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December 2017

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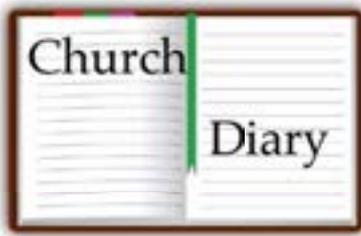
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Flowers in Church December 2017

This month the flowers will be donated as follows:-

3rd Mrs Kinness

10th Mrs J. Skilton

17th Mrs M. Purves

Mrs Jacque Lowe and Mrs Lesley Johnson will be delivering the flowers.

Violet Troup

(Flower Convener)



DECEMBER 2017

- 3rd 11.00 am Moming Worship – with Edinburgh University Brass Band
- 10th 11.00 am Family Gift Service
- 13th 12 noon Mid Week Service
- 17th 11.00 am Moming Worship – 9 Lessons and Carols
- 17th 2-3 pm Carols at Sainsbury's, Craigleith
- 19th 4.00pm Strachan House Service
- 24th 11.00 am Moming Worship
- 7.00 pm Christmas Eve Family Service
- 11.00 pm Carols round the Christmas Tree
- 11.15 pm Watch Night Service at 11.15pm
- 25th 10.30 am Christmas Day Service
- 31st 11.00 am Moming Worship with Short Communion

JANUARY 2018

- 7th 9.30am Early Family Service
- 11.00am Moming Worship
- 10th 12 noon Mid Week Service
- 14th 11.00am Moming Worship
- 21st 11.00am Moming Worship
- 24th 12 noon Mid Week Service
- 28th 11.00am Moming Worship
- 30th 4.00pm Strachan House Service

FEBRUARY 2018

- 4th 9.30am Early Family Service
- 11.00am Moming Worship
- 7th 12 noon Mid Week Service
- 11th 11.00am Moming Worship
- 18th 11.00am Moming Worship
- 21st 12 noon Mid Week Service
- 25th 9.30am Communion Sunday
- 11.00am Communion Sunday
- 27th 4.00pm Strachan House Service

FAMILY NEWS

DEATHS

14th August Mr Norman Nicholson

18th August Miss Sheila Sinclair

26th September Mrs Sheila Milne



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CHRISTMAS FAIR

By the time you receive this our Christmas Fair will be over. On behalf of all the stallholders, the WA†CH Committee of Blackhall St Columba's Church would sincerely like to thank all the businesses, members of the congregation and friends for their donations, help and support for the Christmas Fair on 2nd December.

This year the proceeds from the Fair are going to Clowndoctors and the Building for the Future project.



A full list of the business donations and the overall sum raised will be in the March Bulletin.

George Millar
WA†CH Committee



PRAYER CORNER

Psalm 27 v 14: Trust in the Lord, have faith, do not despair. Trust in the Lord.

The curtain has come down, the prayers have gone up, and the light of God's word and will are now focussed on the 'happening' in question. *Wait for the Lord*, linger a while longer for Him in humility, prayer and thanksgiving. Look for him eagerly and expect the living God to act and respond mightily to you.

Be strong be encouraged, turn your attention from the 'happening' and focus on your relationship with your living, loving God. Of course our common sense and emotions will constantly fight against it, insisting that we concentrate on the issue at hand. But there is absolutely nothing more important than getting peace before God. *Take Heart* whenever your heart fails you, whenever you feel faint, be determined to experience his courage. Let it pulse through your inner being, emboldening your will, mind and soul!

Be bold, be strong for the Lord your God is with you.

Wait for the Lord. He is coming to you in strength and glory.

Dear Jesus. I love you and expect you and I will wait for you for I know you are doing great things.

Isaiah 20 v 15: In returning and rest you shall be saved. In quietness and confidence shall be your strength. Amen.

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Christmas Hope



Critics of religion, and of Christianity in particular, have likened belief in God to belief in Santa Claus or the Tooth Fairy. It's nothing but a charming story for those with childlike belief, but now that we are adults, the critics say that that time is over.

Childish stories may lead to childish fleeting emotions or temporary wonder, and they may even inspire heart-warming ads or films. But they simply don't have the power to inspire lasting works of art that perpetuate our emotion and wonder. The paintings of the great masters, like Rembrandt's *Adoration of the Shepherds*, or music like Handel's *Messiah*, come from a message much deeper than the secularized trappings of the modern holiday season. They come from the history of Jesus's birth and the theology of what his birth means.

The birth of peace and hope at Christmas, in the person of Jesus, does more than inspire art and language. It inspires action. In the winter of 1914, the First World War was only five months old and already about 800,000 men had been wounded or killed. On France's Western Front, British and German soldiers had been fiercely fighting. On Christmas Eve that year, they braced themselves for yet another day of bombs and bloodshed. But that day would be different from all others.

British soldiers in the trenches raised signs reading "Merry Christmas" and sang Christmas carols. Soon, they heard Christmas carols coming from the German trenches. On Christmas morning, both sides rose from their trenches and met in the middle of No Man's Land. They sang songs and engaged in conversations together. They exchanged sweets and cigars. And in one spot, they played football. Along the front the spontaneous truce continued into the next day, with neither side willing to fire the first shot. The truce ended when fresh troops arrived. Enemies, who only days before had been engaged in fierce combat, had acted as if they were brothers. If it was possible then, between World War I's horrid trenches, it is possible again.

