

FREE!



C&B NEWS

CURRIE • BALERNO • JUNIPER GREEN • BABERTON MAINS • COLINTON

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Grow' at Malleny
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The Nights are Drawing in

...but local events are really getting going!
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Launched in 1976, *C&B News* is a volunteer-led, independent, non-profit-making community magazine written by and for the residents of Currie, Balerno, Juniper Green, Baberton Mains, and Colinton.

We publish 10 monthly issues each calendar year, including two "double-month" editions (December/January and July/August) marking our summer and winter breaks.

Opinions expressed by contributors are not necessarily those of the management. We reserve the right to edit or reject submissions.

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Juniper Green: Derek Douglas, Ros Salton, Richard Watt, Gail Rankin.

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DEADLINES FOR NEXT ISSUE

ADVERTISING & LISTINGS: 14 NOVEMBER
EDITORIAL: 19 NOVEMBER
ISSUE DISTRIBUTED: 1 DECEMBER



The last few months saw industrial action affecting our schools and higher education institutions, leading to picket lines outside Currie Primary School (above) and the entrance to Heriot-Watt University. Photos: Caroline Brown, Graham Dane.



BRIEFLY...

SERVICE 44 DETOURED

As you will likely have already noticed, Lothian Buses Services 44 and N44 are detoured away from Johnsburn Road, Balerno, until 8 November, due to road resurfacing work. Buses will operate via Bavelaw Green, Bavelaw Road, and Mansfield Road in both directions.

POPPY APPEAL

The annual fund-raising appeal will see the introduction of a new sustainable biodegradable design. However, the old stock of the distinctive Scottish four-stem design (first launched in 1926 with the opening of Lady Haig's Poppy Factory in Edinburgh) is being "used up" this year, so it will likely be a bit of a lottery which version you might get! Note: around 42% of national donations are now cashless!

JOIN JGBMCC?

Juniper Green and Baberton Mains Community Council is looking for another resident to join the Community Council as soon as possible, and especially anyone with an interest in becoming the next chairperson. For more information, or to have an informal chat with the current Chair, email: correspondence@junipergreenc.org.uk

INN FOR SALE—AGAIN!

On 12 October *The Herald* newspaper reported that the freehold interest for The Railway Inn, Juniper Green was again up for sale. The asking price of £499,000 is noticeably less than the £515,000 listed in June 2023.

CONCERT FOR XMAS

The Broxburn & Livingston Brass Band return with a festive programme to Balerno Parish Church on Saturday 9 December, 7.30pm. Tickets £10 (under 16s £4) from Church Office and website, or Eventbrite.

>P5



Above: Volunteers recently raised the final funds for Harmeny Education Trust's Learning for Life Appeal by taking part in the newly returned Forth Bridge Abseil. See page 5 for more details.



Right: Balerno Ramblers on a coastal walk soon realised they were being watched by some of the locals. Photo: Roger Jonathan.



Above: some of the work of the Charity Crafters, who are holding their Christmas sale at Currie Library on Saturday 18 November (see page 13 for details). Left: some of the participants at a recent youth championship at Balerno Tennis Club.

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Gordon Macdonald MSP

Member of the Scottish Parliament for Edinburgh Pentlands Constituency



Monthly Advice Surgeries

Wester Hailes Library	1 st Friday of month, 10am
Carrickvale Comm. Centre	2 nd Friday of month, 10am
Currie Library	3 rd Friday of month, 10am
Oxgangs Library	4 th Friday of month, 10am
Ratho Community Centre	5 th Friday of month, 10am

NB: NO SURGERIES DURING PUBLIC AND BANK HOLIDAYS

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New Learning Hub Opens at Harmeny

ALISON ACOSTA
FUNDRAISING AND COMMUNICATIONS
MANAGER, HARMENY EDUCATION TRUST

Harmeny are proud to announce that our new secondary learning facilities, the Learning Hub, is now open!

Teaching has commenced in the beautiful wood and brick building, designed to help young people impacted by early years trauma to unlock their potential and thrive. The opening marks the end of the charity's Learning for Life Appeal which raised over £3.2 million to build and kit out the Learning Hub.

"The children and young people in our care have experienced some of the most difficult starts in life," explained Neil Squires, Harmeny's Chief Executive. "Previously, they had to leave Harmeny at age 14, which is an incredibly disruptive experience at a vital time in their learning journey. With our new hub, Harmeny can now be there for them up to age 18 if they need it."

Jennifer Scott, Chair of Harmeny's trustee board added: "Harmeny is an incredibly special place. Thanks to the support of foundations, businesses and individuals in helping build this fantastic new facility, our young people can now have the security they need. They can focus on their future and continue to live and learn among friends and adults they have grown to trust."

The final funds needed were recently raised thanks to the brave efforts of 14 supporters who took on the newly returned



SEE FOR YOURSELF!

C&B News readers are invited to visit the Learning Hub on Saturday 25 November between 11am and 3pm to learn more about the building and its vocational learning and workshop spaces. This is a unique opportunity to pop in and view this purpose-built learning space and we hope to see many from our community there.

Forth Bridge Abseil – including four members of the Harmeny staff team! More than £6,000 was raised from this event alone.

• Visit: <https://www.harmeny.org.uk/>

BRIEFLY... CHRISTMAS CONCERT

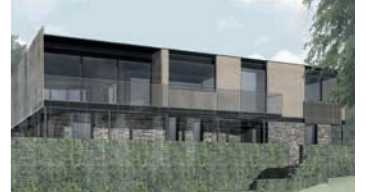
Currie Community High School's annual Christmas concert will be at the James Watt Centre, Heriot-Watt University, on Wednesday 20 December and include performances from a wide range of the school's musical ensembles, as well as showcasing work from the Drama and Art departments. Tickets: £7, available on parentpay, or by email: admin@currie.edin.sch.uk

TOP SCHOOLS

According to *The Times* Scottish School League Table 2023, Currie High School is the 6th school in Edinburgh and 49th in Scotland, with 56% of its pupils passing five or more Highers. Balerno High School is 8th in Edinburgh and 73rd in Scotland, with 48% of pupils passing five or more Highers. This means both schools are within the upper quarter of the country's schools.

BALERNO CHRISTMAS

Balerno's Christmas Tree lights will be switched on at 6.45pm, Thursday 7 December. The Dean Park Primary School Choir will sing Christmas Carols, and additional music



will be performed by the Balerno & District Schools Pipe Band. Refreshments will be available in the Community Centre, Main Street.

PLANNING APPLICATIONS

Colinton: New dwelling on site of existing barn, 30 metres west of 164A Woodhall Road. (23/03855/FUL) Comments due by 3 November.

Colinton: Extension to >P7

Sue Webber MSP

Member of the Scottish Parliament for Lothian Region



Monthly Advice Surgeries

The first Friday of every month from 10am until 1pm in the constituency office at 546D Lanark Road, Juniper Green, Edinburgh EH14 5EL. If this time is not possible you can make an appointment by contacting me via the details below.

Contact Sue Webber
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C&B News: Supporting Local Good Causes

ROS SALTON
DONATIONS MANAGER, C&B NEWS

C&B News is not just a pretty face. We hope it's much more: a source of enlightenment in dark times, diversion on grey days, and inspiration for the hopeful. However, C&B News also lends its support in other, more measurable ways—by donating funds to deserving local causes.

Even although the magazine has been distributed free of charge for more than three years, this practice has continued. We have striven to meet the needs of our community, responding to the usual requests

and allocating generous sums to food banks and local schools for families in need—these last two being a first for our funding.

Our financial year comes to a close in November and, in anticipation of a modest surplus in the "plus column", we again invite requests from non-profit making, apolitical organisations or individuals whose main purpose is to serve the local community.

Deciding who is granted

funds rests with the C&B News management team, which assesses the applications against set criteria. All we ask in return of successful applicants is an article following your event and photos—the more the merrier!

• To request funding, or to find out more, please email me, Ros: donations@candbnews.com outlining your activity and how this will benefit the community.



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Pentland Community Chest Open for New Applications

MIKE ROWE
CURRIE BALERNO ROTARY

Applications are invited to the Pentland Community Chest, which this December will once again provide grants to local organisations towards projects of value to the community. The next deadline is 30 November, 2023.

The original Community Chest was set up by Currie Balerno Rotary in 2017 and is now funded and managed jointly by Rotary and the Balerno Village Trust under its new banner, Pentland Community Chest—reflecting its geographical coverage.

Since 2017, applications have been received from organisations and schools in

the area and 95 grants have been made totalling some £33,000. We are delighted to be supporting such a range of organisations, showing the Community Chest to be effective across our local community.

30 November. Don't miss the deadline!

Information about the Community Chest and an application form are available from links on the Pentland Community Chest website, www.pentlandcc.org.uk



For information about Currie Balerno Rotary visit: www.cbrotary.org or follow us on: facebook.com/cbrotary1020 and twitter.com/cbrotary1020

For information on Balerno Village Trust, visit: www.balernovt.org or follow: facebook.com/Balerno Village Trust

Young Author Joins Pentland Book Festival

IFEYINWA KANU
LOCAL RESIDENT

Chikamso Kanu must rank among the youngest authors ever to appear at the Pentland Book Festival—he's 12 years old!

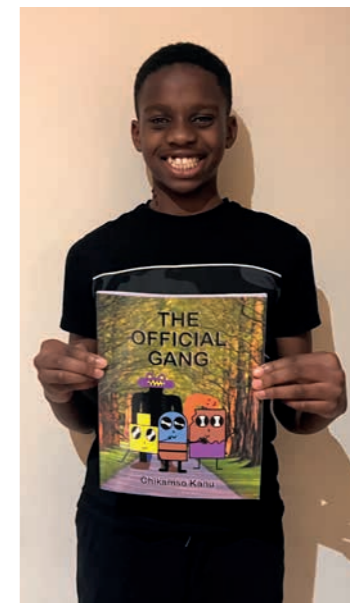
The former Dean Park Primary School pupil will take part in this year's local authors' event to promote his debut children's book, *The Official Gang*, which he both wrote and illustrated—no mean feat!

Chikamso likes writing because it helps him "calm down and relax",

and he has "a big imagination, thinks about a lot of stuff, and does not like forgetting [his] ideas".

He also hopes to do some good: half of the royalties from sales of the book, published by Grosvenor House Publishing in September, will go to support children in need, especially those that have been impacted negatively by "gang" activities.

"I am sure every child has an innate desire to do good," said Chikamso. "I hope to help them in my own little way to shine forth and let the goodness in them overcome the evil around them."



Is Your Voice Being Heard in C&B News?

PAUL FISHER COCKBURN
EDITOR, C&B NEWS

Want to see yourself, your group, school or club in the pages of *C&B News*? Well, don't be shy—get in touch!

Have an area of expertise and enjoy sharing your skills and experience with others? Well, why not do so through our pages?

Think we've missed out on your group's meetings or activities? Then tell us – and thousands of readers – what we've been missing!

C&B News doesn't employ a big team of journalists—the paper remains the work of committed

local volunteers. They do sterling work but, even while this year has continued to see us producing numerous 48-page issues (the biggest the publication has ever been), I can still only publish those articles and photographs which are sent to me.

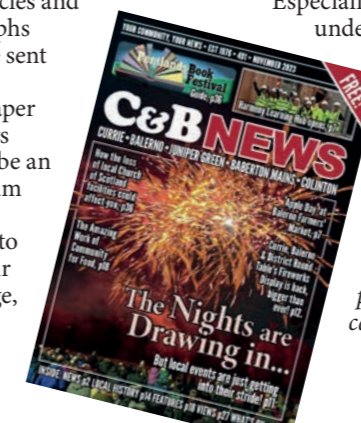
This paper has always aimed to be an open forum for local residents to share their knowledge, skills and

passions with the rest of their community.

