



RPOAS
CENTRAL BRANCH
SEPTEMBER 2021



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CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

It's been a pretty quiet few months for us, with no holidays on the horizon. We did manage a day away though, in June. We drove to Perth and picked up our coach there, departing 8 a.m. for Lindisfarne, Holy Island, near Berwick upon Tweed. Hot breakfast on board! We knew most of the folk on the coach, so even though Covid meant every second seat was kept clear, we could always shout to each other! The weather was sunny and warm, and we had a good trip, visiting the seaside villages in the area. We had to reach the Causeway at the right time, as it's not advisable to drive across when the tide's coming in – or out.

We spent the day on the island, including lunch. When the tide was in the right place, we headed for the mainland again, down the coast to our

hotel at Newcastle Airport. We had dinner, bed and breakfast there then departed for the north next morning, for a visit to Roslyn Chapel – and a picnic – then back to Perth for 3 p.m. Annual leave gone for another year!

It appears that the Coronavirus is actually past its worst now, although some of the restrictions our worthy leaders have made may well be with us for a while yet. Sadly, we have lost some old friends due to the virus and we have probably all been touched by it, in one way or another.

July saw the passing of three old colleagues.

Walter Bauld's funeral was held at Alva Cemetery, where there was a very good turnout.

Jack McGregor's was private and held in St Modoc's Church in Doune, which I was invited to, then Stirlingshire Crematorium, where I was joined by Mike Mill, Jake Currie and Davie Murray. Numbers were very limited due to COVID restrictions.

Fast forward to August, when we learned of the passing of ex member Jim Blair. I recall being transferred to Beancross office in Grangemouth in 1971. Jimmy was the senior man there and we worked together for some time.

All are sadly missed.

August was proving to be an expensive month for me. First, we booked a



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parking space at Edinburgh Airport, where we were meeting Gwen's son and his fiancée, who were arriving from Toronto to stay with us for three weeks. The parking for an hour was £15.99. Unfortunately, the plane was half an hour late, and I was stung for a further £18.00 before I could escape through the barrier. Welcome to Scotland!

A few days later, I was checking my bank balance when to my horror, I found that there had been 103 payments of £2.49 removed from my account by Apple.Com! After waiting for about 30 minutes on the 'phone to the bank, I eventually spoke with someone from the Fraud Unit who advised that I'd been scammed. I will get the money back – some time! (It was actually refunded within a week).

Back to our visitors from Toronto. They were forced to self-isolate for ten days, as Canada was at the time, still on the COVID Amber list, not going Green until 30 August. The other awkward thing was that fiancée Laura had to work for four days each week – on-line and in Canada time – so on these days she was stuck inside working until 11.30 p.m. Curtailed their movements a wee bit.

However, we did manage some of the usual touristy things, like St Andrews for a day in the sun, the Falkirk Wheel and the Kelpies – which included going inside one of them for a short

talk on their history. It was on our way home after this last visit, that Laura announced she had been a wee bit disappointed with our St Andrews trip. When we asked why, she said Mark had told her we'd see the four bridges over the river, but there had only been three. "What happened to the Fourth Bridge?" she asked. Foreigners!!

Best wishes,

Bill

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

POLICE TREATMENT CENTRE

Good news, the PTC is open once again. Please see the current issue of RPOAS News for an offer to sign up and immediately be eligible to apply for treatment (available in September and October 2021 only).

Go to the PTC website and follow the links.

GOOD NEWS

The Capitation fee payable annually to RPOAS by the 12 Branches will remain at £3.50 per ordinary member for a further year due to the pandemic and our restricted activities.

ANNUAL FEE

A BIG THANK YOU TO ALL MEMBERS WHO HAVE RECENTLY PAID THE ANNUAL FEE OF £12 previously deducted many years ago by Pensions Department at source annually in July.

If you believe that you currently have membership fees outstanding, 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 easily be confused with your Branch fee.

PLEASE REMEMBER – LIFE MEMBERS ARE EXEMPT FROM ANNUAL FEE

NEW MEMBERS

Welcome to Ian Clark, David McKenzie and Malcolm Strachan who joined the Branch recently.

