

# BLACKHALL BULLETIN

December 2018

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

No. 154



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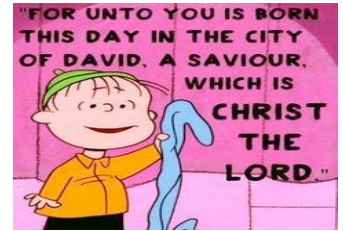
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# Good News of Great Joy

One of the delightful aspects of the Christmas season is the celebration of unique and sometimes quirky family "traditions" that make the season special for each one of us. In my family, we usually have a number of them, ranging from eating a 'picnic' style dinner on Christmas Eve with the children (now grown up) to watching Christmas films, like *'It's A Wonderful Life.'* These traditions have become part of our celebration ritual.



One of my favourite films as a child was *"A Charlie Brown Christmas."* I loved the music that undergirded the animated characters and plot; I loved the fact that Charlie Brown finds the lowliest Christmas tree for the pageant, and I loved Linus's gentle, yet poignant reminder of the true meaning of Christmas. I will never forget his slow walk to the centre of the stage with thumb in mouth and blanket trailing behind him.

To this day, his recitation from the second chapter of Luke still gives me goose bumps. It is a wonderful image as I hear his small, childlike voice proclaiming the powerful message of God's good news for the whole world:

*"And the angel said to them, 'Do not be afraid; for behold, I bring you good news of a great joy which shall be for all the people; for today in the city of David there has been born for you a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord. And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.' And suddenly there appeared with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, 'Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among men with whom God is pleased'" (Luke 2:8-14).*

In recalling Linus's recitation, I've been thinking about the message of good news the angels proclaimed to the shepherds that starry night. I think about what a contrast that message is to our prevailing "bad news" messages today. Random violence, terror, and wars continue; thousands dying of hunger in war-stricken countries, like in Yemen; an increasingly hostile political climate; and news of illness and loss of life among friends and family. It is hard not to feel at times that the world is full of bad news.

As I contrast the bad news of our world with Luke's message of good news, I have to wonder if it's just wishful thinking. In light of our bad news world, what is good about the good news? Notably the angel proclaims that salvation has come in *"one born this day in the city of David, who is Messiah."* For those poor shepherds, this was indeed good news! Their deliverer had come to rescue them from Roman oppression, and now all of Israel would be restored under the rule of God's Messiah.



But this good news would go beyond the boundaries of ethnic Israel to the whole world. The good news of God's promised Messiah demonstrates God's favour towards 'all people.' *"Glory to God in the highest," the angel host proclaims, "And on earth peace among men with whom God is pleased."*

So often, perhaps influenced by bad news all around us, many of us struggle with a foreboding sense that God is angry with us, smouldering with rage and wrath against us. But the angels declare the exact opposite—and this is indeed, good news!

God sends Jesus, the Messiah, out of a sense of delight and pleasure with his creation. The Messiah coming as one of us, Immanuel, God *with us* is the greatest good news we could ever hope to receive. Jesus says in John's gospel, *"For God so loved the world that he gave his only, begotten son; that whosoever believes in him will not perish but have everlasting life" (John 3:16).*

Dear friend, in the face of the bad news of our world and in our lives, the good news of God should resound in our hearts and minds as we enter the Christmas season: God is with us and God loves us! Jesus inaugurates the reign of good news, his *shalom (Peace)*, even in the face of bad news. All are invited to share in this good news.

The good news of God's reign exists even in the midst of crisis. The good news of God's reign offers hope that Immanuel has arrived in Jesus. And even when the news is overwhelmingly bad, the promise resounds: *"In the world, you will have trouble, but take heart, I have overcome the world" (John 16:33).* This is indeed good news.

Wherever you are and whatever situation you are at, let me encourage you to look to the Christ of Christmas; after all, He is the reason for the season, and allow His forgiving love to embrace you and to restore some comfort, peace and joy this Christmas season and beyond.

Wishing you and yours a blessed Christmas and a Joyful New Year,

Benjamin

(Minister)



What can we say?.....The people of Blackhall St Columba's have been fantastic in their response to the fundraising appeal for the Building for the Future Project. We've smashed through our first target and now have secured the funding to allow us to progress Phase 1. This is great news!

A quick reminder of what we are doing in Phase 1:

- Upgrading the infrastructure of the church – heating, lighting, sound and visual systems
- Removing the pews and replacing them with chairs which will allow us to use the fabulous space in the church more flexibly
- Creating a more welcoming and transparent entrance area
- Installing new flooring and storage
- Creating a resource area
- Extending the raised area of the Apse to bring whoever is leading services and events closer to the congregation

So where are we with progressing all of this work?

- We've applied for the necessary permissions from Edinburgh Council and the Church of Scotland
- We're close to finalising the interior design and a full presentation will go to the Kirk Session in January
- We're planning how we prepare the church for the works to begin – including where we are going to store all of the equipment and artefacts
- We've started the process of selecting contractors for various elements of the project and that will continue into the new year.

That all sounds great, but when will we start to see things happening? We expect to move out of the church and start using the halls for our regular services in May. It is easiest to get the halls ready for that purpose during the Easter holidays when most organisations have a break.

And what of Phase 2? Well we're kicking off a significant programme of fundraising events involving both the church and the community. .... a taster of what's coming up in the immediate future:

- Christmas Tree Festival – 6-9 December
  - Come and enjoy 35+ trees decorated by local organisations and businesses, enjoy some festive refreshments and vote for the best tree!
- Concerts - various dates
  - You've maybe missed our Foot Stomping Gospel Band, or Phillipa Wood singing the Great American Songbook, but don't despair, there is music for everyone coming in the new year – classical and modern organ and piano concerts with visiting artists as well as some of our own; violin and oboe recitals and much more

We're sure there is something in the programme for everyone, so please do come along and support as many events as you can. After all, Blackhall St Columba's is for all of the local community!

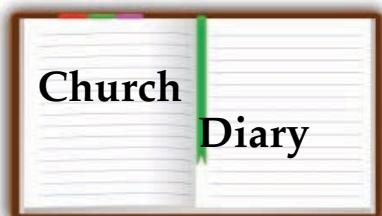


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## DECEMBER

- 2<sup>nd</sup> 11.00 am Morning Worship – Band Service  
1<sup>st</sup> Sunday in Advent
- 9<sup>th</sup> 11.00 am Family Gift Service (All Age)
- 12<sup>th</sup> 12 noon Mid Week Service
- 16<sup>th</sup> 11.00am Morning Worship –  
9 Lessons and Carols
- 16<sup>th</sup> 2-3 pm **Christmas Carols at Sainsbury's  
Craigleith** do come and join us
- 18<sup>th</sup> 4.00 pm Strachan House Service
- 23<sup>rd</sup> 11.00 am Morning Worship - 4th Sunday in Advent
- 24<sup>th</sup> 7.00 pm Christmas Eve - All age Family Service  
11.00 pm Carols with the Choir  
11.15 pm Watch Night Service
- 25<sup>th</sup> 10.30 am Christmas Morning Family Service
- 30<sup>th</sup> 11.00 am Morning Worship with Short Communion

