

BLACKHALL BULLETIN

June 2020

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

No. 160

What a Wonderful World

I see trees of green, red roses too
I see them bloom for me and you
And I think to myself ... what a wonderful world

I see skies of blue, and clouds of white,
The bright blessed day, the dark sacred night
And I think to myself... what a wonderful world

The colours of the rainbow, so pretty in the sky,
Are also on the faces of people going by,
I see friends shaking hands, sayin': How do you do?
They're really saying, "I love you".

I hear babies cry, I watch them grow,
They'll learn much more than I'll never know
And I think to myself... what a wonderful world
Yes, I think to myself... what a wonderful world.

Louis Armstrong

Lyrics by George David Weiss & Bob Thiele



It may seem strange at a time when the world is full of sadness and anxiety to choose What a Wonderful World for the front page. But if we consider the lyrics of the song, we may realise that this is what lockdown is giving us the time to appreciate if we but look around us. I have heard many people saying how lovely it is to hear birdsong without the overwhelming background of heavy traffic.

The pandemic started just as our wonderful world was awakening. During lockdown, on our daily exercise or from the window of our shielded home we have seen the opening of the buds on the trees; watched the daffodils and tulips brighten the gardens, to be followed by bluebells and snowdrops. Even the dandelions and daisies brighten our days – after all they are only flowers growing in the wrong place!

The rainbows in the windows have once again become a message of hope, one even had a message below it saying, "everything will be alright". Sadly, we can't shake hands just now, but by social distancing, face covering and washing hands regularly, we are showing our love for each other. The children already know so much about technology and coping with learning online. They are using it to help their families to keep in touch. We are all learning how useful IT can be.

It has been shown that the pollution over countries who have had lockdown has decreased greatly, giving a cleaner air quality which is what is needed to help those recovering from Covid 19.

We can learn from this experience. How to keep healthy, both physically and mentally. We can try to build a better society. We can take comfort from nature and the beauty that is all around us and take better care of it and our world. We can count our blessings. Her Majesty the Queen summed it up beautifully when she ended her Easter address saying "*We should take comfort that while we may have more still to endure, better days will return: we will be with our friends again; we will be with our families again; we will meet again*".

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'Why are we here?'

Greetings Blackhall community,

My name is Fergus Cook and I am the new minister at Blackhall St Columba's Parish Church. Regular readers of the Blackhall Bulletin will have seen, in March's edition, notification of my appointment and a short biography about me and my family.

Given that this is my first article for the Bulletin, the question I posed 'Why are we here?' may seem at first to be a very existential question for me to begin with. However, the question can be looked at differently depending on the perspective we take. The question can be asked from an individual, a local, a national or an existential perspective.

Let me begin with our local parish church. A mission statement is used by many organisations to answer the very question I posed. What is our purpose? Blackhall St Columba's Church puts its mission statement on many of its publications and its website. It is 'to glorify God....to proclaim Christ....to serve others.'

Right now, in the midst of the present coronavirus pandemic, the church is here for the community of Blackhall. The elements of the mission statement are completely interlinked. As Christians, it is by serving others that we can both proclaim Christ through our actions and worship God through our lives.

William Temple was an English Anglican priest who served as both Archbishop of York and Archbishop of Canterbury in the 1940s. He wrote "The Church is the only society that exists for the benefit of those who are not its members." I think that is an important distinction for us as Christians. You do not need to be a member of the church to seek or receive help from us.

In writing this, it is important to recognise that for us the 'church' is not a building or even an organisation. The church is made up of people. They are your neighbours, your friends and possibly your family. During the present restrictions on gatherings, the church buildings may be shut but, as has been said, the Church is not a building! The Church is the worshipping community and it is as strong as it was before this crisis began. We continue to worship God on a weekly basis. Our services are now based online and can be seen on the website at <https://www.blackhallstcolumba.org.uk/> We also now have a Facebook page where, most days, there are reflections. This can be found on Facebook @Blackhall St Columba's Church.

I have spoken about how we as a church continue to reach out to the community of Blackhall and are here to help in any way we can. I know of the efforts that many in the church are going to in order to keep in touch with members of our community who are feeling lonely or isolated. I also know of the reassurance that many of those vulnerable people have expressed at the extra effort being made. It is also a reassurance that, in an ever-changing world and never more so than now, we have some constants in our life. For the community of Blackhall, the church is one of those constants and, for the church of Blackhall, God and the teachings of Jesus Christ are our constant. The Bible has much to say about this constancy. The psalmist writes about God: "But You are the same, and Your years will not come to an end." (Psalm 102:27) It is also written in the New Testament by the author of Hebrews: Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever. (Hebrews 13:8)

It is through these constants that we can all have the confidence to continue knowing that, in the fullness of time, things will get back to 'normal' whatever that new normal turns out to be.

Take care and be safe
With best wishes and blessings

Fergus Cook

WA†CH Committee

In these challenging times the WA†CH Committee are very keen to continue their remit to support local charities this year as usual.

Over the last 28 years the committee have worked to support and raise awareness of local charities, raising over £280,000 through a programme of events with the help of the congregation of Blackhall St Columba's, the organisations which meet in the halls and the local community.

This year we hope to hold the usual Coffee Morning in October and we have also booked the halls for the ever-popular Christmas Fair to be held on Saturday 28th November.

Meanwhile, we will be pleased to gather any loose change brought to the Church services during July and August or when we are up and running again.