May I suggest something rather daring? Nothing else could have inspired the Christmas truce. No secular sloganeering encouraging soldiers to stop worrying and enjoy their lives could have bridged *No Man's Land's* gap. No political speech and no *New Age* call to unity could have turned *No Man's Land* into a joyful-filled playground. Only the story of Hope's birth could do that, even if only for a moment. Perhaps that's why Christmas does more than just break winter's gloominess with a cup of cheer.

Jesus's birth is indeed hope's birth, which blossoms at Easter. We hint at the interaction between Christmas and Easter in the song '*O Holy Night*':

*O holy night, the stars are brightly shining
It is the night of our dear Saviour's birth.
Long lay the world in sin and error pining,
Till he appeared and the souls felt its worth.
The thrill of hope, the weary world rejoices,
For yonder breaks a new and glorious morn.*

My dear friend, Jesus didn't come into the world to give us only good words and profound examples of moral living. He came specifically to provide a rescue for every human heart, to rescue us from sin and spiritual death by paying the penalty we couldn't afford to pay ourselves. In Jesus's own words, he came into the world as God incarnate to offer himself as a rescue so that we can be saved (Mark 10:45). Christmas is not just the birth of someone whose example helped humanity. It's the birth of the One who saves humanity from itself. In a paradox of time, Easter's hope gives rise to Christmas's joy.

Of course, the world wasn't suddenly made perfect over 2000 years ago and it certainly isn't perfect now. Indeed, the Bible doesn't paint such a shallow picture for us even as it narrates Jesus's birth. His advent is surrounded by pain. The selfish and hateful King Herod wanted the Messiah exterminated so that he could remain king. And so, he ordered the deaths of children who fitted the Messiah's profile in Bethlehem. For the parents of those children, the nights before Jesus's birth were anything but silent or peaceful. And yet, in the midst of it all, God came as a child, and through Him, he offers us hope through the joy of his Son's birth.

My friend, sometimes battlefield miracles cause peace to break out. And sometimes eloquent preaching breathes through the halls of nursing homes or hospital wards. But all of that, the pain and the joy, the beauty and the ugliness, are but echoes emerging from a manger where the wordless infant carried within himself the message that God so loves the world. All of our human expressions of joy, hope, and peace are footnotes to the embodied message of the Christ-child.

Let me encourage you, in the midst of cynicism, violence, uncertainty and of it all, to have joy and peace because of the hope Jesus offers.

Wishing you a blessed Christmas and a Happy and peaceful New Year,

Benjamin
(Minister)



We have received plans and illustrations from our architects Lee Boyd for proposed alterations to the Sanctuary and halls at Blackhall St Columba's Church. These are on display in the vestibule of the Church, the large and small halls and the corridor between the halls and on the Church website. We hope that as many people as possible will view these ideas and let us have comments (see below). The Church is right at the centre of the community of Blackhall and as such apart from being a place of worship the halls are a very useful meeting place for organisations and meetings all year round. It is important to us that the community is kept fully informed.

We welcome comments, suggestions and questions. If these can be made by email or in writing to the Church Office they will be acknowledged and answered as soon as possible after receipt.

Email: BStC.Building4Future@gmail.com

Website: www.blackhallstcolumba.org.uk

This is an ambitious and costly project which we hope will make our buildings more welcoming and suitable for 21st Century purpose. It will not be a quick process as no decisions have yet been made and further ideas are to come very soon. A second set of plans and illustrations will be displayed as soon as agreed by The Kirk Session. These will be a smaller and less costly version of the first ones. No action will be taken until the congregation and Kirk Session have come to an agreement. It will not be a quick process as consents, and planning permission have to be sought. The necessary funds need to be found.

At the present time all "plans" and illustrations are just visions and are not set in stone. We need the input of every interested party whether Church or community member. If you cannot access the halls or the website please let us know and we will try to assist you in seeing it all.

FRESH START

'What you have done for me....has been outstandingly brilliant'. This is a comment from John (name changed).

Over the last two weeks, we have been working with John, who became homeless after the property owner of the furnished flat where he lived asked him to leave. Sadly, he spent the next 12 months sleeping on the couches of his friends and associates. Fortunately, he was allocated a Support Worker from the Salvation Army, who helped him to get a new tenancy from the Council. He was quite anxious about moving onto the property, telling me that *'the flat was completely bare and empty'*. His support worker helped him access furniture through Bethany and made a referral to ourselves. We were able to help him with a number of our Starter Packs (e.g. bedding, towels, toiletries, a food pack, crockery, pots and pans and a microwave). We also completed the second day of his Hit Squad on Tuesday, which gave us the opportunity to paint both his living room and bedroom. Big thanks to all involved for your support.

Here's what our client Wendy had to say about her time spent with the Hit Squad *'The hit team I got were just so nice, helpful and hardworking they were very keen & professional. After about 5 minutes of the team being in my house, I felt like I had known them for a long time. I enjoyed myself painting, they showed me new tricks of the trade I wanted to keep them. So so happy and I must say a huge thank you to Jen for putting it all together'*

Thank you to everyone who generously contributes items for the Fresh Start starter packs. The impact of your donations is echoed in John's comments. The board in the hall corridor has a list of the items Fresh Start put in their starter packs and items that they particularly need for the packs just now.