Are you in touch with colleagues who are not members of RPOAS? Please send on an application form to them. Forms can be obtained from Committee member Mike Mill. There are members' benefits on offer on our website, 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.



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DONATION IM MEMORY OF ALISTAIR



Alistair Cordiner loved attending outings and lunches with his friends in the Branch. He was a keen and generous volunteer, always offering spaces in his car to collect others.

After Alistair's sad passing in February 2021, his daughter Victoria was in touch to share that Alistair wished to leave a donation to the Branch towards a lunch, an occasion so special to him. Once we return to normal, we will

arrange for Alistair's wishes to be honoured.

CONDOLENCES to family and friends of Walter Bauld, Jim Blair, Frank Duffie and Jack McGregor who passed away recently. Sincere thanks to Jim's granddaughter Emily and Jack's son Stuart for writing a tribute and allowing us to use it. We hope to carry a tribute to Frank Duffie in the next issue.

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 September 2021 issue is now on the RPOAS website and in circulation to those who prefer a paper copy. Our next magazine is due out in February 2022.

I am conscious that as we get older, some of us may decide that a paper copy of the magazine is more convenient. Please let me know if this is the case. It can easily be arranged.

RPOAS POCKET DIARIES 2022

I will shortly take delivery of a limited supply of diaries from Ayrshire Branch. Please let me know if you wish to purchase one for 2022. Our oldest members will receive a free diary.



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BEST WISHES TO

Mike Kiely, Dorothy MacLeod, Alex Macmillan, Tom Rintoul and Jack Wardrope who are experiencing ill health.

LUNCHES FOR OLDER MEMBERS

Due to Covid 19, we have missed our lunches in December 2020 and March 2021. Our last meeting was a long time ago on 16 March 2020.

Please contact Chairman or Secretary to let us know how you feel about coming along to a lunch in the future. Currently it seems unlikely that our usual Christmas meals can go ahead.

Chairman Bill Culbard, Secretary Lesley Struth and committee member Mike Mill had a get together over lunch on 13 September, to address various issues they have been working separately on over the past 19 months and to organise delivery of magazines, etc. Our AGM in October 2021 will once again require to be postponed.

GOLFING NEWS

Due to Covid restrictions and other factors outwith my control, it has not been possible to arrange any golf outings this year. Next year, 2022, I hope to return our golf section to normal and have outings in May and June and again in September as we did pre-covid.

Best wishes,
Malcolm Roy
mlclmroy@aol.com

PUPPIES = LOVE AND CUDDLES



A picture of happiness as the Dodds family welcome new puppy, Teddy, a Border Terrier.

POLICE CARE UPDATE

It has been sometime since I have written to you all and hope that you are keeping in good spirits through what has been a very tough 18 months.

The Dodds' household has increased in size not in human count but a gorgeous wee puppy named Teddy. We didn't choose the name, our youngest grandson did! Stuart is not at all unhappy about calling Teddy! He's a Border Terrier and it's a big move away for us from large dogs to a small terrier but it's been great fun. Terrier



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by nature he has already rearranged the garden!

During the past 18 months Police Care has undertaken a root and branch review of the volunteer programme putting in place more commitment than spontaneous assistance. The transition is just about complete and we will be informed of changes in due course.

As far as we know at the moment our roles will be split into two which are the Volunteer Colleague role and Veteran Peer Support role. Overseeing these positions will be a Lead Volunteer role.

The Volunteer Colleague role will combine previous Ambassador and Support Roles which will allow greater engagement and will reflect side by side working.

The Peer Support role is now going through a review period with some changes to be announced at a later date.

The Lead Volunteer role will focus on mentoring and inclusion of volunteers and reporting directly to our Managers.

The Veteran Peer Support Programmes are for those officers who have retired on ill health and gone through the ill health retirement process and find that they are not receiving the support that they require.

In some cases, officers have found that the support has been non-existent and felt left on the “scrapheap” and feeling isolated and vulnerable.

Although PCUK cannot interfere with the process they are there to offer support where required.

It's all change for us but change is not a bad thing..it's just different, but please, the same message is still there.

If you or anyone that you know needs help then contact us through the website and fill out the referral form at policecare.org.uk.