We hope to decide on this year's charity soon and thereafter we will arrange opportunities for the charity to publicise their work at church and at our events. Whatever we raise this year can make a significant difference to a small charity and it is particularly important that we do the best we can this year.

Last year we were pleased to donate £8,220 which was shared between Beach Wheelchairs Portobello and Kindred, a support group for families of children with complex support needs.

George Millar

Convener WA†CH Committee

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CHURCH NEWS

Greetings from Rev Fergus Cook, our new minister

Following his ordination and induction at Cramond Kirk on 22nd March, Fergus is delighted to take up his post as our new minister.

At this difficult time, Fergus is restricted from visiting, but it is still possible for you to contact him at the manse on 0131 466 7503 in either of his 'vestry hours' which are on Sundays and Wednesdays from 2 – 3pm or via the Church Office from 10 – 12.30 Monday – Friday.



Although the church buildings are currently closed, you can still join Fergus, on Sundays for an online service. The best way to do this is by going to the church website, www.blackhallstcolumba.org.uk and from the red banner select "New Sunday online services" where you will find the links to the service. Sunday morning worship is available online from 10.00hrs

There is an after Church Fellowship on Zoom at 11.15 (bring your own tea/coffee!)

You can also follow Blackhall St Columba's on social media. You will find us on:



@BStCC_EH@



BlackhallChurch

ST SOFA'S

We worship at St Sofa's now
Since Covid came to stay
We don't dress up or do our hair
But still we come to pray!
Our Vicar is a clever chap
A Zoom with his IT
And so we sit down ev'ry week
And meet up virtually!

Our Parish Church stands empty
With praise she does not ring;
But still her people gather round
To pray, and praise, and sing!
The virus is a nasty thing
Yet it has helped us see
The church is NOT a building
But folk like you and me!

By Nigel and Carol Beeton



As everyone will already know, work on the Sanctuary has been suspended for the time being. The contractors have moved out of the building having ensured that measures have been put in place to keep it secure, and that proper insurance is in place. At the time of the suspension the work was on time and on budget which meant that we would have expected the contractors to have finished and cleared the site by about the end of April. That would be followed by a short period while we continued to work with them on the usual snagging issues.

We would then have been able to begin the process of readying the Sanctuary for worship. Planning for this stage was well under way. The process involves retrieving everything currently in off-site storage and putting it back or into its new position, taking delivery of chairs and so on and also working through the implications of any new procedures which might be necessary, for example with beading or the welcome teams. That work would probably have taken three to four weeks.

Now, of course, everything is on hold and we can but wait. This is very disappointing but, of course, it is as nothing compared to the difficulties which others are facing.

We don't, of course, know how or when the lockdown will be eased so that the contractors are able to resume work. However, everything should be in place so that we can just pick up where we left off. We must be aware though that supply chains may take a little longer to resume, so we anticipate the contractors maybe needing eight weeks to finish, followed by our three to four weeks of activity. This would mean that the Sanctuary would be ready for use in about three months from the date of the resumption of work. If Sunday services are allowed to resume before that, we will simply continue to use the Large Hall as we have been doing.

We can't know when we will be able to hold the re-dedication service, but there will be one, and we can plan for it. In addition, a leaflet will be prepared for the first Sunday back which will explain in some detail what the refurbishment has involved – both the seen and the unseen bits. It will also explain any changes to the way in which the Sanctuary will be used.

In the meantime, all we can do is follow the advice from the government and the medical experts and pray for everyone affected by Covid19. What we can be sure of is that the pandemic will run its course eventually and that things will return to a new normal. We can also be sure that when that happens, we will have the new Sanctuary fully completed and ready for use, and that it will all have been worth it!

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“You’ll Never Walk Alone”



Our walks around Blackhall are filled with colour at every step. With apple blossom and magnolia, allium and peony, to name but a few, there is no doubt that Spring has fulfilled its promise of new life – and those regular sunny afternoons and evenings have given a real taste of summer.

There is so much more to catch the eye, however, as we look around our homes and gardens. A kaleidoscope of colour from bright rainbows in windows and on doors; messages of love conveyed by hearts of every hue; and teddies galore for those on “a bear hunt”. Even the pavements have been transformed, with hopscotch grids (some with mental maths to back up the home-schooling!); painted pebbles with messages of friendship; and even a challenging “jump the planets” trail.

It’s such a positive reminder that, although we are all involved in an unprecedented situation of “shielding” and “social distancing”, we are actually surrounded by folk who care. Blackhall is a local community where people try to make that word count.

Yet, even with all the messages of love and the offers of support, it’s a time when many of us may feel, more acutely than we expected, the impact of “self isolation”. We know it’s for our own good and for the protection of NHS and other key workers, but it’s just not life as we know it.

A daily walk is now a privilege - not just for pleasure but for our physical and mental well-being. Yet it’s not the same when we cannot walk with a friend, sharing coffee and a scone along the way. We cannot join our usual group, with rucksacks, flasks and food for the day. Yes, we are actually talking to folk across the street as we pass, and we have time to chat to neighbours who are currently working from home. But when the doors close in the evening, we may feel the real impact of our situation.

