

BLACKHALL BULLETIN

September 2026

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

No. 181



Festival of Flowers



at
Blackhall St Columba's Church
Columba Road, Edinburgh

In support of the Tour de 4 Cycle Event
set up by Sir Chris Hoy

including

REFRESHMENTS



CRAFT DISPLAYS

LIVE MUSIC



In aid of

Prostate Cancer uk

Breast Cancer Now

Maggie's

Cure Leukaemia

Macmillan Cancer Support



FRIDAY 30TH OCTOBER 10.00 - 18.00

SATURDAY 31ST OCTOBER 10.00 - 18.00

SUNDAY 1ST NOVEMBER 14.00 - 17.00

Admission free, donations welcome
Wheelchair access

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For more information, or if you, or a
group would like to sponsor a display,
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flowerfestival26@outlook.com



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LONLIENESS

Statistically speaking, it should be almost impossible to be lonely on this planet, planet earth. There are more than 6 billion people roaming around the world and so, in theory, it should be almost impossible to be lonely.

However, that is not the reality that many people find themselves in today. I remember watching the film *Crocodile Dundee*, starring the Australian comedian Paul Hogan. When Paul Hogan, as Mick “Crocodile” Dundee, first arrives in New York, he looks around at the dense crowds and towering buildings with a kind of amused awe. Coming from the Australian outback, where people are spread out over vast land, he interprets the packed city in his own way. With a straight face and dry humour, he remarks that it must be “the friendliest place in the world,” because so many people have chosen to live so close together. The joke lands on the contrast between his naive, literal perspective and the reality of busy, impersonal city life.



Indeed, it is ironically often the case that it is in the busiest of cities that people often are the loneliest. There can be many different reasons for this. Loneliness isn't caused by just one thing, it usually builds from a mix of circumstances, habits, and emotional patterns. Some common causes include; life transitions, moving to a new city, starting a new job, ending a relationship, or retiring can disrupt your usual social circle and leave you feeling disconnected, social isolation, simply not having enough regular contact with others, perhaps due to living alone, working remotely, or lacking nearby friends and family, low self-esteem, if someone feels unworthy of connection or fears rejection, they may avoid social situations or struggle to open up, loss and grief, losing a loved one can leave both an emotional and social gap that's difficult to fill, health or mobility issues, chronic illness or physical limitations can reduce opportunities to get out and engage with others. This is not an all encompassing list of reasons. Mental health challenges, cultural or language barriers or technology overuse, (reliance on social media, like Instagram or TikTok, can sometimes replace meaningful interaction) are all potential causes.

What is worth noting is that loneliness is subjective. As I said, it is not about how many people are around you, it is about the quality of the interaction you have with them.

What can be done about loneliness then and more specifically what can we teach, and do, as a Church to help with this affliction?

I think there are three things that may help. Firstly, we are asked, as Christians, to learn contentment. Paul wrote in his letter to the Philippians; “I rejoice in the Lord greatly that now at last you have revived your concern for me; indeed, you were concerned for me but had no opportunity to show it. Not that I am referring to being in need, for I have learned to be content with whatever I have. I know what it is to have little, and I know what it is to have plenty. In any and all circumstances I have learned the secret of being well-fed and of going hungry, of having plenty and of being in need. I can do all things through him who strengthens me. In any case, it was kind of you to share my distress”. (Philippians 4:10-13)

This is not so much about just accepting a situation but being able to recognise and appreciate small blessings for what they are. It is about appreciating the small contacts we have even if it is a short conversation with a teller or an assistant in a shop.

Secondly, do good for someone else. The writer of Hebrews says; “Let mutual affection continue. Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by doing that some have entertained angels without knowing it. Remember those who are in prison, as though you were in prison with them, those who are being tortured, as though you yourselves were being tortured.” (Hebrews 13:1-3) If we focus on other people, and consider their problems, it not only puts our own problems into context, but we tend to forget about our own issues when we help others. It also encourages others to take an interest in our own problems.

Finally, I believe that worshipping with others will make a profound difference. It is also written in Hebrews; “Let us hold fast to the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who has promised is faithful. And let us consider how to provoke one another to love and good deeds, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day approaching.” (Hebrews 10:23-25).

We, at Blackhall St Columba's Parish Church, have a number of ways that you can engage with us. Whilst anyone is always welcome at our normal Sunday worship at 10:30, we hold many other activities some of both a purely social and some of a more faith based nature. I am convinced that there is something for everyone.

On a purely social front we have a Curry Club, a Whisky Club, a Book Club, an Italian Dining Club, or just regular meetings of our CAMEO Club, (Come And Meet Each Other) and Soup'n' Chat. There are also many one off social events such as; concerts, Murder Mystery High Teas and much more. On a more faith based front we have Mid-week PEACE Services, Bible Conversations, mini Pilgrimages and of course regular Sunday Worship. You can find out most of what we are up to by checking out our website; <https://www.blackhallstcolumba.org.uk/> or by following us Facebook, but the best way is just to come along and see for yourself.

If you are feeling lonely, I would encourage you to lean on Jesus for contentment. Help someone else and worship God with other believers. As well as redirecting your thoughts away from yourself you will realise that when you know God you are never alone.

God bless all, Fergus

OUTREACH EVENTS

These events are open to every reader of the Bulletin. We do hope you will come and join us.

