenboig residents, some auld acquaintances, had gathered to reminisce with him of days gone by.

Jim introduced the cops to one of his old howffs, and of course, the kettle was just off the boil; it would have been rude not to accept the lovely hospitality!



Jim said, *"It was a real pleasure to assist two enthusiastic officers and during our day on the beat I had the pleasure of introducing the community Police Officers to several Glenboig residents in the Village. Approximately 18 old acquaintances gathered at the Centre for Life to reminisce of days gone by. Thank you to all the senior officers who made this visit possible and to the young officer who made my tea at Cumbernauld in the morning"*.

Rewinding almost half a century, the photograph below taken in 1974 shows Jim Manson (left) with Cadet Sandy Dunnett of Northern Constabulary.



Sandy, now retired and a member of RPOAS Highlands & Islands Branch, reminisces:

*"The photo was taken in 1974 when I was Cadet 131 in Norcon1. I joined on 21 July 1974 and was stationed in Wick. I had just turned 16 and a week after joining I was sent to Aberdeen on a cadet course for cadets from throughout Scotland.*

*I was the only cadet from Northern and was in fact the only cadet in Northern having been taken on to replace a female cadet who had recently resigned.*

*"The instructors on the course were constables from all over, one of whom was Jimmy Manson, Lanarkshire. He belonged to Caithness and knew my sisters and other relatives of mine.*

*"The management were concerned I was a wee bit homesick and Jimmy, although not my instructor, befriended me. This photograph was taken and appeared on the front page of the John O'Groat Journal.*

*"The OIC on the course was Superintendent George Henderson, Northern and future Detective Superintendent Norman MacLeod was a constable instructor. Raymond Matheson, Annabel MacLeod, Richard McNeil, Brian Ross and Davie Chisholm were cadets from the other north forces on the same course."*

Sandy retired in 2006 in Thurso. For his final four years of service, he was the Local Intelligence Officer for Caithness and Sutherland.

Jim is an excellent ambassador for RPOAS Lanarkshire and the Lanarkshire Police Historical Society (LPHS) where he is



Sandy Dunnett today.

the Curator. He does a phenomenal amount of varied work for both RPOAS and LPHS.

It is amazing that he recently celebrated his 79th birthday and shows no signs of slowing down. He is an inspiration to all of us and we are so lucky to have him.

**Henry Harper**  
Secretary  
Lanarkshire Branch

## The Ayrshire Police War Memorial



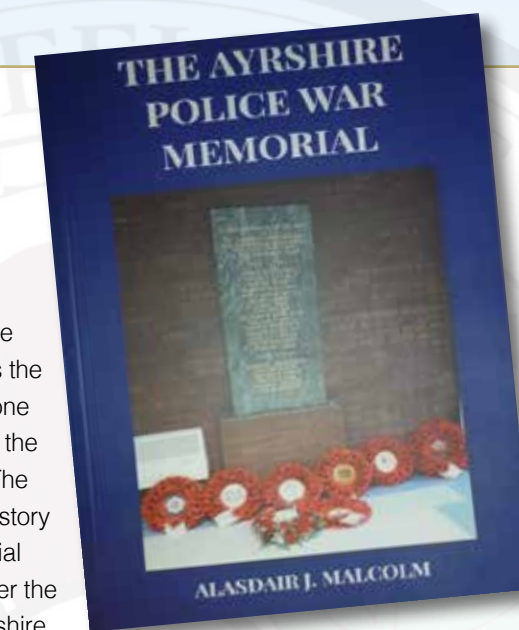
Ayrshire Branch member Alasdair J. Malcolm has recently published a fascinating book, 'The Ayrshire Police War Memorial'.

This is a commemorative book covering the history of the Ayrshire Police War Memorial and the individuals named on it, outlining some of the history of policing in Ayrshire during the two World Wars.

Alasdair was born in Ayr and brought up in Prestwick where he still lives with his family.

In 1985, at the age of 20, he joined Strathclyde Police and completed his 30 years of service entirely in South Ayrshire, retiring in 2015, having been stationed in Ayr, Maybole, Troon, Prestwick and Prestwick Airport.

Alasdair has always had a keen interest in history, particularly local history in Ayrshire and regularly contributes to a variety of local history forums.



The Ayrshire Police War Memorial lists the names of twenty-one officers who fell in the two World Wars. The book charts the history of the War Memorial raised to remember the officers of the Ayrshire Constabulary and Kilmarnock Burgh Police forces who made the ultimate sacrifice and gives some background of policing by the two forces, and the Ayr Burgh Police force, during both conflicts.