But we can only continue to be that with your help.

As *C&B News* continues, why not share your news and ideas? Especially if you live in currently under-represented Colinton or Baberton Mains! *C&B News* is here for you; are you here for *C&B News*?

Please get in touch: email: editor@candbnews.com, or through our Facebook page www.facebook.com/candbnews



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BRIEFLY...

rear, 41 Redford Loan, Redford. (23/04983/FUL) Comments by 3 November.

PLANNING DECISIONS

Colinton: Erection of private indoor equestrian arena and associated facilities in support of current equestrian facility, land 470 metres northeast of 156 Woodhall Road. (23/02656/FUL) Granted, 11 October.

Currie: Change of use from residential to short term let (in retrospect), 8 Currievale Farm. (23/03057/FULSTL) Refused, 2 October.

Colinton: Garage building including new gates and access, 17 West Carnethy Avenue. (23/03549/FUL) Granted, 13 October.

Colinton: Fascia sign, 38 Bridge Road. (23/03562/ADV) Granted, 4 October.

Balerno: Removal of side garage and erection of single storey side/rear extension, 9 Marchbank Gardens. (23/03762/FUL) Granted, 9 October.

Juniper Green: Removal of existing conservatory and erection of single storey flat-roof extension, 4 Baberton Mains Court. (23/03798/FUL) Granted, 6 October.

Colinton: Proposed internal remodelling including kitchen window and utility door alterations, 26 Fernielaw Avenue. (23/03816/CLP) Granted, 9 October.

Juniper Green: Installation of replacement windows, 5 Juniper Park Road. (23/03850/FUL) Granted, 9 October.

Currie: Side extension, demolitions and internal alterations, 156 Muir Wood Road. (23/03930/FUL) Granted, 9 October.

Colinton: Convert existing garage into utility room, add new side extension and extend existing timber decking to rear, plus internal alterations.

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The Amazing Work of Community for Food

SUSIE BASS, ALASDAIR GORDON CURRIE, BALERNO & DISTRICT ROUND TABLE

At Currie, Balerno and District Round Table (CBDRT) we're constantly impressed by the dedication of the Community for Food (CfF) volunteers. We are incredibly grateful that this initiative exists in our area.

We know that every time we make a donation, every penny goes directly to food on the table for people that need it. We were delighted recently to be able to donate again and we were along at HQ this month to hand a cheque for £3,000 over to Val Reid and Susie Bass. A huge thank you to everyone that has put money in a collection bucket or attended our events over the past year; this is only possible with your support.

"The CBDRT have been supporting Community for Food from the very beginning," said Val Reid, "and we cannot thank them enough for this further donation. It really will make a huge difference to the families in our local community that need some extra support as we head into winter."

Community for Food is a voluntary organisation which supports families in our local community. Established in response to the Covid-19 crisis, it now regularly supports up to 50 families, providing fresh food and larder provisions, toiletries and household products.

Families are referred to CfF by six local schools: Juniper Green Primary, Nether Currie Primary, Currie Primary, Dean Park Primary, Currie Community High School and Balerno High School. The charity is run entirely by volunteers, from the organising committee to its pickers and packers and delivery drivers.

CfF relies on food donations from the local community, as well as Morrisons Supermarket, and partners with FareShare, the UK's longest running food redistribution charity, to keep costs to a minimum. Nevertheless, every week CfF spends around £300 to purchase food and products for the families it helps.

"We always need new volunteers to help us—even one evening a month can make a huge difference," added Susie Bass. "We are also dependent on the generosity of donors and funders. If you could consider supporting us with a monthly donation or you know of a company or funder that you think would support us please let us know."

• For more information on how you can volunteer or support CfF, email: communityforfood@gmail.com

• Food donation drop-off points: Scotmid in Balerno and Currie, and Currie Library.

• Visit: <https://communityforfood.com/> and <https://www.facebook.com/communityforfood/>

BRIEFLY...

p7>>>

(23/04063/FUL) Granted, 5 October.

Colinton: Extension, 17 Bonaly Brae. (23/04074/FUL) Granted, 3 October.

Juniper Green: single storey extension to rear and porch extension to front, 19 Baberton Mains Wynd. (23/04124/FUL) Granted, 10 October.

Juniper Green: Single storey extension to rear, 23 Baberton Mains Dell. (23/04181/FUL) Granted, 9 October.

Colinton: Enlargement of existing side extension, 27 Bonaly Wester. (23/04240/FUL) Granted, 13 October.

PLANNED ROADWORKS & ROAD CLOSURES

Juniper Green/Nether Currie: SGN gas main renewal between Juniper Avenue and Nether Currie Road, working westwards: two-way temporary traffic lights and Juniper Avenue closed until end of November.

Pentland Hills Regional Park: Development of Threipmuir car park, with no parking on Mansfield Road between Scottish SPCA and 200 metres south of Threipmuir car park, and on East Farm Rigg for c400 metres from Mansfield Road. Until end of November (TBC).

Balerno: Johnsburn Road from (and including) Main Street roundabout to Burnside Park, CEC carriageway resurfacing. Various traffic management set-ups: Johnsburn Road closed between roundabout and Burnside Park, 7-8 November.

Great News for Local Musicians

TONY MOORE
BALERNO RESIDENT

Paul Ng, proprietor of Balerno's Grey Horse Inn, has decided to make good use of his function room to host Open Mic evenings for the

community. Local musicians will now be able to play their music to an audience instead of at home in their rooms. This will particularly be beneficial to youngsters who are just starting out, as they will be assured that the attending audience will be appreciative and supportive of all their individual talents. We invite you to an evening

of very mixed musical entertainment for your enjoyment. The first Open Mic Evening will be on Thursday 9



November from 7.30pm. Entry is free. For more information, email: info@greyhorsebalerno.com

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LOCAL UPDATES • LOCAL UPDATES

'Let's Talk Care' at Hub@531

ANNETTE WILSON
DEVELOPMENT OFFICER, HUB@531

The first in a series of free lunchtime talks called "Let's Talk Care" – designed to offer information and support to anyone with an interest in navigating the care maze – was hosted by the Hub@531 Lanark Road.

Whether it's for yourself, a partner or a close relative or friend, we often don't consider the subject of care until a crisis, and then it can feel difficult and stressful to make choices and decisions.

Thanks to the support from two local businesses – Homes Instead Edinburgh, and Allingham & Co, Solicitors – these free talks offer a chance to become informed before crisis, ask questions, and meet others who might have similar experiences.

• *Upcoming sessions: "Power of Attorney" (Thursday 9 November, 12.30pm); "Support for Unpaid Carers" (Thursday 14 December, 12.30pm). Why not pop along and meet the team, and enjoy a sandwich and cuppa on us?*

• *You can register your interest by calling Home Instead Edinburgh West on 0131 609 0244, or visit: www.homeinstead.co.uk/edinburgh-west*

Hub@531 Seeks Treasurer

ANNETTE WILSON
DEVELOPMENT OFFICER, HUB@531

Pentlands Community Space (PCS) is looking for a new treasurer to join the board of trustees, to support the Hub@531 community space serving Juniper Green, Baberton Mains and surrounding areas.

The role ideally suits someone with finance experience who is able to oversee the routine financial running of the hub—banking, bookkeeping, reporting, annual accounting and OSCR returns.

• *If you are interested to volunteer to support this important community facility, please email hub531lanarkroad@gmail.com or call Lynn Elliott on 07923 831584.*



Remember, Remember...

ALASDAIR GORDON
CURRIE, BALERNO & DISTRICT ROUND TABLE

Our annual Fireworks display is just around the corner, on Sunday 5 November at King George V Park, Currie. Gates open at 6.30pm for

fireworks commencing at 7.15pm. Tickets £10 adults (£9 online), unaccompanied teens £1, under 16s free with parents. Cash or card, but first come, first served for the front field. (The rear field is free entry, with donations where possible.) All profits made on the night will go towards local charities and good causes.

• *Tickets and more information: www.cbdr.com/*

Autumn Blooms at Pentland Flower Club

WENDY WILLIAMS
PENTLAND FLOWER CLUB

As another year draws to a close the Pentland Flower Club are looking forward to Christmas already.

On a very wet and windy October evening Audrey Buchan came down from Arbroath to demonstrate some beautiful Autumn flower arrangements and to entertain us with stories of her life and career.

• *Next meeting: On 3 November, Ada Paul will travel from Ayr to give us a sparkling demonstration entitled "Hey Ho Silver," which will get us in the mood for our December speaker who is coming over the border from Sandbach, Cheshire.*

• *On 1 December, Mark Entwistle – a national demonstrator, well known in flower arranger circles – will ask us to "Believe in Magic".*

• *Both meetings will be held in Ogston Hall, Balerno Parish Church, at 7pm. Members and visitors will be welcome.*



Balerno SWI Celebrates 88th 'Birthday'

SHEILA MASON
PRESS SECRETARY, BALERNO SWI

October sees our Institute celebrating its "birthday" and this year, 2023, was our 88th!

President Catriona welcomed us on a particularly chilly evening—signs of winter ahead! Although some members are still taking the opportunity to have some time away, those who were at home settled down to have their brains tested with a quiz led by Alan Woodburn.

There were two teams and five categories of 10 questions to be answered. It certainly tested our grey matter somewhat but I'm sure we all learned something new on this occasion. Each member of both teams was able to supply the answers, though not always the correct one! And we did have some fun having "discussions" as to which was the correct one!

No birthday is complete without a birthday cake, so we had this with our "Rural" cuppa. The appropriate song was sung before the candle was lit by Phyllis, fanned out by Ishbel and the cake cut by Sheila.

Sheila had a great surprise when she was presented with a certificate honouring her long service to Balerno SWI.

After our refreshment the business was dealt with and intimation of activities for the months ahead were discussed.

• *Our next meeting – our Annual Business Meeting – will be at 7.30pm on Tuesday 7 November, and will be held in Balerno Church's Ogston Hall—as the Community Centre is being used as a setting by a film company!*

• *Competition Results: Flower of the Month: Aileen Wilson; floral arrangement for a table centre: Donna Pride (first); Phyllis Tait (second); Catriona Reid (third).*



LOCAL UPDATES • LOCAL UPDATES

Hope Yet?

LESLEY HENDERSON
BALERNO FAIRTRADE VILLAGE GROUP

Last month we contrasted some hard world news with Fairtrade/Fair Trade reasons for hope, never guessing what was to follow.

Are our organisations kidding ourselves, that local groups in our small valley can hope to have any bearing on our wider world's latest unimaginable heartbreaks? Is it time for some of us to admit we're beaten? Even past our sell-by dates?

Absolutely not. Inspired by last month's Campaigners' Conference in Dundee, run by the Scottish Fair Trade Forum, we're freshly committed to collective action via the local and wider networks which this area is so lucky to have, to supporting social and climate justice. Dundee's FT speakers and delegates shared lessons and drew moving parallels with its own share in all our history,



including the appallingly unjust days of slavery and slave-trading. These helped us also realise that we and future generations need to educate and plan: not only for social and climate justice right now, but for good ways to make them sustainable well into the future. The vital loyalty of our local Schools' staff and students

is truly appreciated here.