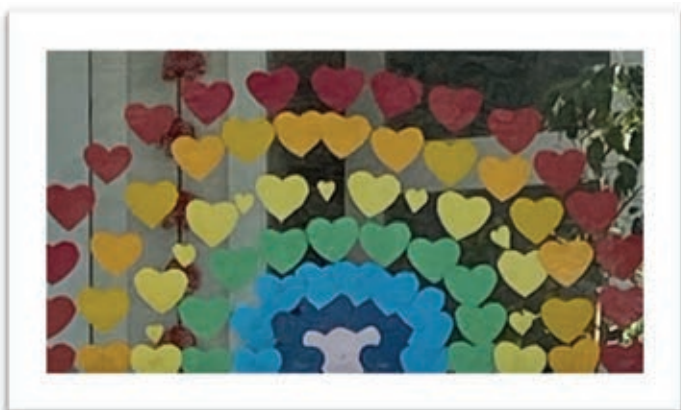
For many of us, this has been a time to look beyond our human restrictions to a God who has promised never to leave us or forsake us; a God who walks with us, however rough the path. You and I may be facing “storms” of all kinds during the Covid crisis – social and financial challenges, family stresses, relationship breakdowns, ill-health and bereavement – but, as that powerful song from Carousel, recently recorded by Captain Tom, reminds us – **“You’ll Never Walk Alone”**.

Perhaps today you might think further about that assurance. It’s not just a line in a lyric, but a strong message based on the words of the Bible, **“I will never leave you or forsake you”**. Christians have proved it to be true over the years - in times of war, as we have been so recently reminded, and in times of peace.

From my childhood, I vividly remember one of dad’s records with Mario Lanza singing these words of another song written for a musical –

*I’ll walk with God from this day on...
There is no fear when I’m near to Him...
This is my prayer, my humble plea –
May the Lord be ever with me.*

As relevant to me today as it was to my parents back then.
MS



A New Way of Working....



We have had to adapt to our new way of living and working during Covid-19, unfortunately meaning that we have had to temporarily halt some of services. We have responded to need in our immediate community in North Edinburgh and have been supplying emergency food, cleaning and toiletries packs throughout the area. We have seen this need increase from the initial first weeks of lockdown to now and have been incrementally increasing what we can put out as we work with partner organisations to infiltrate supply chains to gain access to the goods that we need.

We are proud to say that to date, we have delivered 1,647 emergency packs throughout North Edinburgh since we entered lockdown. This has been a fantastic effort by all involved. We hope that these packs will ease the burden, stress and financial pressure put upon families during this concerning time.

We are looking ahead to the future and how to manage the return of our services and much missed volunteers safely to allow us to continue to provide to those in need across the city. These may be challenging times, but we know, together, we can come back as strong as ever and be able to help those in need the most feel at home in their new homes and communities.

Bringing the Outdoors In

We are all missing the great outdoors at the moment and would like to bring you some blue skies and gorgeous garden scenes from our Craigmillar Growing Space! Our social and practical team leader, Adrienne, has been keeping an eye on our growing spaces during lockdown and it's great to see that nature carries on regardless of everything else that's happening.

We are, of course, missing all of our amazing volunteers who not only help us maintain our growing spaces but play vital roles in delivering all of our core services. As soon as lockdown restrictions are eased, and it is safe to do so we look forward to introducing gardening sessions again and welcoming back all of our lovely volunteers!



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How Can You Help?



As you are aware, for health and safety reasons, we are unable to accept donations of goods at the moment. We are unsure when these restrictions will be lifted in this ever-changing landscape and are currently purchasing **all** items for our emergency food, cleaning and toiletries packs and also goods for our standard starter packs that we are distributing on a small scale via Bethany Christian Trust throughout the city.

If you are able to help us by making a financial donation, in lieu of actual goods, so we can continue purchasing items for our vital packs then we would be extremely grateful. You can donate by visiting our Just Giving page via the following link - <https://www.freshstartweb.org.uk/donate>, by making a bank transfer to Fresh Start's account (Sort code: 80-11-05, Account no: 00470086) or by sending a cheque. All donations are greatly appreciated.

Spring Cleaning During Lockdown



Have you been making the most of the lock down by spending time to Spring clean and clear out your cupboards? If so, we are asking that you put any items that could be used in our Starter Packs aside for us! Once things settle down and we are able to reopen our warehouse doors again to the public we will need these items more than ever before! With many people losing jobs and sources of income over the coming weeks & months we anticipate that our services will be needed more than ever. So please keep Fresh Start in mind when you're having your Spring clear out, hold on to any of the essential household items on [our starter pack list](#) and we will let you know as soon as we are able to accept these donations at our warehouse again. Thank You!



Blackhall St. Columba's Art Club

Although our classes on a Monday and a Tuesday have ceased, members are keeping in touch through a WhatsApp group. Our President, Valerie Gordon, also sends out a weekly bulletin and any paintings that members have completed are being put on the website. Alongside other organisations, we too have no idea when we will be restarting.

Our Annual May Exhibition was of course cancelled, and while we have booked the space at Blackhall Library for December/January we do not know at this stage if it will have reopened by then.

Our AGM was to have taken place at Murrayfield Golf Club for 19 May, but we will be embracing technology and holding it using Zoom.

So, we are in good spirits and, like everyone else, look forward to being able to meet up again face to face!

EDINBURGH FLORAL ART CLUB



Photo by [Marcella Marcella](#) on [Unsplash](#)

Like many other groups, the Edinburgh Floral Art Club is still unable to meet and whilst we hope to start again in September we just have to wait and see, so we have no information at present.

Hopefully we will be able to have plans for the future in the September Bulletin.

