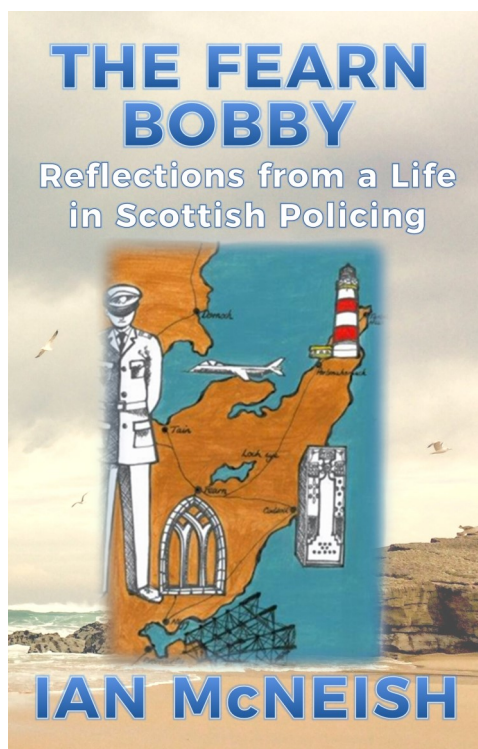


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The Fearn Bobby

Reflections from a Life in Scottish Policing

'It's all about the community', the words of Kenneth Ross, Chief Constable of Ross and Sutherland Constabulary, guided Ian McNeish through thirty years of police service. They were true then, back in 1974, and they are true now.

Ian held a police warrant card for three decades, serving communities across Scotland. In that time, his work saw him moving from the northerly constabulary where he policed the rural Hill of Fearn to the social challenges that presented themselves amongst the urban landscape of Central Scotland.

From his formative years in post-War Scotland through to his application to join the police service, Ian has led a rich and varied professional life that ranged from working in iron foundries to building electronic parts for the Kestrel Jump Jet and legendary Concorde aircraft. But once he had joined the police service, he found himself faced with a whole new range of life-changing experiences – some of them surprising, a few even shocking, but all of them memorable.

Leading the reader through his involvement in front line situations, Ian explains the effects of anti-social behaviour and attending criminal court appearances, in addition to dealing with death and the responsibilities of informing those left behind. He considers topics such as ethics, public interest, police and firearms, drug issues, causes of crime, and a lot more besides.

In a career where his duties ranged from policing national strikes to providing comfort and support through personal tragedies, Ian advanced through the ranks and saw first-hand the vital importance of effective management and good teamwork. Whether as the 'Fearn Bobby', policing a remote countryside outpost, as a seconded officer working for the Chief Executive of a Regional Council, or as a Local Unit Commander in Bo'ness, Ian always recognised the importance of putting the community first. Comparing today's policing techniques with his own professional experiences and examining both the good times and the harrowing pitfalls of the job, his account of life in the force is heartfelt, entertaining, and always completely honest.

Author Biography

Ian McNeish was born in 1946, in Falkirk. His formative years in the post-War period were spent in Bonnybridge, then Balloch. In 1974 Ian joined Ross and Sutherland Constabulary, and in seven months was trusted to police in a single station officer role within a rural area of Scotland with a population of six thousand people. In 1978 Ian transferred to Central Scotland Police, where he rose to the rank of Chief Inspector before retiring in 2004.

On leaving the police service, Ian set up his own company advising small businesses on policy issues as well as carrying out investigations on employment disputes and preparing reports. Ian has also chaired several internal discipline hearings and produced written judgements. He also was Chairman of the board of Signpost Recovery, and for about eighteen months managed the project.

His spare time is taken up with mountaineering, for a time being in Mountain Rescue. He has found time to ascend Mont Blanc and climb all the Munros. He also cycles and has some long distance treks to his name, including cycling from Edinburgh to Paris. He plays competitive curling and also coaches beginners. He did play golf, but cut back on that as he could not spare the time. He has a family: three boys and six grandchildren. When he is not employed with any or all of the above, he writes.

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