

BLACKHALL BULLETIN

September 2023

PRODUCED BY BLACKHALL ST. COLUMBA'S CHURCH FOR THE COMMUNITY

No. 172



On 3rd August, a group from Blackhall St Columba's Church and friends made a second pilgrimage to Inchcolm Island and Abbey. Our first trip was in October 2012 when we had a special service to mark the 1500th anniversary of the birth of St Columba.

The Abbey has been a site of Christian worship for many centuries and Historic Scotland has many informative panels about the history of both the island and the Abbey. They tell us that the dramatically sited abbey complex, Scotland's best-preserved group of monastic buildings, dominates the island.

Though Inchcolm comes from the Scottish Gaelic *Innis Cholium*, meaning Columba's Island, there is little evidence for Columba's presence on the island an entry on Wikipedia does state about the island that *"It was supposedly visited by St Columba in 567, and was named after him in the 12th century and it may have served the monks of the Columban family as an Iona of the east."*

OUR SECOND PILGRIMAGE TO INCHCOLM ABBEY

On a day of much better weather than forecast, we had a pleasant sail on the *Maid of the Forth*, under the Rail Bridge to the island of Inchcolm.



Once safely disembarked, we made our way to the Abbey and then to the refectory where we held a short service of worship and communion. Rev Cook reflected on the atmosphere of worshiping at a site which can trace its Christian heritage so far back and where Augustinian Monks had also worshiped nearly 1000 years ago.



The sea air made our picnic lunches all the more enjoyable, and then we were ready to go exploring the island to find out about its more recent history in both World Wars. We then enjoyed another pleasant cruise back to South Queensferry and admired the amazing engineering over the centuries of three Forth Bridges. We look forward to repeating this trip in the future.

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Finding Joy

As those of you who come to church or join us online each Sunday will know, I have been away on holiday recently. It was wonderful. My wife and I managed a week long break in Costa Adeje, in Tenerife. The complex where we were staying was superb, and, as we had booked to be all inclusive, we had nothing to do except enjoy the sunshine by the pool. The fact that someone else was doing all the cooking made it all the more enjoyable.



A poolside is a wonderful place to people watch. When I was in training for the ministry, I used to work as a lifeguard for Renfrewshire Council and so I know that you don't have to travel to foreign climes to understand what I am talking about. I remember on one occasion, when I was at work, I saw a particular parent come to the poolside with their child. It looked like they had matching swimsuits, towels etc. You will understand that, when small children get to a pool, they want to get straight into the water to start playing and enjoying the moment. However, this child was made to wait while the parent talked on their phone, presumably to a friend. Although I couldn't hear the conversation, I could imagine the friend being told that parent had taken the child to the pool for some fun, as loving parents do. After the phone call came a photoshoot. There were several pictures taken of the child on the towel, beautifully framed with the pool in the background. Then came the selfies, with parent and child smiling taken from various angles to show different backgrounds. It was increasingly clear that the child wanted to get into the pool but the parent said to wait and to be patient whilst they took more pictures of the child – in front of the pool, dipping their foot into the water and then pulling it back out again. They smiled on cue, as if they had done all of this a thousand times before. They probably had. Eventually, once the child was in the water, there were the inevitable calls from the child to 'look at me'. However, by this time the parent was on the phone again, possibly sharing on social media what a wonderful time they were having! The child then asked for the parent to come in and play with them. Despite repeated pleas, they went unanswered. Although a close eye was kept on the child, the parent never put the phone down. After 10 or 15 minutes, they both left to go to do something else.

What strikes me about this scene is the falsehood that lies behind it. What could have been a lovely, fun time for both the parent and the child was spoiled by the desire to create an illusion of a good time. We can imagine the photos taken being perfectly edited and posted on social media with a caption like 'fun pool time with my kid'. Elsewhere there will have been a parent at home with their child, or children, the house a mess because of their game/s. That parent will have been tired because they have spent the day cooking, cleaning, caring for and playing with their child/children. That parent will have seen the other parent's photos and may have compared themselves to the 'perfect' parent at the pool. As we, as humans often doubt ourselves, that parent might have thought "I'm not good enough...", "I don't look like that parent at the pool...", "I don't have money to buy expensive swimsuits like that and I don't have time to make memories like that". That parent at home may well have believed that the other parent was better than them. They might have felt a failure, never knowing that, in their child's eyes, how they had spent their day at home was far better than what the 'perfect parent' at the pool did. One parent failed to find the joy in the moment because they were preoccupied with appearances and the other failed to find the joy because they felt inadequate. What a shame! Both parents were in a position to enjoy time with their child and yet they didn't.

Did you know that the Bible actually speaks to us about this kind of situation? We are told to live in the moment and to enjoy our lives as they are without trying to create something that isn't real. The Old Testament author of Ecclesiastes wrote at length about this saying this to us as: *"The love of money will not be satisfied with money, nor the lover of wealth with gain. This also is vanity."* (Ecclesiastes 5:10) He went on to write: *"This is what I have seen to be good: it is fitting to eat and drink and find enjoyment in all the toil with which one toils under the sun the few days of the life God gives us, for this is our lot. Likewise, all to whom God gives wealth and possessions and whom he enables to enjoy them and to accept their lot and find enjoyment in their toil – this is the gift of God. For they will scarcely brood over the days of their lives because God keeps them occupied with the joy of their hearts."* (Ecclesiastes 5:18-20)

We need to accept each moment of our lives for what it is and try to find what enjoyment we can in that moment. Too many people spend their time wishing their lives away. Of course, it is good to have a record of what we do and to look forward to things like holidays, retirement and other big life events but we should be careful about focussing so much on these things that we forget about or don't see the fun and joy that can be had in each moment now. This applies as well to looking at other people's lives and thanking that their lives are better, easier or more joyful than our own. Remember, what we see on social media is not always real. Often it is staged and filtered and fake. Read happy, joyful times are recorded in our memories, not on Facebook and the like. Sometimes we see wonderful vacation photos or beautiful homes, freshly styled hair and picture perfect families but the photo has captured just ONE styled moment. It may have been the best moment of a whole day that was probably otherwise spent much like ours, working, cleaning and clearing up the mess... unless we were taking the time to enjoy the day and each other and to find the joy!