So yes, we know FT's 2023 impact is relatively small-scale. We know our personal use, stocking, and sales of FT goods pay a finite number of people guaranteed FT prices, and that the FT Premium's funding of great community projects, chosen and run not by distant managers but by producer

communities themselves, can't make the whole world fair at a stroke. But they're still worthwhile steps in the right direction.

• *Please join us at 7.15pm on Tuesday 7 November in the Shepherd Room, Balerno Parish Church, to help plan ahead. We really need you too.*



Edinburgh Tool Library South West Update

PAUL MAKIN
TRUSTEE, EDINBURGH TOOL LIBRARY

The South West branch of Edinburgh Tool Library, based in Colinton, has been running since May 2023 and has loaned out many tools to the local community. Our team of volunteers can provide advice and insights into the best tools for your project, as well as collecting tools from the other branches of ETL as required, should we not have the right tools in stock.

We've also started expanding our "operations" and recently

ran DIY introductory workshops enabling attendees to gain confidence with tools, repairs and understanding how to fix things to different wall types. We are planning more workshops so keep an eye out on social media for our next events—let us know if you have any suggestions!

Our volunteers are also launching a tool/knife sharpening service very soon – with support from the Currie, Balerno & District Round Table, Colinton Village Enterprise and SW2o – to the public, not just ETL members

• *We will be offering an initial discounted price list and releasing more information soon so please head to <https://bit.ly/sw-etl-sharp> to sign up.*

Round Table Getting Ready...

ALASDAIR GORDON
CURRIE, BALERNO & DISTRICT ROUND TABLE

The past month has been busy with preparations for events, charity work—and some socialising too!

Everything's in place for the fireworks on Sunday 5 November (see page 11 for further details). Our biggest display ever, it's grown to be one of the major displays around Edinburgh, and we're delighted to be able to hold it in our local area. We're really grateful to the Currie Chieftains youth section and the 42nd Pentland Scouts for helping out again—please look out for them with their collection buckets and litter pickers.

Santa has also started his planning. His dates, routes, elves and sleigh are all in preparation.

This month we also made charity donations to some more amazing organisations. These include Edinburgh Rape Crisis and Edinburgh Tool Library. We think the work that they're both doing is really inspiring and we would encourage you to look them up and raise awareness.

Social events included a trip



to the Linlithgow Beer Festival and our bi-monthly curry club. Progress also continues on our Scottish Coastal Walk; by the time this issue of C&B News comes out we should have reached North Berwick and will soon be passing home and heading north on our wider orbit of Scotland.

While there is lots going on across the Round Table, we also reflect on the passing of our good friend and member Tim Dew. Tim was a driving force behind our small group and is remembered in a tribute published elsewhere this issue.

• *For more information, including Santa's forthcoming schedule this December, visit our website: <https://cbdrt.com/> or email enquiries@cbdrt.com*

LOCAL UPDATES • LOCAL UPDATES

SW20 Community e-bike Fleet Expansion

PAUL MAKIN
FOR SW20

SW2o have offered a free-to-borrow electric cargo bike for more than a year now, with many members of the community using it to explore the area with their children or carry heavy loads around.

The cargo bike is great for these purposes but we've also now expanded the fleet and added an electric hybrid bike available to borrow—again with no cost! In combination with the cargo bike, this will enable more families to enjoy easy electrically-assisted cycling.

Both bikes together offer a total capacity of two adults and two children. Both bikes have an electric motor which make cycling far easier and "flattens" out hills and make cruising a breeze.

Bikes can be borrowed together or separately and initial training/induction is included.



• *For more information and to book the bites, visit: <http://bit.ly/SW-ebike> or <https://bit.ly/sw20-ebike>*



Tim Dew—a Tribute

ANDY SPEAKE & RON GRIGOR
CURRIE, BALERNO & DISTRICT ROUND TABLE

It is with great sadness that Currie, Balerno and District Round Table announce the passing of one of our members, Tim Dew.

Tim passed away on Saturday 23 September, 2023; he had just turned 51.

Tim joined Round Table in 2007 when our membership was at an all time low and the group was close to folding. Tim's enthusiasm attracted many new members and, from that point Round Table continued to grow and flourish within the local area.

His desire to help others in the community, through fundraising and community events, helped to transform Round Table and the way it worked. He was always trying to optimise the way we operated, and to raise more cash for local good causes. Perhaps his greatest Round Table legacy will be the Currie Beer and Curry Festival, which Tim developed over many years, and which has since grown to be a much-anticipated annual event.

Round Table has a lot to thank Tim for. All our events are bigger and better now because of Tim's involvement. We have more Santa runs enabling us to visit more homes, while the Beer Festival – which attracts hundreds of local people – has become the largest and most popular event of its kind in South Edinburgh.

Tim loved events that brought the Community together. We will all miss his enthusiasm. Round Table has lost a great friend and a fantastic Tabler.

Welcoming The 'New Scots'

FIONA PIGOTT
CURRIE KIRK

Volunteers from Currie Kirk, Currie Community Church and St Mungo's in Balerno joined with volunteers from the Salaam group in Edinburgh City Mission to provide an afternoon of fun and fellowship, on Saturday 14 October, for refugees living in EH14 postcode. This is part of the "New Scots Community", reaching out to others who have recently moved to our area.

We joined with families from

Syria, Afghanistan, and Sudan to participate in the activities. There were craft tables, table tennis (thanks to the boys from the 65th BB company who provided advice and guidance), food, and some Scottish Country dancing thanks to Christine Wilson.

It was agreed by everyone that it had been a great afternoon, filled with fun and friendship, and we're looking forward to hosting another event soon in the Gibson Craig Halls, Currie.

• *If you are interested in joining with us to plan future events for our new neighbours, please contact Fiona Pigott, Currie Kirk by email: fpigott19@gmail.com*



Get your handmade craft, gifts and Christmas decorations at the Charity Crafters' Christmas sale on Saturday 18 November, from 10.30am to 2pm at Currie Library, writes Shona Moyes. "Following our most recent sale, this local community group of crafters were able to donate £100 each to: Currie Creatives, a local community providing creative music sessions for adults with additional support needs; Hopscotch, a charity providing holidays for disadvantaged children; and Balerno Children's Gala. We also sell our work on Facebook and in the Library itself, with all profits going to local good causes."

Another COLINTON Character

Sir Matthew Montgomery Ochterlony FRIBA



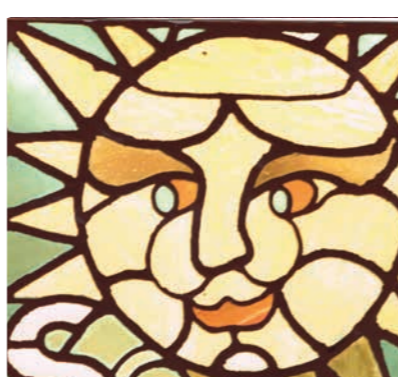
DEREK DOUGLAS SECRETARY, COLINTON LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY



Matthew Ochterlony, whose father was Sir David the 4th Baronet of Ochterlony, was born at Balmadie House, Juniper Green on 28 February 1880. He was educated at the Edinburgh Institution and a private school and in his youth was already interested in architecture and its associated skills.

In 1899 he was "articled" (bound by a written contract) to architects John Kinross and Harold Tarbolton for training, during which time he also attended the Edinburgh School of Applied Art. However, due to ill health, he took a break between 1902 and 1905; this gave him the opportunity to become very proficient in his other passion, woodwork and stained glass.

Matthew then returned to Kinross & Tarbolton where he continued to develop before joining Dick Peddie in 1911. Five years later he enlisted into the Royal Army Service Corps as a private, spending three years in France and Europe before being "demobbed" in May 1919. He then returned to Peddie's for a brief spell before joining Hippolyte Blanc in 1920; it was here that he started to get interested in ecclesiastical work. Since starting his training, he had worked with various architects on differing projects helping him develop his own ideas and style, which would hold him in good stead for the future.



Far left: A portrait of the successful architect, Sir Matthew Montgomery Ochterlony. Left: Falinge, on West Carnethy Avenue, Colinton. Right: Harefield on the same street. Below right: Sir Matthew's family grave. Below left: an example of his work in stained glass.

In 1921 he married Eleanor Fogo, daughter of the architect John Fogo, and the couple moved into Spylaw Cottage, Colinton in 1924. He had already set up business on his own, based at 18 Melville Street, with his early commissions being new houses for some of his "monied" friends in Colinton. He had a style very much of his own, with most of his houses being "harled", with red brick features and crittel steel windows making use of varying shapes and roof designs.

Among the houses he designed in Colinton are Harefield and Falinge in West Carnethy Avenue.

and Fullarton in Bonaly Road. Most of his houses faced north/south with large windows on the south side, making them more economical to heat.

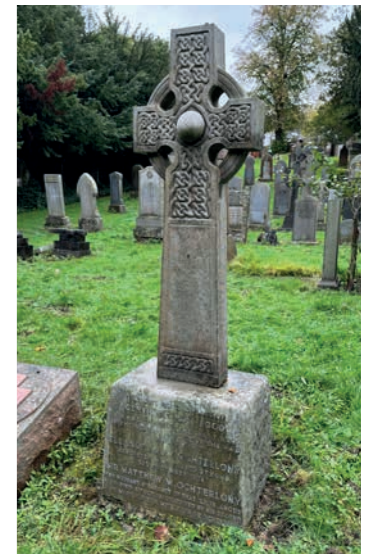
Matthew also designed 9 Easter Belmont Road, Inverewe House and many more. Away from housing he was also responsible for the Old Sailors Ark in the Canongate (now the Adagio Aparthotel), the

Elsie Inglis Maternity Hospital, and Mathers Bar on Queensferry Street. By this time his father had died, meaning he had become Sir Matthew, the 4th Baronet of Ochterlony. During these early years of his own business he also built his new family home, Balmadies, at 65 Spylaw Bank Road.

He was heavily involved with St Cuthbert's Episcopalian Church in Colinton, not only designing the extension but also some of the internal decoration and a stain glass window in the Baptistry in memory of his father. From the late 1930s, most of his work was commissioned by the Episcopalian Church, both in Edinburgh - St David's, St Salvador's, St Fillan's and St Mark's - and throughout Scotland, and even as far south as London. By this time he had formed a partnership with Harold Tarbolton, Tarbolton & Ochterlony.

Sadly his wife Eleanor died in 1938; shortly after this, the Royal Scottish Academy made him an Associate Member due to his extremely skilled craftsmanship in metal, wood and stained glass. In 1942 he married his second wife, the Colinton resident Mary Meiklejohn.

Much of his ongoing work still centred around the development of Episcopalian Churches, until in 1944 his company was appointed as advisors to the Scottish Hydro Electric Board; this led to designing the power stations at Loch Sloy, Pitlochry and Tummel. Sadly neither Sir Matthew nor Harold Tarbolton lived to see their work come to fruition: they died within a few months of each other in 1946. Sir Matthew is buried in the north section of Colinton Kirk Graveyard.



Snapshots of the Past



DOUGLAS LOWE CURRIE & DISTRICT LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

Last month, in "The Society Wedding at Riccarton House - with a King", I included a photo of a society wedding at Currie Kirk. I wondered if the photo I provided did in fact relate to the wedding I described?

Both the wedding ceremony and reception for Henrietta Florence Gibson-Craig and Captain Cumming took place in 1897 at Riccarton House, not in Currie Kirk. However all newspaper reports described the decorations throughout Riccarton Estate, at Hermiston and Currie villages, plus Curriehill and Currie stations. The clothing worn by the assembled crowd also pointed to this being a fashionable or society wedding, but in the photo the assembled crowd fringing the striped awning led directly up to the entrance to Currie Kirk.