Though we, as a church, concentrate on collecting items for Starter Packs, Fresh Start also provides cooking courses and growing spaces. Autumn saw jams and chutneys produced at the Food Station in Harrison Place. The Fresh Start website "what we do page" <http://www.freshstartweb.org.uk/what-we-do> gives an indication of the range of activities carried out by Fresh Start.

Edinburgh Floral Art Club

Our meetings are held in Blackhall St Columba's Church Hall at 2 pm. You are most welcome to join us for our next meetings where you can watch beautiful flowers being arranged and enjoy a cup of tea and a chat. Our next meeting is on **December 8th** when Coral Gardiner from Bath will arrange "Festive Highlights". There is no meeting in January, but we would be pleased to see you on the **9th of February** when the club entertains.

Visitors pay £7 a meeting or why not become a member for £40?



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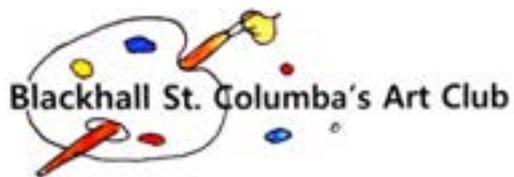
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The Blackhall St Columba's Art Club started its new session at the end of September with around fifty members enjoying good company, painting and sketching and the friendly guidance of our tutor, Diana Jackson. We meet on either a Monday or Tuesday morning, and we also have a couple of informal lunches each year which gives us a chance to meet up with other members who attend on a different day. If you are interested in joining us then please give Anne McLennan, our membership secretary, a ring on 336 4327.

We shall be having a small exhibition of members' work in Blackhall Library from 16th December 2017 to 13th January 2018, so why not pop in and have a look at our work (and maybe even treat yourself or a friend to a picture!).

If you have your new 2018 diary now, then please put in the dates of our Annual Exhibition - 2nd- 6th May 2018. Bring your friends and family along and have a browse and a coffee.

PMcC

Fellowship Afternoon Group

Once again this month will see us enjoying a Christmas Lunch together at the Bruntsfield Golf Club.

Our programme so far started with an enthusiastic Beetle Drive. This was followed by a talk about The Hope International School in Phnom Penh.

The speaker was Morag Campbell, a retired teacher, who travelled from Glasgow to



tell us about the school. The 270 pupils are the children of international Christian workers in Cambodia where Buddhism is the major religion. We heard about the country (whose flag is the only one in the world to display a palace), about Morag's call to venture so far away when retirement was looming, as well as hearing about what the school is achieving.

At the time of writing we are awaiting a presentation for November about The Nazareth Trust who have just moved their HQ to Edinburgh.

On January 16 at 2.15 we will be having another ex-teacher, Alison Elfick, tell us about her Patchwork Craft and displaying some of her work. Anyone who is interested is invited to come along and join us.

Our group is a community one which would welcome new members. Come along and see if it could be for you.

F.D

Tuesday Topics

Tuesday Topics is now well established into the 2017 - 2018 syllabus, however it is not too late to come and join us on a Tuesday evening at 7.30pm in Blackhall, St Columba's Church small hall. The meetings take place on alternate Tuesdays.

We have already enjoyed speakers talking on a variety of subjects that provoked thoughts, memories, and interest. Our meetings are informal and open to all. If you wish to become a member, membership costs £15, but if you would simply like to visit from time to time there is a small charge of £2 per visit. Meetings last approximately 75 minutes, ending with a cup of tea / coffee and plenty of chat.

The topic of our meeting on the 21st November was 'Lost Edinburgh' which was presented by Simon Green of Historic Environment in Scotland.

The 2nd December, although not a meeting is the Church Christmas Fair and we ask our members to make sweets for the Sweet Stall.

December 12th, our next meeting, is a musical evening by Quern. This is a night not to be missed. Quern, a small group of singers, have been entertaining for 30 years, and it is fitting they are helping us mark our 30 years as Tuesday Topics. We have one or two of the original members still very active members now.

On 9th January we will go out for a Post Christmas Meal, which is usually enjoyed by all.

The meeting on 23rd January is different again with Jane Tulloch coming to tell us about her novel 'Assuring you of our Best Attention'. Set in an Edinburgh department store of distinction it may be a bit familiar to you.

If this has caught your interest you will be able to see our full syllabus on the Church website.

www.blackhallstcolumba.org.uk

Simply go to website, and then on to Community Groups, then click on Tuesday Topics.

If you would rather speak to someone please contact;
Diana Taylor. President. **0131 336 3616**
Sheena Wilson. Secretary **0131 332 4078**

NORTH WEST HERITAGE

Our meetings for the beginning of 2018, to which everyone is invited, are as follows:

Thursday 18th January 2018: **Mills on the Water of Leith Water of Leith Conservation Trust** : Davidson's Mains Parish Church Hall 7.30 pm

Thursday 22nd February 2018 : **Living Memory Association Speaker Miles Tubb** : St. Columba's Church , Blackhall 7.30 pm

Blackhall Community Trust Update Winter 2017

Blackhall Community Trust is now a Scottish charity and a company limited by guarantee. We hold three public meetings a year, have a growing membership and a thriving mailing list of residents (see below for details on how to join/support us). We are members of the Development Trusts Association Scotland.

Our **next public meeting** (our AGM) is on Tuesday March 6 at 7.30pm in St Columba's Small Hall. Refreshments (including home-baking) will be served.