God bless all
Fergus

CYRENIANS FARM VEG BAGS

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We have partnered with long established Margiottas and other local shops around Edinburgh to serve as collection points, making it easy to find a location that works for you. We also offer a home delivery service.

For more information or to sign up, simply scan the QR code or follow the link below 😊

Thank you for your support and we look forward to connecting with you!

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The graphic features a green header with the 'cyrenians FARM' logo and the text 'Fresh, organic fruit and veg bags available to order.' Below this, a purple section contains a list of bag options with prices, a QR code, and descriptive text. At the bottom, three images show pumpkins, apples on a tree, and several filled veg bags. The website 'www.cyrenians.scot' and charity registration number 'SC011052' are also included.

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Dear all, I hope everyone has had an enjoyable summer and has managed to get some sort of break or holiday that has left them refreshed and ready for the start of school, university, work or whatever your own circumstances bring you to. Within the Church many of our organisations, that have a summer break, are starting up again and you should take a look at our website. There really is something for everyone. Below are a number of the services that will be coming up throughout September, October and November. God bless all, Fergus

SEPTEMBER

3 rd	10.30am	Morning worship
10 th	10.30am	Morning worship
17 th	10.30am	Morning worship
23 rd	see website	Harvest Ceilidh
24 th	10.30am	Morning worship

OCTOBER

1 st	10.30am	Morning worship & Communion
1 st	3.00pm	Afternoon communion
8 th	10.30am	HARVEST
15 th	10.30am	Morning worship
22 nd	10.30am	Morning worship
29 th	10.30am	Morning worship

NOVEMBER

5 th	10.30am	Morning worship
11 th	10.45am	Remembrance Day
12 th	10.30am	Remembrance Sunday
19 th	10.30am	Morning worship
26 th	10.30am	Christ the King Sunday

The Prayer Circle



Do you know someone in need of prayer? A friend or relative perhaps who is unwell, grieving or find themselves in a position where they don't know where to turn?

Blackhall St Columba's Prayer Circle is a small team of people who will pray frequently for anyone in need of help in complete confidence. We are also happy to accept prayer requests giving thanks for a happy event or asking for God's help with any forthcoming personal endeavour or challenge.

Please contact Prayer Circle secretary Betty Watt at lzbthwatt@yahoo.co.uk or Fergus Cook at Fcook@churchofscotland.org.uk or 0131 466 7503. Or, alternatively, please put your request slip into the locked box on the table in the church vestibule.



HARVEST FESTIVAL SERVICE



The Christian Calendar has always liked to thank people for their contributions to Communal Life. Harvest Festivals are held to thank farmers, crofters and anyone who supplies produce to feed the community. In coastal areas that includes the fishermen who also supply a valuable healthy addition to our diet

We decorate the church for this Festival with fruit, vegetables and flowers which are not wasted but are passed on to people who will enjoy them like Fresh Start who run cookery classes to help people to cook tasty meals, well and cheaply. The flowers go to people who need a wee lift to cheer them up.

If you feel able to contribute anything from your garden or allotment, please feel free to do so. They would be most welcome. We decorate the church on the Saturday morning (7th October) the day before the Service and would welcome any contributions then. If you would like to help to arrange them, you are very welcome to join us. We are also around on the Friday afternoon in the Church's small hall if that's more convenient for you.

Alison Hewat (rajahewat1@btinternet.com) or contact the Church Secretary for further details)

PEACE Services

The 2022/23 session has drawn to a close and we would like to thank everyone who helped to make it a success; speakers, soup makers/servers, pianists, drivers and of course, all the attendees.

From the contributions we received we have been able to donate £200.00 to Social Bite and £200.00 to HopScotch (the Watch Committee charity for 2023)

We are always looking for additional drivers (you don't need to commit to every fortnight) and soup makers/servers (you would only be required twice a year) so if you think you can help, please contact Ruth Laidlaw (ruthlaidlaw@gmail.com) or 07513 967974.

The 2023/24 session will begin, as before, at 12 noon on 13th September 2023 and everyone's very welcome.

Shona Cook
Ruth Laidlaw

TRUSTEES NEEDED FOR P.E.P.

Pilton Equalities Project (PEP) is seeking trustees to join its Board. PEP is a charity supporting the elderly and vulnerable in North Edinburgh and the Board has overall responsibility and accountability for the project. It meets once a month for 2 hours via Zoom. If you are interested in finding out more about the charity or becoming a trustee, please contact Diane Palmer on 315 4466 or at Diane.Palmer@pepscot.org





The Cross of Monte Cassino

Recently, on Saturday 20th May 2023, Blackhall St Columba's Parish Church, in the North West of Edinburgh, marked its ongoing connection to the Battle of Monte Cassino and the Italian Campaign of 1943-45 with a Service of Remembrance and Dedication of Memorial Bench.

The connection between the Church and the Italian Campaign goes back to 1952 when the then minister, the Rev R.W. Watson Mathewson, brought with him to Blackhall St Columba's the Cross of Monte Cassino. The cross, which is of a simple wooden construction, was made for Mr Mathewson by a member of the Pioneer Corps when he was the Army Chaplain at Monte Cassino.

This connection was rekindled when, through an article in *Life & Work* about the refurbishment of the sanctuary at Blackhall St Columba's, the Monte Cassino Society became aware of the existence of the cross for the first time. The current minister at Blackhall St Columba's, the Rev Fergus Cook, made contact with the Society's secretary, Lesley Teasdale and shared the story with the society. During these conversations, it became apparent that the Society was unable to meet for its usual Service of Remembrance owing to the pandemic lockdown. Mr Cook offered to conduct a Service of Remembrance which could be livestreamed thus allowing for the members of the Society to mark the capture of Monte Cassino as they normally would have done.