Doing more research in the British Newspapers Archive I found two more Gibson-Craig "fashionable weddings", both in 1904 and both conducted in Currie kirk. On 10 August, Alice Gertrude Gibson-Craig - second daughter of Sir James Gibson-Craig, Laird of Riccarton - married Percy Kirke, son of Colonel Kirke, Commander of Royal Engineers (Scottish

Opposite page: An old image of Burnside, near Currie Brig, showing an iron well in the foreground. Left: An Iron Street Well behind the hedge on George V Park, Currie. Right: St Mungo's Well, looking a bit sad. Photos: Douglas Lowe.

Division). This might explain the number of military in attendance in the photo. I had initially thought that the figures in the photo were sailors; however, they may have been Royal Engineers.

The other wedding was of Mary Helen Gibson-Craig, Sir James' fourth daughter, who married Henry Ralph Beaumont on 30 December. The weather report in the newspaper mentioned that it was mild and spring-like; however, obviously taking no chances, the bridesmaids' apparel included hand muffs!



As mentioned in our September 2023 issue, there was a time when the original Eastern Scottish bus company was so short of serviceable vehicles that, from the late 1970s into the 1980s, they were forced to buy second-hand buses from other companies in order to keep their fleet up to strength. Unfortunately, the somewhat cash-strapped company, having bought the vehicles, couldn't also afford to repaint any of them in the company's iconic green and cream livery, which explains the sight of this proud old Central Scottish omnibus heading south along (Balerno's) Mansfield Road towards the terminus at Cockburn Crescent. Photo: John Clark.



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THIS MONTH IN... 1993 LOCAL HISTORY AS REPORTED BY C&B NEWS.



PAUL FISHER COCKBURN
C&B NEWS

Inset: The front page of the November 1993 issue of Currie & Balerno News. Main picture: "Cable comes to Currie—and so do the boxes!" the paper reported.

The receptions for both of these weddings were at Riccarton House, suitably decorated for the occasion. Among the guests, similar to the wedding I described last issue, were Earls and Countesses, Dukes and Duchesses, Lords and Ladies and many high ranking military officers. Alas however, no King.

DUNCAN'S BELT

Something else I have been looking at this last month is Duncan's Belt. The narrow strip of woodland runs northwards to cross Lymphoy Road at the site of the gravestone erected in 1820 by General Thomas Scott to mark the finding of a number of ancient stone coffins.

Near the top of Duncan's Belt, at an area marked "dam head" on old maps, was where the first piped water for Currie village was obtained. In 1872 Major Scott of Maleny had offered to supply water from Maleny Estate free, providing the proprietors met the expense of "bringing it" in. This was agreed and the total cost was expected to be around £400 (£37,200 in today's money). This was fed in pipes to iron street wells in the Kirkgate, in Burnside, at Kinauld and four others in the village street; one – now long gone – was across from the Gibson Craig Hall.

Water had previously been available from natural wells in the village, tapped from along the ridge that Currie sits on. There was one at the old toll house and a small plaque marks this. There were also a number of wells around the village: behind the smiddy; at the The Riccarton Arms; at Easter Currie Farm, and many other spots. St Mungo's well was covered over when the Balerno branch line was built in the 1870s; however water will eventually find a way through and, in the early 1970s, the then council built a small stone well as a feature to contain this. It sits beside the Water of Leith 100 yards or so (about 92 metres) east of Currie brig.

Before leaving this, lying between Duncan's Belt and Rosebank Farm is a field called Duncan's Park. Does anyone know who Duncan was? Stuart Harris, in his *The Place Names of Edinburgh*, mentions that the name has appeared on maps since 1812. So it is not a new name.

Who was Duncan?

Currie Community High School featured prominently in this 20-page edition of *Currie & Balerno News*. The front page shared the news that pupils had won top prize in "a nationwide technology initiative" run by (now long-gone) Rover Cars, designed "to introduce students to the world of work of a Rover dealership". The school, sponsored by then-local Rover dealer J B Scott & Sons (alas, also a company no longer with us) "took first prize [...] with their special go-kart" which had been "assembled and modified as part of the pupils' Technological Studies."

As reported in the school's regular "Notebook" page, Currie CHS had also been the only school to be honoured at the first Edinburgh Green Belt Trust Environment Award ceremony, after staff and pupils had "improved Curriehill Strip, created an ecology pond, a marsh and wildlife garden, and what was essentially an "outdoor classroom" for their S1 Environment Course, Standard Grade Biology and Sixth Year Studies Biology classes: "The broad aim is to recreate and nurture habitats lost or reduced over the last century and to use these habitats to fulfil the educational objectives of our own courses and those of the Scottish Education Department", the school reported.

Elsewhere in Currie, preparations were well advanced for what the paper described as "the largest independent fireworks display held in the Lothians", at King George IV Park on Friday 5 November. Organised, as ever, by the Currie, Balerno and District Round Table, the event would (according to the following issue) attract "an excellent turnout" and ensure "a healthy profit for the chosen charities, namely Harmer House School in Balerno and The Children's Hospice at Bridge of Allen".

Naturally, the issue – edited by Neil C Scott – also reported on other local events, such as the Balerno Parish Church Christmas Fayre (on 20 November). But the gravity of Currie CHS was inescapable, with mention of a new musical, *Once upon a Castle*, due to receive a short run (two performances, 20-21

December) in the school hall, while a recent road safety awareness roadshow had – "despite the rather dismal weather" – attracted almost 400 attendees through the school gates.

Within the issue's "Club News" pages – essentially an earlier incarnation of today's "Local Updates", Nelson Bowman provided an "appreciation" of The Pentland Singers' co-founder Iona MacKinlay who, after nine years, was stepping down to concentrate on – amongst other things – teaching music to children with special needs. "She leaves behind lots of good memories of concerts enjoyed by choir and audience alike," Nelson wrote, before assuring readers that the choir "will live on". Indeed it has – and it will be celebrating its 40th anniversary year throughout 2024.

Talking of the future, a report on annual school board chairman's meeting at (you guessed it) Currie CHS, noted concerns about the potentially drastic cuts to existing educational services – especially "extracurricular music, art, community education [and] nursery education" – which would be needed to fund the creation of the new, single-tier local councils that would ultimately replace the existing district and regional councils from May 1996.

Meantime, a different future was already leaving its mark on the area, in the form of cable-laying and new street furniture. United Artists Communications was bringing its "ultimate home entertainment package and a top quality cost saving telephone service" to the upper Water of Leith valley. Cable TV promised access to more than 35 television channels, more than 300 films a month, the "hottest sporting action", and "worldwide news around the clock"—oh, as well as educational and children's channels, and (of course) the BBC, ITV and Channel 4. Unusually, all of Balerno and Currie were expected to be "connected" to the network by the end of 1993; in contrast, other parts of Edinburgh, it was suggested, might have to have to wait up to three years until the end of 1996!

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Cooking the Books



band from the 1980s and 90s). I've made a few things from this book and, truth be told, I think they're pretty good, even if I do say so myself.

I've made her cookies, her vanilla cake and I'm desperate to give her pineapple upside-down cake a go. I did one of her recipes today, in fact, for my eldest child's ninth birthday. He requested a red velvet cake (pictured, below left) which has turned out to be the lightest sponge I've ever tried. And it's delicious. The smell from the oven as it baked would warm the cockles of Jack Frost himself. I found the cream cheese frosting recipe that went with it a bit too sweet (but that may

I don't know if you've noticed but it's colder outside now than it was. Every morning I am greeted by frost on the grass and an icy car. And I love it. As a pale, ginger person, the summer months are something I often have to endure. I do love the sunshine. But the heat? No thanks. Burning skin? Also no. Being indoors with a cup of something warm, wrapped in a blanket while looking through a window at the birds flitting outside in the chill? That's my idea of heaven. Of course, the other thing many people desire with their cuppa is a slice of cake.

I've mentioned a number of times before in these articles that I don't have a sweet tooth. However, I am about to tell you about a book named exactly that: *Sweet Tooth* by Lily Vanilli (no, not Milli Vanilli, the scandalous lip-synching

just be me) and also on the sloppy side. Which is a shame, because the flavours worked really well. The best icing (I believe) can be found in a book I've talked about before, *Konditor and Cook* by Gerhard Jenne. So I might use that recipe for this cake next time. And yes. There will be a next time.

However, the thing I am here to talk to you about today is not red velvet or cream cheese frosting. I am here to tell of a cake that is the most scrumptious, most comforting, most pleasing to the senses in the world. And it's in Lily Vanilli's book. This bake is the smell of autumn. It's rich and spiced and perfect for those crisp November days when elevenses call and you want to warm up from the inside out. This paragon of perfection is Porter Cake (above left). Yes, porter. As in the beer. It adds richness to this fruit laden, spiced cake which is topped with toasted almonds and then drizzled with a porter syrup. Porter isn't always easy to find, but I managed to get some from Edinburgh's own Bellfield Brewery. They happen to specialise in gluten free beers, so that's handy for coeliacs and others who find gluten difficult to digest. I don't particularly have an affinity with the drink itself, but I really did like theirs. It was smooth and chocolatey and I'm glad I bought a case.

So treat yourself this autumn. Fight anyone who wants to lick the spoon as it goes in the oven. And when the cold winds rise and the golden leaves blow, when we all need that bit of cosy comfort, this cake will do nicely thank you very much.

Bellfield Brewery, 46 Stanley Place, Edinburgh. EH7 5TB



with Balerno Resident STEF LYONS



Rotary's Contribution to Morocco and Libya

MIKE ROWE
CURRIE BALERNO ROTARY

Currie Balerno Rotary have made a contribution to the international aid for those affected by the natural disasters in Morocco and Libya, through ShelterBox.

The charity sends emergency boxes to disaster areas, each providing a tent and living essentials for displaced people. We have donated £1,250, including substantial personal contributions from members.

We regularly support ShelterBox



and we are proud to have received their bronze award for the help we have given to aid people made homeless in disaster areas.

If you are interested to know more about Currie Balerno Rotary - what we do both locally and internationally - visit our website: www.cbrotary.org or follow us on: [facebook.com/cbrotary1020](https://www.facebook.com/cbrotary1020) and twitter.com/cbrotary1020

Local Scout Volunteer Completes Unique Tour of Scout Groups

MARTIN ELLIOT
SECRETARY, LOVE FROM JAMIE

A local volunteer with Scouting completed a unique challenge during August, visiting all 88 Scout Groups in his local Scout Region while raising thousands of pounds for two local charities.

Bonaly resident Martin Elliot, who volunteers with the Scouts in South East Scotland Region visited the groups which span Edinburgh, East Lothian, Midlothian and the Scottish Borders as part of Jamie's Journey, a month long event in memory of his son who died in 2019 aged 8 months.

While Jamie was still in neonatal care, parents Martin and Fiona received the devastating news that his brain had developed abnormally and that life for their son would be far from straightforward. During the next eight months Jamie endured a plethora of hospital appointments and stays which he faced bravely. Unfortunately, Jamie's challenges continued to grow, and he died in his parents' arms at Edinburgh's Sick Kids Hospital in August 2019.

Martin and Fiona set up local



charity Love From Jamie to honour their son's memory and to help other families dealing with grief following the death of a child.