Stay safe and well.
Isabel Ingram

TUESDAY TOPICS

Regular readers of the Bulletin will know that Tuesday Topics usually meets in the Small Hall of Blackhall St Columba's Church on alternate Tuesdays at 7.30pm for a talk or presentation, followed by a chat over coffee, tea, and biscuits.

We all very much enjoyed our outing to the King's Theatre on 3rd March to see the Southern Light Opera's production of 'Anything Goes'. Unfortunately, that proved to be the last meeting of the session, because our speaker for 10th cancelled on the day, the COVID19 Pandemic was declared, and we had to cancel the rest of the programme, including the A.G.M. At the time of writing we are still in LOCKDOWN, and not able to plan for the next session.

For more Information about Tuesday Topics visit www.blackhallstcolumba.org.uk under Community Activities, and / or contact Eleanor Lowrie, President Tel. 0131 332 4827 or eleanorlowrie@yahoo.co.uk

Until next time, our very best wishes to all our members and friends.
Jacky Cowie

Apology – in the March edition of the Blackhall Bulletin events for the 10th and 24th March were omitted. Ed.



BLACKHALL CHILDREN'S SPORTS COMMITTEE

Sadly, like so many other things, our Family Fun Cycle of 10th May and the Children's Sports Day on 6th June have had to be cancelled due to the current restrictions because of Covid 19. However, we hope to be able to tell you about our Annual Funding Awards in the September issue of the Bulletin.

GARDENING IN LOCKDOWN IN BLACKHALL

Who would have thought at the start of March that our gardens plus their care and attention would be our focal point for the spring months, with plans of what to grow continuing into summer?



Many of us grow tulips in containers to give a splash of colour from February to April, but the question often asked is what we should do with the bulbs after flowering. Reusing the bulbs is a popular option but remember it is highly unlikely the flowers will be the same quality in the future years. To produce a tulip bulb takes much skill and it is best left to the experts, with the Dutch producing in excess of three million bulbs, - in fact this British habit of trying to reuse bulbs is an enigma to the Dutch! However, if you want to use the bulbs again, remove the heads after flowering and dry the bulbs off. Select the largest bulbs and discard the rest. Store in a dry shed before planting again in September.

Lawn care is an emotive subject! Although fine lawns (*those similar to golf greens*) are cut to a height of one eighth of an inch, and mowing then taking place thrice a week, there is no need to maintain a home lawn the same way. It is easier to cut the lawn at a minimum of half an inch and preferably at one inch. By doing this a lush turf sward develops which is soft to walk or sit on. Let's not become involved in whether daisies and speedwell are desirable in the lawn and making the lawn bee friendly.

At present the greenhouse is full of tomatoes and pick and come again lettuce. Growing one's own tomatoes is fun and also very educational. The flavour of home grown is always better primarily because they are grown in a growing media (*that includes soil, grow bags, and ring culture*) while commercially the production is often by hydroponics. There is still time (*end of May*) to make up a tomato basket using a variety such as Tumbling Tom, and these don't need the side shoots (*the shoots that appear in the leaf axils*) to be removed. Likewise, there is still time to plant tomato plants as long as they are not at just post germination stage. Feed weekly, when watering, with Miracle-Gro or Tomorite, and stick to the recommendations. Under watering or irregular watering will cause a black hardened base to the fruit - this is a nutritional problem called blossom end rot. Tomatoes are grown as a single stem (cordon) and remember to remove side-shoots. They also require staking, and although bamboo canes may be adequate, using a stake is preferred due to the weight of the fruit trusses. Gentle tie the main stem to the stake using soft garden twine - the stems can be soft and tender thus easily bruised. Around the plant base, basil can be grown for use as a herb.



There is nothing better than having cut and come again lettuce to ensure the daily supply of leaves for garnishing. Thinly sow a very small pinch of seed in a 9cm pot, and then prick off four or so plants into a large container, and of course pass the excess seedlings onto others. Do another sowing after a month or so thus having some continuity. Although normal butterhead or crisp varieties can be used, it is better to use mixed lettuce seed such as red and green salad bowl mix. Being more adventurous consider other green leaf mixes such as those containing Japanese Greens, Arugula, Rucola, Oriental Mustard, and Pak Choy.

For more detailed advice do look at, and join, the Facebook page of Blackhall Horticultural Society, and ask questions - nothing is ever too silly or simple to ask!

John MacLennan

BLACKHALL COMMUNITY TRUST



After lockdown, like many organisations, we postponed all of our activities, cancelling our Annual General Meeting, our art workshops, our walking group and our coffee morning group. Everything remains on hold. We wish local residents, our Blackhall Community Trust members and participants in our activities the very best during this difficult time. We are thinking of you!

We can still be contacted by email via blackhallcommunitytrust@gmail.com. Along with everyone else, we are hoping for improvements to the situation and we are paying close attention to guidance. We anticipate running our AGM as an online meeting in the near future as public meetings are unlikely to take place for some time. Join BCT as a member or sign up for the newsletter if you would like to be notified of the AGM date.

It is free to become a member of BCT – email us to join via blackhallcommunitytrust@gmail.com. Also email us and let us know if you would like to sign up for our newsletter. Visit our website www.blackhallcommunitytrust.org.uk or follow us on Facebook [@blackhallet](https://www.facebook.com/blackhallet) or Twitter [@BlackhallCT](https://twitter.com/BlackhallCT).