A summary of their service and short lives, and, where possible, images of the officers themselves, provides a personal and lasting story to each individual officer, enshrining their memory for future generations.

The book can be purchased at:  
[www.mybestseller.co.uk](http://www.mybestseller.co.uk) Price: £9.00.

The direct link for selling page is:  
[www.mybestseller.co.uk/aldasair.malcolm](http://www.mybestseller.co.uk/aldasair.malcolm)

Or contact Alasdair at [aj.malcolm@btinternet.com](mailto:aj.malcolm@btinternet.com) to arrange direct purchase/collection/postage of a copy.





# Reminiscing During Lockdown

**While reminiscing with a former colleague during lockdown Jack Simpson, a retired Inspector from Edinburgh, was recalling memorable incidents in which he had been involved during his 35 years' service.**

That chat resulted in the publication of a book 'Police Revelations' in which he shares some of these experiences (See 'Terror in Tenerife' below).

Priced at £7.50, it can be purchased from Amazon or by contacting Jack at jackandmorag@yahoo.com

## TERROR IN TENERIFE

After retiring from the police Jack purchased a timeshare in Tenerife and looked forward to spending many holidays relaxing in the sun.

Not long before his first vacation he was in conversation with former colleague, Gordon Marshall, and was surprised to learn that he also had an apartment in the same timeshare complex and, by sheer coincidence, it was for the same week.

Subsequent years saw Jack and his wife Morag enjoying many holidays in the company of Gordon and his wife Kate.

On the first night of one holiday the happy foursome dined out at a local restaurant. During the meal Kate began to feel unwell so she and Morag returned to the complex while Jack and Gordon made their way to a nearby chemist to purchase some medication.

En-route they were approached by a young Moroccan man handing out leaflets for a local sex show. Jack and Gordon attempted to continue but the man was quite insistent so, in an attempt to placate him, Jack accepted one of his hand-outs.

Despite having succeeded in handing over one leaflet, apparently the man was still not satisfied and, as Jack looked on in amusement, he began kneeling in front of Gordon and pleading that he should also accept one.

A few minutes later, having failed in his attempt to break Gordon's resolve, the man eventually stood up and began crossing the road, allowing the two holiday makers to resume their journey.

After a few steps Gordon announced that he thought he had left his wallet at the restaurant. When Jack suggested he might have been 'dipped', they looked round and saw their now furtive-looking Moroccan friend making off rather quickly.

They immediately caught up with him and, while Gordon stood in front to block his path, Jack saw and retrieved a wallet from his trouser pocket. It was Gordon's wallet and a quick check confirmed the contents were still intact.

With a total combined police service of over sixty years their

training kicked in and, without exchanging a word, they instinctively decided that their light-fingered friend was not about to get off scot-free. So, with the intention of detaining him until the police arrived, they took hold of him. Their Moroccan prisoner, on the other hand, had no intention of hanging around and, in his determination to break free, all three fell to the ground where they continued to struggle.

The area was extremely busy with tourists heading out for the evening and a large group of onlookers immediately formed a circle around the struggling trio who, by then, were in the middle of the road. One youth with a west of Scotland accent asked what had happened and, when told, he replied: "Just give him a good kicking!"

The struggle continued for about twenty minutes until the first of two police cars eventually arrived with two-tone horns sounding and lights flashing. As it screeched to a halt, the crowd spontaneously burst into applause. The prisoner was whisked off in that car while Jack and Gordon were transported to the police station in the second vehicle.

At the police station the police officer was about to start taking their statements when the phone rang and, after answering it, he handed the phone to Jack and said: "It's for you". Jack was confused. No-one, not even their wives, knew they were there. However, the puzzle was solved when he took the call – it was from an interpreter.

After giving their statements the two 'heroes' then returned, bruised and bleeding, to their apartments and related details of their escapade. But instead of receiving the anticipated plaudits for arresting a thief who, they had been informed, was well known and extremely active in the area, they were rebuked, lambasted and greeted with: "Are you two completely stupid? Two pensioners fighting with a man half your age who could well have been in possession of a weapon!"

The following day Jack and Gordon were visited by the police. They were cited to appear at court as witnesses and were given a typed copy of their statements. Unfortunately, the statements were in Spanish and all Jack could understand was the name 'Gordon Marshall' and the word 'amigo' which he recognised as being Spanish for 'friend'.