Members of Scouting and GirlGuiding from across the region - including groups in Juniper Green, Currie, Balerno, and Colinton - got involved in Jamie's Journey, travelling with Martin on the different legs of his journey which covered 460 km on foot and by bike. Young people and adult volunteers who took part earned a unique Jamie's Journey badge which they can wear proudly on their uniforms.

Jamie's journey has so far raised more than £2,300 which will be shared between Love From Jamie and South East Scotland Scouts, which this year marks 15 years since its formation and provides more than 6,500 young people with Skills for Life through exciting and adventurous activities.

Donations to Jamie's Journey can be made at: <https://www.justgiving.com/campaign/jamiesjourney2023>

'Glorious' Apple Day 2023



VAL REID
BALERNO VILLAGE TRUST

Saturday 14 October was Apple Day at the Balerno Farmers Market!

Once again, thank you to our volunteers who spent the week before the market up ladders in apple trees doing loads of picking. Thank you to local folk who volunteered their trees and also to those that brought apples along on the day. This is a real community effort and we're really grateful. We managed to have the perfect amount this year to keep the press running to bang on the end of the market at 1pm.

The horrible weather of the week before the market may not have been the most pleasant, but it did do a very good job of cleaning the apples, although they all still got a wash—they just didn't need as much scrubbing as usual!

We were really lucky to have such a glorious day, and this was reflected in the turnout at the market: we had more than 1,150 visitors, making it one of our busiest apple days ever.

We also had the popular apple pie competition: C&B News' own "Cooking the Books" writer Stef Lyons took first prize in the Adult Section, while Jessica McCandlish won the primary school section, with her brother Jayden as runner up! Unfortunately we had no entries in the Secondary Section this year, maybe hampered with it being the first weekend of the October school break. I refuse to believe that there are no keen bakers in our local High Schools, so hopefully next year they will make an appearance!

There was a great response from folk coming along to take bottles of juice for a donation. Thank you all so much to those who donated apples, our fab volunteers who picked and washed, chopped, pressed - particularly Tom Gilfillan who looks after the apple press for us and gives up his time every year. Also a thank you to The Free Company who take away all the leftover scraps, skins and cores from the apple press to feed to their pigs—it's not just humans that look forward to Apple Day!

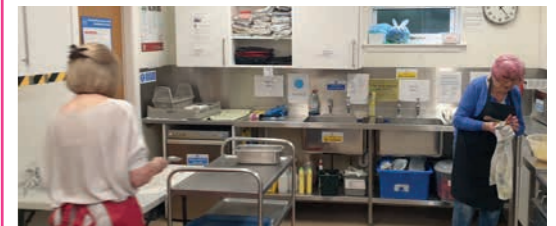
Balerno Village Trust exists to make Balerno a more sustainable, resilient and thriving place in which to live, work and play. We'd love to have you on board! If you'd like to hear more about the Trust, our AGM is on Thursday 9 November from 7.30pm at Balerno Bowling Club, 5 Ladycroft. It would be great to see you there!

The next Balerno Market is on Saturday 11 November. Come along and get an early start on your Christmas shopping!

Wish Comes True for The Mill Cafe

KEN MCCUNN
THE MILL CAFE

BEFORE: Once upon a time, in a magical place called The Mill Cafe, in Balernoland, there was a rusty, old dishwasher. Day after day, week after week, it would do its best to wash all of the dirty pots and pans, mugs and plates. However, as time went on, the Cafe grew and grew... and grew. The poor old dishwasher began to feel the strain. It began to leak a bit, then the door didn't quite shut properly. It was all too much. Something had to be done. But a new dishwasher - a really good one - would cost a fortune. Who was going to pay for that?



Volunteers Anne Lambie and Maureen Woodburn back in the bad old days.

DURING: You might well ask, dear reader. Just when the old dishwasher was about to pack in, a letter appeared, as if by magic. It was from TOR Christian Foundation, who wanted to know if we needed to buy anything. They didn't have to ask twice! We applied for a grant and, within a month, they said yes - not just for the dishwasher but all of the kitchen alterations that would be necessary!



Alister Skinner and Lyall Downie taking the old sinks to the Men's Shed where they were repurposed into a barbecue.

AFTER: As with all major projects, there were challenges to be overcome. To our surprise - and despite detailed specifications being agreed in advance - the custom-built units that were meant to fit round with the new dishwasher didn't fit. Fortunately, our supplier accepted that the problem was theirs and, after re-measuring, excellent replacement units have been supplied and fitted.



Sandra Gray and Jackie McNeish loving the new dishwasher.

The Mill Cafe is situated in the St Joseph's Centre, 2 Main Street, Balerno. It is open Tuesday to Friday, 9am - 2pm as well as on Farmers' Market days, on the second Saturday each month.

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Letting the Grass Grow at Malleny Garden

JAMES BELL
 HEAD GARDENER, MALLENY GARDEN

Historically, this lawn would have been cut fine, but since changing its management to a meadow in recent years we have seen an increase in interesting things. Common spotted orchid has increased from less than 10 plants to probably over 100. The interesting Meadow Saxifrage is also present, though a little harder to see.

The meadow saves time on lawn mowing during the year, but still needs cut at some point—normally in October. Most is cut with a scythe bar mower, but we leave some uncut strips until Spring, the uncut strips providing some habitat and refuge for various animals and insects which would be lost if we were to remove it all in one go. A variety of meadow loving fungi, including waxcaps, also benefit, and it also looks a bit more interesting.

If you have a bit of lawn, try letting some of it go long. You'll be amazed at what appears.

• *Volunteers make a huge difference to the National Trust for Scotland. There are many benefits to volunteering with the Trust. If you, or someone you know, would like to volunteer with us, email: mallenygarden@nts.org.uk.*

• <https://www.nts.org.uk/visit/places/malleney-garden>

As we move into Autumn, new colours come to the fore. The yellows and reds appear in the trees and shrubs. Hidden behind green pigments during the summer months, they become visible as the green pigment breaks down. The display of Autumn colours can change almost daily with some bright colours lasting just a few days.

Also, as the first frosts arrive, we bring in our tender plants to winter in the greenhouse. Salvia, Fuchsia, and Argyranthemum (Marguerite) wouldn't survive outside, so need extra care. Some are potted up inside and fresh cuttings are rooted and grown on for next year's display. Our Dahlia

"Coltness Hybrids" have been lifted, cleaned, and stored in a frost-free shed ready to be grown again next year. They flowered very well this year; we look forward to their bright colours again in 2024.

Around Malleny Garden we leave areas of lawn to grow as meadow, including one cut into a rose flower. An increasingly popular way to manage grass, it helps boost biodiversity and, if done well, can still look neat.

Our largest area is in front of Malleny House.



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Still Walking into Autumn



**GAIL COUSINS
BALERNO RAMBLERS**



September sunshine and above seasonal temperatures continued into October, though we have had some rainy days, breezy days, and a few very windy days. The jet stream has again been influencing our weather and we are now feeling chilly north winds, along with darker evenings and morning condensation that will soon be frost on the car.

Since mid-September Balerno Ramblers has organised two walking opportunities a week—altogether eight walks, involving 83 walkers enjoying plenty of fresh air and good company.

Midweek Ramblers

Recent Wednesday walks included the Fife Coastal Path from East Wemyss to Kirkcaldy, and a more local route from Currie Library to Ranges Road, via the Poet's Glen (during which the group were surprised to see Autumn Crocuses in flower) and then onto the col overlooking Glencorse Reservoir, before a descent to the Harlaw Visitor Centre for lunch.

Weekend Group

On the Autumn Equinox, members headed to Penicuik for a circular walk up Cuiken Glen, through woods towards Penicuik House, and a riverside walk by the River Esk. Walkers saw the Napoleonic Memorial, dedicated to the 309 French prisoners of war who died in Valleyfield Paper Mill Prison between 1811 and 1814. The group returned via part of the Penicuik to Dalkeith Walkway.

Main: Group selfie on Wetherlaw Hill. Photo: Erna. Middle: At the Napoleonic War Memorial. Photo: Shauna Dickson. Above: Midweek group at Poet's Glen. Photo: Jane Smith. Right: Peebles Circular. Photo: Kate Duncan

Five ramblers met to complete the Culter Fell circular. Their climb was rewarded with lovely views over the surrounding countryside. The weather was surprisingly good, unseasonably warm, a bit overcast at lunch time. They descended via Moss Law and returned to their cars via Coulter Waterhead Reservoir.

Four walkers set off from Newlands Church in a dry weather window over very squelchy ground from the previous day's heavy rain. At Wether Law (479m) they were content with atmospheric views rather than the full panorama. The climb ended at Whiteside Hill Prehistoric Fort and enclosure of one acre. A spectacular pre-Roman iron age fort with ramparts and medial ditch.

Upcoming Walks

The Midweek group will be offering walks from: Linlithgow along the River Avon to Muiravonside



Country Park, returning via the Union Canal; a circular walk up Cuiken Glen, through woods towards Penicuik House; and a local walk from Currie Library, route still to be confirmed. A bird-watching-themed walk is on offer from Musselburgh.

The Weekend group is offering: two energetic Pentland walks starting in Currie, one via Harlaw, Black Spring, Black Hill, Green Cleuch, Hare Hill, Bavelaw, Thriepuir, Harlaw, Currie—with a steep ascent/descent of Black Hill on lesser used hill track, it's a strenuous 13 miles (20.9 km). The other Pentland Walk is listed as 9 miles (14.5 km), with an ascent that's challenging: from Malleny Millgate, Harlaw, Black Springs, Black Hill summit (by easier ascent), Bell's Hill, Harbour Hill, Bonaly reservoir, Colinton.

There will also be two walks in the Kingdom of Fife: one a linear walk along the Fife coastal path between Lower Largo and East Wemyss, the other a circular walk to Kingseat, over the causeway of Loch Kitty, and up East and West Ninians.

New Members Welcome

• All our walks are open to members and non-members and new members are always welcome.

• For more details and contact numbers please email: enquiries@balernoramblers.org.uk; or visit www.ramblers.org.uk/balerno or www.facebook.com/Balerno-Ramblers.

November Introductory Walk

Saturday, 4 November 2023

Start time: 9.30am, from Pentland View car park. (Estimated finish time: 12:30pm)

Route: A gentle 4 miles (6.4 km) woodland walk, starting at Pentland View Car park, following the Water of Leith downstream via Colinton Tunnel after stopping for a break in Spylaw Park; taking the "Slateford via Canal" route, then continuing to follow the path through Colinton Dell until we reach Lanark Road and the Water of Leith Visitor's Centre, where we plan to stop for social gathering. Return by Lothian Buses Service 44.

The first 3 miles (4.8 km) of the route have a tarmac path, after which the route is dirt and stones, with three groups of steps (a maximum of 11 steps together). Some areas can be muddy if it has been raining.

Suitable for all ages: a woodland dell walk, including a tunnel with eye-catching artwork, history, and wildlife—all make this walk an interesting introduction to Balerno Ramblers.

What to wear: Comfortable clothing and waterproofs suitable for the weather conditions, and sturdy walking shoes or walking boots.

What to bring:

- A drink and snack for break.
- A mat to sit on in the grass for our break.
- Money for bus and visitor's centre.

Please register with the leader to join this walk. Jacqui, on 07967 152841.

Regrettably, dogs are not permitted on our walks.

The final Introductory Walk of 2023 will be on Saturday 2 December. Save the date; more details to follow.



Rotary Meets Joanna Cherry KC MP

**MIKE ROWE
CURRIE BALERNO ROTARY**

The members of Currie Balerno Rotary were delighted to welcome local MP Joanna Cherry KC to our meeting on 11 October.