Take Care

Lesley Dodds

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

Hello,

I hope this finds you well.

Just a little update from Division...

We are very much starting to feel like we are back to normal within front line policing with Covid restrictions having been nearly, fully lifted. Officers were still very busy during the pandemic, but we have seen yet another increase in demand with things starting to open



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fully. The pubs/ night clubs have now been open with few restrictions over the last few weekends and the increase in weekend calls has been notable. The public, in the main, are good-natured and happy to finally be out enjoying a night out again.

The schools are also now back after the summer break, the roads are most definitely almost back to pre-covid use levels. We have unfortunately had a number of deaths on the roads during the holidays which are always devastating.

You will probably have seen in the media the stories in relation to an increase in water deaths during the holidays too. The warm weather and people having 'staycations' this year has undoubtedly had an impact; we have unfortunately been involved in a few of those within our patch. Extremely sad indeed for all involved.

We have, this week, seen a slight increase in the Covid absence levels within Division. Nationally the figures are climbing and we are also affected internally. We are monitoring this closely and hoping that our officers, the majority of whom are fully vaccinated, manage to stay safe and well. None of us want to go back to more restrictions.

There is currently a huge focus right now internally on the planning of the COP26 for the Climate Conference at

the end of October. Officers are starting to be told what duties they will do during this event, many will have a change of shifts or location for work and all options to ensure suitable coverage to meet our demands are being considered, including 12 hours shifts in many areas. One thing is for sure, whether officers will be working at the event in Glasgow or staying in Division for business as usual policing, all will be gainfully employed and it will be a very busy 3 weeks for us. Locally, the planning team is busy putting plans in place to ensure that day to day policing is not affected and that we are managing our resources effectively. Within Forth Valley we have a number of sites that might be of interest to climate change protesters so lots of planning is taking place to ensure we are prepared for every eventuality.

I hope everyone is staying safe and managing to enjoy a bit more freedom.

Best wishes

Marie

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

Our oldest member **Leslie Cumpstey** reached the age of 94 years on 31 August.

Our second oldest member **Willie Winter** will be 94 years in December 2021.



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George Fraser will celebrate his 92nd birthday in October 2021.

Belated best wishes to **Gus Smith** who was 90 years old earlier this year.

Best wishes to **Archie Orr** who will reach 90 years of age in December 2021.

**FUNDRAISING EVENT –
HONORARY MEMBER KEITH
GRAY**



I'm going to be doing the Scottish Half Marathon on Sunday, 19 September 2021 - the first one for a couple of years! It's also my first event in my new race chair!

I'm fundraising for a local disabled kids' charity:

<https://www.theyardscotland.org.uk>

The fundraising is organised through my employer and can be found in this link -

<https://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/fundraiser-display/showROFundraiserPage?userUrl=FreeAgentFundraising2021&isTeam=true>



The event sets off from Tranent, out along the golf coast and then back to finish at Musselburgh Racecourse.

Cheers.

Keith



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(For those who don't know Keith, he is the grandson of life member Davie Findlay and he supported the Branch's Committee by taking charge of the Accounts from 2010 to 2020. Please consider supporting him in this worthwhile venture).

NEW LIFE MEMBERS FOR 2022

Alisdair Douglas, John Ferguson, Sandy Findlay, Brian Hencher, Jim Kindness, Brian Mulgrew and Hugh Paterson.

(LIFE MEMBERS DO NOT PAY AN ANNUAL FEE SO PLEASE REMEMBER TO CANCEL ANY STANDING ORDER YOU HAVE FOR PAYMENT OF ANNUAL FEE. YOU BECOME A LIFE MEMBER ON 1 JANUARY 2022 AND ARE THERAFTER EXEMPT FROM FEE).



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OBITUARIES

FAREWELL TO

JAMES "JIM" BLAIR

8 JULY 1932 – 5 AUGUST 2021

My grandfather, Jim Blair, was quietly but fiercely proud of his police career. He joined Stirling and Clackmannan Police Force on 13 August 1956 as "Constable 301"; was transferred to Central Scotland Police in 1975 upon regionalisation; ultimately retiring after 30 years of service on 30 June 1987. Never one to see the attraction of golf (apologies to all golfers!), he continued to work for some years undertaking Census work for Falkirk Council and then as a Sheriff Court Officer in Camelon.