## JANUARY 2019

- 6<sup>th</sup> 9.30 am Early Family Service  
11.00 am Morning Worship
- 9<sup>th</sup> 12 noon Mid Week Service
- 13<sup>th</sup> 11.00 am Morning Worship
- 20<sup>th</sup> 11.00 am Morning Worship
- 23<sup>rd</sup> 12 noon Mid Week Service
- 27<sup>th</sup> 11.00 am Morning Worship

## FEBRUARY 2019

- 3<sup>rd</sup> 9.30 am Early Family Service  
11.00 am Morning Worship
- 6<sup>th</sup> 12 noon Mid Week Service
- 10<sup>th</sup> 11.00 am Morning Worship
- 17<sup>th</sup> 11.00 am Morning Worship
- 20<sup>th</sup> 12 noon Mid Week Service
- 24<sup>th</sup> 9.30 am Communion Sunday  
11.00 am Communion Sunday



Blackhall St. Columba's Church  
WA†CH Committee

## Christmas Fair

**On Saturday 1st  
December at 2 p.m.**

**In Blackhall St. Columba's Church  
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**Stalls Include Baking, Books,  
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Entrance 50p per Adult

Proceeds to Alzheimer Scotland -  
the Prentice Centre in Granton

The Scottish registered charity number of Alzheimer Scotland is SC022315



## Christmas Tree Festival In Blackhall St Columba's Church



**6<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> December**

Please come and view the 38 trees decorated by  
local businesses or church groups

Tickets (including refreshments) are  
£5 for adults and £1 for children

Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> 6pm – 8.30 pm  
Friday 7<sup>th</sup> 11am – 4pm and

Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> 6pm 8.30pm  
11am – 4 pm

All proceeds to the Building for the Future project.



*Wishing all our readers a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year*

*from the Minister and congregation of Blackhall St Columba's*





## Prayer Corner

*Who is mighty as you are, O Lord, with your faithfulness all around you? You rule the raging of the sea, when its waves rise, you still them. Psalm 89 v 8-9*

The Christian life is like a deep ocean, not easily mastered but definitely filled with profound treasures. Imagine standing at the water's edge, waves pounding, the swirl dashing and the turmoil of the whole picture. The many currents created between your past and God's future for you! All allow for you to plumb the depths. What God is doing in you and your land-loving instincts is necessarily and surely different, and sometimes you will feel caught in the middle of two powerful forces. However, you must allow yourself to sink deep into the waters of transformation to the point that you feel completely helpless and surrender into His safe anchorage. When we allow God's Spirit, the Holy Spirit, to teach us to swim towards the loving arms of Jesus no matter the waves that try to drown us, we will become seaworthy and Christworthy, able to survive and come through into His will for us.

*When you go through deep waters and great trouble, I will be with you. When you go through the rivers of difficulty, you will not drown! Isaiah 43:2*

Dear God. I do prefer to stay on land, but I also realise that your waters give and teach me true life. Thank you for teaching me to swim in the precious name of Jesus and Saviour. Amen.

## Flowers in Church December

This month the flowers will be donated as follows:-

- 2<sup>nd</sup> Mrs Muriel Morton
- 9<sup>th</sup> Mrs Lynette Aitken
- 17<sup>th</sup> Mrs Moira Purves

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

Violet Troup  
(Flower Convener)



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kieran.fitzpatrick@mhdlaw.co.uk

## Edinburgh Floral Art Club

Our meetings are held once a month (September – December and February – June) at Blackhall St Columba's Church Hall from 2 – 4 pm.

Forthcoming meetings :

**Friday 14<sup>th</sup> December.** David Ryland, a National demonstrator from Cumbria will be showing us "A little bit of Christmas".  
Come along for a festive treat.

**Friday 8<sup>th</sup> February;** The Club Entertains.  
After a wonderful musical afternoon two years ago, we are looking forward to a return visit from the "Rolling Hills Chorus". This is a male a capella group singing mainly in the barbershop style. After what I am sure will be a lively performance, tea and treats will be served.

**Friday 8<sup>th</sup> March**  
Kate Russell from the Wirral is the demonstrator to the title "Out of the Attic"

Visitors are welcome to all our meetings at £7 a meeting.

For further information please contact Liliias Hoskins on 0131 477 0245

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## Knit and Natter

This session we have a new project to work on in addition to our usual Fresh Start and Early Years Centres knits.

As you may or may not know, this year there is to be a Christmas Tree festival in the church in early December so we have added Christmas decorations to our repertoire. Come along and see how we decorate our tree.

We are always looking for new members to our group, so if you fancy joining us on a Monday evening at 7.30pm in the church hall you will be made most welcome. Please don't think your knitting won't be good enough.

For further details contact [stcknitnatter@gmail.com](mailto:stcknitnatter@gmail.com)  
Lilian Cockburn

## IF YOU HAVE ANYTHING TO DONATE TO THE FAIR

All donations for the above stalls will be gratefully received in the Church between 10am to 12, 2 to 4pm and 7 to 9pm on Thursday 29th and Friday 30th November.

Donations can also be handed in on the Saturday Morning between 10am and 12 noon

All proceeds will be donated to  
Alzheimer Scotland Charity (No: SC022315)

## St Columba's Junior Singers are looking for new members

The Singers have now started the new session and are already shaping up to be a good, enthusiastic group of singers. We are, however, in need of more voices to help swell the sound and to ensure we always have enough singers to cover absences.

If your child, or a child you know, is interested in coming along to our sessions, we would be delighted to welcome them. We have no auditions – the only requirement is to enjoy singing – and no cost is involved. Our group is open to any child in the Blackhall area in the P3 – P7 age group. We meet every Thursday during term time from 3.30 – 4.15 pm in the Upper Hall of Blackhall St Columba's church halls. For more information please phone Amy Donaldson on 332 1354 or come along any Thursday afternoon.



## Carol Singing at Sainsbury's Craigleith Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> December

Please come along and join with members of St Columba's Church, Blackhall to brighten the shoppers' afternoon by singing Christmas Carols from 2-3pm.

## Tuesday Topics



Since starting our new term in September, the art club has had a very good turn out of members and we have enjoyed demonstrations from our tutor on abstract art and the use of and mixing of colours.

We have a very busy schedule this year as the Art Club will be participating in the Christmas Tree Festival at the Church and we are busy creating hand painted decorations for the tree.

These will all be for sale to raise additional funds for the church renovation, so a good chance to get some unique Christmas presents and at the same time help the church.

The club are also preparing paintings to set up in the Blackhall Library where we will have a small exhibition from 15<sup>th</sup> December to 12<sup>th</sup> January 2019. Again, all paintings there will be for sale.

If you would like more information about the club, please do get in touch with our membership Secretary, Anne McLennan, on 336 4326 or [annemclennan@gmail.com](mailto:annemclennan@gmail.com). She will also advise you on the current vacancy situation.