Thursday 17th September at 7pm : date to be confirmed): Community Conversations - The Anxious Generation

We continue our series of topical conversations with a discussion around the issue of the effects our modern society with its emphasis on technology and social media has on our children and their mental health. There will be a presentation with an opportunity to ask questions too. If you are concerned about this issue and want to know more, please come along. This is open to members of the church and the wider community and is free of charge.

Saturday 3rd October : Music @ St.Columba's- Bristo Community Concert Band

Please join us in the sanctuary at 7pm to enjoy this fantastic local community band, established in 2014, which enjoys playing and performing a wide range of music. There are no tickets needed for this event but donations for the band and towards the refreshments will be gratefully received.

Sunday 11th October: Cold Harvest Lunch

This will follow the Harvest Service and take place in the large hall. It will be a wonderful way to share what the Lord has provided with friends old and new. Further details will follow at a later date.

Friday 30th October to Sunday: 1st November: Festival of Flowers

Blackhall St Columba's Church will host a **Festival of Flowers in support of the 'Tour de 4' cycle event**, the brainchild of Sir Chris Hoy, which was set up following his diagnosis with Stage 4 cancer in 2023. Proceeds from the Festival will be distributed among five cancer charities nominated by the 'Tour de 4': Prostate Cancer UK, Breast Cancer Now, Maggie's, Cure Leukaemia and Macmillan Cancer Support.

The **Festival of Flowers** including refreshments, live music & crafts will be held in Blackhall St Columba's Church on:

Friday 30th October 10:00 - 18:00

Saturday 31st October 10:00 - 18:00

Sunday 1st November 14:00 - 17:00.

Entry is free, but donations would be appreciated.

Saturday 28th November : WATCH Committee Christmas Fair from 2-4pm

The annual Christmas Fair will take place once again in the church building with all the favourite stalls like the book stall and the home baking stall along with the popular goodie baskets and the tearoom etc. Come along and support our marvellous committee which is raising funds this year for Parkinson's Disease UK. Please refer to the church website for more details nearer the time.

Sunday 6th December : Movies@stcolumba's Join us at 6.30pm for a modern classic Christmas movie, 'Elf' (PG). This feel good movie is a family favourite and stars Will Ferrell as Buddy the Elf, a human raised by Santa's elves. Please feel free to dress (up) as you wish. We defy you not to leave smiling and with a spring in your step.

Seasonal refreshments will be served. there is no charge but donations to cover costs will be gratefully received.

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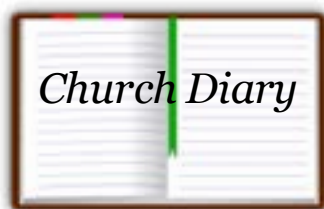
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SEPTEMBER

6 th	10.30 am	Morning Worship
13 th	10.30am	Morning Worship
20 th	10.30 am	Morning Worship
27 th	10.30 am	Morning Worship

OCTOBER

4 th	10.30am	Communion
	3.00pm	Afternoon Communion
11 th	10.30am	Harvest service and lunch
18 th	10.30am	Morning Worship
25 th	10.30am	Morning Worship

NOVEMBER

1 st	10.30 am	Morning Worship
8 th	10.30am	Remembrance Sunday
11 th		Remembrance Day
15 th	10.30 am	Morning Worship
22 nd	10.30 am	Morning Worship
29 th	10.30 am	First Sunday in Advent Praise Band and Family Service

Please note that details are correct at time of printing. For most up to date details please check the website: www.blackhallstcolumba.org.uk

If, for whatever reason, you find yourself unable to attend any service in person you can join with us on line when the service is happening (i.e. at 10.30am) or watch later if you cannot do that. Go to:

www.youtube.com/@blackhallstcolumba

or scan the code



The

Prayer

Circle



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

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

Please contact Prayer Circle secretary Betty Watt at lzbthwatt@yahoo.co.uk or Fergus Cook at Fcook@churchofscotland.org.uk or 0131 466 7503.

Alternatively, you can fill in a prayer request card, found either on the table at the back of the sanctuary or there are some beside the Bibles on the back of the seats at the back of the Church, and pop it into the locked box, marked *Prayer Requests* on the table at the back of the Sanctuary.



Midweek Peace Services 2026 -27

Theme – Our Journey of Faith

Our midweek Peace services begin at 12 noon in the sanctuary with a short act of worship with an invited speaker followed by a soup lunch. It is an opportunity to share fellowship, food and worship together and everyone is most welcome. Please consider joining us.

16 th September	Communion	Rev Fergus Cook
30 th September	Journeys of Faith	Muriel Stenhouse
14 th October	Journey to the Pulpit	Rev Derek Munn
28 th October	Pilgrim Journey to Assisi	Margaret Brown
11 th November	Journey to Peace	Rev Fergus Cook
25 th November	Charity Focus	Parkinson's Society

For more information please contact:

Shona Cook 07981 970 054 or

Ruth Laidlaw 07513 967 974

We rely on volunteers to make and serve lunch and to drive some of our attendees to the church so, if you think you might be able to help, even on an ad hoc basis, we would love to hear from you.

Although the summer tends to bring a slowdown in requests for household starter packs and Pantry Food Shop applications, this never lasts when the schools go back. FreshStart is already preparing for this post summer spike. Stocks of starter pack items have been building up, but these will soon be used up so your continuing support is very much appreciated by FreshStart.

As always any donations of household goods can be handed in on Friday mornings between 10 and 11.30am to one of our team of volunteers on duty in the church halls. Regarding this team we are looking to recruit more volunteers from the church and community. Duties are not more than 5/6 times a year and further information is available if you contact us as directed below. FreshStart would appreciate you joining the local team.