Joanna started her talk by referring to her recent meeting with the Pentlands Ukrainian Support Group, where she said she had been delighted to see the support given to the Ukrainians by Currie Balerno Rotary.

Her theme this evening was "Why we need human rights legislation" and she was clearly well qualified to speak on this subject. Joanna is currently Deputy Chair of Westminster's Joint Select Committee on Human Rights; indeed, she chaired that Committee when Harriet Harman was engaged elsewhere. The Committee has cross party membership and brings together representatives of both Houses of Parliament.

The main responsibility of the Joint Committee is to monitor – and, where appropriate, challenge – proposals for UK legislation which might breach human rights, and she gave examples of recent legislation which had come under review.

Joanna also gave a brief account of the development of human rights law against a background of international agreements, starting with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948, which in turn led to the establishment of the European Convention on Human Rights in 1950 and the UK's Human Rights Act in 1998. In all of



this she stressed the universality and international dimension of human rights.

In this connection she presented a powerful and persuasive defence of the European Convention on Human Rights against a background of antipathy in certain quarters.

Joanna's presentation was fascinating. She made legislation interesting—can we say more? We enjoyed her company and the sharing of her thoughts, and are grateful that she found the time to be with us. She's welcome back any time.

Thank You, Grey Horse Inn

**MIKE ROWE
CURRIE BALERNO ROTARY**

Currie Balerno Rotary would like to thank the clientele of The Grey Horse Inn, Balerno for their generosity. They filled this bottle with donations – £413.38 to be precise – and that's a lot of pints!

Paul and Jane at The Grey Horse Inn donated the money to Currie Balerno Rotary to be passed on to local charities. We have agreed with them that the sum should be shared by our two local food banks—Currie-based Community for Food, and the Wester Hailes Food Bank run by the Holy Trinity Church.



Photos: Fiona Donaldson, Tipereth

Campbell Park Orchard Adoption Party a Great Success

SHONA HARROWER
FRIENDS OF CAMPBELL PARK

Our Orchard Adoption Party and share picnic went even better than we could have hoped.

Tipereth Pottery pulled out all the stops to get 24 personalised ceramic tree name plaques crafted in time for the party. Local dog walker, "Friend of Campbell Park" and MSP for Lothian Region Sue Webber kindly agreed to present the plaques to the FCP members who had so far 24 adopted named fruit trees. Paper tree confetti showered the volunteers, and photos were taken as each plaque was presented. By the time the party was over, another five trees had been adopted, leaving just one tree in need of a named orchard carer! (Spoiler—not any more, thanks to local residents Marjorie and Brian Spiers!)

This all followed on from another highly energetic outdoor education morning with the Bonaly Primary P5 year group. The sun shone while the children each planted a native woodland tree, adding more than 40 tree whips to our native woodland trail. The trees planted included oaks, birch, pine,

aspen, and sycamore.

The children also spread many barrow loads of fresh wood chips along our 100 metre (109 yards) woodland trail path. They raked, sowed, and tamped down wildflower seeds throughout our 500 square metre (5,381 square feet) wildflower meadow zone. They pulled out weeds from around the base of their A1 orchard apple tree and were rewarded with their Bonaly Primary School tree name plaque, also presented by Sue Webber. The joyful atmosphere was captured in a one-minute video to be uploaded to the FCP facebook page of course,

The Friends of Campbell Park, NatWest community volunteers, and City of Edinburgh Council park staff made light work of finding gaps in the orchard hedge for a further 70 trees, all done during the lunchtime share picnic. When all the biodegradable confetti had been scattered and tree name plaques secured to wooden stakes, the party moved to the Colinton Inn.

Alas, I couldn't keep up with the NatWest volunteers and bid them farewell at 6pm. Craig, the pub owner, was delighted and said he thought that FCP should bring their friends to "the Coly" every month! We'll see...



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Illustration: Paul Fisher Cockburn

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Small Wheels

I write in support of the "Moving on Small Wheels" letter in your October issue, and agree with everything said.

Shops either have no room to move about or make using a small scooter impossible. A nice afternoon could be had at a garden centre but no drop off pavement to cross road and cars and vans park across drops near cafe's, dentists, etc.

One thing I really appreciate -- and it is overlooked -- is how ready people are to help if they think you are struggling, strangers mostly. That was a big eye-opener.

Getting to do a bit of personal shopping or to a bank cost at the very least £30 for a taxi there and back.

Need I mention the pavements? Glad I am not the only complainer!

Name withheld
Currie



Horse Dung

Following recent letters on this subject, I am writing to complain as well about the piles of dung on the Water of Leith pathway. I recently walked the section from Currie to Balerno and was shocked by the piles of dung—piles and piles of it, absolutely disgusting!

In some places, you can't walk along admiring the view and surroundings as you have to keep watching in case you tread in a pile. Surely something can be done to force horse riders to clear up after themselves—it is just common courtesy.

James Parker
Balerno

Secure Your Sheds and Garages

With the nights drawing in, now is a good time to make sure your sheds and garages are secure.

If you are considering purchasing any security products Police Scotland would always recommend that they are endorsed by either Secured by Design (www.securedbydesign.com) or Sold Secure (www.soldsecure.com).

If you see anyone acting suspiciously near to your property or vehicle, please contact the police immediately with as detailed a description as possible of any person or vehicle involved. Please call 999 in an emergency, or 101 to report to the police.

PC Campbell
Prevention, Interventions and Partnerships Department, Police Scotland Edinburgh Division



Local residents and visitors to the Colinton Tunnel Mural may have noticed the wire detector at the western entrance, presumably placed there to keep tabs on the number of pedestrians and cyclists using the Water of Leith Walkway. However, given it is hardly flush with the newly installed path surface, we wonder if the system will also count the number of people tripping over the cable?



What the...?

MILLBANK MUTTERINGS

by TAURUS CERAMICUS BARBATUS

197: PRINTING PROGRESS

These days we think nothing of copying complex diagrams. Find a copy shop, use the office copier or your home printer and hey presto, the job is cheaply done.

But that wasn't the case in my youth. If you wanted a copy of your letter, you needed to sandwich a sheet of carbon paper (invented in 1801) between the top sheet and the one you wanted to copy on to, and then write or type your message. For organisations doing many copies, the original would probably be stencilled and printed on a Roneo machine.

Years later, you might be able to slowly print copies using a contact process involving heat sensitive paper to burn on the image. Fortunately, the "photo copier" was just round the corner and it could print large numbers of black and white copies speedily and cleanly. Since the turn of this century, astonishing developments mean I can print colour copies at home or email letters, pictures and drawings round the world, assured that they will be printed as precisely as the original within an hour of dispatch.

And that's not all. In the early 1960s, I recall a local authority that made "contact copies" of individual A1 tracing paper drawings using light sensitive paper under a glass frame where a saucer of ammonia had been placed. No machinery was involved. You just found a room with lots of daylight, set everything up and came back ten minutes later for your copy. The alternative was to get the bus to the city printer, 35 miles away. We've come a long way.





PLANNING BY ARCHIE CLARK

No Buses

On 10 October, during the morning rush hour, there was an accident at the roundabout on the A71 at the Outer City Bypass. That closed the A71. Traffic was diverted on to Lanark Road West/Lanark Road.

At the time, six-months of gas pipe renewal works were under way. There were long tailbacks on Lanark Road.

I joined a queue at the bus tracker in Juniper Green to take a 44 into town. The tracker advised that seven buses were due in 4, 16, etc minutes and – despite the heavy traffic – the buses were shown as moving. We were reassured by the Balerno bound buses opposite continuing out of town.

But our buses didn't arrive. One after another, an "Out of Service" bus appeared. Then there were 25s, 35s and country buses migrating along the 44/45 route, but requesting they stop proved futile. The tracker board continued its imaginary schedule with no message to indicate the reason for the break in service or when normality would return.



The accident as reported on Google Maps.

I was later informed that the bus company had sent out a message on some social media platform, which was pretty pointless when the stranded "customers" were staring at the tracker board. I understand that 87% of the population has "smart" phones. So what? The tracker board should have been carrying the information.

Once things had settled back to normal congestion levels, it occurred to me that someone must be responsible for ensuring that a reasonable public transport system was maintained, not just when the programmed gas mains, electricity, broadband, water and sewage services need to be maintained but also when an accident occurs (once again)

on the nearby trunk road. Abandoning people and not even allowing them to board an out-of-normal-route service when their advertised bus failed to appear was plainly unacceptable. Who judged that our journey was unimportant? Not informing people using the tracker boards showed a lack of management skills and suggests that the system is designed to serve itself and not the public.

Clearly, the transport system lacks the resilience needed to cope with an emergency. But will lessons be learned, and implemented? Who is responsible?

Short Term Lets

In June, I wrote about the number of Short Term Let proposals appearing in the planning lists. The procedure is pretty tortuous. The whole of Edinburgh has been designated a Short-Term Let Control Area. Licenses had to be applied for by 1 October 2023.

There are a very large number of applications in the system. Some have been awaiting a decision for a long time. In one (Juniper Green) case, the planning department invited the applicant to provide a planning statement on how their proposal complied with a policy subsequently introduced under NPF4. Whatever the merits of the application, the request (relating to local amenity and loss of residential accommodation) seemed of questionable relevance to the application.

We have read that landlords claim that 98% of planning applications for short-term lets are being refused. That seems to be confirmed by a casual glance at the Weekly lists. What is not obvious are the reasons why some applications are approved and others not. Are decisions being made on the balance of how many temporary residents a community can absorb or are other factors involved? For some it is a very expensive process.

Much of the present planning lists are given over to Short Term Let applications and tree works. Currently there are few applications for construction work of any size. Sometimes applications and decisions are even published on the same day, notwithstanding the 21-day period to lodge comments. While governments strive to accelerate planning decisions, seemingly without increasing the number of suitably qualified officers, it looks as though some improvements need to be made to the administration as well.

New High School for Wester Hailes

On 17 April this year, The City of Edinburgh Council advertised in its Weekly List its intention to erect a Secondary School building with associated landscaping and car parking at Wester Hailes Education

Centre (aka Wester Hailes High School).

In June, I wondered whether the path through the planning system was going to be smoothed to allow the application to be fast tracked. On 2 October, five-and-a-half months after the proposal was lodged, it was approved by the planning committee. That's pretty good going.

It would be interesting to

know how many applications lodged long before this one are, for whatever reason, still in limbo, awaiting assessment or a decision. One might ask whether there are enough suitably qualified planners to go round. Perhaps our councillors could find out what the number of planners has been, year on year during the past five years?

Telescope Proposal

Application 23/04129/FUL has been submitted for an optical ground station telescope in open ground north of the main teaching buildings on the Heriot-Watt University's Riccarton Campus.

The 70cm reflector

telescope is intended for bi-directional optical and quantum communications with satellites. The signals would be from optical wavelengths across the visible and near infrared ranges and would comply with laser safety

regulations. The telescope is not particularly large and would be enclosed in an 'all-sky' dome standing 5m high on a concrete plinth about 5m square. The dome opens only when the telescope is in use, otherwise remaining closed.



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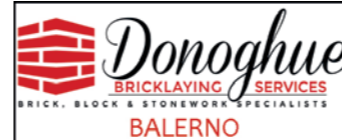
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PLANNING BY ARCHIE CLARK



Wester Hailes Health Centre Site Redevelopment

One long running application awaiting a conclusion is 22/03302/FUL — a proposed affordable housing development, comprising 73 units with associated infrastructure and landscape, at 7 Murrayburn Gate. That was lodged in July 2022.