When the prisoner appeared in court a few days later, and pled guilty, he was sentenced to six months in prison. But, because of his guilty plea, his sentence was reduced to four months.

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**Jack Simpson  
Lothian & Borders Branch**



# Alex Grant (1930 - 2021)

**Alex Grant was born in Cromdale, near Grantown on Spey, on 7 April 1930, the third child in a farming family and he would experience hardship and grief in his young life.**

His mother died when he was 5 years old, he lost his sister when he was 10, and at 15, he was working on the farm with his father when tragically his dad dropped dead. Responsibility for the farm then rested on young Alex's shoulders. With the assistance of an uncle and some neighbours, he managed to keep it productive.



In his youth, he cycled, half bottle in pocket, to the entertainment of the day, dancing in the village hall, once waking up in the local graveyard, flat out on a tombstone, where his reveller friends had put him as they thought that was where he would be most comfortable for the night!

The dancing is where he met his wife Janet, the love of his life, to whom he was married for 64 years. They delighted in their children, Kate and Ewan and two granddaughters, Selena and Eilidh. Kate followed Alex into the police and Ewan became a joiner, with his own business.



## 1956 – Kilmarnock Burgh Police

When Alex decided to join the police, he looked for a place where he could be settled. That took him to Kilmarnock Burgh Police and he would live in Kilmarnock for the rest of his life. Well over 6 feet tall, with strength developed from the manual labour of the farm, police colleagues would say that he was a great man to get behind in a rammy!



Alex always had an interest and concern for others which led him to being the constables' Police Federation representative of the newly formed Ayrshire Constabulary. His association with the Federation continued until he retired in 1986, by which time he was secretary of the Joint Branch Board for Scotland and a recognised authority, even by Chief Constables, on all things Federation. Such was his memory, that in his later years, he could still quote the regulations of the time.

In retirement he became Secretary and Treasurer of RPOAS Ayrshire Branch, a position he held for 22 years. He was also national Vice President and President. He championed the cause of the Police Treatment Centres and with his encouragement, over a period of years, Ayrshire Branch members donated in the region of £25,000.

He was held in such esteem that when he stepped down as Ayrshire secretary in 2012, he was the only person ever to be appointed, Ayrshire Branch Honorary President. A small gesture but one Alex appreciated.

His early life experiences may have contributed to his stoic, practical nature but they did nothing to diminish his sense of humour. With his fantastic memory, he had a funny story for almost every occasion.

Alex was his normal, active self until a few weeks before his death, cooking, baking – oatcakes a speciality, gardening, wood turning, making pens and spice racks for others and still helping with the work of RPOAS Ayrshire Branch, organising and delivering magazines etc., always interested, always interesting, always ready for a chat and a laugh. A giant of a man with a big heart, he was well respected across the Association. He will be sorely missed by his family and friends.

**David Seawright, Secretary  
Ayrshire Branch**





# Alexander Dowie Marr

## BEM

(1937 – 2021)

### REMEMBERING A REMARKABLE MAN

**During the past year or so, the words 'remarkable' and 'inspirational' have been used to describe many in our society who have stood out for whatever reason; however, no-one deserves such an accolade more than Sandy Marr; indeed the Marr family as a whole are no less deserving.**

Sandy, an Honorary Member of the Fife Branch, passed away at his home in Kirkcaldy on 13 May 2021 after a long illness, with his family by his side. His funeral service was held in Kirkcaldy on 26 May. Although Covid restrictions were in place, the hearse, with a police motor cycle escort, was met by a large number of serving and retired officers on the approaches to the Crematorium.

Born and brought up in Methil, Sandy was one of a family of two brothers and one sister. Working life started in the local Co-op; however, at 18 years of age, National Service beckoned and he was to spend the next three years in the Royal Air Force stationed at RAF Padgate. After demob, he returned to the Co-op in Methil, and in 1960 he married local lass Ena, at Inner Leven Parish Church. Soon their family was complete with the arrival of daughters Karen and Sandra.

In 1963, Sandy took the decision to join Fife Constabulary.

Following Initial Training at the Scottish Police College, Tulliallan, he was posted to Kirkcaldy, his first and only station. After a few years of general beat duties, he was appointed as 'Area Man' (Community Constable) in the Templehall area of Kirkcaldy, a position which was ideally suited to his good humour and friendly disposition.