If you have cleared surplus items but still wish to help, you can donate money via their website (www.freshstartweb.org) or use their Amazon wish list (details on the website).

Lilian & Michael
FreshStart Co-ordinators
c/o Church Office
0131 332 4431

"Soup n Chat"

WE ARE BACK FROM OUR SUMMER BREAK !

Come along on any of the following dates and join this friendly, happy group. Bring a neighbour and even if not a soup fan the "Chat" is always good. Anyone from the Blackhall community is welcome.

Friday **28th Aug** 12noon to 1.30pm in the Large hall

Friday **11th Sept** 12noon to 1.30pm in the Small Hall

Friday **25th Sept** 12noon to 1.30pm in the Large Hall

Friday **9th Oct** 12noon to 1.30pm in the Small Hall

Friday **23rd Oct** 12noon to 1.30pm in the Large Hall

We look forward to meeting you there

Michael Cockburn
Lead and admin Volunteer.



Two Sudokus to puzzle over, one easy, one medium Enjoy !

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* SAVE THE DATES *

A Christmas Celebration

'IT WAS ON A STARRY NIGHT'

Thursday 17th & Friday 18th December 2026

I know it seems quite early to be mentioning Christmas BUT it is never too soon to save a date in your diary for a special celebration this Festive Season!

This year something a little different from what has happened for the last few years is happening at Blackhall St Columba's Church and we want to share our plans with you so you can save the stars in your diaries.

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

Here are the important details

WHAT ? A CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION CALLED 'IT WAS ON A STARRY NIGHT'
WHERE ? BLACKHALL ST COLUMBA'S CHURCH
WHEN ? THURSDAY 17th and FRIDAY 18th DECEMBER 2026 at 5.30pm

On the last Thursday and Friday before Christmas (just as schools close for the holidays), throughout the day and in the early evening, we will be spreading the Good News by hosting this performance of the Greatest Story Ever Told in our sanctuary. We want members of our community to join us in finding out the true meaning of Christmas told in word and in song. Hear the Angel Gabriel's message, discover what it meant for Mary and Joseph and see how the shepherds reacted. Encounter King Herod and end your journey in Bethlehem and the stable to discover the most wonderful gift we have ever been given. After the performance, we are also offering a brand new Christmas Nativity Escape Room for the older children who come along. There will be seasonal treats and refreshment available AND our biennial Christmas Tree Festival in the large hall. There couldn't be a better way to enjoy Advent and start your Christmas celebrations!

We look forward to welcoming many of you there.



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EDINBURGH PARKINSON'S SOCIAL CAFES

Parkinson's is a progressive neurological condition that affects the brain and makes movement more difficult over time. Symptoms can include tremor, stiffness, slow movement, cognitive changes and problems with balance. Everyone experiences Parkinson's differently, and while there is currently no cure, medication, exercise, and support can help people live well with the condition.

One of Edinburgh Parkinson's branch's most valued services is its network of Social Cafés, which provide a warm friendly and informal place where people living with Parkinson's, along with their family members, friends, and carers can meet for a chat and support one another over a cup of tea or coffee. The cafes offer a relaxed environment where everyone is welcome, whether they have been recently diagnosed or have been living with Parkinson's for many years. Information leaflets produced by Parkinson's UK are available and external speakers such as the local Parkinson's advisor are sometimes invited. The cafes are supported by a dedicated group of volunteers who are available to offer information, answer questions and signpost people to local services and activities.

There are currently three Social Cafés across Edinburgh: at Butterflies Café, Blackford and Grange Parish Church (formerly Marchmont St Giles Church (second Monday of each month); Hays Community Hub, Niddrie (fourth Monday); and Fairmilehead Church (third Wednesday). These cafés were expanded in 2024 to make support more accessible across the city.

The Edinburgh Parkinson's Branch is extremely grateful to the WATCH committee at Blackhall St Columba's Church for their support this year as their chosen charity. With their support, Edinburgh Parkinson's hopes to establish a fourth Social Café serving the north-west of Edinburgh. This new café will provide an opportunity for local people in the north west of Edinburgh affected by Parkinson's to meet others, share experiences, and access support closer to home.

For further information and support: www.edinburghparkinsons.org

National Support and Advice

Parkinson's UK Helpline:

[0800 800 0303](tel:08008000303)

Now that you know a little more about the Parkinson's Social Cafes, please do come along to our craft and coffee morning in the Church to help raise funds for our charity this year. And of course, you mustn't forget our Christmas Fair on Saturday 28th November.

We look forward to welcoming you all ! And we thank you for your continuing support for the Watch Committee and the charities who benefit from your support – every penny counts !



CRAFT COFFEE MORNING
BLACKHALL ST. COLUMBA'S CHURCH
IN AID OF
 **Parkinson's UK**
For every Parkinson's journey
in **EDINBURGH**



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ADULTS £5.00 OVER 5 £1.00 UNDER 5 FREE
10.00 - 12.00 NOON

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PLACE FOR THOSE WITH
PARKINSON'S DISEASE IN
NORTH WEST EDINBURGH.



WATCH COMMITTEE

The time has come once again for the WATCH committee to organise our fund raising of 2026.

This year we have chosen to support Parkinson's UK (Edinburgh). The branch aims to open a Social Cafe in NW Edinburgh. This vital service will provide individuals living with Parkinson's and their caregivers a relaxed environment to gather access support and share information.