Valerie Gordon

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## North West Heritage

The meetings for the New Year are as follows:

**Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> January** in Blackhall St Columba's Church hall at 7.30 pm **The Edinburgh of Burke and Hare** Speaker Eric Melvin.

**Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> February** in Davidson's Mains Church hall at 7.30 pm **Archaeological Discoveries during the Edinburgh Tram Project**. Speaker John Lawson, City of Edinburgh Archaeologist.

**Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> March** in St Columba's Church hall at 7.30 pm **The History of Riddles Court**. Speaker Russell Clegg, Patrick Geddes Centre for Learning.

**Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> April** in Davidson's Mains Church hall at 7.30 pm. **AGM followed by a talk on Elsie Inglis and the Scottish Women's Hospitals**. Speaker Iain Macintyre.



Tuesday Topics re-started on 25<sup>th</sup> September in the small hall of Blackhall St Columba's Church. We have been enjoying excellent speakers whose topics have covered Edinburgh's health, local wildlife, genetics, Scotland's Charity Air Ambulance and behind the scenes with one of our local MSPs.

**In December** we will be at the Christmas Fair with the Sweets Stall and on **4th December** we will be entertained by favourites Amy Donaldson and her group, Quern.

**On 15<sup>th</sup> January** we will have our post-Christmas meal and on the **22<sup>nd</sup>**, Jane George will give us a talk on 'The Scottish Suffragettes'.

**On 5<sup>th</sup> February** we welcome back Fred Daniels. His presentation will be 'Golden America Pt1 Chicago to South Dakota'. **On the 19<sup>th</sup>** we will have Roy Johnstone's talk on 'The Women Pilots of the Air Transport Auxiliary – Spitfire Women'.

If you would like to join us for any of our meetings in the New Year, you will be very welcome, either as a member or as a visitor. Membership costs £15 and visitors pay £2. Our group is non-denominational for women of all ages with visitors, women and men always welcome. We meet on alternate Tuesday from late September to April starting at 7.30 with a speaker, followed by tea or coffee and a chat.

For further information, our full syllabus can be viewed on the Church website at [www.blackhallstcolumba.org.uk](http://www.blackhallstcolumba.org.uk) under Community Activities and/or you may contact Jacky Cowie, Secretary 332 1066 or Eleanor Lowrie, President 332 4827.

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## Fellowship Afternoon Group

Our 2018/19 Session got off to a good start in September when we had a pleasant afternoon listening to Scottish songs. We welcomed Grant Douglas to our October Meeting when he told us about his memorable visit, with his mum and dad, to receive his MBE from Prince Charles at Buckingham Palace. He brought along a video for us to enjoy.

Our next meeting, on 13<sup>th</sup> November (sadly will be past when you read this) will be a talk by the Reverend Bob Barker, one of our Church members, talking about the cruise Doreen and he took to celebrate their Diamond Wedding Anniversary. As usual our group will be responsible for the Baking Stall at the **Christmas Fair on 1<sup>st</sup> December** – we look forward to selling you our goodies.

Our last meeting this year will be lunch at the Bruntsfield Golf Club which is always a happy occasion.







## Blackhall Community Trust Update



**Our next public meeting is our AGM on Wednesday 27 February 2019 at 7.30pm, Small Hall, Blackhall St Columba's Church. Everyone is very welcome.**

Blackhall Community Trust has been busy!

We have

- finalised our Business Plan and our preferred design for a new Ravelston Park Pavilion
- increased our membership significantly over the last six months (thank you to everyone who has shown their support by becoming members)
- launched a new website [www.blackhallcommunitytrust.org.uk](http://www.blackhallcommunitytrust.org.uk). Very generously, Taste Design, a Blackhall-based brand design agency, built the website for us (and also donated our logo!)
- produced a leaflet which sets out what Blackhall Community Trust does
- submitted our Community Asset Transfer Stage 2 application to acquire Ravelston Park Pavilion from the City of Edinburgh Council on behalf of the Blackhall community
- set up a fundraising page on the BT MyDonate website. You can donate to support our activities and our work to acquire Ravelston Park Pavilion by putting this link in your browser <http://bit.ly/BlackhallCommunityTrust>
- organised our first big fundraising event. We are really delighted to announce that Elaine Miller, comedian, physiotherapist and local celebrity has kindly offered to perform her comedy show as a fundraiser for Blackhall Community Trust. Elaine, AKA Gusset Gripper, specialises in pelvic floor health and uses comedy to deliver a strong message about how we can all maintain and improve our own pelvic health. Elaine is a regular at the Fringe; this summer, her show was an award-winning sell-out. In addition, the Holiday Inn has offered us its function room as a venue for the fundraiser. The event will take place on 1 March 2019, 8pm; if you would like to buy a ticket (or if you would like to donate a raffle prize!), email [blackhallcommunitytrust@gmail.com](mailto:blackhallcommunitytrust@gmail.com). More details will follow – look out for posters and information on our website.

**Blackhall Community Trust (BCT) continues to organise a number of activities for local residents. The Book Club** meets in Ravelston Park Pavilion on the first Thursday evening of every month. **The BCT walking group** now goes on monthly walks on the first Thursday morning each month. Our **coffee mornings** at Cloudberry for those who are new to the area or who would like to feel more connected to the community are on the last Thursday morning 10-11.30am of every month. Please see our posters for more information. These activities are increasingly popular and we are delighted to be getting to know more local residents!

**Blackhall Community Trust:** Join our email/mail list or follow us on Facebook or Twitter.  [@blackhallct](https://www.facebook.com/blackhallct)  [@BlackhallCT](https://twitter.com/BlackhallCT)

Email us: [blackhallcommunitytrust@gmail.com](mailto:blackhallcommunitytrust@gmail.com) Visit: [www.blackhallcommunitytrust.org.uk](http://www.blackhallcommunitytrust.org.uk)

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# ARMISTICE 100



At the end of October I went on a coach tour to France and Belgium, specifically to the area of the Somme where the last 100 days of the 'last push' that resulted in the allies winning the War, took place. It was a combined operation by land and air, the Royal Flying Corps having just come into existence. As we travelled across the flat ground we were reminded repeatedly of where the respective front lines would have stood.

We stopped in Montreuil with its impressive statue of Earl Haig on horseback. Then to Amiens, which was threatened but never captured by the Germans, and where last August, Prince William with Catherine attended a memorial service in the magnificent cathedral. The last hundred days to victory began on 8th August at Villers Bretonneux. Here too is the huge Australian National Memorial and cemetery. The Empire did not desert us. Like the Canadians, among whom was my husband's uncle, they came to our aid and paid a heavy price.

There was another huge military base at Etaples and in the cemetery there lie two Blackhall men, David Mathewson of the chemist's shop and William Storey. It was strangely moving to see their names recorded there and to know they are on our War Memorial here. Later we passed Courcellette where John Davie lies and Pozieres where there rest the remains of both Hector Simpson of the old Blackhall Dairy and John Kerr whose father was church officer. Hector and John lived next door to each other in Blackhall and are buried in the same cemetery.