Life, though, for the Marr family changed dramatically in October 1975, when Sandy suffered horrific, life-changing injuries on duty. Whilst conducting door to door enquiries during a murder enquiry in Leslie, he undoubtedly saved the life of an eight year old girl whom he pushed out of harm's way as a speeding motor car driven by a drunk driver mounted the pavement. Sandy was hit by the car,



*Sandy hard at work in his study.*

and lost a leg at the scene. His other leg was later amputated in hospital, where he was to spend many months.

Such was his resolve and determination, however, and with the full support and encouragement of his family, the medical profession, friends and colleagues, and indeed the Chief Constable, Robert F. Murison, Sandy returned to duty as Collator at Kirkcaldy Police Station in August 1976, just ten months after his accident. Showing amazing fortitude, having mastered the use of his two artificial legs, he proudly reported for duty in full uniform. Sandy remained in post until his retirement in 1984.

His heroic actions were recognised with the award of the British Empire Medal, and inclusion in the Roll of Honour of the Carnegie Hero Trust.

As everyone soon discovered, 'retirement' in Sandy's vocabulary was a word, not a lifestyle! He was a stalwart of the Fife Branch, (incorporated in 1985), and as well as being a founder member, for many years he looked after the finances in a prudent and meticulous manner, be it as Auditor or Treasurer, a position he held for fifteen years. He served the Branch with great distinction and justly deserved the award of Honorary Membership in 2015. Despite failing health in recent years, Sandy made every effort to embrace Branch activities and its members – always smiling, always

cheery. He was forever positive in outlook, and always appreciative of the support and assistance of the wider Police family, including the Police Dependants' Trust.

The Police Service; however, was but one chapter in Sandy's life. He formed a very successful house building business, which for many years he ran with his older brother Chic, a joiner to trade. While Sandy primarily looked after the administration side of the business, occasionally he would find himself despatched to the local builders' merchant to pick up materials – hand controls in his car another challenge he enthusiastically embraced.

Foreign travel was something Sandy and Ena greatly enjoyed, particularly with their family. Disney World in Florida, cruises in the Caribbean, North America and Australia were great favourites. Long haul flights - no problem!

As devoted to his family as they were to him, Sandy is survived by Ena, his wife of sixty years, daughters Karen and Sandra, two grandchildren and two great grandchildren - a remarkable man, a remarkable family, a remarkable life.

Ken Bellingham QPM

Vice Chair, Fife Branch



*Presentation of the British Empire Medal by the Lord Lieutenant of Fife, Lord Kilmany, in April 1977*





# CENTENARY OF MURDERED INSPECTOR ROBERT JOHNSTON



(L to r): Martin Allan, Sandy Geddes and William Kirkwood



On 4th May 2021, RPOAS Lanarkshire Branch Members Sandy Geddes, Martin Allan and William Kirkwood paid their respects at Balmaghie Parish Church in Castle Douglas by laying a wreath at the grave of Inspector Robert Johnston who was killed by the IRA in Glasgow on 4 May 1921. It was the 100th anniversary of his murder.

Inspector Johnston was the officer in charge of the detail which was taking an IRA prisoner from Glasgow Police Court in Turnbull Street, Glasgow to return him to Duke Street Prison. They had some intelligence that the prison van might be attacked so Inspector Johnston, along with Detective Sergeant George Stirton and Detective Constable McDonald - were the armed escort in the van together with police driver Constable Thomas Ross.

The van came under attack from more than thirty assailants as it slowed to turn right from the High Street into the entrance to Duke Street prison. Inspector Johnston was fatally wounded in the first volley of shots. D.S. Stirton then stood over his body and fired his gun but was hit on the wrist, taking him out of the fight. D.C. McDonald emptied his revolver towards the assailants, but it seems that none of them were hit. The gang fired their guns into the lock of the van, but it did its job, and the group ran off without achieving their objective - the release of the prisoner.



During the following days and weeks, the police arrested many for the attack and weapons were seized during house searches. Of those that went to trial, they were almost all found 'Not Proven' on all charges while a few were found 'Not Guilty'.

Inspector Johnston was buried where he was brought up, within sight of his home at Balmaghie Kirk. His grave, like others in the graveyard, is very well maintained by the Balmaghie Sacred Landscape Trust (as it ceased to be a church in 2015). You couldn't pick a better view from the hillside that the Church and graveyard sit on.

