

WEEKLY BULLETIN 13

Rotary Club of Lochaber

Wednesday 17 June 2020

Welcome to the thirteenth edition of our little weekly bulletin. It does look as if we are gradually emerging from this awful virus and normal life can be seen in the (not too) far distance - albeit with restrictions on our activities - maybe even the social distancing 2 metres will be reviewed this week! Remember to try and join us for our Weekly Zoom Meeting at 1pm today. See you there!

... and we start with an update from President-Elect Richard

First of all, can I wish you all a very happy birthday? The 70th anniversary of the foundation of Lochaber Rotary, necessarily passed largely unmarked but let me recognise the years of community activity and service which that milestone represents.



Also, can I thank the club members for electing me as President for 2020-21. I'll do my best to fulfil the role as well as I can, supported by a very experienced team. It will obviously be a strange year, but as well as reviving whatever activities we are allowed to continue, we will also be looking for new activities and projects to keep the club lively, vibrant and active.

Thanks to everyone who has been sharing the zoom meetings. The technology is really very easy, so if you haven't tried it yet, give it a go. We're meeting at 1.00p.m. on days when we would have a lunchtime meeting, and at 6.00p.m. on the first Wednesday for a catch-up and then council business.

From a personal point of view, I have never been so busy. That may be surprising from a minister when church buildings are largely off limits; schools, hospitals and care homes are closed to visitors; and home visits are impossible. However, the combination of preparing weekly online services, sending out sheets for people to use on Sundays on their

own, constant zoom meetings, telephone visiting and forward planning more than fill my time. Video editing was never part of my training, but it has certainly become part of my job. I think I'm at thirty videos and counting since lockdown.

One of my more unusual jobs has been finding a way to provide bereavement care in lockdown. My approach has been to make arrangements by telephone, email or zoom, then to video a service, with no-one present but me, at the front of the church. That goes online at the same time as the graveside service happens, with largely the same content. So far, my five lockdown services of that type have generated well over 2000 views, which would equate to an overflowing church for every service, so hopefully that's working fairly well.

I've enjoyed taking part in the Zoom training provided by the District, and am starting to get to grips with the quirks of the wider Rotary organisation. I'll have a few more ideas for our own club to share once the official handover happens. Meanwhile, bright ideas for activities that can happen before restrictions are fully released will be gratefully received.

..... last week's Lunchtime Zoom meeting was chaired and hosted by President-Elect Richard and attended by 12 members. A wide range of topics included:-

- The District prep courses for incoming conveners were well attended and there was a good exchange of ideas. Many clubs have dropped the word "club" from their name on the basis that it is more inclusive. Thus, we would become "Lochaber Rotary"
- Our 2020-21 handbook will be updated and published online - making it easier for updating and modifying. Members can then print off their own copy.
- Partners' Lunch will be held on 10 February
- Sundial Garden - We will continue to tidy and maintain the sundial feature on the Parade Green. If you can spare an hour or so please get in touch with Iain Johnston
- Jenny will deliver her "Job Talk" online sometime in July - date to be confirmed.
- Club Assembly will take place on 27 June - again, it will be a virtual event held online.

And, while John Hutchison and Richard were discussing the Gaelic Choir, Past-President Angus reminded us that 70 years ago he was a member of Knightswood Junior Gaelic Choir !!!



FACE COVERINGS

Jenny has kindly offered to supply face masks to those of us who require them when away from home and in shops or other confined or enclosed environments. She makes them from cotton material "really fab fabrics" and in different sizes. If you or your family need some please contact her at stevejenny88@yahoo.com, If you wish you can make a donation in lieu of the costs to the SSPSA. **Thank You Jenny !**

....you may have read that last Friday was the anniversary of the 51st Highland Division surrender at St Valery just days after the successful mass-evacuations at Dunkirk. Rotarian Ian Michie, a former member of this Club, was one of those ...