The Thiepval Memorial designed by architect Sir Edward Lutyens and opened in 1932 is hugely impressive. Here are recorded in the graveyard Allan Ramsay Davie and William Sloan aged 21 and 22 respectively. An assistant printed off for me their details. There it was Blackhall, Edinburgh and I knew their names were on our War Memorial. Strangely moving!

I knew as we passed through Arras that the remains of John Morton were there and those of David Heggie were at Poperinge where we spent a night. Ypres or to use its Belgian name, Ieper, is widely known since there was more than one Battle of Ypres and since that is where the Germans, to the horror of the allies, first used gas as a weapon. In a cemetery there lies James Donaldson.

At the Menin Gate we attended the simple nightly wreath-laying ceremony to remember them. On the panels there are the names of two Blackhall men, Ernest Johnson and William Robertson.

We stopped at Polygon Wood where lies James Simpson, again of the Dairy, cousin of Hector and named on the Blackhall Memorial.

The grave of Wilfred Owen meant a lot to me because I have taught his Great War poetry to schoolchildren. On the day we left we had attended a service to mark 100 years almost to the day of the death of a Cumbrian vicar, Theodore Bayley Hardy, VC, DSO, MC. He was a chaplain and the most decorated non-combatant of the War. The service took place in the church where he ministered. Later we saw the bridge at Briastre where he was fatally wounded.

Eventually we were shown the railway carriage where the armistice was signed at the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month in the year 1918.

Of course it would take a long time to visit the graves of all the men recorded on our memorial but I am glad to have stood where some of them lie. We do not forget that there is no greater love than that of a man laying down his life for others.

Mary Morrison



1914-1918 1914-1918 1914-1918 1914-1918



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## SOMETHING FOR YOUR DIARY

Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> January 2019 is the date of an event you cannot miss. Following the great success of the previous one a Burns Supper is being held in the Holiday Inn Hotel, City West, at Craigleith. Reception starts at 6.30 p.m. with proceedings commencing at 7 p.m. ending by 11 p.m.

A highly talented local cast will offer their thoughts on the Immortal Memory (Eddie Thorn), Toast to the Lassies (David Stirling), Reply for the Lassies (Amy Foster) and give renditions to a Haggis (Muriel Stenhouse) and charm us with beautiful accompanied singing (Jenny Logan). You'll enjoy all that entertainment along with a piper, Master of Ceremonies and a 3 course supper for only £35 p.p.

The event is being organised by the stewardship team of Blackhall St Columba's church for the benefit of the fundraising to improve our halls for the benefit of the community. However it is open to all and as last time we especially like to see new faces, hopefully yours.

Tickets are limited and following the previous sell out you are strongly advised to get yours now. You can come on your own, with family, a friend or friends but whichever way you'll be in excellent company and enjoy yourself.

Use the contact details below for further information on menu etc., to ask any questions and to book your ticket.

Sandy Weir  
Tel 0131 336 2483 Email [weirmachine@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:weirmachine@blueyonder.co.uk)  
Church Office  
Tel 0131 332 4431 [secretary@blackhallstcolumba.org.uk](mailto:secretary@blackhallstcolumba.org.uk)



ROBERT BURNS.

## BURNS SUPPER SATURDAY 26<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2019

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Music again  
Reply for the Lassies  
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can be ordered from Sandy Weir  
[weirmachine@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:weirmachine@blueyonder.co.uk) tel: 0131 336 2483  
OR  
via Blackhall St Columba's Church Office  
[secretary@blackhallstcolumba.org.uk](mailto:secretary@blackhallstcolumba.org.uk) tel: 0131 332 4431

**A TRULY MEMORABLE SCOTTISH NIGHT TO WHICH ALL ARE INVITED**

*Image Source: Flickr / CircaSassy*



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# Craigeith Men's Probus Club



Our autumn session has been very successful and as well as knowing more about Edinburgh life in the 1820s from Eric Melvin's most informative talk on Burke & Hare, we were encouraged by Allan Tulleth to spend more time examining the vast array of tombstones in Edinburgh's historic graveyards.

Among the highlights of our early spring talks will be hearing about the History of Dunfermline Abbey on **20<sup>th</sup> February** from Nicki Scott. The Abbey of course is an active Church of Scotland whose minister is Mary Ann Rennie. One of her previous charges was Corstorphine St. Annes here in Edinburgh. The graves of the Scottish monarchs come under the care of Historic Scotland. It has been said that all true Scots are descended from Robert the Bruce, who is buried there, with numerous other figures from Scotland's turbulent history of the 1300-1500s. One of the newest recognised of his descendants is Meghan Markle, the Duchess of Sussex. But not all Probuss activities veer in historic directions and our outing on **27<sup>th</sup> February** to Glenkinchie Distillery will be a prime example. Glenkinchie is the home of probably the best lowland malt whisky and we are assured that samples will be freely available. Interestingly the name 'Kinchie' is from the name 'De Quincy' and so perhaps our activities are all interrelated with Thomas de Quincy of 'Confessions of an Opium Eater' fame being buried in St. Cuthbert's Churchyard.

Issues such as conservation and ecology are also covered within our scheduled talks when on **6<sup>th</sup> March** we welcome Heather McHaffie to our midst. Heather is a recognised botanical conservationist, something which was noted when she received an MBE a few years ago, and her theme of 'Scottish Plant Conservation' will be an eye opener to many.

With our minds in focus on spring life and short breaks away one of our final talks of the session is entitled 'Play it again, Sam', in which Ian Garden will tell us the secrets behind 'Casablanca', the classic wartime film. Ian's talk is on **3<sup>rd</sup> April** while on **17<sup>th</sup> April** we welcome Phil Coad, a recently retired senior master from Edinburgh Academy, who will be accompanying John Davis' singing more Scottish songs and ditties.

As a group we are recognised within Probuss circles in the Lothians as being inclusive with the only criteria being a retired male - no need to be an ex accountant or college principal to be in this Probuss! We meet at Blackhall Bowling Club, just off Craigerook Road and close to Cafe Citron, at 10am, on the first and third Wednesdays of the month, for coffee/tea plus biscuits with the talk starting at 10.30am.

For more information please just email me, John MacLennan, [johnmacleannanuk@gmail.com](mailto:johnmacleannanuk@gmail.com), or [infocpc21@gmail.com](mailto:infocpc21@gmail.com)

John MacLennan : Speakers Secretary

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## CELEBRATING 20 YEARS OF CAMEO (Come And Meet Each Other)

The Cameo Club was founded on 2<sup>nd</sup> October 1998. In order to celebrate our 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary we decided to make our meeting on Friday 28<sup>th</sup> September a rather special one.