Inspector Johnston is believed to be the only serving Scottish police officer killed by the IRA while on duty in Scotland (other attacks did take place in Scotland around that time but nobody was killed during them). The real 'hero' of the event is D.S. George Stirton who, despite coming under sustained heavy small arms fire,

stood over his colleague's body and didn't leave his post and still tried to shield Inspector Johnston.

On our visit in 2021, we were met by representatives from the Balmaghie Sacred Landscape Trust who were delighted that we were in attendance to commemorate the anniversary. Also present was retired Strathclyde Police Inspector, Joe Craig, a resident of Dumfries. Joe helps run the Dumfries & Galloway Police Museum and has for many years laid flowers on the grave of Inspector Johnston on the anniversary of his murder.

Anyone wishing to read more on the incident can visit the Glasgow Police Museum where Alastair Dunsmor is a walking encyclopaedia on this and many other police topics.

The Police Museum is situated on the First Floor, 30 Bell Street, Merchant City, Glasgow G1 1LG Tel: 0141 552 1818. Website: <http://www.policemuseum.org.uk/>

There is also a book about the incident - 'High Noon on High Street' by Stephen Coyle. (Amazon: <https://www.amazon.co.uk/High-Noon-Street-Daring-Glasgow/dp/1873586442>)

**Sandy Geddes  
Lanarkshire Branch**







# DEDICATION OF THE NEW UK POLICE MEMORIAL AT THE NATIONAL ARBORETUM

On 28 July 2021 my wife Alison and I were honoured and privileged to represent the Retired Police Officers' Association Scotland at the dedication of the new Memorial to all police officers in the United Kingdom, killed in the execution of their duties and who, as the Memorial says, 'dedicated their lives to protecting us'. We were the only representatives of the Scottish Police Service in attendance. However, every Police Force in England, Wales and Northern Ireland was represented together with members of their support agencies such as The Police Federation, The National Association of Retired Police Officers and many others.

Prior to the ceremony the approach driveway to the Memorial was lined with officers immaculately turned out in their dress uniforms with heads bowed and proudly parading their respective Force's Colours. That sight alone was so poignant that it felt at the time that taking photographs would have been so inappropriate. Later, photographs were not allowed at the actual ceremony, I think probably for the same reason.

Together with the other 400 or so invited guests, we were directed through the lines of Force Colours to seating areas adjacent to the Memorial where we were able to sit in silence and absorb the symbolic beauty and peace of the Memorial and its surroundings. That 'symbolic beauty' is no better described than in the words of the designers of the Memorial:

*"The landscape embraces the Celtic spiritual concept of a 'thin place' where we step from one world to the next. Contrasts in light and shade, the wild and controlled, add to the experience of a serene yet powerful space.*

*"Raised edges to a circular glade surrounded by a bold and simple ring of trees embrace visitors, imparting a sense of protection, as the police protect us. The glade itself is edged by the wilder, more natural wooded part of The Arboretum.*

*"Descriptive text and a 'Siltoe Tartan' evoking the police uniform, edge the path leading to the Memorial and a tall doorway supporting a brass screen. The portal represents the threshold to the dangerous places where the police must go.*

*"Leaf shaped apertures cut from the memorial represent service, sacrifice and lives lost. The brass will weather while the gilt edges remain bright, and as the sun shines the site is lit by this gilded absence".*

Seated alongside us were a couple who had lost their son, a Traffic Officer, who was killed attending a routine RTA when he stepped out of his police vehicle and into the path of a car which had skidded on black ice. They epitomised the real significance and importance of the Memorial. After a slight delay we were joined by HRH The Prince of Wales, The Prime Minister, Boris Johnson, The Home Secretary, Priti Patel and those officiating and performing at the Service. The rain came down and the service began but the weather did not detract in the slightest from its serenity and the emotion involved. Chair of the Police Arboretum Memorial Trust, Sir Hugh Orde OBE, QPM, welcomed HRH and the guests and invited HRH to dedicate the Memorial.

Katherine Jenkins OBE then gave a stirring rendition of 'I Vow to Thee My Country'. Readings followed from members of the families of deceased officers and then an "Act of Remembrance" was made by HRH The Prince of Wales. That was followed by a minute's silence and a fly past by The National Police Air Service. A lone Piper from The Police Service of Northern Ireland then played 'Highland Cathedral' before wreaths were laid by members of the police family accompanied by The National Police Symphony Orchestra which gave a wonderful and highly emotional performance of that beautiful song, 'You Raise Me Up'. Acts of Commitment followed from two serving and one retired police officer and the



Service concluded with closing prayers, The Blessing and The National Anthem, again beautifully performed by The National Police Symphony Orchestra.