Community Priorities: A Community Hub, more places at Blackhall Nursery and recreational opportunities and facilities for all ages

These are exciting times – we have been approved for our City of Edinburgh Council Stage 1 Community Asset Transfer application to transfer ownership of Ravelston Park Pavilion to Blackhall Community Trust on behalf of the Blackhall community. We now move on to Stage 2. Meanwhile, we have applied for grant funding from the Scottish Land Fund for over £15,000 to support this asset transfer process. If successful, we can commission a business plan, feasibility studies, building surveys and initial designs for Ravelston Park Pavilion to ensure that it is fit for purpose for Blackhall Nursery and as a community hub.

We now run the following groups and activities, in response to requests from local residents:

- A monthly book club which meets at Blackhall Nursery, Ravelston Park Pavilion – two sessions have been held so far
- A monthly walking group – two walks have taken place, one on Corstorphine Hill and one along the Water of Leith
- A monthly coffee morning for those who are recently retired, are new to the area or feel a bit isolated and would like to connect to the community (six held so far in Cloudberry, Blackhall). Our latest coffee morning was on Thursday 30 November 10-11.30am, Cloudberry, Blackhall. If you check there or contact us we can tell you when the next one will be – Christmas festivities changing the dates.
- A pop up café to tie in with the Blackhall School Parent Staff Association's gardening days.

Please email or write to us if you are interested in joining any of the above activities. We are very happy to look into organising other events or activities – just let us know what you would like.

If you would like to become a member of Blackhall Community Trust (at no cost, with a liability of only £1 and with voting rights), join our Board or join our email database, contact us by email via blackhallcommunitytrust@gmail.com or post c/o Blackhall Nursery, Ravelston Park Pavilion, Craigcrook Rd EH4 3RU.

Otherwise, show your support by following us on Facebook or Twitter

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Visit our website/blog: www.blackhallcommunitytrust.wordpress.com

Tina Woolnough, Chair, Blackhall Community Trust

Blackhall Community Trust is a company limited by guarantee, registered in Scotland SC551774. Scottish Charity SC047250.

What's happening in Blackhall in December ?

Why not join us celebrating Christmas in St Columba's ?

3 rd	11.00 am Morning Worship – with Edinburgh University Brass Band
10 th	11.00 am Family Gift Service
17 th	11.00 am Morning Worship – 9 Lessons and Carols
17 th	2-3 pm Carols at Sainsbury's, Craigleith
24 th	11.00 am Morning Worship 7.00 pm Christmas Eve Family Service 11.00 pm Carols round the Christmas Tree
	11.15 pm Watch Night Service at 11.15pm
25 th	10.30 am Christmas Day Service

Carol Singing at Sainsburys

Once again members of Blackhall St Columba's will be carol singing at Sainsburys on **Sunday 17th**

December between 2 and 3 pm.

Everyone welcome so do come along and join in the fun!

This year we are collecting for our WATCH charities for 2017 Clowndoctors and Building for the Future.



Wishing all our readers

A Merry Christmas

And a Happy New Year



Christmas celebrations in BLACKHALL VILLAGE

Thurs 7th Dec 6.30 – 8.30pm

ILLUMINATION OF CHRISTMAS LIGHTS BY
REV. BENJAMIN ABELEDO AT 7.00PM

Carols Sung by the Children of Blackhall Primary School * Festive Brass Band 6.30pm * Mulled Wine at Cafe Citron * Wild & Smoky Grill * Festive Curls at Angus Gordon * Meet Trolls & Minions in Orange Tree Yoga/Laura Weaver Pilates Studio * Tombola, Mulled Wine & Shortbread at Discover Chiropractic * Wine and Nibbles in Bruce Collie's Office * Mince Pies, Nails & Fizz at Beautique * Sparkly Tattoos & Tombola at Cloudberry * Lizzie's Cupcakes * Santa's Grotto at Aiken & Niven * Stocking Fillers, Pocket Money Gifts & Face Painting plus amazing Indian Food from Bangla Kitchen at Maddie & Mark's Shoes * Bowling Club for Bar, Fun & Games * Blackhall Primary PSA, Sports Committee, Guides, Nursery & Playgroup are all supporting the festive fun with Christmas Stalls and more in Bruce Collie's Yard * Fundraising in aid of Nordoff Robbins.

Thank you to the Blackhall businesses who contributed to the running of this event and also to Blackhall & Craigleith Community Group for providing the Christmas tree.

BLACKHALL HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

The winter meetings of the 'horti' are progressing well. In October we enjoyed a romp around South East China with Simon Crutchley when Simon entertained us with stories of his plant collecting trips. The virtues of Permaculture were explained fully by Kate Everett in November. Kate helped us be more aware that, as gardeners, we need to do our best to protect our planet. The logic, plus workable systems were outlined so that we can all take a more sustainable and self-sufficient approach to our gardening.



Our meeting on 11th December will focus on growing flowers for cutting in the garden. All too often when visiting the florist the choice is limited to what can be grown successfully under glass or outside often in warmer climes, and so the range is small. Our speaker, Tricia Kennedy, grows her flower crops at the foot of the Pentlands and will tell us the secrets of growing those classic cut flowers of old such as Clarkia, Godetia, Nigella and Stocks.



By early January the gardener is keen to start preparing for spring and so our theme on 8th January is Mulching and we look forward to hearing of its benefits from Fiona Playfair from Garden Solutions, a local producer of garden mulches and compost.