Over the course of his career, Jim resided first in Falkirk and later at Brooke Street in Grangemouth whilst stationed at Beancross Police Office, serving here for 11 years (according to his own records) before moving to Wallacestone in 1972.

Not the kind of man to make a fuss or seek praise: there is much the members of his family did not hear about his police working life.



He was very conscious of shielding his children – Joan and Linda – from the more unpleasant details of what he may have dealt with on any particular shift.

Early in my career as a community midwife, I discovered I had covered some of the same 'beat' in Grangemouth that my Papa trod over 50 years ago. This shared experience



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provided much food for conversation and amusement as we shared opinions about which flat stairwells were the most unsavoury!





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In speaking to people who knew him after his death, I was touched to discover that Jim's police career was closely intertwined with his personal identity. Some friends of my mum's still lovingly referred to him as "PC Jimmy Blair" even long after he retired.

In the brief time since his death last month, his family have been touched by the kind messages from his former colleagues and peers who have similarly fond memories of him. To hear how he helped and guided others in their own careers comes as no surprise, despite being the kind of thing he wouldn't have spoken about himself.

We would like to extend our thanks to the members of the Retired Police Officers' Association for taking the time to read this tribute, and for your kindness and compassion following our loss.

Emily Hutcheon



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JACK MCGREGOR

1943 - 2021



Born in Lower Raydon, Suffolk on 6 January 1943, Jack Dewar McGregor was the first of five children for his mother Alice Mary and her husband James Morris McGregor. Upon returning from active duty in World War II, James and Alice moved to Essex, finally settling in the very Scottish named 'Bide a Wee' on Frinton Road, Kirby Cross where he grew up with his younger sisters Maureen, twins Jan & Val and Sheila.

On leaving school, Jack embarked upon a five year engineering apprenticeship at Paxman's in nearby Colchester; however, having

successfully completed his apprenticeship, his love of the countryside and the outdoors would strongly influence his future career choice. He chose to leave behind the steady and standard working hours indoors in favour of a career that would allow him greater variety and hopefully a greater deal of autonomy. Even meeting Gillian through their mutual love of Scottish country dancing at the local Caledonian Society, Jack wished to give up the relative stability of the work he had trained hard for and decided against settling down in the area both he and Gillian grew up in, surrounded by their family.

No, not only had he decided to change career – he wanted to move some 500 miles away to Scotland! This decision was fully supported and endorsed by his soon to be wife, and so he applied to join Perthshire and Kinross-shire Constabulary.

Joining the Police in May 1965 and following training at Tulliallan, Jack was delighted to be posted to Blairgowrie – a place he knew well from family holidays as a youngster and nearby to where his father hailed from, Ballintuim. Indeed, Jack still had relatives in the area.

On 4 September 1965, Jack was once more back South, but only to get married to Gillian in his local family church in Kirby-le-Soken – that very same evening he and his new wife were headed North once more to start their life together in Scotland.



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Once settled, the family followed. Catriona was born in Blairgowrie in 1967, Iain followed soon after in 1968 and then Stuart followed a little later in 1972. Policing seemed to suit Jack well, and Jack suited Policing, particularly in the rural communities he worked within. An opportunity to realise his ambition of running a single officer station soon became available to him and on 10 January 1973, the family moved to the Police Station in Doune which was to become the family home to this very day.

Jack took to the new role immediately and even when regionalisation came in 1975, Jack decided to stay on in Doune and join the newly formed Central Scotland Police rather than return to a posting in Tayside. Jack thrived in this role, and I think it would be fair to say, this role would be his most favourite one during his 30+ years as a Police Constable. The hours were long and varied, effectively on-call 24hrs a day and 7 days a week; however, during his time working out of Doune, he forged strong and lasting relationships with the whole community in and around Doune, making many friendships along the way too which remain to this day.

Jack would have many highlights during this time and if he were here today, he would have many a tale to tell. One thing that really stands out for us is when Monty Python came to town to film *The Quest for the Holy Grail* at Doune Castle.