After the dignitaries departed we were each given the opportunity to lay a single white rose at the foot of the Memorial and pay tribute silently and individually to our former colleagues. The whole event was very thoughtfully and professionally presented and executed and was indeed a fitting tribute to all those officers who made the ultimate sacrifice in the execution of their duties.

However, the UK Police Memorial is much more than a physical edifice in brass. It has a digital feature commemorating almost 5000 members of our police service who have laid down their lives. Creating a fitting online tribute to these brave men and women, the Digital Memorial uses data supplied by The Police Roll of Honour Trust. Each day an "On This Day" feature commemorates officers and staff on the anniversary of their death. Where available, brief citations with photos are shared on the Trust's twitter platform.

The National Arboretum is a beautiful, very peaceful location to visit just outside Lichfield. It is laid out over substantial, immaculately manicured gardens and woodlands and

comprises the UK Police Memorial and neighbouring Regimental Memorials to members of the Army killed on duty together with Memorials to those killed from The Royal Navy, The Royal Air Force, The Merchant Navy, Auxiliary Services and the other Civilian and Emergency Services, all sited in their own dedicated gardens. It also houses a very modern Visitor Centre, restaurant and cafe and is well worth visiting if you're ever in the area.

It was a very poignant and emotional day for us and one we'll remember for a long time to come.

**Louis Munn  
Lanarkshire Branch**

(Former Chief Superintendent and Divisional Commander, Strathclyde Police, retired in 2004)

## NATIONAL MEMORIAL ARBORETUM

Croxall Road, Alrewas, Staffordshire DE13 7AR

*Opening times:*

*10am – 5pm daily, (except Christmas Day)*

Free entry.

Donations appreciated.



## Victim Support Scotland

### VOLUNTEERING OPPORTUNITY FOR RETIRED POLICE OFFICERS

**Volunteers are crucial to the work of Victim Support Scotland. With the help of our excellent volunteers, we provide support in our local communities and courts to people affected by crime throughout Scotland.**

#### What our volunteers do

There are many varied volunteering roles with Victim Support Scotland, from front-line to administration to fundraising, and more.

Most of our volunteers directly support people affected by crime in the community and in the court environment.

But our volunteering opportunities are far from limited to these, and we aim to offer volunteering options to fit the skills and experiences of anyone interested in supporting our organisation.

**Find out more about the different volunteering roles with us by following the links below.**

[Support volunteers | Victim Support Scotland](#)

[National Support Centre support volunteers | Victim Support Scotland](#)

If you're interested in volunteering with us, please visit our volunteer application page for more information.





# OBITUARIES

## IN REMEMBRANCE

*We record with great sadness the deaths of the following Retired Police Officers*

### AYRSHIRE BRANCH

AMES, Leslie  
65 years; retired in 2004 - died on 29 January 2021

BLACK, David  
77 years; retired in 1993 - died on 11 August 2021

ERSKINE, Alan  
65 years; retired in 2009 - died on 29 May 2021

FULTON, John  
65 years; retired in 2004 - died on 25 January 2021

GOODWIN, Mark  
86 years; retired in 1991 - died on 12 February 2021

GRANT, Alex  
90 years; retired in 1986 - died on 21 February 2021

GRANT, John  
82 years; retired in 1992 - died on 25 February 2021

KENNEDY, Bruce  
62 years; retired in 2007 - died on 26 February 2021

LOGAN, Patrick  
79 years; retired in 1989 - died on 9 March 2021

McCLURG, James  
91 years; retired in 1984 - died on 2 June 2021

McGARRIE, James  
63 years; retired in 2009 - died on 28 May 2021

McMICHAEL, William  
91 years; retired in 1987 - died on 7 February 2021

McMILLAN, Robert (Bob)  
75 years; retired in 2001 - died on 27 May 2021

POWELL, Richard  
72 years; retired in 1993 - died on 25 February 2021

SPIERS, Glenn  
73 years; retired in 2000 - died on 18 June 2021

WILSON, Murray  
69 years; retired in 2000 - died on 31 January 2021

### CENTRAL BRANCH

ADAMSON, John  
75 years - died on 9 March 2021

BAULD, Walter  
71 years - died on 6 July 2021

CORDINER, Alistair  
70 years; retired in 1998 - died on 4 February 2021

McGREGOR, Jack  
78 years; retired in 1995 - died on 10 July 2021

PITCAITHLY, David  
94 years; retired in 1977 - died on 8 May 2021

THOMSON, Colin  
88 years; retired in 1988 - died on 25 May 2021

### DUMFRIES AND GALLOWAY BRANCH

BROWN, Gordon (John Gordon Brown Vale)  
89 years; retired in 1987 - died on 22 July 2021