We were delighted that Jeanette and Iain Lowrie were able to join us all the way from Pitstone, Leighton Buzzard, also John Crombie (now resident in Edinburgh). Jeanette and John set up Cameo in 1998 and have taken great interest in watching it grow from strength to strength. Of course an organisation such as this couldn't function without the happy band of volunteers who give willingly of their time and support. A huge thank you to them.

We had a celebratory cake which was cut by Jeanette and John, then our members and guests enjoyed pancakes, cake and tea or coffee.



We were then delighted to welcome Jenny Logan (no stranger to us) and Margaret Donaldson at the piano who entertained us with a selection of well-known favourite songs. Jenny was a 'star' as usual, making contact with everyone in the hall. A wonderful happy morning enjoyed by everyone.



Cameo is for anyone in the Blackhall and surrounding area who may be housebound or who would like to meet others for a chat and refreshments. We meet once a fortnight on a Friday from 10.15/30 am to 12 noon. Our Christmas lunch will be on Friday 7<sup>th</sup> December at the Holiday Inn and our first meeting in the New Year is on Friday 4<sup>th</sup> January 2019. Give one of us a ring if you would like to come along – transport can be provided.

Margaret Brown 332 5957 Fiona Drinnan 232 6762

With Christmas fast approaching, Esmé Randall's book of poems, *Angels Ants and Artichokes*, illustrated by Katharine Wake, would be the perfect stocking-filler, with something for everyone.

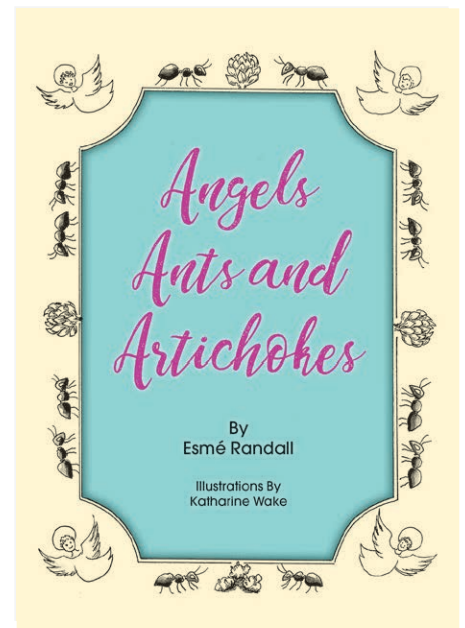
As its title suggests, the subjects are wide-ranging. There are delightful poems for children, like 'Mr Tortoise', who 'nibbles on lettuce but never on cake.' For adults, there is a set of seasonal poems: 'Autumn in Edinburgh' – 'The fog is coming down/ And the lights are coming on/ The air is quite autumnal/ And the tourists are all gone,' - cleverly evokes the sigh of relief the city gives after the Festival exodus.

The 'Miscellaneous' section features charming nature poems and joyful celebrations of holidays, but sadder, reflective ones like 'Care Home' as well. There's an enjoyable note of acerbity too in 'Irritation' – a plea for a proper, ordinary plate – and 'Hotel Rooms' highlights the annoyance many of us feel about the lack of thought given by hotel chains to anyone other than business travellers – male at that!

It finishes with poems for Advent and Christmas, picking up different aspects of the season, ranging from commercial to spiritual, including 'The Nativity Play', where the young speaker finds an original answer to not being chosen to be Mary.

With Katharine Wake's delightful and quirky line drawings, this is a very attractive book.

Aline Templeton



*This book is being sold in aid of the extensive renovations required to the stonework at the Church of the Holy Cross, Davidson's Mains. By purchasing a copy of Angels, Ants and Artichokes, price £6.00, you will help to save this lovely Episcopal church.*

**Copies will be available from:** Cloudberry, Blackhall and Barnton, St Columba's Church Office, Davidsons's Mains Parish Church Office and Cramond Kirk Office.

# LOCKERBIE 1988

With a sigh of relief I got into the car. Another Selection School over! Another group of people assessed as suitable to go forward as candidates for ministry. It was almost Christmas, time for family and friends.

I switched on the radio. A Pan Am 103 aeroplane had fallen out of the sky near the Dumfriesshire town of Lockerbie. At the time I was working with the team of Organisers for Evangelism in the Department of National Mission. There were five of us with an area of Scotland each. Our task was to meet Presbyteries and congregations and encourage them to become missionary, outward looking parishes. My area was the South of Scotland, Edinburgh, the Borders and Galloway. So I knew the little town of Lockerbie and the ministers serving there.

The occupants of the plane were mainly American students from the University of Syracuse who had been studying here, returning home for Christmas. Thus it was that soon the relatives were coming to see the place and identify their dead. All the ministers locally were involved in meeting them and trying to share their grief. I found myself too travelling on Christmas Eve and on a few days after Christmas to Lockerbie and sharing in the listening ministry. I met Dr Swire who later became a leader among the bereaved families seeking explanations and justice. At that time he was just a father who had lost a daughter, Flora full of promise. I too had a Flora and we talked of Skye where his family had connections and which I knew well. It was there that the remains of his Flora were eventually buried.

There were others who came with their grief and memories, and hopes dashed for their young people. Not all were American. There were some local people too. I will not forget the moment of standing by the enormous crater left by the bomb and up at Tundergarth on the hillside lay the nose cone of the plane. People were finding parts of bodies in their gardens.

Perhaps because it was Christmas the words kept going through my head "Emmanuel. God is with us." We certainly needed God in Lockerbie and I doubt if the words were ever more meaningful. Owing to Christmas holidays the Bible Society premises were closed, so I drew up my own list of what I considered helpful words of comfort, took them to the general shops where there was no difficulty in having them displayed, and they were very quickly snapped up by ordinary men and women seeking some kind of solace in their grief, and looking for meaning.

A year later Cameron Gibson who was minister at Tundergarth where the nose cone came down, asked me to preach at the memorial service held in his country church. This I did using the Celtic Cross which, with its circle, points to light beyond darkness and life beyond death. I think many found it helpful and I was glad to share a message of hope in the midst of tragedy and despair.

Mary Morrison



The Lockerbie Air Disaster Memorial

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After someone has experienced a period of homelessness, being able to afford a cooker for their new home is a luxury that unfortunately many cannot afford, along with many other essential household items. Around the Christmas period this lack of amenity is felt further as the messages of indulging in delicious treats and sitting down for tasty meals are shown almost at the turn of every corner.

Fresh Start want to make this a reality for people who have been homeless and provide them with a brand new cooker, fully fitted by our trained and professional team. Any small donation would be gratefully welcomed and will go towards providing someone with a new cooker that will make a real difference to their festive period and their life going forward.

You can donate by sending a cheque to Fresh Start 22-24 Ferry Road Drive, Edinburgh EH4 4BR or on line at <https://www.justgiving.com/campaign/cookersforChristmas2018>



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# Blackhall Guiding

202 & 202C Brownies and 202 Rainbows held a Family Beetle Drive this term to help raise money for the Church refurbishments. They raised a fantastic £170. Well Done to everyone involved.

