

**Mrs Alice McKenzie, SI Kirkintilloch, Award of Paul Harris Fellowship, May 2021**

**Text from SI Kirkintilloch member Melanie Brickley**

At 92, Alice McKenzie is the pride of East Dunbartonshire.

She was recently awarded Rotary International's highest honour for her exceptional humanitarian work. The Paul Harris Fellowship is given to a non-Rotarian (or Rotarian) who has made an outstanding contribution to the community. The 'Service Above Self' award was presented to the retired librarian in her garden in Lenzie by members of Kirkintilloch Rotary Club.

Alice was a dedicated Commissioner for the Girl Guides, she founded the Talking Newspaper service in the area, introduced mobile libraries locally and reading sessions in care homes. She chaired Strathkelvin Arts Association, bringing youth orchestras from Europe and beyond to the town. In 1974 she was a founder member of Soroptimist International of Kirkintilloch & District in which she still retains a lively interest and has been made an Honorary member of the Region. She has a shelf in the Glasgow Women's Library in her name.

Alice was awarded an MBE for her work with Save the Children. In the late eighties she took books to universities in war-torn Romania, she fostered five young people who in turn adopted her as their Scottish Granny. In recent years she has been at the forefront of supporting Syrian families who fled to Scotland from Syria. This led to the formation of the Jasmine and Thistle Group which helps to bring families from both communities together. Two young women from the group recently took part in a virtual Conference from the United Nations in New York.

Officers from Rotary International told Alice that their members had been unanimous in agreeing that she should receive the honour.