This year was the third year that the Church has held special Service of Remembrance and the Monte Cassino Society generously donated a Memorial Bench to be placed by the Blackhall War Memorial in the grounds of the church.

The service, which included the dedication of the bench, was attended by numerous people including the Canadian Consul, the New Zealand Consul Scotland, the Consul General of the Republic of Poland and the Indian Consul General who all laid wreaths. In addition, there were further wreaths and official representatives from the Cameron Highlanders, the Seaforth Highlanders, the Cameronians (Scottish Rifles), the Royal British Legion Scotland, the Monte Cassino Society and the Kirk Session and congregation of Blackhall St Columba's. Many others also attended, some representing other organisations, but many simply to remember relatives who served, fought and, in some cases, gave their lives during the battles.

The Rev Cook said, 'It can be seen from the varied international representatives that gathered along with people from all backgrounds that the struggle against tyranny, oppression and domination is the responsibility of all. Our reading during the service, from the prophet Micah, speaks of a time when *nation shall not lift up sword against nation; neither shall they learn war any more*. At this time of renewed conflict in Europe, it is particularly important that all come together not only to remember and honour those who have fought before but to recognise the futility and cruelty of war and to work together to prevent, mitigate and stop further conflict.'

Rev R. J. Watson Mathewson came to Blackhall St Columba's in 1952 and he brought with him the Monte Cassino cross. The following is from an article written about it:
'Mr Mathewson became an army chaplain in 1942, serving first with a Young Soldiers Battalion at home and then with the 2nd Battalion of the Scots Guards in Italy and Palestine. During the war the Rev Watson Mathewson had served in a Corps Reinforcement Unit, which was established behind the lines, at the battle for Monte Cassino. As part of the efforts to 'build' a church there a member of the Pioneer Corps had made a simple wooden cross. Mr Mathewson wrote later "when I first saw it, I was disappointed; the crossbar seemed too long and out of proportion. Then I realised that this was the only kind of cross the Pioneers were accustomed to make; one to set over the grave of a soldier, the crossbar had to be long enough to accommodate his name, rank and number and unit. So, I left it as it was, a perfect symbol of the comprehensive love of God in Christ for the individual..."'

This cross has been in the sanctuary and part of the worship of Blackhall St Columba's ever since.

*** SAVE THE DATE FRIDAY 22ND DECEMBER 2023 ***

I know it seems quite early to be mentioning Christmas BUT this year something very special is happening at Blackhall St Columba's Church and we can't contain our excitement. As soon as you hear about it, I am sure you will want to share in the excitement too!

Our doors will be open wide to welcome everyone, young and not so young, to come into the church at the heart of the Blackhall community and experience for themselves our "Follow the Star Nativity Trail".

You will not want to miss this event and so get your diaries out and note down the details now.

What? - FOLLOW THE STAR NATIVITY TRAIL
Where? - BLACKHALL ST COLUMBA'S CHURCH
When? - FRIDAY 22nd DECEMBER 2023

On the last Friday before Christmas (the day school closes for the holidays), throughout the day and early evening, we will spread the Good News by hosting this interactive exploration of the Greatest Story Ever Told using the church itself and all its halls and buildings. We want members of our community to join us in finding out the true meaning of Christmas in a novel and exciting way as they hear the Angel Gabriel's message and go on their own journey to follow the star finding the shepherds, King Herod and some wise women on their way until they finally reach the stable and discover the most wonderful gift we have ever been given. As if that wasn't enough, we are also offering a Christmas Nativity Escape Room for the older children who come along. In addition, there will be lots of Christmas crafts, some seasonal musical entertainment and, of course, plenty of Christmas treats and refreshments.

There couldn't be a better way to start your Christmas celebrations!

We look forward to seeing many of you there.
Shona Cook



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WATCH COMMITTEE BLACKHALL ST COLUMBA'S CHURCH

This Year the WATCH committee, with the agreement of the Kirk Session, are raising funds for HopScotch children's charity.

HopScotch is based in Silverknowes and provide respite care and holidays for young carers and children who, because of family commitments are unable to have holidays. They are referred to HopScotch either by the schools or social work department.

The children spend up to a week in Ardvullin, by Fort William. This is an estate where they can learn to interact with a variety of different animals - cows, goats, horses etc., try out water sports and just hang out with other children with similar backgrounds. A complete change of environment for these young people.

Our fundraising started with the coin collection on Sunday morning in church, from beginning of July to end of August, to be followed by a Coffee Morning with craft and baking stalls on 7th October from 10 – 12 noon (see below) and the annual Christmas Fair on 2nd December from 2pm.

A stall holders meeting for Christmas Fair in will be held in the small hall at on 22nd September from 7 – 8pm. Anyone interested in helping at the Fair please feel free to come along to this meeting or contact Lynn Bunney or Rosi Watt via the Church Office.

The WATCH Committee very much appreciates the support of the church and local community and we look forward to your continued support.

Lynn Bunney WATCH Committee.

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WATCH Committee
CRAFT COFFEE MORNING

Saturday 7th October
10am -12noon
St Columba's Church Hall

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flowers & plants*

*Wonderful
Hand sewn &
knitted goods*

Greeting Cards!

*Coffee, Tea
& Home Baking*

*All Proceeds to HopScotch children's charity
- do come along for a fun morning!*

And... it's never too early to think about Christmas - honest!
St Columba's Christmas Fair - Sat 2nd December @ 2pm
put it in your diary! Proceeds to HopScotch children's charity



What an amazing summer, days of endless sunshine followed by mixed weather, wind, rain and sun all in one day. There has been a lot to stimulate painting outdoors for our Art Club members.