From all at Blackhall Guiding, we wish you a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!



157th Rainbows started following the brand new Girlguiding program this term. As well as welcoming new Rainbows we have welcomed 3 new adult volunteers. One of the Rainbows favourite games remains 'Red Red River'. **Claire - 157 Rainbow Leader**



We started off the term with an amazing sleepover in the Blackpool tower Ballroom. It was an action packed weekend visiting Seaworld, Madame Tussauds, Tower Circus, 4D Cinema, Blackpool Tower Eye, a Strictly dance show in the Ballroom and of course sleeping on the Ballroom floor with 625 other Brownies from around Scotland. We came back with lots of amazing memories. **Nicole - 202 and 202B Brownie Leader**



202 Guides have had a busy start to the term, with our first ever camp (in tents!) at Bonaly. We have also been building campfires and making ice cream s'mores! Four of our Guides are going to a Jamborette in the Netherlands in 2019, so we've all been doing our "Going Dutch" Challenge Badge to learn more about the Netherlands. **Lorna - 202 Guide Leader**



This term Blackhall Rangers are learning life skills to prepare themselves for the real world. They are budgeting and planning for a trip and learning how to cook healthy and easy meals. **Chelsie - Blackhall Ranger Leader**

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

What we want from you?

- Able to spare 1-2 hours a week during term time.
- 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 [GGUKBlackhallDistrict@outlook.com](mailto:GGUKBlackhallDistrict@outlook.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 the different birds they spot in support of the RSPB's Big Birdwatch.

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 and are delighted to have been included as part of the Council's pilot scheme for 2018/19 to deliver 1140 hours of free early learning and childcare (up to six hours a day, term time only) to a small number of children.

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](http://www.careinspectorate.com).

You can place your child's name on the Nursery waiting list from their 2<sup>nd</sup> birthday by downloading an application form at [www.blackhallnursery.co.uk](http://www.blackhallnursery.co.uk) or by contacting the Nursery for an application form on 0131 332 8296.

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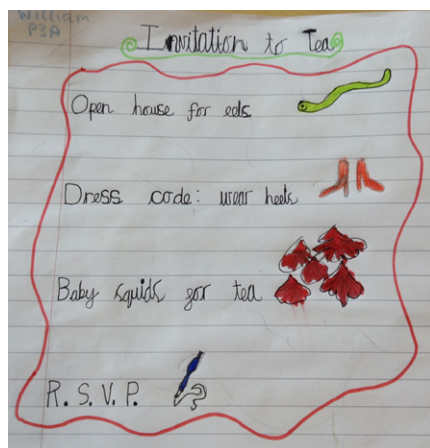
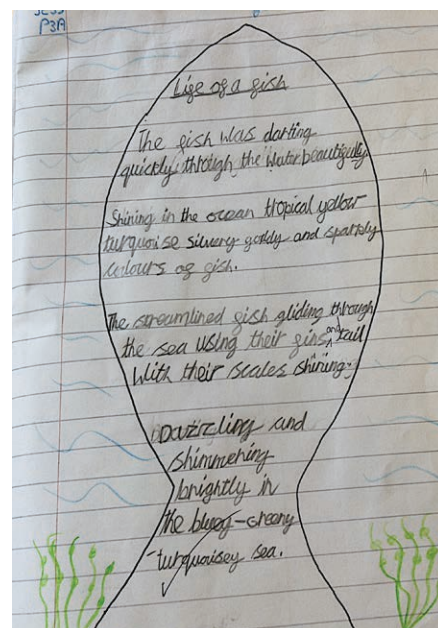
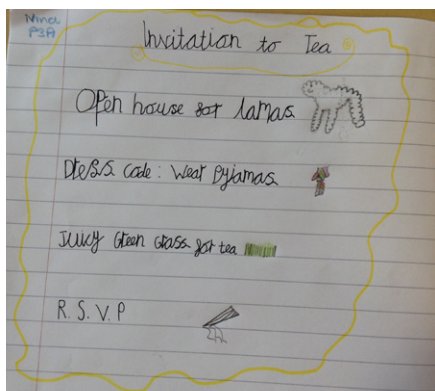
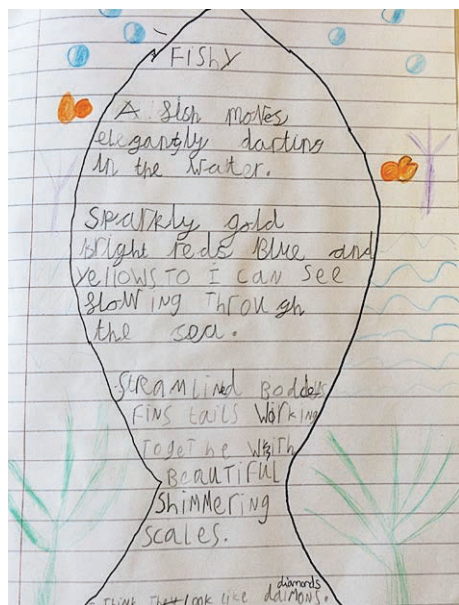
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# BLACKHALL PRIMARY SCHOOL

In this edition Primary 3A have written invitations to tea and poems about fish, Primary 4C share some Autumn Poems, Primary 4T have drawn some silhouettes and written about the endangered animals they have been studying and Primary 7A tell us about their stay at Lagganlia,