JULY to DECEMBER 2026

Our coin collection began at the beginning of July and with the help of our young folks and Frances the coins continue to arrive each week for which we are truly and very thankful to everyone who contributes (its not easy find coins these days)

Our **CRAFT COFFEE MORNING** will be Saturday the **26th September 10am until 12 o'clock**, apart from the delicious coffee and pastries you will be able to peruse the beautiful craft stalls including jewellery glass ornaments and wooden artefacts
Cake and provisions Hand crafted crochet and knitting and sewing and also a Raffle
All donations of baking and provisions or crafts will be gratefully received.

CHRISTMAS FAIR (It's never too early) will be held on the 2pm until 4pm Santa will be in attendance along with his Elf and helpers,

Lynn Bunney WATCH Team

VOLUNTEER APPEAL - COFFEE MORNING & CHRISTMAS FAIR

If you would like to lend a hand at the coffee Morning or Xmas Fair there are plenty of ways to get involved.

Serving coffee & refreshments

Home Baking (always very popular)

Helping out on the Stall

Managing the dishwasher!!

Whether you can spare a whole morning or just a little bit of time your help would be greatly appreciated.

Want to get involved ?

Please get in touch with

Lynn Bunney on 07742 271 878
or Rosi Watt on 07533 955 025





Following a busy year the Art Club season finished with our annual exhibition. This year we supported Maggie's Centre in Edinburgh and raised a sum of £1491. We were delighted to achieve those and thank everyone who came along and supported the exhibition. Art works on display this year were particularly good.

Each year we choose a winner for the People's Choice award. This year we presented the Quaich to Eileen Duval for her painting 'Moonscape'.



Our term starts up again on Monday 7th September. For membership details please contact our Membership Secretary
Joyce Whytock.
Family.whytock@blueyonder.co.uk

EDINBURGH FLORAL ART CLUB

Following a successful and enjoyable coffee morning at Blackhall St Columba's in June we are looking forward to our first meeting of the new session on **Friday 11th September** at 2pm in the large hall when we will welcome Kirstin Colman from Musselburgh whose demonstration is titled: "My Journey with Flowers. In **October** we meet on **Friday 9th**, same time and place, and Regina O'Regan from Kinross will be our demonstrator, her demo is called "A Whole New World". We are grateful to Blackhall St Columba's for their support and encouragement, and to those who came along to the Coffee Morning.

Our meetings start at 2pm and finish around 4pm, we raffle the floral arrangements and enjoy refreshments after the demonstration. Visitors are welcome (£10) and new members, too (£60 per annum). **If anyone wishes more information about our syllabus for the coming year (when we will celebrate our 75th Anniversary, we are one of the oldest flower clubs in the country), or simply would like to know more about the Club, then please contact our Chairman, Suzie Stark, on 07888 942561.**

If you like flowers, enjoy seeing inspirational arrangers in action and fancy the occasional 'hands-on' workshop then do come along and see what we get up to, we are a friendly group, and you will receive a warm welcome!

CAMEO CLUB

Our last meeting saw thirty-nine members and volunteers enjoying Scottish and popular songs accompanied by expert keyboard playing. We had two new faces who are potential volunteers, and we gave our congratulations to one member who celebrates his 90th birthday the next week.

Our entertainment programme is varied with something for all. The Cameo Choir, which is made up of local singers will be presenting a popular playlist at the on the **7th August** followed on **21st** by a new performer at Cameo who plays the harp. We look forward to welcoming all our performers as they make Friday mornings very pleasurable with members also enjoying each other's company.

Cameo is open to all from 10.30-12pm every second Friday. We meet in the large hall at Blackhall St Columba's church. We have an expanding table of men who join us. We can also arrange to provide local car lifts.

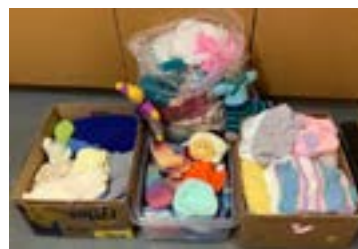
Further information can be found on the website - blackhallstcolumba.org.uk - or phone the number below.

Fiona Drinnan 343 6762

KNIT AND NATTER

After taking a break over summer, we will be starting up again on Monday September 7th. We will be meeting in the Sanctuary at 7.30pm and would be happy to welcome anyone interested in joining our group.

We have been able to deliver a bumper bundle of knits to Pregnancy Counselling and Care which they were delighted to receive. Out of interest I counted as I packed:



16 blankets, 29 cardigans, 17 jumpers, 43 hats, 2 scarves and 5 toys, this didn't include hats and booties which were part of sets.

If you have any good condition baby items which you no longer have any use for Pregnancy Counselling and Care would be delighted to receive them as there is no let up in the number of families needing help. They gave out 150,000 items in the last year. They are also looking for volunteers to help sort and pack, especially as they now have more space in Lochside View.

If you would like any further information about Knit and Natter please contact me at stcknitnatter@gmail.com

We'd love to welcome you to our group.

Lilian Cockburn

TUESDAY TOPICS

As last year, we are having monthly meetings, still in the Small Hall and at the same time of 7.30 pm. We hope our regular attenders will come again and also hope to welcome anyone who would like to join us. Men are welcome and the membership stays at £20 for the year or £3 per meeting if you just come occasionally. Talks usually last about 45 minutes and then after questions, we have a cup of tea or coffee. Do come and meet new friends.