The Art Club year ended in May with our AGM. New Committees come and go and this year we say goodbye to Myke Grantham who has stepped down from his duties after seven years as treasurer and our 'leader' over the last year. Myke was presented with plants for the garden. The Peoples' prize of a quaich for the most popular painting at the annual exhibition was awarded to Kerry Houston.

In May our annual Art exhibition of our members' paintings and hand painted cards raised £1000 for our chosen charity, Project Esperanza. We were delighted to present a cheque to Suresh Sanders who represented the charity. This is a local charity based in Muirhouse which aims to reduce health inequalities that have been exposed in the North of Edinburgh, especially prevalent in ethnically diverse individuals. They offer specialist culturally appropriate and faith sensitive advice, support and services to vulnerable families.



The exhibition was a great success and we thank everyone who came along to support the event during the five days.

The club will start up again on Monday 4th September and we look forward to seeing current and new members.

Marge Whiteside

TUESDAY TOPICS

We had an interesting set of speakers last year but with a slightly reduced membership. This was probably a hangover from COVID and as a result we have had a struggle to find new committee members for the coming session. Eleanor Lowrie, our president for several years, has retired and I would like to take this opportunity to thank her for all her work. We welcome Debbie Pearce who has taken over.

We would love to see some new members join us in October and, of course, welcome back our faithful members. You don't need to be a Church member ~ we are open for anyone who is interested in an evening out, talks, and friendship. We meet every second Tuesday from 3rd October in the small hall at St Columba's Church and we have some excellent speakers lined up for your interest and enjoyment.

We charge £20 for the whole year or you can pay a small amount for one evening if you don't want to join.

The Syllabus until Christmas is as follows:

3 rd Oct	Giving second hand furniture a second chance	Cath Purves
17 th Oct	Alaska, The Last Frontier	Henry McMeekin
31 st Oct	The Botanics	Emma Lacroix
14 th Nov	Charity Night – Fresh Start	Ryan Strachan
28 th Nov	Davidson's Mains Village Now and Then	Neil McIntosh
2 nd Dec	Church Christmas Fair	T.T. will be at the sweet stall
12 th Dec	Christmas Crafts and Nibbles	Debbie Pearce

If you haven't come to Tuesday Topics before or are new to the area, please do come and join us. After the Talk we serve tea and coffee and there is time for a chat and making new friends. More details can be accessed by calling

Lyndy Paton. 0131 332 7377 or 07460212174
Sheila MacKintosh. 0131 336 1357

EDINBURGH FLORAL ART CLUB



The Club starts up again on Friday 8th September at 2pm at Blackhall St Columba's Church in the large hall.

For those who do not know what happens at our meetings, most months, we invite a qualified Flower Arranger to come along and create five arrangements. They generally chat whilst doing them about what interests them or particular events but we are also told what foliage and flowers are being used, so we all learn something new. The arrangements are raffled after the demonstration. After the demonstration members can stay and chat. Sometimes there is a workshop so that people can have a hands-on opportunity to make their own arrangement.

We have a full programme and meet at 2pm on the second Friday of the month from September to December and February to June.

If you are not a member but are interested in coming, do come as a Guest. You would be most welcome.

NORTH WEST HERITAGE

Wednesday 20th September: *Are We Nearly There Yet? (History of Scottish Milestones)*. Speaker Bruce Keith.

Wednesday 18th October: *The Last Spike - The First Transcontinental Railway across the USA*. Speaker James Waugh.

Wednesday 22nd November: *The Cold Hand of Charity - Tales from the City Poorhouse*. Speaker Alastair MacDonald

Meetings take place in Davidson's Mains Parish Church North Hall at 7.30 pm. Membership of the group is £15.00 pp or £25.00 per couple. Individual talks are £3.00 payable at the door. For more information contact the Secretary, Charlotte Cowe on 336 2494 or email charlotte@dmains.co.uk

SCOTTISH COUNTRY DANCING



We hope all our members have had a relaxing and enjoyable summer and are "raring to go" as the various organisations which meet in the church halls start up again.

The 2023 autumn term of the Scottish Country Dance Class will resume on Thursday 21st of September at 7.30 pm in the large hall of St Columba's. We will finish with our Christmas Party on the 7th of December, resuming for the spring term on Thursday 18th of January 2024.

We are a mixed class and are always delighted to welcome new members. Muriel Stenhouse, our teacher, is very patient and walks us through the dances so why not come along and give it a try. You will receive a warm welcome.

Margaret Brown
332 5957

KNIT AND NATTER

We begin our next session of Knit and Natter on Monday September the 25th at 7.30pm back in the Sanctuary. Whilst looking forward to catching up with our friends we would also like to welcome anybody who might like to come and join us.

All are welcome whether a seasoned knitter, returning to knitting or a beginner. Tea/coffee, biscuits and nattering are also important parts of our evenings.

As Pregnancy Counselling and Care are moving premises I have as yet been unable to deliver our latest batch of knitting to them, but hope to do so before too long. We have also been busy

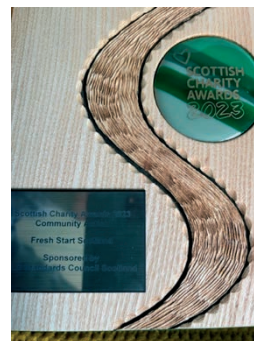


knitting more poppies for a new project which will be hung in the Sanctuary in time for Remembrance Sunday.

If you would like to know more about Knit and Natter, please contact me at stcknitnatter@gmail.com

Lilian Cockburn

FreshStart - Award winning



On Friday 23rd June the Scottish Council Voluntary Organisations (SCVO) held the Scottish Charity Awards 2023 and we are proud to say FreshStart was the winner of the *Community Action Award*.

This award is for establishing the needs of the communities and then meeting those needs. The successful launch of the pantry shop, community meals, cooking classes, helping with basic school uniform, home starter packs (from your donations of household items) and Conversational English classes all were praised for the positive impact on the communities FreshStart serve. FreshStart had some pretty stiff finalists to compete with but the judges were clear that the Award was very well deserved largely because of the input of volunteers and the level of donations from the wider Edinburgh community to meet the demand.