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CAMEO CLUB

At the time of writing we are looking forward to the summer months, but do not know when the Coronavirus “Lockdown” measures will be relaxed.

Our members, who are mostly older, might like to know that there is a programme in place, so that as soon as churches are open again, and meetings for groups are allowed, we are ready to go. We will contact you with our start date when the time comes.

There may be new ladies and gentlemen who would like to join us when we meet every second Friday between 10.30am and 12noon for refreshment and entertainment. We can also provide car transport for those who live in the community.

You will be very welcome to “Come And Meet Each Other” – there is no charge for membership - members and volunteers will be looking forward to seeing each other again.

Contact numbers: Margaret Brown 332 5957
Fiona Drinnan 343 6762

OUR 40th BIRTHDAY YEAR!

Readers may remember in the last issue we told you September 2020 would be the 40th Birthday of the Blackhall Bulletin. In that issue, Margaret McArthur, the first editor, told us a little about the start of the Bulletin. We hope to continue the story in our next edition.

THANK YOU FOR THE MUSIC!

Janet Whiteman (pictured at the keyboard) writes:

“A few weeks before Christmas, Classic FM held a competition for a Yamaha Clavinova digital piano to be won for a worthy cause. I entered this competition (never thinking I would win) on behalf of Blackhall St. Columba’s Church.

The congregation raise thousand of pounds each year for various charities, not only at home but also abroad and to enhance fundraising, hold many musical events. In entering the competition I thought a new piano would be great for our Church hall/s for everyone to enjoy.

The week before Christmas, whilst having lunch with friends, to my surprise, delight and great excitement I received the news via my mobile phone that I had won, or rather Blackhall St. Columba’s Church had won.”



We also asked for **YOUR** contributions. Have you had an article in the Bulletin, or your photo, or both, like Janet Whiteman (left) who sent a copy of the article in the Bulletin from March 2009 when she won a Yamaha Clavinova for the Church?

You don’t need to have the article, if you can tell us roughly when you were in it and what your piece was about, we would love to hear from you. We might even find it in the archives and be able to reproduce it.

With this being an online edition and everything being so different, we will carry on our celebrations into 2021 so, if you’re looking for something to do – now you have it! Remember how it felt to see your photo, drawing, floral arrangement, award, celebration in your Blackhall Bulletin. Drop us an e mail and tell us about it. It doesn’t need to be much, just a line or two. Share your happiness, pride or even surprise with us.

Or you can just write and tell us what you enjoy about the Bulletin so we can keep doing things you enjoy reading. The e mail address is below.
Ed.

bulletin@blackhallstcolumba.org.uk

BLACKHALL HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

Like many other clubs, due to the Covid 19 outbreak, our meetings came to an abrupt end in early March. But like numerous other clubs and groups the value of social media in promoting and updating the wider community became obvious. The 'horti' has a Facebook page on which we post up to date gardening tips and offer simple advice to anyone seeking it - of course such advice is given remotely, and our expertise is similar to that used by our good friends on BBC Beechgrove Garden.

It was sad that for the first time in the club's history our annual plant sale could not take place in mid-May and although we updated all social media this did not stop pre-booked advertisements being published. In a similar vein our garden visits were cancelled.

Now, let's be positive and remember that the 'horti' meetings will start again on Monday 12th October at 7.45pm in the small hall at St. Columba's Church. Throughout the summer months use every available minute in the garden relaxing and making Blackhall a riot of gardening.

Please have a look at our website at: <https://e-voice.org.uk/blackhall-horticultural-society/>

John MacLennan, Hon. President



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KNIT & NATTER

Like everything else, Knit and Natter had to stop meeting in March, but that does not mean there have been idle hands. I have been in touch with as many of the group as possible and needles are still clicking away. We may be missing out on the nattering but that isn't stopping us.

It was pointed out to us that our Nativity, or Knitivity as I heard it referred to, was missing a donkey and we were given a pattern to remedy this before this Christmas.

Lilian Cockburn

stcknitnatter@gmail.com



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NEVER GIVE UP, NEVER DESPAIR

- THAT WAS THE MESSAGE OF VE DAY

I speak to you today at the same hour as my father did, exactly 75 years ago. His message then was a salute to the men and women at home and abroad who had sacrificed so much in pursuit of what he rightly called a “great deliverance”.

The war had been a total war; it had affected everyone, and no one was immune from its impact. Whether it be the men and women called up to serve; families separated from each other; or people asked to take up new roles and skills to support the war effort, all had a part to play. At the start, the outlook seemed bleak, the end distant, the outcome uncertain. But we kept faith that the cause was right - and this belief, as my father noted in his broadcast, carried us through.



Never give up, never despair - that was the message of VE Day. I vividly remember the jubilant scenes my sister and I witnessed with our parents and Winston Churchill from the balcony of Buckingham Palace. The sense of joy in the crowds who gathered outside and across the country was profound, though while we celebrated the victory in Europe, we knew there would be further sacrifice. It was not until August that fighting in the Far East ceased and the war finally ended.

Many people laid down their lives in that terrible conflict. They fought so we could live in peace, at home and abroad. They died so we could live as free people in a world of free nations. They risked all so our families and neighbourhoods could be safe. We should and will remember them.

As I now reflect on my father’s words and the joyous celebrations, which some of us experienced first-hand, I am thankful for the strength and courage that the United Kingdom, the Commonwealth and all our allies displayed.