As well as telling us of the sights of seeing grown men in full armour hanging around the local pub, enjoying a refreshment or two over lunch, Jack was called upon by the film crew to help one afternoon. They had an abnormal load to transport along the Main Street to the Castle for shooting later that day. Jack went to help in his tiny Police mini van. The abnormal load? It was the large wooden 'Trojan' rabbit. The thought of this giant wooden rabbit travelling slowly down the main street escorted by the tiny Police mini van with its single light flashing must have been a real sight to behold.

Alas, in 1981, Jack's time as the Chief of Police for Doune was to come to an end as CSP rationalised the number of offices they had and one of the offices earmarked for closure was Doune. Postings to Dunblane, Callander and then back to Dunblane again with a short and less happy time in between stuck in an office at HQ in Stirling



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followed. As you recall, Jack wasn't happy in the office – out and about in the community is where he wanted to be and that is fortunately where he spent the majority of his working life.

During the 80's he joined the firearms team and even formed part of a protection team watching over a local dignitary. He completed his final years in the Police at Dunblane office as a community Police officer, just as he would want it to be – back in the heart of the community, working closely with local schools and numerous community groups and played an integral part of establishing the Doune and Dunblane Motorcycle Track in Argaty.

In 1995, Jack decided to retire – a few months beyond the standard 30 years of what had been not only a loyal and dedicated service in the role of Police Constable, but 30+ years of dedicated and devoted service to the local communities he was privileged to serve amongst.

Less than a year later he was to regret retiring – the Dunblane tragedy in 1996 shook the local communities he loved so much, as well as the wider world. He didn't let retirement get in the way of getting involved though – initially as a volunteer, Jack would join the school staff as they tried to pick up the pieces from that awful tragedy. A familiar and reassuring face for pupils, parents and staff alike, Jack was able to play his small part in trying to heal the community that had been such a big part of his life. A year later, the

need for a replacement hip resulted in him being unable to continue in that role, but at least he had been able to help a little and he was thankful for that opportunity.

Away from work, Jack had many interests and hobbies. He loved his garden, fuschias especially, and his own garden was often not enough as he regularly embarked upon helping neighbours with theirs too. From a young age he loved playing cricket and was a very talented fast bowler. From playing with his dad in his local team in Kirby Cross as a youngster, he went on to represent Coupar Angus and Stirling County for many years, winning a Scottish County championship medal with the Doggies at Stirling. He also represented Central Scotland Police and regularly opened the bowling for the Scottish Police cricket team against English and Welsh forces.

In the winter there was curling where he again proved to have quite a talent, skipping many a rink for Doune Curling Club, again, successfully representing Central Scotland Police in national championships winning many medals and trophies along the way. He also loved countryside pursuits and was a keen fisherman – whilst this was mainly a hobby, he also regularly represented the Scottish Police fishing team at competitions – again, many medals and trophies provide evidence that he was in no way short of ability in this pursuit.



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Jack Dewar McGregor fell asleep for the final time on 10 July 2021, aged 78, after a short but extremely brave battle with cancer. An incredible man who was extremely proud of his whole family. A dedicated and wonderful husband to Gillian, devoted and proud father to daughter Catriona and sons, Iain and Stuart. A kind-hearted and loving grandfather to Morven, Gregor, Holly, Hamish, Lucy and Katie. He will be greatly missed by all who knew him – as many have said, one of the good guys.

Stuart McGregor

LORNA DOW

It is with regret that I advise of the death of retired Inspector Jim Dow's wife, Lorna Dow, aged 75 years, on Saturday 11 September 2021 at Forth Valley Royal Hospital, Larbert. The funeral will be private and will be held at the graveside at St Thomas Cemetery, Cambusbarron at 1 p.m. on Friday 24 September 2021.

We offer the deepest sympathy of the Branch to Jim and his family now and in the days ahead.

WALTER BAULD

Walter passed away in hospital on 6 July 2021 at the age of 71 years.

Our deepest sympathy to Walter's family and friends.

FRANK DUFFIE

Frank passed away in hospital on 13 September 2021 at the age of 90 years.

Our sincere condolences to Frank's widow, Betty, granddaughter Hannah and all the family.

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.



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