In October last year [C&B News 480], I recorded that the Edinburgh Urban Design Panel (which draws its members from CEC, The Cockburn Association, RTPI, EAA and other bodies) stated that, in regard to car parking and vehicle access, it was their view that this was not an appropriate location for a parking-free development, which is better-suited to an inner-city location with good access to public transport. It noted that parking spaces were available to existing car owners in this part of Wester Hailes and queried whether it was realistic to expect that the needs of future residents, particularly people working anti-social hours, and visitors, would be met without convenient access to car parking.

Notwithstanding that advice, the proposal is to return to Committee with a “minded to grant” recommendation, with only two “accessible” and two “car club” spaces, arguing that – as the site is located close to the city’s “active travel network”, a train station and is well served by the bus network – lower levels of car parking are sufficient. A total of 188 cycle spaces are proposed.

DPEA Examine City Plan 2030

One of several requests to CEC from the Scottish Ministers studying the City’s 2030 Plan relates to “Affordable Housing”. As the City’s proposals pre-dated the introduction of the latest National Planning Framework (NPF4), the DPEA asked CEC whether it may be necessary to revise its definition of “affordable home/ affordable housing” since NPF4 describes this as: “Good quality homes that are affordable to people on low incomes. This can include social rented, mid-market rented, shared-ownership, shared-equity, housing sold at discount (including plots for self-build), self-build plots and low cost housing without subsidy.”

DPEA observes that the City’s proposed Plan states that the affordable housing requirement should be “at least 35%” and asked the Council to explain how the reporter is expected to rely on the Council’s summary of the conclusions from the District Valuer’s

City Plan 2030 Proposed plan

September 2021



report “when the original documents are not before the reporter in this examination?” The Council is asked to explain how it determined the 35% requirement and questions how the Council can be confident that a 35% requirement on sites consisting of 12 or more units will be sufficient to meet the level of affordable housing planned.

DPEA might find the justification in some abandoned SESplan Consultations. In September 2015, I noted a SES plan Main Issues Report (covering an

area from the Borders to mid-Fife) reckoned that there was a need for 52% affordable plus 12% social rented housing (total 64%) [C&B News, March 2019]. The following year, their “Proposed Strategic Development Plan” reduced this figure to something “more realistic” since it was “not possible” to achieve. Seven years on, post-Brexit and post-Covid-19, it doesn’t appear that these paper figures are achievable through the developer route. Time for Government to address the shortage with a rapid Council House building programme?

City Plan 2040

City Plan 2030 is currently being examined by Scottish Government reporters. However, as is the nature of these things, The City of Edinburgh Council is gearing up for the next City Plan, due in 2040. I wonder how many of today’s planners will be around to see it through?

There are three main stages to this process: evidence gathering, plan preparation, and delivery. CEC tells us that it is at the evidence gathering stage. The new Development Plan Scheme contains the draft Participation Statement which is one of the first steps. (This is a summary of when and how the Council is likely to engage with the public on City Plan 2040.)

The City is seeking the

views of the public on the content of the Participation Statement which started in October.

You can join the Council’s mailing list on cityplan2040@edinburgh.gov.uk. As 2040 is 17 years away, and we haven’t even got the 2030 Plan in place, it does seem a little early to be preparing for 2040 when the world is likely to be a quite different place. I think I’ll opt out of this one.

Re-use Buildings

As one who enjoys exploring Historic Scotland’s ruined castles, it occurs to me that when there is such a shortage of affordable homes that we are missing an opportunity to restore some of these derelict old buildings back to life by converting them into small

centrally-heated flats. Could some not be brought back into use as hubs for a local artisan community, re-introducing old skills and providing a walkable settlement?

Converted old mills and former “colonies” retain the character of their areas while serving a modern-day community. They give a sense of permanence that is

reassuring. Suitably selected buildings could reduce urban sprawl.

It is not a developer’s solution, but it would provide focal points which builders’ often meandering housing estates do not. With global warming, perhaps the thick old walls would help keep us cool. Would you not fancy living in a castle (the dungeon excluded)?

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JOANNA CHERRY MP
EDINBURGH SOUTH WEST

WAR & SUPPORT

The terrible brutality of the Hamas attack on Israel on 7 October cannot be condemned strongly enough. It was truly horrific and, of course, Israel has the right to defend itself. However human rights are universal and Palestinian lives matter as much as Israeli lives, so it has been terrible to see the indiscriminate bombing of civilians living in the Gaza strip in response and the terrible loss of life.

An enormous humanitarian crisis is upon us, with water and food supplies to Gaza cut off. Collective punishment is a war crime. Many constituents have written to me expressing their alarm and demanding action. I have taken up their concerns with the UK Government and I support the First Minister Humza Yousaf's call for the siege to be lifted and for the bombardments and air strikes to stop.

Meantime, the Pentlands Ukrainian Support Group has done tremendous work with Ukrainian refugees living locally. I visited their recent monthly get together and tried my first borscht. Many are worried about what is going to happen next year when the current three-year Ukraine visas start to expire. This lack of certainty is adding stress and worry, and I am taking up these concerns with the Home Office.

PUSG have been supported by Currie Balerno Rotary, who last month invited me to speak to one of their meetings about the value of Human Rights legislation and my role as deputy Chair of the Human Rights Committee at Westminster. It was a lovely evening with wonderful company, and some excellent questions.

There as everywhere I have visited in recent weeks constituents have raised with me the plight of innocent Palestinians and I will continue to pressurise the UK Government on this issue.



GORDON MACDONALD MSP
EDINBURGH PENTLANDS

CHILDCARE

News of the closure of not one but two breakfast and after school clubs based at Nether Currie Primary School and Currie Primary School was a huge blow to parents and children who rely on these services, particularly when they were notified at such short notice with little time to put alternative arrangements in place.

I met with the service providers Spring Oscars to find out exactly why they could no longer offer the services at the Primary Schools, and I wanted to know what could be put in place to ensure families did not face an uncertain future with before and after school childcare going forward. It was evident from our discussion that regulations requiring degree-level qualification for these settings, given the split shift working, was impacting – and continues to impact – recruitment and retention of staff.

The Scottish Government are in the process of compiling a strategic framework for Scotland's early learning and school age childcare profession and I took the opportunity to raise the issue in the Scottish Parliament with the Minister for Children and Early Years, asking if the Scottish Government would consider a review of the regulatory compliance requirements in particular, degree qualified peripatetic roles.

The Minister was sympathetic to the request and stated discussions were on-going with stakeholders, seeking a consensus on the type and level of qualification that is most appropriate for the school-age childcare workforce. Furthermore, the strategic framework steering group will look at recognising and developing a wider range of qualifications that are relevant to school-age childcare.

This should go some way in providing much needed stability and support for parents, carers, children, and staff across the sector, in addition to the increase in pay to at least £12 per hour announced recently by the Scottish Government.



SUE WEBBER MSP
LOTHIAN REGION

PARK LIFE

Our parks and green spaces having a special place in our lives, and there are some hidden local gems. One of these is Campbell Park, hidden away off Woodhall Road. The Friends of Campbell Park group was formed by Shona Harrower, a woman whose passion and energy are catching: on a chance meeting one morning she had me signed up!

In October we all came together for the Orchards Adoption Party. Bonaly Primary 5s, along with volunteers from NatWest, joined forces with the Council's Parks and Green Spaces team to plant 40 trees and re-sow 500sqm of wildflower meadow. Each business or individual that had adopted a tree within the orchard had a unique ceramic plaque made by Tiphereth Camphill. It was an absolute pleasure to present the plaques to everyone that came.

We can also take the Pentland Hills for granted, with it being right on our doorsteps. There is a large project currently taking place to upgrade the parking facilities across the area, from Bonaly to Threipmuir. Yes, there will be a period of inconvenience, but the result will be worth it. Toilet facilities will also return and the horrid orange portaloos at Harlaw will be gone!

Our safety within the regional park is down to the dedicated Pentland Hills Park Rangers who, as well as managing the land and facilities, regularly deal with anti-social behaviour like vandalism, dirty camping and fires.

Last summer they dealt with 118 irresponsible fires and collected 416 bags of litter from dirty camping. You can imagine what they might contain! However, with funding cuts looming by the Scottish Government's NatureScot agency, the ranger's job are under threat.

These are vital roles. I'm trying to get answers but, with the budget pressures, it's another example of the onus being foisted on local authorities to fund what was a national responsibility.



CLLR SCOTT ARTHUR
COLINTON/FAIRMILEHEAD

CONGESTION

Edinburgh is one of the UK's most congested cities, and that impacts on our wellbeing and our capital's economy. There is a real need to tackle this problem, and also ensure our transport system can accommodate those who will live in the up to 37,000 homes that will be built in Edinburgh in the coming decade.

Traffic lights can always be more efficient and utility works can also always be managed better, but I am sure most people will agree that more cars won't solve Edinburgh's congestion crisis or help us meet our climate obligations. As a car owner, I accept this.

This is why the Council consulted on a range of measures earlier this year which aim to make using walking and public transport easier. The consultation comprised an open online survey which anyone could answer and market research using a representative sample of Edinburgh's population, such as older people, parents with young children, younger people and disabled people.

This showed that the majority of people want narrow footpaths widened, and for them to be free of defects and clutter. There was also significant support for faster and more reliable bus services. Perhaps the most interesting result was the support for investigating more restrictions to through traffic in the city centre, to help create a place which is more pleasant to spend time (and money).

It's important to note that this does show that residents and businesses understand the challenges Edinburgh faces and want a say on how they are tackled.

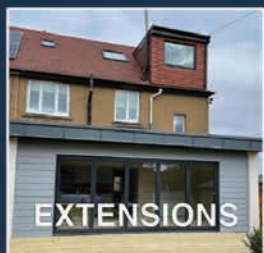
During the summer I was lucky enough to be able to take the train to Rome, I went via London, Paris, Geneva and Milan. It was evident that each of these great European cities are on the same journey as Edinburgh. All were investing in active and public transport, and none were regretting it.

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CLLR GRAEME BRUCE
PENTLAND HILLS

SECOND GEAR LIMIT?

At the last Transport & Environment Committee, a report was laid out detailing the findings from the Rural Roads Speed Limit review looking at Currie, Balerno and other areas of West Edinburgh. Along with that report was Speed Limits Review 20mph across the city. Lothian buses expressed concern about the impact of 20mph proposals which would make journey times much longer.

In my opinion, setting main arterial routes to 20mph will put people off taking the bus; in fact it will put people off going into the city centre, as it will seem like an eternity to reach there. If this goes ahead, it will be detrimental to hundreds of businesses (including Lothian Buses) and will do nothing to encourage young and old, to venture into the centre and enjoy the restaurants and bars, with its many museums and various attractions of this beautiful city. Again, a further report will also be presented at this committee in February 2024.

The latest update I have received from the council regarding the bridge at Roley Wood is that the Contractors advised that their survey had found no major rot issues and any small defects are localised and superficial in some areas. They have been asked to pull together a scope of the works to reinstate the bridge as it was intended.

I have had a number of complaints of late regarding the state of Weavers Knowe Crescent near to the entrance of Riccarton Mains road. As expected I have notified the council of this issue and have pressed for remedial action as soon as possible before it turns into a dirt track.

Lastly, I have had a number of concerns raised about the state of the 3G pitch and goalposts at Balerno. Again, I have notified the council who have responded to say the burnt patches will be rectified and will work with Edinburgh Leisure to organise repairs to the goalposts.