## PRIMARY 3A



## LAGGANLIA

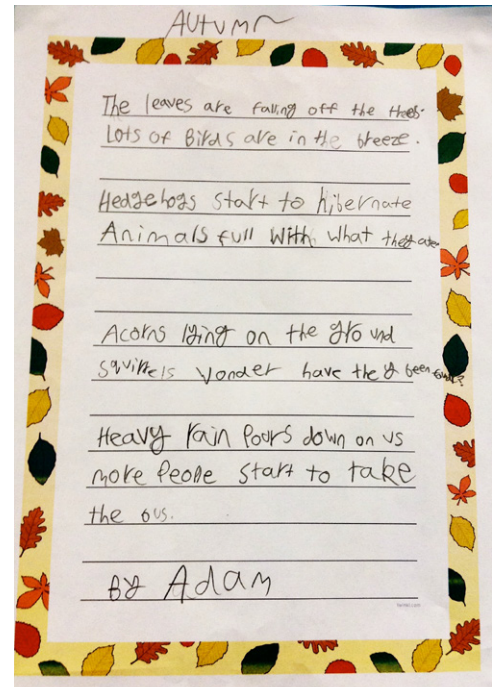
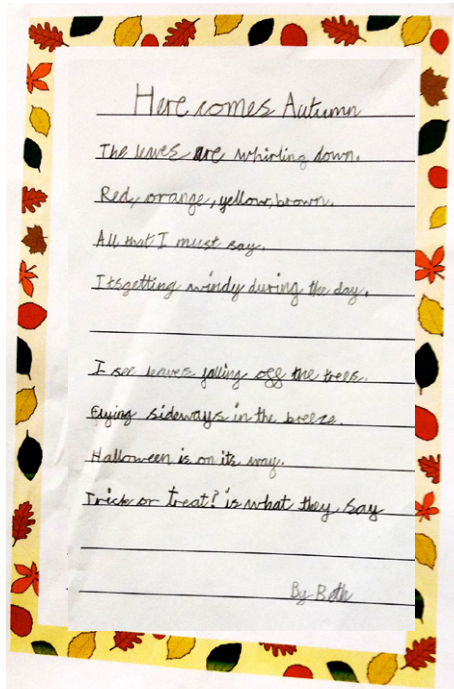
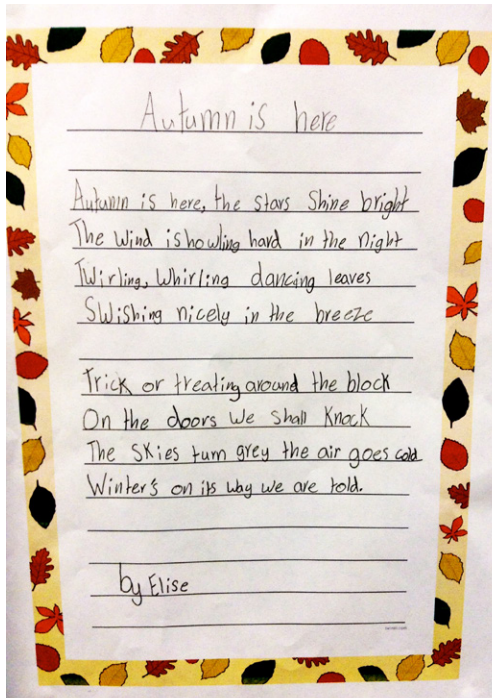


On Monday 24th September, we set off on our 3 hour journey to our home for the week, Lagganlia. When we got there we had lunch and we were all eager to find out our dorms. When we got told our dorms we were all happy. We then found out our activity groups and were given a tour of Lagganlia with our instructor for the week. After that, we had to make our beds (which some people were not too good at). We then had scrumptious baked potatoes with the starter of soup. Then our instructor for evening activities asked us what we wanted for our breakfast the following morning. The options were square sausage and quorn sausage. We then went into the the common room and evening activities started. That night it was a scavenger hunt. At 9-9:15 we went to bed. The rest of the week was similar with us meeting our instructor in the morning and then getting ready for our activities. There was a range of activities such as gorge walking, abseiling, kayaking, climbing, hill walking, mountain biking, duckying (canoeing on inflatable dinghys) and snowsports. Every evening, we had a different activity. Some highlights included completing a ropes course whilst blindfolded in the dark; and the disco on the last night. We had a fantastic week and made memories for life!

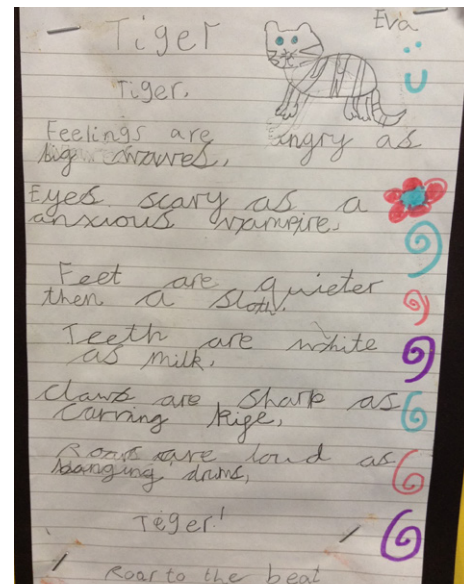
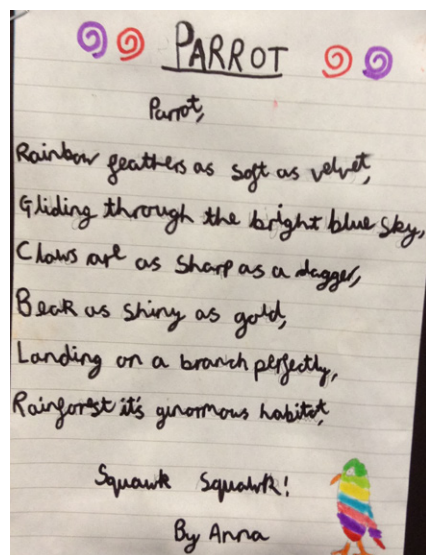
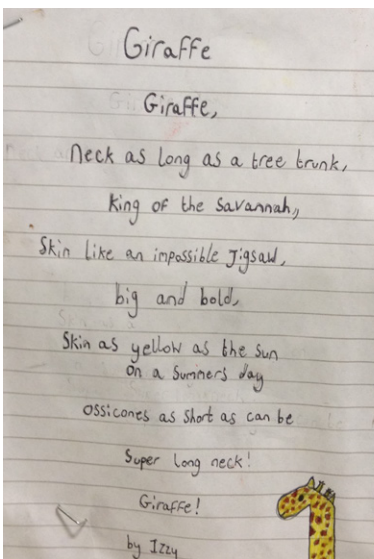
By Daniel and Thomas, P7A

# BLACKHALL PRIMARY SCHOOL

## AUTUMN POEMS by PRIMARY 4C



## SILHOUETTES AND POEMS BY PRIMARY 4T



# Blackhall Horticultural Society

It was disappointing that Gavin McNaughton was unable to join us on 12<sup>th</sup> November but we were delighted to welcome Heather McHaffie and to listen to her talk on 'Ferns for the Garden'. Heather was a breath of fresh air enlightening us on how this often neglected plant group can be used successfully in the home garden.

On 14<sup>th</sup> **January** we welcome Kate Collieran, a team member at Edinburgh Zoo, and former student at SRUC & RBGE, who will be covering a range of topics related to planting trees and shrubs, soil types and needs, and the benefits of mulching.

The interesting theme of the rise of lady gardeners in the Victorian age will be covered by Deborah Reid when she visits us on 11<sup>th</sup> **February**. Gardening was thought of as being a male dominated profession especially with bowler hatted head gardeners and male dominated bothy living. However the influence of women in the profession is sometimes overlooked. Who can forget Jane Loudon and Olive Harrisson, and more recently Gertrude Jekyll, and Beth Chatto? In fact gardening would be much the poorer without these ladies as well as Vita Sackville-West and Beatrix Havergal, the latter who established Waterperry as a college for ladies interested in gardening.

Following on with this theme of influential women in horticultural circles, we are delighted to be welcoming Pam Whittle to the club on 11<sup>th</sup> **March**, and look forward to hearing from her of the plans to restore Saughton Winter Gardens and Park. Her role in driving forward this project during her tenure as President of the Royal Caledonian Horticultural Society was, and still is, immense. We know that with her skills this gem of Edinburgh's garden history will be fully restored onto the international horticultural stage.

One of the highlights of the Blackhall year is our Plant Sale, so don't book any holidays or day trips for **Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> May**.