80 years ago today (last Friday) my late Father in Law, John Fraser (Ian) Michie, alongwith thousands of other 51st Cameron Highlanders, surrendered to the German Army at St Valery in France. He spent 4 years in a PoW camp in Silesia in Poland before being liberated by the US Army. As a fluent German speaker he became the official camp translator.



The Camp Commandant, an elderly and slightly disabled man "only doing his duty" was compassionate, good and fair (as far as he was allowed to be) and, at the request of the prisoners, Ian made strong representations to the liberating US Army that the commandant and his staff be treated fairly.

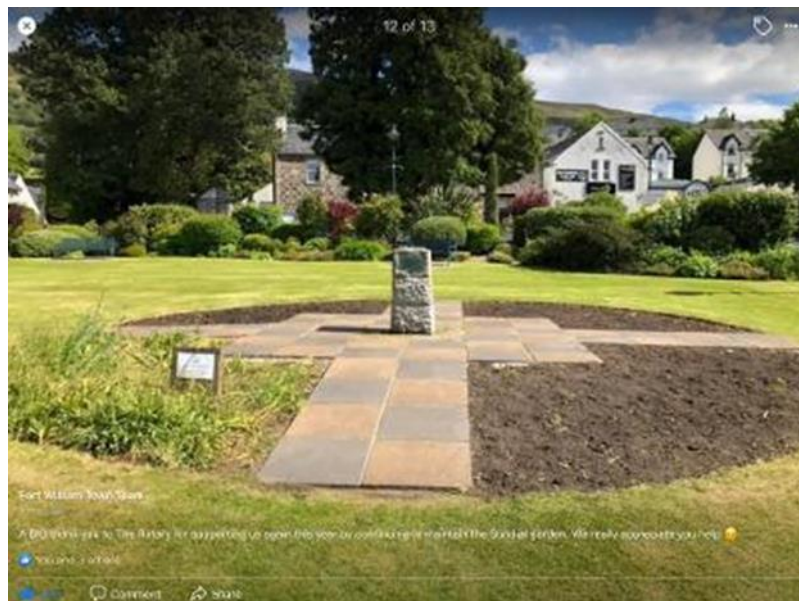
Ian almost never spoke about the war but we did get the above story from him. He came home with a great love for the ordinary German people. His attitude was that we're all human beings. It's the politicians that cause wars.

Ian was a long serving and committed Rotarian. He was president of Inverness Rotary in 1976. When he and his wife Cathy moved to Fort William in 1999 he transferred to our Club and, in the year 2000, as our "newest" member he had the honour of cutting the Club's anniversary cake at our 50th birthday !

Photo at the summit of Glen Sannox in Arran c1979

.... **Rotary in action**.... thanks to Past-Presidents Mike and Iain and their team for clearing, weeding and tidying the sundial plot on the Parade Green. Well done folks !

The Fort William Town team recorded its appreciation on its Facebook Page - ... Sundial on the Parade Green.... ... "The sundial has been cleared by the Rotary so many thanks to them for their hard work"



**Fort William Town Team**

1 hr · 🌐

It's been a little while since we have been able to post and we all hope you have been enjoying your own gardens while you have been at home.

If you have walked along the High Street recently you may have noticed our planters looking a little sad due to us all being in lockdown.

Well this afternoon some of the committee (socially distancing) used their daily exercise to do a little weeding and tidying. The planters are looking so much better now and the War Memorial has had a good tidy up too. The Sundial has also been cleared by the Rotary so many thanks to them for their hard work.

Another snippet of news, we received a lovely donation recently from a lady in Canada 🇨🇦. Lorraine made the gesture in remembrance of Pam Matheson. We have chosen to use the money to plant Heathers in the window boxes of the hub so they look lovely all year round. We hope you all like them!

That's all for now but keep an eye on the High Street while you are out and about. You never know we may be able to do a little more soon to bring some colour to the town 😊

#fortwilliamtownteam #myoutdoorcapital #communityspirit



Mark Lintell and 66 others

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