We are grateful for your donations of both household and food items and do hope you will continue to support FreshStart going forward. Every Friday between 10 to 11.30am our volunteers are on duty in the church halls to accept your donations.

Lastly, we are always looking for new volunteers for Friday morning collection duties and as the new rota will be starting in September it is a good time to join. Please contact Lilian or Michael Cockburn for further information or to add your name to the group of volunteers.

Lilian & Michael

07427 855199

cockburn_carfrae@yahoo.co.uk

BLACKHALL HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

A warm welcome from your local gardening group, fondly known as “The Horti”. We are a small group of gardening enthusiasts. Summer is here and like most years some flowers and crops are faring better than others.

My recently acquired greenhouse is being fully utilised, I’ve already had a good crop of cherry tomatoes and cucumbers, there’s lots of chillies and promise of a few aubergines and peppers. However, not a single cosmos seed germinated this year and in the vegetable garden, my courgette plants are full of male flowers, not a female in sight! So much for always having a glut of courgettes! Hopefully the Tromba D’Albenga Squash will fare better. Each season brings surprises and lessons, which is why I love gardening.

We kick off our 2023/24 season with An Introduction to Garden Design, if you are interested in making big or small changes, why not come along for some inspiration.

Our programme is as follows:

11 th September 2023	Introduction to Garden Design by Caroline Kerr-Smith
9 th October 2023	A Guide to Pruning by Colin Wren
13 th November 2023	Attracting Pollinators and Wildlife into your Garden by Lesley Gordon
11 th December 2023	Christmas Wreath Making with Louise Wood

Looking ahead into 2024, we have talks on Soil Structure, Roses, Bonsai, Dahlias and Houseplants.

Is there a project or do you have an idea you think we’d be interested in? Then please do get in touch.

Why not come along and join us? New members are always welcome, no experience necessary.

The Horti meets at 7.45 pm on the second Monday of the month from September to May in the small hall at Blackhall St Columba's Church. Look out for each month's poster displayed locally in the Blackhall area. You'll also find us on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/211472892232483>

If you would like more information please email Sheena, Horti President, at blackhall.horti@hotmail.com

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The Cameo Club

The Cameo Club is held in the large hall at St Columba's between 10.30 and 12.00 every second Friday and is for the community to meet and socialise. (Cameo standing for Come And Meet Every One). On the Fridays in between our programme dates you can now go to the Soup'n'Chat, a church outreach initiative which is held in the Small Hall from 12-2pm.

Early in the summer we had our Outing to Pettycur Bay in Fife where we enjoyed a sunny day along with a first-class lunch of fish and chips included and wonderful views across the Forth to Edinburgh.



You can tell how tasty the fish and chips were – look at all the empty plates and happy faces!

As I write we are due to be welcomed on a different outing for coffee and cake at Northcare Suites on Telford Road. Thirty-two members will meet in the bistro there.

In September we celebrate our **25th Anniversary** starting on the 8th with a Clarsach player and followed on the 22nd by a vocalist. On October 6th we welcome back Douglas Anderson who plays the guitar and sings Scottish and Irish songs. On October 20th we have a new musician to us, who will be playing the accordion.

We always hope to see new faces either as members, or to join our team of volunteers. We particularly need drivers to help transport members for our 10.30 starts and take them home again at 12noon. If you need any more information, please contact the numbers below.

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Getting to Know You..... The Eldest Elder

Welcome to the first in a new series of encounters with Blackhall folk who make a difference within the community.

John Crombie lived and worked in this area for 37 years before moving south with his wife to be closer to family. Since being widowed in 2016, he has been “back home” and serves again as an elder in Blackhall St Columba’s Church. His passion is for reaching out beyond the usual church services, and he helped set up both the CAMEO Club and, just recently, the fortnightly Soup and Chat in the church hall on Fridays.

I caught up with John in one of his favourite places, the Royal Burgess Golf Club, “within a pitching wedge” of his Barnton flat; and was introduced to the refreshing taste of a “John Panton”, a unique non-alcoholic mix of ginger beer, angostura bitters and lime, named after one of his golfing heroes.

It was a real insight into the popularity of this 94-year old golfer, to have so many of the others greet him and engage in banter while we sat in the clubhouse. It proved to be a fascinating morning and I hope you enjoy getting to know this snowy-haired gentleman as much as I did. MS



Where did you live as a child, and can you share one of your earliest memories?

I grew up in Portobello. My earliest memory is of being held up on my dad’s shoulders, dancing about the living room and bouncing my head on the Christmas paper chains hanging from the ceiling.

Where did you go to Senior School and what was particularly important about that time?

I was a pupil at the Royal High in Regent Terrace. Piano and singing lessons started my lifelong love of music; while art lessons and playing rugby fostered an ongoing interest in both of these. Looking back, I am aware I also learned the valuable lesson that it is no bad thing to be “middle of the road”. Consistent mediocrity seems to have prepared me well for all that lay ahead - and I am aware that so many others like me have gone on to make a positive impression on the world and continue to do so.

What was your job and what made it worthwhile for you?

I was a solicitor. Heading a large partnership gave me the chance to provide employment and other opportunities over many years, as well as helping people whenever I could.

You were married to Isabel for more than 60 years. How did you meet the love of your life?

I went, reluctantly, as a young Christian, to an international weekend conference of the National Bible Society of Scotland, apprehensive and expecting very little. Yet I gained the interest of a good-looking young woman from Stromness, and we embarked on a long-distance courtship, based on regular correspondence, (yes, he still has those letters!) culminating in a summer wedding in Portobello.

What do you remember as one of the happiest times with your family?

