

WEEKLY BULLETIN 46

Lochaber Rotary

Wednesday 17 February 2021

Welcome to the 46th edition of our little newsletter, the first edition of which was launched on 25 March 2020 with an anticipated life span of 12 weeks! Well, we can now see a glimmer of daylight at the end of this dark tunnel with the number of deaths and hospital admissions falling day by day, and the uptake of the vaccine rollout expected to have a positive impact in the near future.

"My love affair with the Hills" by George Bruce

... and another little prompt about George's recently published book. At £8.95 (£6.50 to Rotary colleagues) - it's a terrific buy and a good easy read. You can dip in and out as many of the chapters are "stand alone" stories. Chapter 9 "The Ice Maidens" is a lovely story with a happy ending! The photo below was kindly offered to Rotary by journalist Iain Ferguson to help publicise the book!



Last week's meeting: There was a good attendance at last week's lunchtime meeting.

Formal business included the need to obtain storage space for Rotary materials including our stock of gifts for Santa's Grotto at the Festival;

General discussion: Input from members covered a wide range of topics and interests.

Secretary John: all quiet in Onich, logging for the fire, getting his jab today; George

has been interviewed by journalist Iain Ferguson about the launch of his book which will be featured in, among other publications, the next edition of Lochaber Life; Ken also getting his job later today; doing disability access audits; visiting 98-year old uncle in Ballachulish Care Home; Simon has installed new radiators and is upgrading his en-suites; Sheana has been busy preparing to move house; and reminded us of the music masterclasses accessible online; Mike busy at work and getting car serviced (no mean feat); Jenny still logging up the miles in the 'Tough Cookie' challenge; John H has had his job, busy building a path in his wooded garden, following the rugby, cycling again; keeping an eye on Charlie but not allowed to visit;

Malcolm has been busy grandchild minding and getting new windows installed in holiday cottage; David M busy at work which involved a site visit to Ardgour; following the Celtic Connections festival online and booking for this month's virtual annual mountain festival; Paul has had several activities on the go including a home schooling project on 'The Rainforest'; watching progress at the new Corpach marina; rescuing and repurposing discarded wood from old wharfs at the canal; preparing seed potatoes for the gardening season; Ron has been enjoying this good spell of weather, cycling and walking; following the rugby from both the Scottish and Welsh perspectives; preparing firewood for next winter; Richard very busy, also followed rugby tournament; can't publicise details of funeral services due to lockdown restrictions; officiated at a service in Skye.

!!!Assistant Governor Bob Thomlinson was the "Hon Man" in the Sunday Post!!!

Many of us will remember the 'Hon Man' in the Scottish Sunday Post - the weekly newspaper which at one time held the distinction of having the most saturated coverage of any newspaper in the world - and was, maybe still is, a must read for every household in Scotland. The "Hon Man" wrote a very popular weekly column about how he could have a 'Holiday On Nothing'!!!



Members will recall Bob's online visit to one or two of our meetings last year during which he told us that he was friendly with former Rotarian Gavin Reid. Following up on this I bumped into Gavin and Morag recently during their daily walk on the Cow Hill

Circular above Upper Achintore and told them of AG Bob's visit. Gavin told me that Bob is a retired journalist and added, excitingly "Did you know that Bob was the "Hon Man" in the Sunday Post?" What next!!!!

... and a message from our northernmost member the Reverend Anthony Jones

BEYOND THE WALL

A Message from 'Lock-Down', February, 2021

Thinking of the ongoing 'on and off' 'lock down' reminds me of the time I visited Berlin as a theology student at Cambridge. We went as a representative party of students primarily to attend the annual Kirchentag (Churches festival). This is a huge Christian celebration with music, events and gathering together of churches from throughout Germany and the world.

There is a real carnival atmosphere as the festival lights up the city. Back in 1989 however, we were still living with the then dying embers of the cold war. The city was divided West and East by the infamous 'wall'. During our time in the city, we had the then unique opportunity of going through 'Check Point Charlie' into the then East Berlin to visit a Lutheran theological seminary. We took with us a variety of gifts including oranges and newspapers. Unbelievably, such western luxuries as these were frowned upon. Now one wonders what all the fuss was about! Speaking to the local folk in East Berlin at the time there were mixed feelings about uniting with the West. Many felt they were happy with the way things were. There was no way they believed that the 'wall' would ever come down. Just before we left West Berlin, there was also international protest at the situation in China. A huge street march took place in the city against the terrible massacre in Tian Men Square.

A matter of months later and history was changed. The Iron Curtain largely broke and amazingly and unbelievably to many, the Berlin Wall fell. We must give thanks for new found freedom wherever it happens in the world. As long as justice and human rights prevail. We have never had to experience such division in our life times as this. We have not had physical walls or doors to encarcerate our liberty. We have however had the terrible blight of the 'covid 19 virus' and the national stay at home 'lock down'. Often we have been confined to our houses and computers. We have not had the pleasure of visiting relatives near and far. Churches have only been able to open for limited restricted services. Places of worship have for the large part had to remain closed. Unable to meet physically as a Rotary Club. Masking up, socially distancing.

All these restrictions though hard to live with are however meant only for a limited time and, above all to keep us safe. At least we can read our newspapers, eat oranges (!)

and socially engage on 'zoom' or 'skype'. Worldwide business, politics and commerce can still continue via the internet. At times when we are given to think the walls of 'lock down' will never come down - think of Berlin! Nobody in the East believed that the wall would come down.

There is much to give us all hope as the scientists work hard and the vaccines are rolled out....

and a very amusing story guaranteed to lift your spirits - spotted by John Hutchison - thank you John

Man caught driving with 'practically zero-visibility' in Dundee

13 minutes ago



POLICE SCOTLAND

Police said they "could not believe" the man had attempted to drive the car

A man has been charged with dangerous driving after being stopped in Dundee with snow covering almost his entire front and rear windscreens.

Police said it was "about the most extreme example of lack of preparation" that they had ever seen.

Officers said the man had been driving with "practically zero-visibility" when stopped.

The incident took place in the Dunsinane Industrial Estate on Thursday.