CARTER, William Arthur (Bill)  
95 years; retired in 1983 - died on 2 August 2021

McVITIE, Ernest (Ernie)  
90 years; retired in 1983 - died on 29 March 2021

NEWTON, Frederick QPM  
70 years; retired in 2002 - died on 29 January 2021

THOMSON, Allan  
89 years; retired in 1978 - died on 13 May 2021

### FIFE BRANCH

BURNS, George  
95 years; retired in 1977 - died on 13 July 2021

HAMILTON, John Patterson  
77 years; retired in 2001 - died on 26 February 2021

MARR, Alexander (Sandy) BEM  
83 years; retired in 1984 - died on 13 May 2021

WARD, Francis (Frank)  
83 years; retired in 1994 - died on 18 March 2021

### GLASGOW BRANCH

FERGUSON, John (Fergie)  
83 years - died on 19 April 2021

HUNTER, William  
97 years - died on 12 June 2021

LEIPER, James  
76 years - died on 8 June 2021

MacNAB, Archibald  
80 years - died on 24 July 2021

McCALL, William  
65 years - died in May 2021

### GLASGOW BRANCH Cont'd

McNEIL, Frederick  
82 years - died on 10 June 2021

MONAGHAN, Peter  
74 years - died on 20 June 2021

MUNRO, Catherine (Irene)  
90 years - died on 29 March 2021

WALKER, Eleanor  
78 years - died on 28 July 2021

### HIGHLANDS AND ISLANDS BRANCH

INGRAM, Edward Bisset Davidson (Eddie)  
82 years; retired in 1992 - died on 26 May 2021

MACLENNAN, James Dallas  
88 years; retired in 1977 - died on 31 March 2021

MACLEOD, Alastair H  
76 years; retired in 1997 - died on 24 March 2021

SHIELS, Simon John (Jack)  
79 years - died on 24 July 2021

SMITH, Iain  
52 years; retired 2019 - died on 16 February 2021

### LANARKSHIRE BRANCH

BALLENTINE, George  
73 years; retired in 2002 - died on 13 April 2021

BIRD, David  
65 years; retired in 2009 - died on 22 March 2021

GRANT, William (Wullie)  
80 years; retired in 1995 - died on 24 May 2021

GRAY, William (Bill)  
95 years; retired in 1980 - died on 30 June 2021

HARRISON or ARMSTRONG, Anne  
75 years; left in 1967 - died on 30 April 2021

JOHNSTON, Robert (Bob)  
92 years; retired in 1983 - died on 20 April 2021

JORDAN, William David  
67 years; retired in 2005 - died on 20 June 2021

McDOUGALL, William (Willie)  
80 years; retired in 1994 - died on 15 February 2021

