

Chairmans Report

Covering the period from 27th March 2019 24th March 2021

A rather different period for Lismore community 2019 was as normal and 2020/21 was not!

During March 2019 to Feb 2020, We enabled our clients to attend Hospital and doctors' appointments on Lismore and both Oban and Glasgow. Dental, Ophthalmic and Hair appointments, café visits, some social calls and of course regular shopping and delivery of messages.

Once we went into the first Lock down our service pretty much ground to a halt, on account of our clients being the most vulnerable to Covid the shop being closed and nothing going on on Lismore.

In 2019 We continued to have a "Get-together" every second month where the "Granny Bus" users, Trustees and some drivers met at the Heritage Centre Café in the summer months and in the wee manse church room in the winter to enjoy tea and scones. This gave the users the opportunity to meet socially, have a chat, and we could review the service and discuss any improvements or changes we wished to make. We also took our clients to The Trust's lunch club and activities at the school house.

Thanks to Ron Livingstone at Point House in January 2020 we had another very successful trip down memory lane, listening and singing along to some of his huge collection of 78's, on his antique wind up gramophone whilst feasting on a magnificent spread of cakes.

We held another fund-raising car wash event on August 4th with water supplied by Roger from the stream at Sailean, it was a lovely sunny day we washed lots of cars and we raised £122 Freda Dot and Duncan and other members of the board provided delicious tea and cakes for the car owners.

Near Christmas we had a Holly Lunch for 34 guests, with the help of the children of Lismore Primary School and would like to thank Catherine Davies and the school staff for putting on such a good show lots of lovely songs from around the world. This raised £240.

So, what else did we do since 2019?

We welcomed Carol onto the Board, Freda Retired after many many years as secretary we extended our heartfelt thanks for such long dedicated service and gave her a gift from all users and trustees of wormery.

Our soon to be 7-year-old Vehicle continues to be serviced by Gunn's garage. The decision was taken not to effect the expensive work on the automatic gearbox to make manual engage and it has been operating reliably for the whole period. It is only really be needed if there was a repeat of the 2018 beast from the east and snowy icy roads.

Duncan and I continue to do the monthly vehicle checks and keep the vehicle clean.

We very sadly marked the passing of 4 very special and much-loved regulars during this period, Roma Black in June 2019, Mary McFadyen in September 2019, Marjorie MacDonald in January 2020 just before her 100th birthday, and Margaret MacDonald in December last year. A tremendous loss to their families and to us associated with the Granny bus, dear friends sorely missed.

Once the pandemic put us in lock down in March 2020 with no gatherings allowed, we had a total of 20 trips till today starting in August when much needed haircuts, ophthalmic appointments and a need to see if the world was still spinning. We have only been allowed one passenger per trip wearing masks and using copious amounts of hand sanitiser. Just a few to the shop once Laura opened it up again the rest to long awaited hospital appointments and vaccination clinic in the hall. Many of the hospital appointments were via Point ferry and I would like to thank the volunteers who used their own cars for this purpose.

Now to the Thank-you's

I would like to say a big thank you to so many, but especially to all the lovely people who gave their time to volunteer as drivers of the Granny Bus, going at times a little further than required: Using your own cars in times of need, carrying parcels, unloading shopping, searching for Glasses, sticks and hearing aids. Without you all, this valuable service would be sorely missed. I hope we can call on you again once we have a chance to get back to operation in a slightly more normal fashion.

So here we go Thank you, Carol and Julian, Dot, Caroline Bath, Clare Haworth, Iain Barclay, Laura Gloag, Stuart Ross, Mary MacDougall, Duncan and Freda, Katy, Christine Green, Rosemary Barry, Ian McKinnon, Maureen Mitchel, and Roger

Thank you, our users, for the appreciation patience and generosity you share.

Thank you also to those in the community who support us with both encouragement and financial contributions. And thank you to the carers who have often got our clients ready for transport, or alerted us to the need for transport.

I hope the rest of 2021 will see more social interaction and chances for social life, I am looking forward to get together in the café again.