Our first ever holiday abroad together, with our daughters Val, Susie and Judie, was to Mallorca. I remember the sudden warmth as we came down the aircraft steps and the distinctive sound of the crickets. We all enjoyed the taste of fresh melons and tomatoes; but, for the girls in particular, it was the thrill of waking up very single morning to warm sunshine and not a spot of rain. No anoraks needed – until our return home.

Which film would you choose to watch again and again – and why?

The Magnificent Seven – because it illustrates the ultimate victory of the underdog.

Which concert or theatrical performance would you describe as your best experience?

Bruch’s Violin Concerto played by Nicola Benedetti.

Which three words would you choose to describe yourself?

Grumpy Old Git (though he admits his family will strongly dispute this, when they read it in print)

If you could spend the day with someone famous, past or present, who would it be and what would you hope to do.

Jesus. I’d just want to listen to him. That would more than fill my day.

What would be your hope for the Blackhall community for the years ahead?

A closer community spirit for the people of Blackhall and Drylaw; not just for the proposed merger of the two churches, but for the parishes as a whole.



BLACKHALL LIBRARY NEWS

**What's on Blackhall Library
Sep, Oct & Nov**

Mondays
5-6pm Lego Club (Fortnightly)
5-7pm Westwoods Book group (1st Mon of the month)
6-7.30pm Monday Book group (3rd Monday of the month)
2-4pm Movie Matinee (Adults - start date TBC)

Tuesdays
10:00-12:30pm Blackhall Painters Group- (weekly - resuming in Sep)
10:30-11am Bookbug (0-5+y.o.)*
3:30-4:30pm Tiger Tales (4-8 y.o.)*
6-7:30pm Adult Writing Group (Fortnightly)
6:45-7:45pm Tuesday Book group (2nd Tue of the month)

Wednesdays
11:30-1:30pm Macmillan Cancer Support
11am-12pm Library Link (Fortnightly)
6-7:30pm Wednesday Book group (3rd Wed of the month)

Thursdays
All day Dog Friendly Day
10-12:30pm Drop-in Gardening (All welcome)
10:30-12:00pm Coffee Morning (All welcome)
1:30-3pm Knit and Natter Group

Fridays
1-3:30pm Teens Book group (Monthly)
2:30-3:30pm Library Link (Fortnightly)
3-4pm Craft (5+y.o.)*

Saturdays
11-11:30am Bookbug & Storytime (0-5+y.o.)*

***Please note - booking is essential
via Eventbrite for kids' activities
(updated links every week on Facebook page)
For more information regarding any of these sessions
please contact:**

✉ Blackhall.library@edinburgh.gov.uk ☎ 0131 529 5595
📷 @BLACKHALL.LIBRARY 📘 BLACKHALL LIBRARY

Additional events will be added to our weekly 'What's On' as they are scheduled

As always we have had a lot going on at Blackhall Library. Some of the highlights have been our Spring Fair which attracted over 400 people, our Open Garden Day and a fantastic Dinosaur Day which saw many happy children engage in fun dino themed activities. We have had donated a very useful study table with USB charging points by the FoBL and had the carpet in our children's area replaced brightening up this area. Other new developments include the introduction of a 'Quiet Space' this can be used as a multi-faith prayer space, private breastfeeding area or for anyone needing a quiet moment.

Blackhall Library would like to thank everyone in the community who help to make the library a warm community space and an extra big thank you to our Blackhall Library Fairy Godmother and Friends of Blackhall Library volunteers for their generosity and continuing support of the library.

To keep up to date on events and activities happening in the library please keep an eye on our Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/BlackhallLibrary> or pop into the library for one of our 'What's On' events.

FRIENDS OF BLACKHALL LIBRARY (FOBL)

We celebrated a year of the Friends of Blackhall Library in June. In the past year we have raised funds at the Spring Fair and our stand at the Blackhall Sports Day to buy tables, storage unit and a study desk for the library. We have also greatly enhanced the outside of the library with bunting and planters of summer bedding plants. FoBL volunteers have worked throughout the year in the garden to make an attractive area for people to sit and read, and children to play. On 29th July the garden was the focus for our fundraising garden event.

FoBL Knit and Natter group who meet on Thursdays 1.30pm – 3pm have been busy producing a variety of knitted items to sell at our fundraising events. They are currently working on Halloween and Christmas items to sell at our next event – **Halloween Fair on Saturday 28th October 2023 10am – 1pm at the library.**

We are currently looking for more garden volunteers. We're a friendly bunch so why not join us on Thursday mornings. If you can't make a regular commitment or can only volunteer at weekends - no worries just let us know.

For further information please get in touch with Tess Storr at the library or email Helen Forrester: chairfobl@gmail.com

THE FRIENDS OF BLACKHALL LIBRARY INVITE YOU TO:

**HALLOWEENFEST
AT BLACKHALL
LIBRARY**

28TH OCTOBER 10AM - 1PM

There will be:
Spooky displays
knitted & crocheted items to buy
Refreshments
Raffle with prizes to be won
Childrens' activities including lucky door prizes for coming in costume!

All proceeds will go towards supporting the Friends of Blackhall Library



The Church golf outing held on the afternoon of Thursday 8th June was again played at Ravelston Golf Club and 14 players enjoyed a lovely day.

The winners this year were:

Involvement Cup

John Turner

Handicap Cup

1. Alan Francey
2. Fergus Cook
3. Lindsay Duguid

Ladies' Cup

1. Jenny Clark
2. Barbara Duguid
3. Frances Douglas

Nine Hole Prize

Ian Thom

Nearest Pin at 5th

Mike McKinnell

Nearest Pin at 18th

Lindsay Duguid

**Church Golf Outing
8th June 2023**

Once again a big thank you to Ravelston for the use of their Course and for the delicious meal which was enjoyed by all. Thank you also to Frances Douglas for her emails and sorting out the score cards.

I look forward to a bigger turnout next year and would welcome donations of wine and golf balls as we no longer have sponsorship from Murrayfield House.