We start on Tuesday October 6th with a talk by Linda McDonald entitled 'All the Women' (The story of MUMs Recipes – Malawi Underprivileged Mothers). This will be an update since the last time she spoke to us about 12 years ago.

On November 3rd Dave Burke's talk 'Faraday Base, Antarctica 1981 – 1984' will be about the experiences he had when he worked there.

On December 1st Andrew Laing will speak about his work as senior keeper in the carnivore team at Edinburgh Zoo.

We are also arranging our usual post-Christmas lunch in January.

You don't need to be a member of the church to come. We welcome anyone from the area who is looking for friendship and interesting talks.

For more information please contact either Lyndy Paton on 07460212174 or Sheila Mackintosh on 07774717968.

BLACKHALL ST COLUMBA'S SINGERS

Junior Singers begins its new session on Thursday, 3rd September in the upstairs hall of Blackhall St Columba's Church. We meet from 3.45 – 4.30pm with most children coming straight from school. We are hoping to welcome some new members this session so if your son / daughter is in P3 – P7 and enjoys singing, please come along and give our group a try. So, what happens during choir time? Well, our emphasis is on fun and enjoyment. After warming up our voices, we obviously do lots of singing, working on new songs, revising others but always try to finish our time together with musical games. Later this session, we are hoping to put on another "Musical Evening" in the church, so much of our time will be working on material for that.

Last session was very busy but enjoyable with plenty varied outings. We sang during two or three church services, took part with the Senior Choir, Praise Group and Praise Band in the performance of "Joy – a Christmas Celebration", sang to the residents of Strachan House and Queen's Court and, for the first time, accepted invitations to sing during the Edinburgh Highland Strathspey & Reel's Society concert in the Queen's Hall and The Telephone Choir's annual concert held in the Church Hill Theatre. This coming session is already shaping up to be equally exciting, so if you are interested and would like more information, please phone Amy Donaldson on 07711 659 849

NORTH WEST HERITAGE HISTORY GROUP

We meet in Davidson's Mains Parish Church at 7.30 pm. Membership is £15 per person, £25 per couple. For further details contact Charlotte Cowe at charlotte@dmains.co.uk or telephone 0131 336 2494.

23 September 2026. Ruxton – The World's First Modern Murder showcasing the groundbreaking work of Scottish Scientists. Speaker Tom Wood

28 October 2026 History and Future of Edinburgh's Water Supply . Speaker Simon Fuller

25 November 2026 Campaigning for Edinburgh – 150 years of the Cockburn Association. Speaker Richard Rodger

BLACKHALL ST COLUMBA'S CHURCH GOLF OUTING 2026

Once again the Annual Golf Outing was held at Ravelston Golf Club on the 26th June, there were 15 players and 18 staying for a delicious high tea, our thanks go to Ravelston for a most enjoyable day.

The winners this year were:-

Involvement "88" Golf Cup:	James Burr
Murrayfield Ladies Cup	Jenny Clark
	2 nd Frances Douglas
Murrayfield Cup	Graham Patterson
	2 nd Matt McGowan
	3 rd Fergus Cook
9 Hole Prize	Sally Foster
Nearest the Pin	18 th James Burr
Longest Drive	17 th Graham Patterson



Thank you to Murrayfield House for their sponsorship.

David Thomson

Frances Douglas Secretary

Breath-Works



From the week beginning 3rd of November
Dee@Breath-works will start running her
Monday evening class from 6-7 pm at Cramond Kirk
and her classes
Tuesday and Thursday morning from
9.30am -10.30am at Blackhall St. Columba's Church
Livestream available
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YOGA MOVES

Yoga Moves with Mary
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Blackhall St. Columba's Church
(Livestream available)
Tuesday 6:30am -7:15am
Online Yoga Rise - Zoom
Thursday 6:00pm -7:00 pm Vinyasa Flow
St Columba's Church , Upper Hall
(Livestream available)
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CONGRATULATIONS

Bangla Kitchen attended the 2026 Scottish Curry Awards at the Glasgow Marriott Hotel on 27th April. We have previously won in 2014 and 2015, being finalists in 2013 and from 2016 - 2020, now being winners this year for the category 'Curry Takeaway of the Year'. We have also previously won the 2023 Spice Awards as well.

We want to thank our customers for their loyal support over the years and we are grateful for their votes. We will continue to provide the best service and delicious meals for our customers.



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Opening hours:

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Wednesday 10.00am-8.00pm
Thursday 10.00am-5.00pm
Friday 10.00am-5.00pm
Saturday 10.00am-5.00pm

For information about events and activities
that are being run in the library please contact
us on:

Blackhall.Library@Edinburgh.gov.uk or
529 5595 or just pop in!



SCOTTISH COUNTRY DANCING

With nearly six months since the last Bulletin, the Scottish Country Dance group that meets at Blackhall St Columba's Church is about to start up again for the new session.

We are a friendly group of enthusiastic dancers – men, women, singles and couples – and we meet each Thursday evening from 7 till 9 in the large hall.

With a range of experience, from those who have danced for decades to those who joined us only last year, ours is not an official RSCDS class, but a “social” class, where the focus is as much on the *dancers* as it is on the dancing. There is a partner for everyone, and we aim to encourage one another in every way.

As the class teacher, I prepare a weekly programme of strathspeys, jigs and reels to cater for all abilities. We walk through each dance, revising the various formations as we go, so everyone can join in when the music starts.

(On that note – no pun intended – I would very much welcome someone who would be willing to come each week as a non-dancer, to help by playing the music I have set up ready. Really straightforward, using my iPhone playlist, but it would let me focus on the dancers.)