The wartime generation knew that the best way to honour those who did not come back from the war, was to ensure that it didn’t happen again. The greatest tribute to their sacrifice is that countries who were once sworn enemies are now friends, working side by side for the peace, health and prosperity of us all.

Today it may seem hard that we cannot mark this special anniversary as we would wish. Instead we remember from our homes and our doorsteps. But our streets are not empty; they are filled with the love and the care that we have for each other. And when I look at our country today and see what we are willing to do to protect and support one another, I say with pride that we are still a nation those brave soldiers, sailors and airmen would recognise and admire.

I send my warmest good wishes to you all.



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VE DAY 75TH ANNIVERSARY

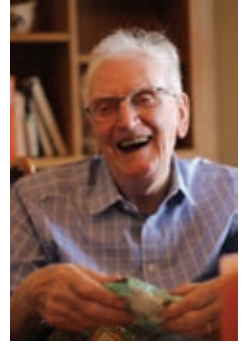
Some members of the St Columba's family Share their memories of VE Day and life then.



I was in Madras on VE Day, swimming in the sea which we later discovered was not a wise thing to do, strong tides and big waves. I had mixed emotions on hearing the news, pleased it was over but saddened by the huge loss of life.

It wasn't over for us though as my unit was preparing to fight the Japanese and we all knew what a difficult task that would be, however, we took confidence from Field Marshal Slim.

John Pettigrew



I was 9 years old when the war ended. We were days away from starvation in what was called the Hunger Winter of 44/45. When things were going bad for the Germans, they took as much food as possible from the population to feed their troops. We lived in Haarlem, between Amsterdam and the coast and not far from the famous bulb fields. So for weeks we lived on grass and tulip bulbs. A couple of days after the liberation Canadian soldiers gave the children rides on their tanks and give us sweets and chocolate bars. Not a good idea after a diet of grass and bulbs, and I was sick all over his tank and I don't think I was the only one. After a few days emergency food came in and I especially remember white bread and margarine from Sweden. A lot of people still died when they ate too much of the bread at once and I remember my mother having a stand-up fight with my grandfather because he wanted it all at once and she would only give him a few slices every few hours.

Ria Platt

Lillas Skia doesn't remember much of the day itself. She was too young to be allowed to go to join the dancing in Princes Street Gardens. She remembers from those days the beautiful show of nasturtiums which her father had planted, rambling over the Anderson Shelter roof. They were delighted that the war in Europe had ended but also thought of relatives and friends who had died in the conflict and were aware that there was still fighting going on. Celebration food if you were lucky would be meat paste sandwiches and a fairy cake, if your mother had saved enough from rations (1 egg a week).

People say the situation today is like wartime. It is nothing like it. She went to school and to Girl Guides though carrying a torch to see the way home in the dark. The local tennis courts had been turned into allotments and potatoes and vegetables were grown for use at home.

On the first night coming to live in Edinburgh the family had to go into the Anderson shelter but it was half full of water as the house had been empty. As they couldn't use it, they had to go into their neighbour's shelter where she met the girl who became her oldest friend and the girl's younger brother in bed in the shelter looking at this strange girl who had come in.

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Blackhall Guiding



157 Rainbows have been exploring our creativity and learning about charities as we work on the new programme. We are really pleased to have held our Promise Ceremony before our weekly meetings stopped due to the lockdown started in March. There are still plenty of Guiding activities to do at home such as our Interest Badges and Girlguiding UK 'Adventures at Home' via the website. We are looking forward to when we can meet again as a unit. **Claire - 157 Rainbow Leader.**



202A Brownies have been making some fun crafts including Russian Dolls and special Tea cards for the mums. We'd also been practicing our skipping and keeping fit with the help of Zumba with Gabi and a Karate lesson with Alan. With the suspension of meetings due to lockdown, we moved online and have met and managed to do all sorts of activities including crafting, bingo and scavenger hunts. We have had some guest speakers along to share information. **Pam- 202A Brownie Leader**



202nd Guides have fundraised for Portobello Beach Wheelchairs, Bridge 8 Hub, Maggies and Corstorphine Emergency Response this year. We've done kayaking at Bridge 8 Hub and had great First Aid training from Corstorphine Emergency Response. We've also continued Guiding throughout the lockdown, by doing Zoom meetings. We've had some really interesting guest speakers and learned about gender stereotypes. We've also continued doing badges and even undertaken a virtual camp! **Lorna - 202 Guides Leader**



Blackhall Rangers have been working on self-improvement this term by learning about healthy cooking and taking on new physical activities. They made a tasty low-fat version of butter chicken at the start of the term and followed this by learning some new relaxing yoga exercises - the latter of which has been particularly helpful during these uncertain times. We look forward to seeing one another after lockdown but until then, the Rangers have been able to work independently on their badges via online resources. **Chelsie - Ranger Leader**

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BLACKHALL NURSERY NEWS

SUMMER TERM



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.

The summer term is usually such a busy and happy time as the Nursery year comes to an end and we say goodbye to the children who are moving on to school and see the excitement of the younger children who will return as 'big children' after the long holidays. This year however, our time together came to an abrupt and sudden end. The Government announced the closure of all schools and nurseries, and this currently remains in place. Prior to this, the children had taken part in activities such as a Road Safety Walk, including a visit from Pauline, the school crossing patrol, who demonstrated how to cross the road safely. The Primary 7 Fairtrade Committee from Blackhall Primary School presented a PowerPoint demonstrating their learning and we all enjoyed watching 'Pablo Super Banana!' World Book Day saw the children bring in their favourite book to share, and both staff and children dressed up as book characters. The Nursery Staff continue to keep in touch with families and hope that everyone is staying safe and well at home.