Mike McKinnell

Blackhall Probus Club



The Blackhall Probus Club is part of a UK-wide group which organizes social events for retired gentlemen in the local area. With a membership of around forty, we will be meeting this coming session on the first and third Thursday of the month from 5th October through to 4th April 24 at the Blackhall Bowling Club on Keith Row at 10:00 to chat over tea/coffee/biscuits before listening to a talk given by experts and enthusiasts across a wide range of subjects. We also hope to organise one or two lunches (including Christmas) to which partners are invited, Quiz, Pie and a Pint sessions after a couple of the talks and, new for this year, local walks lead by one of our members.

Talks planned for the coming session include *The story of Thomas Muir*, *TV programmes we used to watch* and *Life as a Procurator Fiscal* all of which bode well for a diverse, interesting and entertaining series.

We are always pleased to welcome new members, so if you would like to join us, please contact the Secretary for more details or come to the first meeting on Thursday 5th October.

We look forward to meeting you.

Keith Gilroy, Secretary, Blackhall Probus Club.

Phone: 0787 327 5854 Email: ksgprobus@icloud.com

With recent news of dogs becoming ill after walkies in Inverleith Park, I thought readers might be interested in a new vet practice in our area. I'll leave Karen to tell you all about it.



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Hello! I am Karen Lantrip, the vet and owner, of West Edinburgh Vets and I can't tell you how excited I am to welcome you! I was born and raised in sunny California, where I entered the veterinary world at age 15 cleaning kennels at my local clinic, before working my way up to Veterinary Nurse and then Practice Manager. Eleven years later I moved to Bonnie Scotland to pursue my veterinary science degree. After qualifying from the University of Edinburgh's Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies, I moved back to the US for 5 years, before following my heart back to Edinburgh to settle with my family.



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0131 654 1988

Support when you need it most

Blackhall

Nursery

News

September 2023



Blackhall Nursery is situated within the wonderful nature resource of Ravelston Park and Woods. At Blackhall Nursery, we put the children at the heart of everything we do. We provide a safe, healthy and happy environment where children grow and develop through play and active learning.

As always, the summer term has passed by in a flash. The children have been very busy learning through play. Since Easter we have learned how to keep ourselves safe, with help from a Pauline, our local crossing patrol and Green watch from Drylaw Fire Station. We have been keeping ourselves healthy and had visits from Childsmile (toothbrushing) and three parents, a Doctor, a Nurse and an Optician who came in to share their expertise with the children. We tasted all sorts of different healthy foods, including passion fruit, avocado and fennel and moved our bodies to take part in Woodland walks, a tennis lesson and our own Sports Day. The children who were leaving us had lots of visits to school, taking part in assembly and meeting their 'BFG' as well as their new teachers. We have looked after our stick insects and watched our tadpoles, ladybirds and caterpillars grow and change.

In June, thanks to some amazing fundraising by our parent committee, we all went to East Links Farm Park for a full day trip – a very exciting first post-Covid big trip out. It was a wonderful way to mark the departure of those children heading off to school and we now look forward to welcoming a new cohort due to start in August.

Blackhall Nursery is a registered Scottish charity working in partnership with the City of Edinburgh Council. We offer full day (8:25am-2:35pm) places for 3-5 year olds during term time.

You can place your child's name on the Nursery waiting list from their 2nd birthday by downloading an application form at www.blackhallnursery.co.uk or by contacting the Nursery for an application form on 0131 332 8296.



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SUNDAY CLUB

During Sunday morning worship (10.30 – 11.30am), we have a time when the children can leave the service to attend Sunday Club in the small hall. There, they can take part in activities such as storytelling, arts and crafts and games all relating to a particular theme. Some children attend almost every week, some come along once or twice a month, while others join us whenever they are in the area visiting relatives or friends. It matters not – Sunday Club is there for any child in church that Sunday. All are welcome.

So far this year, the children have, over several weeks, looked at “Our Wonderful World” and pictured below are some of the children who were putting “Love” into action. “Joseph and his Technicoloured Dreamcoat” was, and still is, a very popular musical, and during this summer, the children have been looking at the various parts of Joseph’s life. We look forward to seeing their “Joseph” artwork on the walls of the small hall later in the year.

All children are welcome in Sunday Club whether they can attend every weekend or only occasionally. If you would like more information, please contact Amy Donaldson 332 1354.



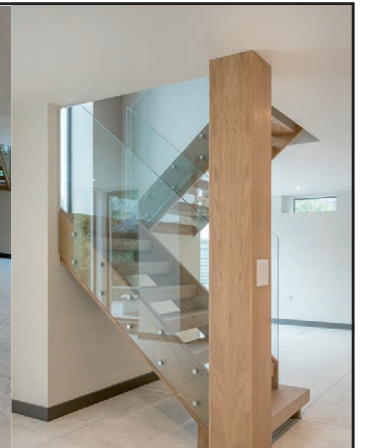
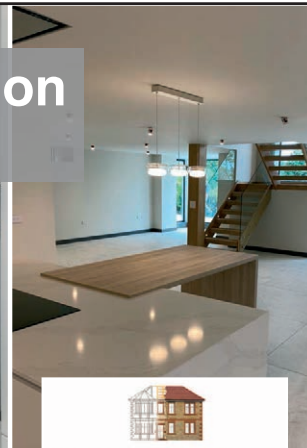
JUNIOR SINGERS

This last year has again been a busy one for Junior Singers. They sang for the residents of Queen’s Court and those in Strachan House; they took part in the Ross Bandstand Christmas event and sang several times in church. The children have now been enjoying well-deserved summer break.

We are always looking for new members to join our group so, if your child is in P3 – P7, and enjoys singing, please do get in touch. We meet every Thursday afternoon during school term time, from 3.45 – 4.30pm in the upstairs hall of the church. Fun is always at the heart of everything we do so, even though we may be rehearsing for a performance, we always make sure we leave time at the end of our sessions for some musical games.