With a party at Christmas, an Afternoon Tea Dance for charity in February, and a Spring Fling at the end of the season, we have plenty to look forward to, and you would be most welcome to come along in September to our two “open evenings”, on 17th and 24th, to see if country dancing is for you. No special gear needed - just dress comfortably, bring a pair of flat-soled shoes and a mug for the tea- break. Just £3 for each evening, but this would be deducted from the £20 term fee if you decide to join.

For further information, just call the church secretary, who will put you in touch with me. I'd love to hear from you, dancer or DJ!

Muriel Stenhouse



LOOKING FOR A NEW WAY TO KEEP FIT ?

WHY NOT TRY ZUMBA?



In the large hall at 10am every Saturday there is a dance class with a difference. Actually lots of differences : ages, shapes, energy levels, balance... But we all have lots of fun. Zumba really is the dance style for everyone. Why not come along and try it?

Zumba is an individual dance to Latin rhythms (e.g. Salsa, Cha Cha, Merengue). The sessions always start with a gentle warm up then for each routine Gabi demonstrates what we are supposed to do and we try to follow. That's all. Everyone dances to our own ability and comfort level, and if I'm going left when you are going right then that's just how it is!

No pressure. It can be a gentle movement to music session, or a full high energy work out. The choice is yours.

New members welcome. All you need is loose clothing and some trainers. So what are you waiting for? Don't miss out on this fun way to stay fit.

For more information contact Gabi Brown now on 07720867472





BLACKHALL PROBUS CLUB

We are looking forward to the 42nd session of the Blackhall Probud Club, which will begin in early October.

The Club offers a series of twice monthly talks on a variety of topics of interest to retired and semi-retired men in the local area. Our current membership is around 40 but we are always keen to welcome new members.

The Club's meetings are usually held on the 1st and 3rd Thursdays of the month from October through to April (once in December on the first Thursday) at Blackhall Bowling Club, Keith Row. We begin at 10am with a cuppa and catch up, with the talks beginning at 10.30.

In a change to previous sessions, we are holding a New Year Lunch, as opposed to a Christmas Lunch, in January 2027. As before, partners and spouses will be invited to this event.

We shall be continuing with our occasional and very popular "Quiz, Pie and a Pint" event, leisurely walks in and around Edinburgh and visits to local places of interest, usually linked to the subject matter of one of the talks.

Our programme will start on **Thursday 1st October** with a talk from Dr John Middleton, entitled, "A Lifetime in Iron and Steel", which is very topical, given the recent privatisation of British Steel. Two weeks later on the **15th**, Roy Johnstone, a previous speaker, will be giving a presentation on "The Cuban Missile Crisis".

In November, we shall be hearing on the **5th** about the invaluable work undertaken by CHAS (Children's Hospices Across Scotland), followed two weeks later on the **19th** by Andy Waugh, talking about the canine service, "Therapy". The autumn meetings will conclude on **3rd December** with an interesting topic presented by David Land which is intriguingly entitled, "Counting, Writing and Speaking".

If you are interested in any of the talks which make up our varied programme, or any of our other activities, please contact me or better still, come along to our first meeting. You will be made very welcome.

Gordon Hamilton

President

gdhprobus@gmail.com

0131 332 6089

BLACKHALL LADIES

PROBUS CLUB



The Club has a healthy membership, and we are looking forward to an interesting and varied programme next session. In **October 2026** we will hear from Tom Kelly, with a talk on "A Plague on Your Polio". This will be followed in **November** by a talk from The Yard, which is our chosen charity for the session. In **December**, we will hear from Jackie Sangster on Occupations of Old, with refreshments and Christmas treats.

In **January 2027**, Cat Irving of the Royal College of Surgeons will give a talk on "Bloody Knives and Body Snatches: The Development of Surgery in Scotland". This will be followed a week later by our Post Christmas Lunch at the Royal Burgess Golf Club. We look forward to a talk in **February** by Ruth Boreham on her time as a researcher on the TV programme Who Do You Think You Are, and in **March** Simon Bendle's topic will be a celebration of International Women's Day with Edinburgh Heroines. In **April** our AGM will take place, followed by refreshments.

Membership is open to ladies who are retired or semi-retired, and we meet at Blackhall Bowling Club on the second Thursday of the month from October to April, from 10.00 am to 12 noon with tea/coffee and biscuits before every talk. Enquiries from ladies who are interested in joining are very welcome, and should be made to the Secretary, details below.

Christine Proudfoot, Secretary.

Phone: 0131 343 1761

Email: proudfootchristine2@gmail.com

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CRAIGLEITH PROBUS



What were your highlights of summer 2026? Too much football in place of favourite TV programmes? Or ensuring the garden was watered, harvesting your home grown edibles, and sitting back to watch the weeds grow! But the summer we were involved exchanging ideas with fellow active Probus Clubs in Edinburgh, and beyond, so that a fully fleshed programme of talks could be circulated promptly to anyone who may fit the membership category of being over 55, and semi or fully retired, and we, within Craighleith Probus, are always delighted to welcome guests and potential members.

Our programme of talks starts on Wednesday 7th **October** when we welcome Tom Wood, a local retired Deputy Chief Constable, with his talk based on his own experiences of ‘**The World’s End Murders**’. This case is fascinating to study and to be retold especially with the use of double jeopardy plus DNA and forensic soil science to ensure the conviction.