As 2018 progresses we look forward to hearing about Plants for our climate (February), Fruit Growing (March) and Designing gardens (April). You don't need to be a keen gardener or even have a garden to come to the 'horti' meetings. Just pop along to the small hall at St. Columba's church at 7.45pm on the second Monday of these months. We'll be delighted to meet you.

John MacLennan

Hon President.

Reminiscences of Christmas the reason for the season

Remember when Christmas shopping began in December?
Nowadays that fact very difficult to believe,
While superstores display festive ware in September,
Many folks still enjoying annual Summer leave!
Now Yankee 'Black Friday' has invaded festive Season
Greedy billionaire store moguls rub hands with glee
As cash-strapped shoppers battle for gifts, lose reason
During this commercialised over-spending spree
Let's remember true reason for season's celebration
Of lowly stable birth, without fanfare, pageantry,
No floods of gifts for him, just humble adoration,
For that Bethlehem babe's arrival, now legendary
One whose name uplifts the hearts of me and you?
First six letters of 'Christmas' should give you a clue.

Irene W. Clouston



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In the cold, dark days of winter it may seem harder to get out and about and be as active as you are during the warmer summer months. However this doesn't need to be the case - The LOOPs (Local Opportunities for Older People) Phone Line is here to help. Based at Volunteer Edinburgh, the phone line was set up to help connect older people in Edinburgh with things to do in the city. If you are over 65, a family member of someone who is, or a health worker, you can call us to speak to a friendly advisor about activities and clubs in your area. We provide a unique service tailored to the individual needs and interests of our clients. Often transport to and from activities can be an issue, but this is something we can investigate and advise on as well.

Being out and about is so much more than just the activity itself. The social aspect is just as important, especially as we grow older. Once we reach retirement, we often find our social circles have become smaller, or our families more disparate. Joining a group brings routine, new faces, great conversation and simply a chance to get out of the house.

Since opening in late 2014 we have helped over 1500 callers to reconnect with old interests, find new hobbies and make new friends. Often the call comes from a friend, family member or health professional looking for advice on someone else's behalf.

Blackhall and the surrounding areas are well served for activities. If you would like to join an art or knitting group, get some gentle exercise or simply meet new people for lunch or a cup of tea, give us a call and we will find something that suits your needs.

Recently we have created a new Facebook group called "Just Retired Edinburgh". As the name suggests this is aimed at those who have recently retired and may be looking for a new interest or hobby in the next stage of their lives. Just search the name in Facebook and join-up.

We also run a regular programme of events throughout the year, recent examples have included a Tell Your Tale reminiscence event as part of the Luminare creative ageing festival and a fashion show. We have also launched a recipe book containing a range of delicious dishes gathered from local community groups.

With 20% of Edinburgh's population aged 65 and over, there will be a group or activity out there for everyone – let us help you get "oot the hoose".

Call us on **0131 603 8311** or email on **loops@volunteeredinburgh.org.uk**

We are open Monday to Friday, 10am to 4pm.

If you are online you can follow us for all the latest information on the phone line and our upcoming events:

Twitter - @EdinburghLOOPs

Facebook - @edinburghloops

Instagram – loopsphonenumber

Website – **www.loopsphonenumber.org.uk**



Craigleith Probus



Our new session has started well with an excellent talk by Jim Ruxton about *Red Dot Radio* which was followed by Ian Campbell telling us about 'War of the Worlds' and 'The Time Machine'. In November we settled down to learn about the work of a Meteorologist from Martyn Sunter as well as the Conservation of the Scottish Flora from Heather McHaffie. As can be seen we cover a wide range of subjects which have certainly stimulated discussion at our meetings as well as afterwards!

December and early 2018 look just as interesting. On 6th December we look forward to hearing about the 'Silver Darlings' from Simon Fairnie who has an on going interest in the fishing community of Fisherrow, now part of Musselburgh. As Simon has an involvement with the Musselburgh museum I am sure our questions will drift between the two. On 20th December we welcome Janet Halton who will explain about the work of "Nordoff Robbins" music therapy who state that their mission is to 'Make Music – Change Lives'. Music has the power to affect us in different ways. It can be stimulate or sooth; it can stir our emotions and memories, comfort and inspire. If you have an interest in this subject do along to our meeting as a guest.



On 17th January we look forward to hearing about Corporal Wojtek who was a member of the Polish Army in WW2 and served at the Battle of Monte Cassino. What is more interesting is that he was born in Iran in 1942 but sadly died in Edinburgh in 1963. We look forward to hearing about from Aileen Orr how Wojtek got from Iran to join the Polish army and then to Edinburgh Zoo : yes Wojtek was a bear who now has a statue in Princes Street Gardens. Continuing the theme of war but from a different context on 7th February when Ian Garden returns to Craigleith to tell us about '*Telling Lies during War Time*'.



The work of the Citizens Advice Bureau will be our theme on 21st February when our guest Hazel Bett will be explaining the role and function of Citizens Advice within the community but also how we can be of help to this long established organisation.

Craigleith Probus prides itself on being open and friendly to all semi retired or retired gentlemen. As stated before in the Bulletin, we meet at Blackhall Bowling Club on the first and third Wednesdays of the month at 10am for coffee/tea plus chocolate biscuits which is followed by the talk for an hour or so at 10.30am.