McILLWAIN, Thomas  
76 years; retired in 1994 - died on 8 February 2021

McINTOSH, Peter  
88 years; retired in 1985 - died on 2 August 2021

McMILLAN, Thomas (Tam)  
61 years; retired in 1999 - died on 18 May 2021

### LANARKSHIRE BRANCH Cont'd

McNEILL, David GIBB (Davie)  
71 years; retired in 2003 - died on 22 May 2021

NEILSON, Andrew (Andy)  
57 years; retired in 2018 - died on 19 February 2021

RUXTON, David  
82 years; retired in 1990 - died on 24 November 2020

SAXON, Paul  
60 years; retired in 2009 - died on 1 March 2021

TEDMAN, David  
67 years; retired in 1990 - died on 11 January 2021

WHYTE, James (Jimmy)  
87 years; retired in 1985 - died on 18 January 2021

### LOTHIAN AND BORDERS BRANCH

ANDERSON, James  
95 years; retired in 1976 - died on 19 May 2021

ASH, Peter  
86 years - died on 18 July 2021

BLACK, Robert (Bob)  
91 years - died on 27 February 2021

CLARK, Hector OBE, QPM  
87 years; retired in 1994 - died on 5 April 2021

CLARK, James  
95 years - died on 3 February 2021

COUPER, John  
75 years - died on 11 April 2021

GIBB, Steven  
61 years; retired in 2011 - died on 28 May 2021

GILL, James MBE  
68 years; retired in 2001 - died on 7 April 2021

HENDERSON, Douglas  
83 years - died on 19 February 2021

HUNTER, Robin  
Died on 31 January 2021

HYDE, Alexander  
86 years; retired in 1986 - died on 13 September 2020

JUSTICE, Alexander  
76 years - died on 6 February 2021

McBIRNIE, Alexander (Jack)  
62 years; retired in 2013 - died on 15 June 2021

### LOTHIAN AND BORDERS BRANCH Cont'd

McKENZIE, Andrew  
Died on 17 February 2021

MACKAY, Stewart  
81 years; retired in 1990 - died on 19 May 2021

PUNTON, Ronald McLeod  
86 years - died on 19 February 2021

ROBERTSON, Leonard Grieve  
94 years; retired in 1977 - died on 24 May 2021

SMART, Cyril  
90 years; retired in 1984 - died on 19 July 2021

TEMPERLEY, Isaac (Tam)  
73 years - died on 28 May 2021

TURNER, George  
90 years - died on 16 March 2021

### NORTH EAST BRANCH

BACCHUS, Jerome Andrew  
56 years; retired in 2019 - died on 5 May 2021

BARCLAY, William (Bill)  
89 years; retired in 1982 - died 26 May 2021

BERRY, Bill MBE  
85 years; retired in 1987 - died on 15 February 2021

GERRARD, Alexander James (Sandy)  
92 years; retired in 1984 - died on 8 March 2021

McLENNAN, Ian James  
85 years; retired in 1990 - died on 24 March 2021

MACKAY, James (Jim)  
85 years; retired in 1987 - died on 27 June 2021

MENZIES, Ian  
68 years; retired in 1995 - died on 17 June 2021

MURRAY, Eric William  
86 years; retired in 1988 - died on 12 April 2021

WELSH, Brian  
73 years; retired in 1996 - died on 26 February 2021

WELSH, Brian  
73 years; retired in 1996 - died on 26 February 2021

### RENFREW AND DUNBARTON BRANCH

BENNIE, George  
96 years - died on 3 September 2020

GALLAGHER, Willie  
57 years; retired in 2014 - died on 21 March 2021

### RENFREW AND DUNBARTON BRANCH Cont'd

McCALL, William  
74 years - died on 10 May 2021

MITCHELL, Ian  
79 years - died on 19 March 2021

STEWART, Donald  
92 years - died on 7 September 2020

WALKER, John  
93 years - died on 12 April 2021

### TAYSIDE BRANCH

ADAM, Tom  
73 years; retired in 2001 - died on 12 March 2021

ASSENTI, Michael (Mike)  
60 years - died on 3 July 2021

BAXTER, James (Jim)  
77 years - died on 31 March 2021

BERWICK, Adam Taylor  
98 years - died on 28 March 2021

BINNIE, David  
90 years - died on 16 July 2021

CAMPBELL, Frank  
86 years - died on 4 February 2021

DRUMMOND, Eric (Richard) QPM  
Died on 19 May 2021

HORNE, Derek Lyall  
69 years; retired in 2001 - died on 1 June 2021

LEASK, Brian  
86 years - died on 26 June 2021

MACNAB, Peter  
90 years; retired in 1982 - died on 5 June 2021

McGOULDRICK, Tom  
93 years - died on 13 March 2021

MORGAN, George  
75 years - died on 6 February 2021

ROSS, Donald  
88 years; retired in 1984 - died in 2021

SOUTER Robert  
75 years - died in April 2021

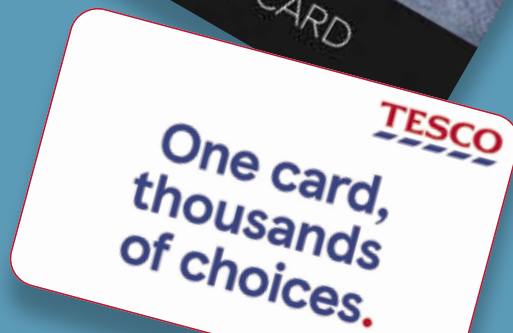
VALENTINE Roland  
92 years - died on 29 January 2021



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