How much do you know about **Thomas Carlyle**? Brought up in Ecclefechan and eastern Dumfries-shire, to attend University he walked over 100 miles to the University of Edinburgh to study under John Playfair while also perfecting, as used in maths, the Carlyle Circle. However it is his literary skills that Ian Campbell, Emeritus Professor, English Literature, will be exploring when he visits us on Wednesday **21st October**.

Parkinson’s Disease leads to an unexpected way life reshapes itself, and we look forward to Gary Sloan explaining this to us on Wednesday **4th November**, and this will be our first charity event of our session
Do you know about ‘**The Edinburgh United Breweries Fraud**’? Perhaps stated as Boiling the Wort and Cooking the Books! See you on **2nd December** but no samples, sorry!

Do you remember the **Soviet Invasion of Czechoslovakia** in 1968. David Land, our speaker on Wednesday **16th December** was there at the time. Come and find out more.

And 2027 our themes include ‘Lenin’, ‘Elsie Inglis’, ‘If War Should Come (WW2)?’ and Cryptic Crosswords - look in the next Blackhall Bulletin!

Just drop me an email if you want any more information as well as checking our webpage <https://cpc199021.wixsite.com/craighleith-probus-cl> or just pop in on the 1st & 3rd Wednesday of the month to Blackhall Bowling Club at 10am for refreshments followed by the talk at 10.30am

John MacLennan - Meetings Secretary johnmacleannanuk@googlemail.com



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BLACKHALL NURSERY

NEWS

SEPTEMBER 2026



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

As always, the summer term passed by in a flash. The children were very busy learning through play and staff support this learning by following the children's interests. Since Easter we have learned how to keep ourselves safe, with help from Corstorphine First Response, the police and Green watch from Drylaw Fire Station. We have been keeping ourselves healthy by tasting all sorts of different healthy foods, including passion fruit, avocado and fennel and moved our bodies to take part in Woodland walks, a tennis lesson, dancing and yoga. The children who were leaving us had visits to school, meeting their 'BFG', their new classmates and their new teachers. We watched our ladybirds and caterpillars grow and change.

In June, we had a trip to East Links Farm Park for a full day trip – a very exciting trip out. It was a wonderful way to mark the departure of those children heading off to school and we now look forward to welcoming a new cohort due to start in August.

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

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

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202 and 202B Brownies were busy last term spending lots of time outdoors and trying out new sports including Squash which many girls have now taken up as a new hobby. They worked together in their sixes learning to build a tent, did some cooking over a campfire, learned how to use flint and steel to light 5 second fires and thought about what you may need to pack if you were going camping. They enjoyed ending the term with a silent disco party on board the Maid of Forth where 18 girls achieved their Gold Award, 10 Silver and 10 Bronze. They are looking forward to another action packed term
Nicole Harland – 202&202B Brownie Leader

202 and 202B Brownies built bird boxes which they then put out around Cammo to attract more wildlife in the area.



202 Guides thank the community for support of their final fundraising efforts for their Swiss adventure to World Centre Our Chalet in July. The summer was busy enjoying the outdoors, setting fire to things & kayaking at Port Edgar! **Matilda Lomas - 202 Guide Leader**

202 Rainbows had fun bandaging to complete their First Aid badge and an enjoyable farm visit strawberry picking & pony grooming. Plus we celebrated the girls receiving 11 Awards (6 Gold) and said goodbye to our leavers moving up to Brownies. **Nicola McDermid – 202 Rainbow Leader**

202A Rainbows had a lot of fun cooking s'mores and popcorn over the campfire



202C Brownies have been looking at their promise and what it means including learning about Fresh Start. They then organised a bring & buy sale to raise funds for a shopping trip for donations to the charity. Three older girls also achieved their gold award. Congratulations. **Helen Abbott – 202C Brownie Leader**

202A Rainbows have been busy working on their Take Action Theme. They learned about what a charity is and how they could support one. They learned how to plait and preserved even when they found this tricky. They ended the summer term with a trip to Pizza Express
Barbara Bon – 202A Rainbow Leader

This term, Rangers have been making the most of some relaxed evenings during exam season. They've cooked sausages in the woods, revisited favourite activities from their Rainbow days such as playing with Play-Doh and decorating biscuits, and will round off the term with a trip to Cramond Beach. **Chelsie Wyatt – Ranger Leader**

In April 202 Guides, 202 Brownies and 202B Brownies attended Girlguiding Cityscapes in Glasgow. They explored the city all while playing a wide game with fellow Girlguiding members from Scotland.



Volunteer with Girlguiding Edinburgh?

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

We are looking for enthusiastic adults to help with Rainbow, Brownie & Guide units city-wide,

Full training and support provided. See our website or register online for more information:

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

Blackhall.districtcomm@gmail.com

BEAVERS



Beaver ScotJam Lochgoilhead

The 23rd Craigalmond Beavers were given the opportunity to attend the Beavers ScotJam event at the Scout National Outdoor Centre in Lochgoilhead in June. The Beavers joined other groups from around Scotland and enjoyed a packed weekend of outdoor pursuits including paddle boarding, climbing, canoeing, archery, nature activities and singing around the campfire. Thanks to the Staff at Lochgoilhead and all of our Leaders.

Attendance at Beavers ScotJam 2026 was supported by a generous grant from the Blackhall Children's Sports Committee and the Beavers' own fundraising efforts.

Congratulations to Beavers Aidan, Arlo, Brodie, Dylan, Gabriel, James F, James M, JP and Liam who gained their Chief Scouts Bronze award, the highest award available to Beavers.