JohnMacLennan: Speakers Secretary
infocpc21@gmail.com

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Blackhall children receive thousands of pounds in funding this year from local sports committee

The Blackhall Children's Sports Committee (BCSC) has been in existence for over 100 years. It was formed in 1909 as a voluntary, non-profit, organisation with the aim of promoting and organising children's sports and activities in our own community. Now in 2017 it's just as relevant to the community as it was then, encouraging grassroots activity in sports and helping our community stay fit and healthy.

In 2017, the BCSC awarded almost £6,000 in sports funding to the community. Children who benefit from the awards range from toddlers right up to senior school level. The types of sports funded this year include climbing, swimming, table tennis, athletics, fencing, hockey, netball, tennis, sailing, badminton, outdoor camping, tumble tots and yoga. Preference is given to funding for equipment and coaching fees.

Nine local children received funding this year to assist them in their chosen sport, totalling £1,525. An average award of £169 per individual.

Most of the funding goes towards local groups where the benefit is spread across a wider number of people. This year nine local groups received funding for sporting and healthy activities for children in Blackhall, totalling £4,160. An average award is about £462 per group. Groups supported this year are Blackhall Primary School, Blackhall Athletic Football Club, Blackhall Playgroup, Blackhall Mothers and Toddlers Group, Blackhall Tennis Club, Blackhall Girl Guides and Blackhall School Netball Team.

Last year Blackhall Primary School received funding from the BCSC for the purchase and installation of a climbing wall, matting and a basketball ball hoop in the school playground. The wall and the hoop are very well used by the school children and a great addition to the play area.

Centre photo shows Diane McLachlan, Chair of the BCSC presenting the cheque to the School with climbing wall on left and basketball hoop on right.



Applications for awards each year are held from Jan- April. Individuals or groups based in Blackhall are eligible to apply. Application forms will be available to download from links on our website during this time
<http://www.activeblackhall.com/bcsc/>.

For more information throughout the year we have a Facebook page
<https://www.facebook.com/BlackhallChildrensSC?fref=ts> and Twitter account https://twitter.com/blackhall_csc





Pink Panthers

Explorers Scout Unit

The Pink Panthers meet in the Large Hall on Monday evenings at 8pm. The Unit is open to boys and girls aged 14 to 18. Many of the 30 members are former Scouts in Blackhall, Davidson's Mains and Comely Bank. PPESU works in partnership with the Scout Group (Beavers, Cubs and Scouts).

In July 2017 the Pink Panthers travelled to the Danish National Jamboree "Spejdernes Lejr" and more recently had an overnight hike in the Lomond Hills. The next "camp" is a pre-Christmas weekend at Canty Bay.

www.pinkpantherexplorers.org.uk

leaders@pinkpantherexplorers.org.uk



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Blackhall Guiding

Just because it is getting darker outside does not mean that Blackhall Guiding units are staying indoors. As long as you wrap up warm then there's plenty to do outside in the dark! From torchlit games, to campfires, to spooky exploring, our units are still keen to get out and about as much as they can, no matter the weather!

From all at Blackhall Guiding, we wish you a very Merry Christmas & the best for the new year!



If anyone has been hearing VERY LOUD singing around Blackhall recently, then it has probably been the Rainbows! They are determined that everyone will learn our favourite campfire songs. Now, on the count of three.. There was a

crazy moose...
-Seona, Leader, 157A
Rainbows



Brownies have just returned from an exciting camp in Perthshire, full of adventurous activities. The girls turned into monkeys as they climbed high in the trees; worked together to build a raft,



and then use it to cross the water; and soared through the air on a giant zip wire!
-Nicole, Leader, 202 Brownies



Senior Section have been developing skills for the future, including writing CVs and money management. We held

mock interviews to boost confidence before applying for jobs and held a workshop on cover letter tips & tricks. However, we've also had time to relax, from baking to dance.

-Kate, Leader,
Senior Section



Guides.

Blackhall Guides

Guides got pretty muddy volunteering at the Race for Life fun mud run! From handing out medals at the finish line, to encouraging the runners

& squirting them with water & mud, the Guides were covered in mud by the end of the day! I'm sure the giant mud slide didn't help either!
-Alice, Leader, 157
Guides



Volunteers are needed to help at Rainbow, Brownie and Guide units at Blackhall St. Columba's

What do we want from you?

- Able to spare 1-2 hours a week during term time. (It's no problem if you can't make every week)
- Willing to complete a DBS check (paid for by Girlguiding)
- Enthusiasm for volunteering with children

What's in it for you?

- Great CV experience and potential for references
- Opportunities to complete qualifications including first aid
- Opportunities to go on trips and try new things
- A chance to meet new people
- Guaranteed fun every week!

Contact Alison Will on 332 8425
or blackhallguiding@gmail.com for more information



Blackhall

Nursery News



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.

It is a very busy and exciting time of year in Nursery with the children dancing along to live bagpipes to celebrate St Andrew's Day, learning lots of new songs for our Nativity Play, baking Christmas treats and creating colourful decorations. Although very busy, the children have not forgotten their responsibilities towards looking after the environment and have been recycling paper and making new handmade paper which we are using to decorate our special Christmas cards. Our Alternative Christmas Card project also helps the children to learn about the needs of other children around the world and by raising funds they are able to choose life-changing gifts through the World Vision charity. We are looking forward to our Winter Woodland Walks in Ravelston Woods when we will take some time to observe the changes that are occurring in nature and the children will also keep a tally of how many bat boxes they can spot – there are so many!