Blackhall Nursery is a registered Scottish charity working in partnership with the City of Edinburgh Council. This August will see us begin to offer 1140 hours to all children who attend the Nursery. This will be provided through full-time sessions of 6 hours per day (8.35am -2.35pm) in term time only. Parents can opt in for an extra hour per day (2.35-3.35pm) for a small fee.

We are a feeder nursery for Blackhall Primary School and **all places are free and funded by the City of Edinburgh Council**. The Nursery enjoys an excellent reputation within the community but don't take our word for it, please take a look at the parents' comments on our recent Care Inspectorate report available at www.careinspectorate.com.

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 requesting an application form via email at staff@blackhallnursery.co.uk

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BLACKHALL PRIMARY SCHOOL

Primaries 5 and 6 worked with Scottish Opera to put on Warriors! The Emperor's Incredible Army



To prepare for our performance with the Scottish Opera of 'Warriors! The Emperor's Incredible Army' we spent time in class with our teacher, learning and practicing the songs. One class of Primary 5 were the soldiers, the other were the builders and one Primary 6 class were the peasants. The other Primary 6 class were split in two, half joining the soldiers and the other half joining the builders. - Zachary P5B

During our art lessons we made terracotta warriors out of real terracotta clay, as this is what we had been learning about during our opera rehearsals. The clay is made of mud and water. It took three weeks to make them as we only worked on them on a Tuesday. The real builders in ancient China took years and years because they made eight thousand soldiers and many more things. They made them for the Emperor so he could use them in the afterlife. The Emperor was very worried about his mortality. He got tonnes of people to search the earth for something that would make him immortal. The builders made the Great Wall of China and the Emperor's resting toom, which is very impressive. - Stina P5B

On the day of the actual performance some people from the Scottish Opera came in to work with us. Our group were soldiers and so we wore a blue velvet, environmentally friendly material which was very warm. There were also some masks for some of us which didn't smell very nice! The builders group wore a terracotta coloured top, trousers and hat. Finally, the peasants wore yellow and lime green tops and trousers, with a woven hat. The people from the Scottish Opera were lovely and they helped us lots by teaching us the chorography for the performance. They were also amazing singers- Isla A P5B

Just before the performance started, we prepared by putting on our costumes and settling into our ready positions which the people at the Scottish Opera had taught us. We had to stay quiet whilst the parents came in and then the introduction played. We had to try and remember the counts before we could stand up, when we had to move, to watch the opera performance at the back to help us and of course we had to remember to sing the song lyrics as well! Each group had their own song and chorography to perform but when it came to the end song, we all sang together! The front row also had to wear terracotta masks which were quite hot and sweaty but they were okay in the end. The performance went so well, and all the parents loved it, it was such a nice feeling to know that all our hard work and practice had paid off! - Isla M P5B