Scouts & Cubs Spring Camp

32 Cubs & (younger) Scouts went to Lochgoilhead in May. Activities included Giant Stand Up Paddleboarding, Canoeing, a Speedboat ride, a Hike and lots of games. We travelled to and from Lochgoilhead on an electric bus. Funding from Blackhall Children's Sports Committee helped with travel costs for camp and is much appreciated. Thanks to the Staff at Lochgoilhead and all of our Leaders.



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Trustees

We are looking to recruit two volunteers to join our Trustee Board. A background in Scouting is not essential. Training will be provided. Skills in GDPR or Health & Safety would be a bonus.

Trustee - Young Adult

We are also looking for a young adult (18 – 25 years) to join our Trustee Board. This is a great way of practising skills, expanding a CV and fulfilling CPD requirements.

For more information please contact:

LOOK CLOSER

What do you see, nurses, what do you see?
What are you thinking when you're looking at me?
A crabbit old woman, not very wise,
Uncertain of habit, with far-away eyes,

Who dribbles her food and makes no reply,
When you say in a loud voice, "I do wish you'd try,"
Who seem not to notice the things that you do,
and forever is losing a stocking or shoe,

Who, quite unresisting, lets you do as you will,
With bathing and feeding, the long day to fill?
Is that what you're thinking, is that what you see?
Then open your eyes, you're not looking at me.

I'll tell you who I am as I sit here so still,
As I move at your bidding, as I eat at your will,
I'm a small child of ten with a father and mother,
Brothers and sisters, who love one another,

A young girl of sixteen with wings on her feet,
Dreaming that soon a true lover she'll meet;
A bride now at twenty – my heart gives a leap,
Remembering the vows that I promised to keep:

At twenty-five now I have young of my own,
Who need me to build a secure, happy home;
A woman of thirty, my young now grow fast,
Bound to each other with ties that should last;

At forty my young sons will soon all be gone,
But my man stays beside me to see I don't mourn;
At fifty once more babies play round my knee,
Again we know children, my loved one and me.

Dark days are upon me, my husband is dead,
I look at the future, I shudder with dread,
For my young are all busy with young of their own,
And I think of the years and the love that I've known,

I'm an old woman now and nature is cruel,
'Tis her just to make old age look like a fool
The body it crumbles, grace and vigour depart,
There now is a stone where I once had a heart.

But inside this old carcase a young girl still dwells,
And now and again my battered heart swells,
I remember the joys, I remember the pain,
And I'm loving and living life over again.

I think of the years all too few – gone too fast,
And accept the stark fact that nothing can last.
So, open your eyes, nurses, open and see,
Not a crabbit old woman - Look closer – see ME!

Written by a Montrose nurse Phyllis McCormack
in 1966 and published in The Sunday Post c.1973



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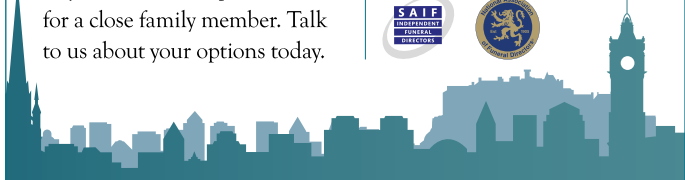
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BLACKHALL GARDENING CLUB

August already and hopefully our gardens are still doing well. The weather has been mixed but thankfully we have not had the heat and drought other areas have suffered.



Our 2025/26 season has been a great success with talks in the last few months covering such diverse topics as Local Gardeners Question Time, The History of Allotments and how to look after them, and a talk by MT O'Donnell from Scotland Grows Magazine. The last meeting of the year was our AGM and a talk by Binny Plants on Shade Planting.

In May we once again held a most successful Plant Sale in the Church Hall in partnership with the Christian Aid Coffee Morning. Our members very kindly donated many wonderful plants for sale - a big thank you to all of them and to those who helped on the day. We raised over £1500 and as a result were able to donate £500 to such a worthy cause.

We are busy finalising our 2026/27 session. We start in October with a talk on **Saughton Physic Garden**. Future talks will be on such topics as **Gin Botanicals and Rhubarb**, a talk on **Apples and Pears** by Colin Wren from NTS and **A New Approach** to weeds by Sarah Gerhardt!

The group meets at 7.45pm on the second Monday of the month from October to May in the small hall at Blackhall St Columba's Church. Look out for each month's poster displayed locally in Tesco's and Sainsburys and on the church notice boards.

You can also check out our Facebook page which can be found at www.facebook.com/groups/211472892232483. Talks are open to members and non-members, we look forward to seeing you at one of our meetings. If you would like more information, please email blackhall.horti@hotmail.com.

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Edinburgh EH4 3NB
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Session Clerk

Eddie Thorn
Telephone 332 5702

Church Secretary

Tel: 332 4431 or email
secretary@blackhallstcolumba.org.uk
for Hall Bookings
bookings@blackhallstcolumba

DEADLINES

Kirk News (May edition)

Friday 16th October

Please send all items to the Editor;
Judith Mair, c/o Church Office
or by e-mail to: judith.mair@hotmail.com

Blackhall Bulletin (September edition) -

Sunday 25th October

Please send all items, including Advertising Enquiries
to the Editor: Barbara Wilson, c/o Church Office
or by email to: bulletin@blackhallstcolumba.org.uk



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youth groups and junior singers. You can find it
all at www.blackhallstcolumba.org.uk or
contact the office by phone (see above) or e mail
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