Blackhall Nursery is a registered Scottish charity working in partnership with the City of Edinburgh Council. We offer places in morning and afternoon classes, providing sessions of 3 hours 10 minutes for 3-5 year olds during term time*. We are a feeder nursery for Blackhall Primary School and **all places are free and funded by the City of Edinburgh Council.**

***Following interest expressed by local parents in a recent survey, Blackhall Nursery Board is seeking the permission and support of the City of Edinburgh Council to deliver 1140 hours of free early learning and childcare to local children aged 3-5 from August 2018 (up to six hours a day, term time only). If this is of interest, please make sure that your child's name is on our waiting list and we will keep you informed of future developments.**

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.

BLACKHALL PRIMARY SCHOOL

Primary 2 O have been writing rainbow poems

Red as a shiny apple,
Yellow like the sun,
Pink like a pig,
Purple as a plum,
Green as a leaf,
Blue as a whale,
Orange as a sunset.
by Emily M

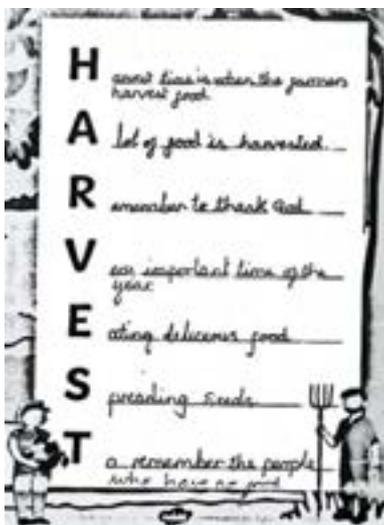
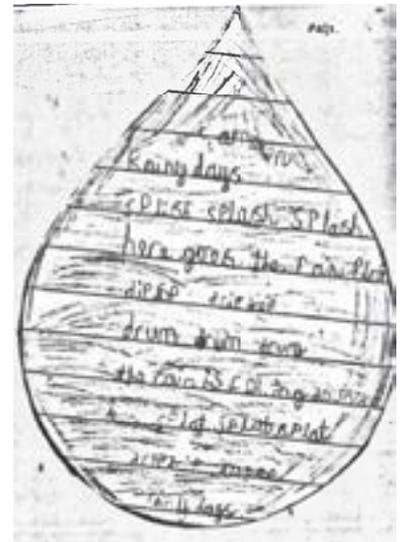
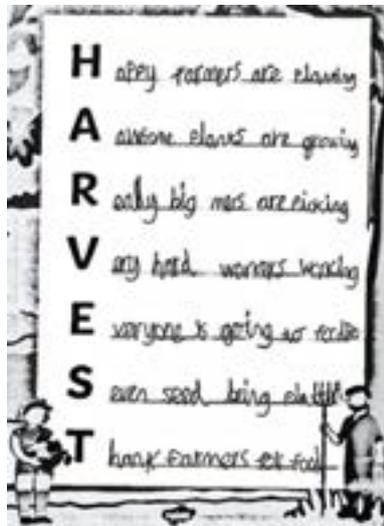
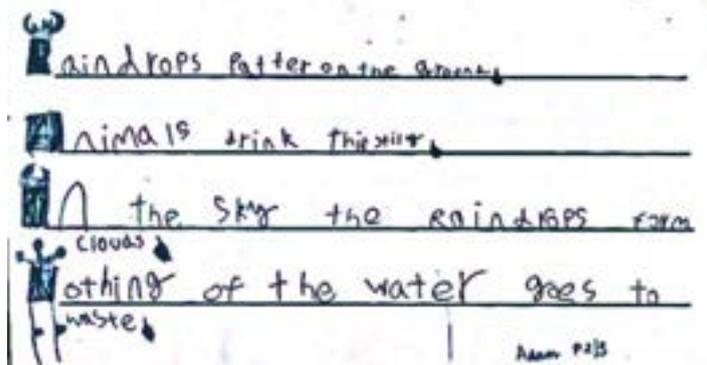
Red as a post box,
Yellow like the sun,
Pink as a pig,
Green as an apple,
Orange as a juicy orange,
Purple like a plum,
Blue as the sky.
by Felicity

Red as a strawberry,
Yellow like the sun,
Pink like a flamingo,
Green as a leaf,
Orange like the juicy orange,
Purple as a plum,
Blue like a blueberry.
by Jess

Red as a shiny apple,
Yellow like the burning sun,
Pink as a waddling pig,
Green like the dry leaf,
Orange like the egg yolk,
Purple as a wizard's hat,
Blue like a juicy blueberry.
by William

BLACKHALL PRIMARY SCHOOL

Primary 2/3 have sent us some acrostic poems and shape poems about rain and P4M acrostics about Harvest Time.



Cramond playgroup has spaces!



If you are looking for childcare or for an opportunity for your child to play with other young children without parents or carers, Cramond Playgroup is just what you need!

Based in north west Edinburgh, Cramond Playgroup is an established playgroup with a fully qualified team. They offer a wide range of educational and fun activities across two rooms, and the biggest perk is there's no parent rota!

They currently have spaces for children aged 3 - 5 years and there is a waiting list for under 3s (children can join the waiting list from birth).

Cramond Playgroup:

Children aged 2 - 5 years

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Please contact us at cramond.waitlist@gmail.com to register your child



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CHRISTMAS CARDS

Time to write your Christmas cards again – what designs have you picked to send this year? Are they religious ones?