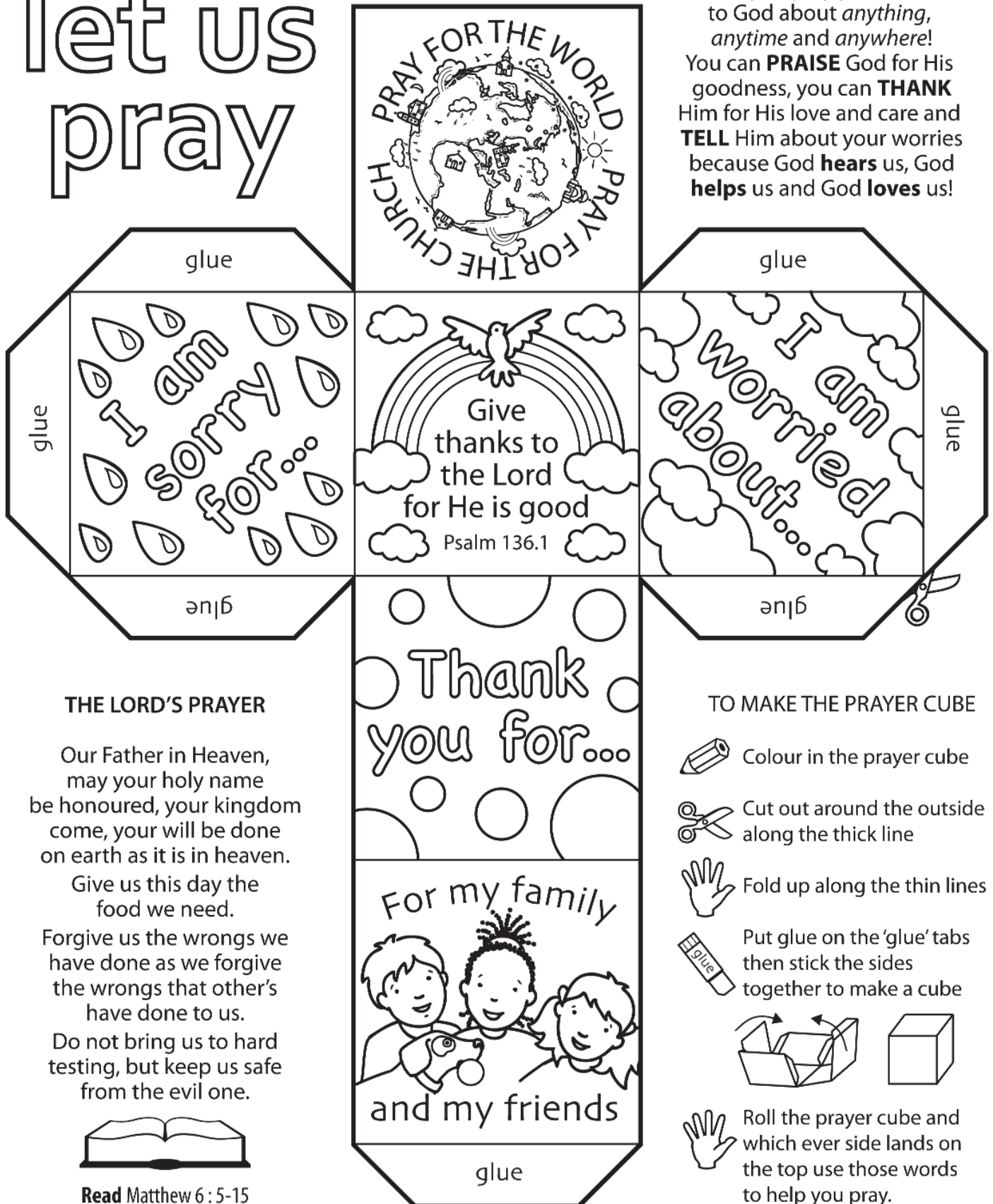
BLACKHALL PRIMARY SCHOOL

Primary 4 classes have used different techniques to create some amazing art works of stormy days and kings and queens



let us pray

When you pray you can talk to God about *anything, anytime and anywhere!* You can **PRAISE** God for His goodness, you can **THANK** Him for His love and care and **TELL** Him about your worries because God **hears** us, God **helps** us and God **loves** us!



THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father in Heaven, may your holy name be honoured, your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day the food we need.





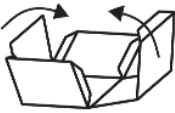


Forgive us the wrongs we have done as we forgive the wrongs that other's have done to us.

Do not bring us to hard testing, but keep us safe from the evil one.



Read Matthew 6 : 5-15

TO MAKE THE PRAYER CUBE

-  Colour in the prayer cube
-  Cut out around the outside along the thick line
-  Fold up along the thin lines
-  Put glue on the 'glue' tabs then stick the sides together to make a cube
-  
-  Roll the prayer cube and which ever side lands on the top use those words to help you pray.



The Blackhall Probus Club is part of a world-wide movement which organizes social events for retired men in the local area. With a membership of just over fifty, we meet on the first and third Thursday of the month from October through to April 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 diverse range of subjects. We normally finish around 12:00.

With the spread of Covid-19, our Committee took the decision to cancel our meetings from the 19th March to avoid the risk of infection, preempting the Government lockdown decision. We expect social distancing to be required until the end of this year, particularly for our age group, therefore we have made the decision not to publish our 2020-21 Syllabus as it is highly unlikely that “things will be back to normal” and safe to start the new session on 1st October. We will continue to review Government guidance and give an update in the next issue of The Blackhall Bulletin and directly to our membership.

Our Spring Lunch and Pitlochry Festival Theatre Outings both had to be cancelled but we can look back on an otherwise excellent year of talks and good fellowship.

We will provide an update in the next Blackhall Bulletin as to when we will start the next session and welcome new members.

Neil McIntosh, Secretary, Blackhall Probus Club.
Phone: 0131 312 6164 Email: neil.mcintosh@blueyonder.co.uk
27 Hillpark Way, Edinburgh, EH4 7ST.



The sudden cessation of our activities in early March has resulted in our members being forced to be otherwise occupied on a Wednesday morning - in fact this period of lockdown and how it affects our members has been challenging. Hopefully the occasional phone call from the committee has been of value. Our final meeting, on Wednesday 4 March, was our fundraising event for Autism Initiatives with well in excess of £300 being raised.

It was agreed that we would hold our Annual General Meeting when we reconvened in early autumn and at that stage Larry Walls will step up to be our President. The lockdown has been an interesting episode and perhaps it is pleasing to hear that many skills that have not been in use for numerous years having their rebirth. Examples of these are the skills of fence painting and paving slab pointing, and, during our daily walks in greater Blackhall and Silverknowes passing our members' homes it has been a joy to see these successes.

We hope that Stan da Prato will return to the club and tell us about the Changing Wildlife of our Coasts, although a better theme could be the Changing Wildlife of Edinburgh Suburbia and simple identification of the numerous fauna that has been noted in our gardens ranging from chaffinches to badgers.

Jim Martin, our Speakers Secretary has the programme of talks for winter 2020-21 fully prepared but until we know when we can cease our social isolation and commence our social inclusion, we will not circulate these. We do hope our first meeting will be on Wednesday 7 October at 10am for coffee, followed at 10.30am by a talk.

As one of the more proactive local Probud Clubs we look forward to welcoming any semi-retired or retired men to our meetings. If you would like more information please just email us on infocpc21@gmail.com or look at our webpage <https://craigleithprobus.myfreesites.net>.

John MacLennan Past President

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Sunday 5th July**

Please send all items to the Editor,
Christine Denham, c/o Church Office
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**Blackhall Bulletin-
Sunday 26th July**

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