The 'horti' meets at 7.45pm on the second Monday of the month from September to May in the small hall at Blackhall St Columba's Church. If you would like any more information please just email us on [blackhall.horti@gmail.com](mailto:blackhall.horti@gmail.com) or look at our web page. <https://e-voice.org.uk/blackhall-horticultural-society/>

John MacLennan : Hon President

## PLANT SALE SATURDAY 4<sup>TH</sup> MAY

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Venture Week Holiday Club Feedback Questionnaire

**Are you a parent/guardian, grandparent, relative, or know a child in Primary 1 - Primary 7?**

We would like your help to develop children's work in our church/community.

We would be very grateful for your feedback about **Venture Week Holiday Club**.

Once completed, please return the questionnaire to the Church Office in an envelope addressed to the "Venture Week Team." (Please feel free to use separate paper to expand on your answers where necessary).

Your Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Child's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Your E-mail address: \_\_\_\_\_

Your Phone number: \_\_\_\_\_

If you are happy for us to contact you in response to your answers, please tick here. \_\_\_\_

1. Did a child that you know attend this summer's Venture Week Holiday Club?  
Yes \_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_ Prefer not to say \_\_\_\_
2. Has a child you know attended a Holiday Club before, even at a different Church?  
Yes \_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_ Prefer not to say \_\_\_\_
3. Please select the child's school age;  
Reds (Primary 1/2) \_\_\_\_ Greens (Primary 3/4) \_\_\_\_ Blues (Primary 5/6/7) \_\_\_\_
4. If you are a **PARENT/GUARDIAN** of a child who attended this year's club, do you give permission for us to add any of the following to our church website?  
A group photograph \_\_\_\_ A group video clip (iMovie) \_\_\_\_  
A video clip of your child individually (iMovie) \_\_\_\_ An individual photograph \_\_\_\_  
None of the above \_\_\_\_
5. If applicable, what did the child you know enjoy most about the club, and what did they perhaps least enjoy?
6. Was the time of this years' club suitable for your family?  
(Please explain briefly).  
Yes \_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_
7. If applicable, how would you describe your experience of this year's club in 3 words.
8. Does the current format of the club appeal to the child you know?  
Yes \_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_  
If No, how do you think it will need to change to appeal to children in the future?

9. In general, is there anything that you would like to see added to the current programme?  
e.g. a trip to the local park? A picnic? A social evening?  
(Please see Q10. for examples of what we already do).
10. On a scale of 1-5, where 1 = unimportant, and 5 = essential, please rate the importance of each element of our club.
- |                          |                          |                     |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------|
| Bible story telling ____ | Games ____               | Making friends ____ |
| Snacks ____              | Singing and dancing ____ | Crafts ____         |
11. If the child you know has attended our club before, please tick all that apply;  
The child understood and enjoyed the video clips that were shown daily. \_\_\_\_  
The child enjoyed the songs \_\_\_\_  
The child enjoyed the story \_\_\_\_  
The child enjoyed the crafts \_\_\_\_  
The child enjoyed the games \_\_\_\_  
The child felt welcome \_\_\_\_  
You were satisfied with the leaders \_\_\_\_
12. Would you consider sending a child to our Venture Week Holiday Club if;  
(please tick all that apply)  
The times remained the same (Mon – Fri, 10am - 12pm). \_\_\_\_  
The length of the morning was longer (9am-1pm). \_\_\_\_  
The club was one full day (9am-5pm). \_\_\_\_  
The club was two full days (9am-5pm). \_\_\_\_  
The club was held in the evening. \_\_\_\_
13. Would you consider a child attending Venture Week Holiday Club if;  
(please tick all that apply)  
it was held in February. \_\_\_\_ it was held at Easter. \_\_\_\_  
it was held towards the end of the summer holidays. \_\_\_\_ it was held in October. \_\_\_\_
14. On a scale of 1-5, where 1 = not at all, and 5 = absolutely, how likely would you be to recommend our club to a friend? (Please circle your answer).
1.    2.    3.    4.    5.
15. Whether or not a child you know has attended before, do you have any other views or comments you would like to provide to help us develop our children’s ministry.
16. Help is needed in many small and part-time ways from preparing and delivering leaflets, preparing snacks to teaching crafts and telling stories etc. If you would like to learn more about how to join our friendly team without any obligation, please tick here. \_\_\_\_

Thank you for taking the time to fill out our questionnaire.

**Church Office** Columba Road, Edinburgh EH4 3QU  
**Telephone** 0131 332 4431 **Email** secretary@blackhallstcolumba.org.uk  
**www.blackhallstcolumba.org.uk**  
 Scottish Charity No SC008756

“ To glorify God...  
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to serve others. ”

**WE NEED YOUR SUPPORT** - Blackhall Playgroup have been chosen for the Tesco Bags of Help Grant Scheme (small round token) and with your vote we will secure funds to help us purchase new resources to support learning through play.

You can vote for playgroup at the following Tesco stores:

- Tesco Metro @ Davidson Mains
- Tesco Express @ Queensferry Road
- Tesco Superstore @ South Queensferry



1	5		3				9
2		4		8			5
6							
	1			6		2	
	9		5				4
							8
8			7		6		4
4				2		1	7

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If you get stuck and want the solution just drop an e mail to the usual address on the back page.



To vote you will need to make a purchase of any value within the above stores between the 1 November to 31 December. Every time you shop ask your cashier for a token and vote for Blackhall Playgroup's 'Let's Play' project at the voting boxes. Playgroup children, parents and staff thank you for your support.

Blackhall Playgroup is a small friendly playgroup offering early learning and childcare in a play based setting for children from their second birthday. Based in St Columba's Church upper hall we meet Monday to Friday from 9.00am to 11.30am during school term time.

Our early years qualified staff support children's curiosity, social skills, wellbeing and learning through play in a caring and fun environment.

Blackhall Playgroup, St Columba's Church, Columba Road, EH4 3QU  
 07999 514809 blackhallplaygroup@hotmail.co.uk  
 Scottish Charity Number: SC011212



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Scottish Registered Charity No SC008756

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**Church Secretary**

Ms Julie Nicol  
in Church Office from  
Mon-Fri 10.00-12.30p.m.  
Tel/fax 332 4431

## DEADLINES

### Kirk News – Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> December

Please send all items to the Editor,  
Christine Denham, c/o Church Office  
(Home tel: 336 5943) or e-mail:  
kirknews@blackhallstcolumba.org.uk

### Blackhall Bulletin- Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> February

Please send all items to the Editor,  
Barbara Wilson, c/o Church Office  
(Home tel: 312 6035) or e-mail:  
bulletin@blackhallstcolumba.org.uk

### Advertising Enquiries

Enquiries regarding advertising  
should be sent to Kay Rich,  
8 Queen's Ave South, EH4 3BU  
Home tel: 332 8502

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## 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](mailto:secretary@blackhallstcolumba.org.uk)

# WELCOME



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