Look in the shops at all the different designs, traditional and modern. Traditional religious cards have usually included the nativity – Mary, Joseph and the baby Jesus. But what else would you count as religious? The Three Kings? The Bible doesn't say they were kings, or that there were three; just that they were Wise Men, who travelled far to bring special gifts for the baby Jesus.

Do you know why there are so many robins on Christmas cards? The first postmen in Victorian times wore red and were called robins, so robins were shown as delivering cards.



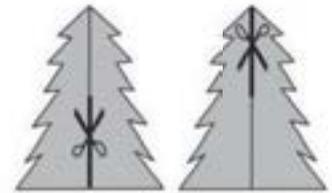
Whatever kind of card you send this year, be sure to include a kind message with love for your friends. Our love is a tiny echo of God's love for all the world.

CARD or DECORATION

Here is a simple 3-D Christmas tree that you can use as a decoration or a card. You will need green card, crayons, glitter or paint, scissors and sticky tape.

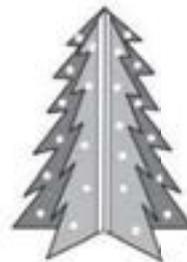
Fold a piece of card in half, then cut it in half. Put the two pieces together and fold them in half again.

Draw half a Christmas tree opposite the fold. Cut along the line and you will have 2 identical trees. Fold the trees in half, very lightly, hardly creasing the centre line to mark the centre of the tree. Cut a slit along the bottom half of the centre of one tree and along the top half of the centre



of the other tree. Slip the two trees together along the slits. To help the tree to stand firmly, use sticky tape to fasten the parts together where they meet.

Decorate the tree. If you are using it as a card then leave an area free of decorations so that you can write on it.



What goes red white red white red white?

Santa rolling down a hill.

Mouse Makes

Colour in one star a day as you countdown to Christmas

"I bring you **good news** that will bring great **joy** to all people. The **Saviour** has been born today! ...
 Glory to God in the highest heaven, and peace on earth to those with whom God is pleased".
from Luke 2 vs. 10,11,14

CHRISTMAS
BABY **HOLY** **JUDEA** **S**
B **J** **P** **E** **A** **C** **E** **S** **O** **N** **O** **F** **L** **O** **C** **K** **P** **U** **S**
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MARY • JOSEPH • NAZARETH • GALILEE • JUDEA • BETHLEHEM • DAVID
 HOLY • CHILD • BABY • SON • NAME • JESUS • MANGER • ROOM • INN
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Sheila Sinclair

- an appreciation

Regular Bulletin readers may have turned to this page for our crossword. Sadly there is no crossword as our crossword compiler, Sheila Sinclair, died on 18th August.

I had the privilege of knowing Sheila for five years when she e- mailed the Crossword to me, always on time and ready to insert. I knew her as friendly, bright, witty, helpful and reliable lady who loved language and with whom I shared a love of North Berwick where Sheila stayed latterly. But I learned that there was much more to our crossword compiler than her love of crosswords and quizzes. I thought it fitting that we used this space to share her other talents with you.

Sheila was born in Edinburgh and, after attending Flora Stevenson's and Broughton High School she passed her Civil Service exam and began working in the Post Office. As with many civil servants, her job took her round the country, including St Albans and London. Sheila was very much a people person and when Post Office Telecommunications became BT she

used her people skills to help many employees prepare for redundancy before deciding to make herself redundant. This meant she could return to Scotland where she worked in a consultancy in Leith for ten years.

1990 saw her move to North Berwick where her skills were put to use in many ways. She was chair of the community council (also editing their newsletter!) where she led by example; her tireless enthusiasm and sense of humour helped her get others involved and get things done. North Berwick has won the Coastal Town title, awarded by Britain in Bloom, nine times, before being awarded the RHS Rose Bowl in 2016.

Sheila was also the Honorary Secretary of the East Lothian Community Rail Partnership and campaigned for the reinstatement of the public toilets at North Berwick, making an arrangement for rail passengers to use the facilities of a local gallery while waiting for action to be taken. Sadly, this improvement was not realised before her death. However she did arrange for the R.L. Stevenson poem *From a Railway Carriage*, which was written on a train

journey to North Berwick, to be put on display at the station there.

Sheila had a very positive outlook and attitude and was honoured earlier this year with the Rotary International Award for outstanding service to North Berwick. Over the years she had raised in excess of £30,000 for good causes, much of it through quizzes she compiled (every bit as difficult as the crosswords!).

Sheila loved words and language and used her linguistic skill for good for so many. Our thoughts go out to her sister Norma and her family.



Sheila with her well deserved Rotary International Award

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Church Secretary
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DEADLINES

Kirk News Tuesday 5th December
Please send all items to the Editor,
Christine Denham, c/o Church Office
(Home tel: 336 5943) or e-mail:
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Blackhall Bulletin Sunday 4th February
Please send all items to the Editor,
Barbara Wilson, c/o Church Office
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Front cover *Tree of Peace* by kind permission of the artist, Bridget Taverner. For more beautiful images by this artist visit her website at www.moonmeadow.com

READING THE BULLETIN FOR THE FIRST TIME?

Blackhall St. Columba's Church also produces a pack with useful information about the area - doctors, schools, churches, youth organisations, sporting facilities etc. If you would like a pack please contact the church office either by telephoning 0131 332 4431 or e-mail secretary@blackhallstcolumba.org.uk



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