If your child is interested in finding out more about Junior Singers, either come along to the hall any Thursday or phone Amy Donaldson on 332 1354

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Girlguiding **Blackhall Guiding**



14 202 Brownies worked so hard and were awarded their Gold Award

157th Rainbows are busy working on the Girlguiding program, some with the Gold award in their sight! We hope to enjoy another sleepover and would love more girls to join our waiting list. **Claire Slaine- 157 Rainbow Leader**

202C Brownies have a busy term ahead including a sleepover at Beamish, a visit to the Scottish Parliament and Gangshow. Our theme is skills for my future.. **Helen Abbott – 202C Brownie Leader**

Guides in Blackhall continue to be busy, earning badges and awards, having outings and trips and are looking forward to another fun year ahead. **Lorna Kelly – 202 Guide Leader**



Blackhall Brownies and Rainbows attended the Girlguiding Edinburgh Carnival taking part in circus workshops and an open top bus tour of Edinburgh.



202 Rainbows are welcoming 6 new Rainbows this month and we are excited to be working on the Take Action Rainbows theme. We hope to have some trips planned like the amazing summer trip to the Girlguiding Edinburgh Carnival Fun Day. **Nicola McDermid – 202 Rainbow Leader**

202&202B Brownies spread kindness around the Blackhall Community leaving kindness boxes and plants on door steps.

This term 202 and 202B Brownies start off the term with a sleepover in Beamish Museum and a trip to Alwnick Castle to take part in broomstick training. We look forward to starting on the express myself theme this term and will go and watch many of our brownies in this years Edinburgh Gang Show which is being held in the Festival Theatre. We also look forward to our annual trip paddleboarding. With thanks to the Blackhall Children's sports committee for providing us with some funding in order for this to go ahead. **Nicole Harland – 202&202B Brownie Leader**

Volunteer with Girlguiding Edinburgh?

Could you spare some time to volunteer with us? It's an exciting time to be part of Girlguiding as we get to grips with our most exciting (and biggest) programme overhaul in 100 years!

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<https://www.girlguiding.org.uk/get-involved/become-a-volunteer/>

GGUKBlackhallDistrict@outlook.com

BLACKHALL PRIMARY SCHOOL

The children in Blackhall Primary School were learning about Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STeAM) in the Summer Term. Teachers have taken classes outside to explore the school community and completed a wide range of lessons and activities.

Every class in Primary 1 to Primary 7 has had opportunities to learn about STeAM and to put their skills to the test in different activities and challenges.



Primary 4s, for example, used their engineering skills to make a vessel to 'Protect a Pringle' in a variety of challenges.

Primary 7 had a parent volunteer in to speak about Software Engineering. In Primary 5, another parent came in to speak about their work in Pharmacy.

As a school, we invited parents and carers into school for our STeAM Ahead Day. This allowed the school community to see the amazing work we have been doing and gave the children a chance to share their learning. As you can see from the pictures, the children covered a wide range of topics this term and really enjoyed sharing their learning with each other.

Next term, each class will DrEaM in Colour (Drama, Expressive Arts Music) and will use the topic to launch another successful year of learning in Blackhall. We hope to see members of the wider community at our various events throughout the year.

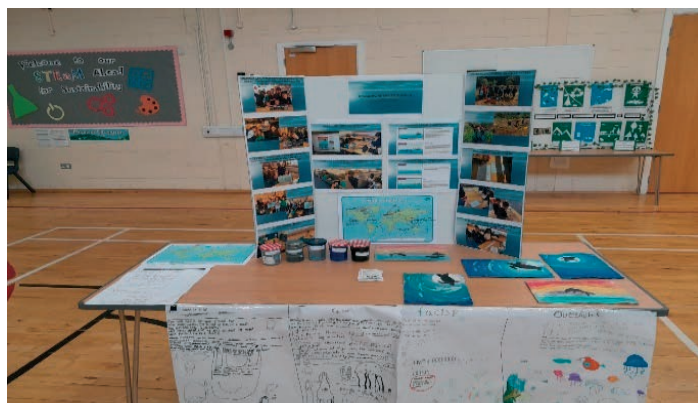
On the next page you can see the displays by some of our year groups.

Thank you to all the parents and carers who came along. We hope you enjoyed it and were impressed by what we had learned.

Below is a selection of images from our STEaM event which was held at the end of our summer term in June.

They show a variety of displays which showcase the knowledge and understanding that our young people have regarding the very important issue of sustainability.

During the event, which was attended by many Parents and Carers, representatives from each year group were able to share and discuss the information that was on display.





Blackhall St Columba's Church of Scotland, Edinburgh
Scottish Registered Charity No SC008756

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Rev Fergus Cook
5 Blinkbonny Crescent
Edinburgh EH4 3NB
Telephone 466 7503

Session Clerk
Eddie Thorn
158 Craigleith Road
Edinburgh EH4 2EQ
Telephone 332 5702

Church Secretary
Mrs Joy McGonigal-Paget
in Church Office from
Tues-Thurs 9-12 noon
Tel: 332 4431 or email
secretary@blackhallstcolumba.org.uk

DEADLINES

Kirk News (November edition) **Friday 13th October**

Please send all items to the Editor:
Judith Mair c/o Church Office or
e-mail:Judith.mair@hotmail.co.uk

Blackhall Bulletin (December edition) - **Sunday 22nd October**

Please send all items, including **Advertising Enquiries**
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Home tel: 312 6035 or e-mail to:
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READING THE BULLETIN FOR THE FIRST TIME?

Welcome to the area. We do hope you enjoy living here. To help you find your feet, Blackhall St Columba's Church website gives you all you need to know about activities happening there for young and old. From leisure activities like painting and dancing to our youth groups and junior singers. You can find it all at www.blackhallstcolumba.org.uk or contact the office by phone (see above) or e mail secretary@blackhallstcolumba.org.uk or

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