CLLR JASON RUST
COLINTON/FAIRMILEHEAD

A BUSY MONTH

Another busy month at Council with constituent concerns. Planning matters, road safety and the Dell Road path closure have been top of the mailbox. During the years I have sadly found that responses are taking longer to obtain and, more frequently, are in the negative in the first place when they arrive. However, I will keep pressing for necessary action.

On a more positive note, I was pleased to present awards to RAF Air Cadets Sqn 870 at Redford Barracks at their Awards evening. The Cadets were a credit to the squadron and it was great to hear about their individual achievements and the life skills they are developing for future. A good turnout of their family and friends helped to make it a memorable evening.

Finally, I was pleased to join a group of volunteers from Oxfangs on a barge trip from Ratho down the Canal run by the expert, Seagull Trust Cruises. Run by unpaid enthusiastic volunteers, it was an enjoyable couple of hours and meant a lot to the hardworking volunteers from Oxfangs Neighbourhood Centre.

We are very fortunate to have such a range of voluntary organisations with committed volunteers in our part of the city and to see activities pick up again post-pandemic.

• *Constituents should contact me any time via email: jason.rust@edinburgh.gov.uk or in writing to The City Chambers, High Street, Edinburgh EH1 1YJ or call with any local queries.*



CLLR STEPHEN JENKINSON
PENTLAND HILLS

INN-WARD INVESTMENT

Pubs are one of Britain's oldest and most popular social institutions, and play a key role in our local communities, as well as being hugely important to our local economies and, collectively, to the national economy. Pubs provide vital local meeting places and are a focal point for community events and festivals. That is why there is always lots of interest and some nervousness when one of our local pubs is put up for sale.

The Railway Inn in Juniper Green is one of the very few independently-owned village pubs in Edinburgh. Originally established as a public house way back in 1891, The Railway Inn (clue is in the name) was the closest pub to the Juniper Green railway station and quickly became a firm favourite with both locals and visitors to the area. The trains might be long gone, replaced by Service 44 buses, but the Railway Inn remains a busy and popular local institution to this day.

The villages of Juniper Green, Currie and Balerno up the Lanark Road are well served by some excellent local pubs, and the Railway Inn is no exception; as a local Councillor, it is always useful to occasionally pop in after a community event or a meeting for a pint, speak to the locals and find out just what they "really think" of their area and their city.

I'm sure the sale of the Railway will go through smoothly and swiftly and both visitors and locals alike will be able to look forward to many more years of local hospitality. I certainly look forward to popping in again soon welcoming the new owners to Juniper Green.



RICHARD M HENDERSON
BALERNO COMMUNITY COUNCIL

MONEY?

What could you do with £1.23 million? The question is not entirely rhetorical since it has, in a slightly modified form, been asked of Community Councils across Edinburgh as part of an initiative by the Scottish Government "to accelerate our ambitions for place, 20-minute neighbourhoods, town centre action, community led regeneration and community wealth building" and to "contribute to net zero, wellbeing and inclusive economic development, tackling inequality and disadvantage, and community involvement and ownership, including the repurposing of buildings, maintenance and repairs, reallocating external space and community led land acquisition".

This £1.23 million is the latest tranche of funding in an initiative started by The City of Edinburgh Council in 2021 under the title "Place Based Investment Fund", which has so far allocated £7.37 million across 16 projects..

Bids for the 2025/26 round are now being sought, and this begs a question: are we seeing a shift in the way public funding is being determined? If funding decisions are truly being opened up to local influence then government needs to ensure that communities are sufficiently skilled up and resourced to allow them to benefit.

Separately, questions also arise about timescales. How long does it take communities to develop deliverable plans for projects? If strategic planning is being asked for, then asking for bids within five months from a standing start is likely to be fairly demanding—especially if you look at some of the currently funded projects where capital investment of over £1 million may be at the top end but is not a one-off example.

But all this does seem to lead us back to my September and October comments. Should Balerno seek to acquire a redundant Police Station? Could Balerno actually, itself, deliver a safe pedestrian route to the Pentland Hills?

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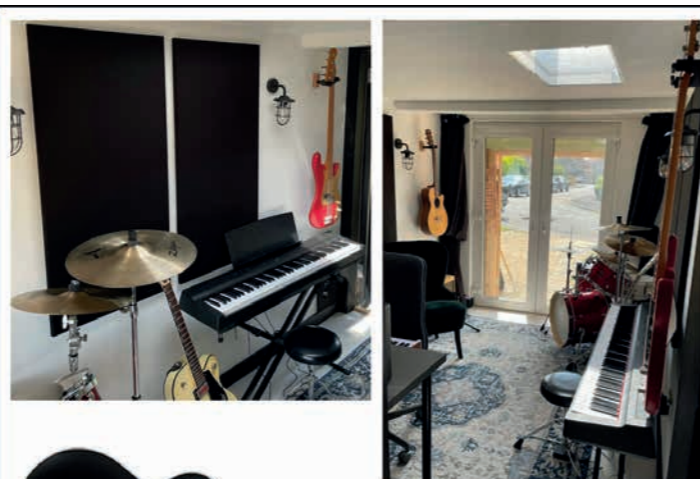
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DAVID HOUSTON
CO-CHAIR, COLINTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL

DAVID HOUSTON

DAVID HOUSTON
CO-CHAIR, COLINTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL

DANGEROUS CORNER

What a saga this has been for Colinton folk. My colleagues and I on Colinton CC have put in an enormous effort and there have been many local voices before us. What is the issue? Spylaw Street joins Bridge Road at a dangerous point behind a blind corner for traffic approaching from the bridge over the Water of Leith. The average speed in both directions is well above the speed limit of 20mph with some drivers exceeding 40mph. It is a wonder that no-one has been killed at this black spot.

As Transport Convener, I gave CEC Road Safety all the local details and described the dangers that pedestrians, cyclists and drivers faced trying to cross Bridge Road at this point. The officers took many months to come back with a proposed solution to the Community Council. Then when we, as locals, could see many things wrong with the plan they were completely resistant to modifying it. For example, we asked why a mini-roundabout had not been considered and why they were closing off the current pedestrian route across the top of Spylaw Street contrary to their own professional street design policy.

At last we got a meeting with the senior manager responsible for Road Safety who understood our local case and was prepared to take it forward. Then just when we were beginning to see the prospect of a proper response to this issue, what do CEC do? They re-organise Road Safety and give it very poor resourcing – only six officers for the whole of Edinburgh and despite earlier assurances no item on the revised plan has been delivered. This is despite a total CEC budget of £1.3 billion and extra capital funding of £11 Million specifically for transport improvements. We are totally fed up and very badly served. Will it take a fatality to get some action on this?



COLIN MACLEOD
CURRIE COMMUNITY COUNCIL

COLIN MACLEOD

COLIN MACLEOD
CURRIE COMMUNITY COUNCIL

WEST EDINBURGH 2050

Currie Community Council recently welcomed the opportunity to comment on the “Towards West Edinburgh 2050” strategy, and Community Councillor Hugh Ross provided some well-thought-out and balanced proposals on behalf of the CCC. Below is a short excerpt of our response:

“The CCC hopes that its response and those of other interested parties will help formulate and assist with the preparation of future policy and delivery plans for physical development, investment, and infrastructure projects in the area.

“Our main criticism of the plan is that it largely ignores the massive housing developments that have been going ahead to the west of the city in West Lothian and does little or nothing to address the increased volume of traffic that these developments are creating for West Edinburgh as a whole and for communities, such as Currie, through people commuting to and from the city for work and leisure.

“CCC welcomed the development of extending the tram routes. However, for it to be of value to the residents of Currie, Balerno and Juniper Green, we argued that it should include Riccarton Park and Ride in the loop and ideally extend to Heriot-Watt University

“CCC hopes that careful consideration will be given to the views and suggestions made in its response to the “Towards West Edinburgh 2050” strategy document, as it is firmly of the belief that their adoption will result in better future policy and delivery plans for physical development, investment and infrastructure projects in both Currie and West Edinburgh as a whole.”

• The next CCC meeting is on Wednesday 8 November, 7.30pm, at the Gibson Craig Halls. We invite all members of the community to attend to discuss a range of issues including anti-social behaviour, pavement parking, and the possible creation of a Currie Community Trust.



Our Local Churches: Another Threat to our Community Spaces

JOHN BURNSIDE
CURRIE RESIDENT

Readers of C&B News will already be aware of the imminent threat to the premises of Balerno Police Station and the prospect of them being sold off for other use despite local opposition to the prospect of the loss of space that is seen as a public asset which could provide a potential opportunity for the community.

However, a further, and more serious, threat is looming in the terms of uncertainty regarding the long term future of the shared community spaces which are called “church halls”. The impending union of the Church of Scotland Congregations in Currie and Balerno which is scheduled for January 2025, currently means that the communities will no longer have their own parish minister. That loss may not have an immediate



Top: Balerno Parish Church. Photo: Apple Maps. Above: Currie Kirk, Below: Gibson Craig Halls. Photos: Paul Fisher Cockburn.

impact on the daily lives of the majority of the community, but if the loss of a minister were to lead to the closure of the church buildings >>> P38



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P37 >>> in either Currie or Balerno, then the impact on community life would be grave. For the moment, there is no immediate schedule for the disposal of the church premises in either Currie or Balerno, but the same financial pressures which are leading to the reduction in the number of ministers are also leading to the closure of an increasing number of church buildings across the country.

The bottom line is that you don't have to be a Christian, or a member of the Church of Scotland, to benefit from the facilities which the church buildings offer to their communities. These community resources have been built, modified and maintained by the members of their congregations through regular giving and occasional appeals for financial support for particular projects. The Gibson Craig Hall has had much investment to make it a flexible space which is used by many community organisations. Since the former St Joseph's Catholic Church was repurchased by Balerno Parish Church, it has been modernised to provide the facilities for a community cinema as well as the Mill Café. These spaces are available for hire to anyone looking for a space for a children's party or other such event, but you have to book well in advance if you want to be sure of getting the space.

No matter what the reason might be for the decline in church membership, the absence of church buildings from our communities would be a major loss. It is difficult to see how their amenity could be replaced as the capital cost

Similar issues will affect the buildings of the uniting congregations of Colinton and Juniper Green. Photos: Paul Fisher Cockburn

of new building would be prohibitive and so it is essential that they are maintained. Some might see this as being a problem for the churches, but that would be to turn a blind eye to the problem. If the Church of Scotland – as



an organisation – has accepted that it can no longer base its future planning on the assumption that the model of the traditional 20th Century church is good for the future, then communities

across the country need to look forward to the future in the realisation that the resources which congregations have shared with their communities may no longer be there.

Communities should not wait until these assets are under immediate threat, because by that time there will be deadlines. Now is the time where community councils and churches should be talking to each other about matters of mutual interest for the future.

That shouldn't mean that the congregations are simply looking for another source of easy revenue for a smaller number of people to carry on doing what they enjoy doing; it should mean that we are exploring realistic ways for sustaining the resources which the churches have been giving to communities for centuries and recognising that their closure would represent a major loss.

It has been done successfully in the centre of the city, so why not here?

INVISIBLE DISABILITIES



3: WHEN YOU'VE GOT TO GO, YOU'VE GOT TO GO...

WORDS BY M
ILLUSTRATION BY KMCL

The Royal College of Surgeons reported that "In 2020, 14 million people (21%) in the UK had a disability. It was estimated that 70% of the disabilities were non-visible."

Non-visible disabilities include: diabetes; asthma; brain injury; dementia; learning difficulties; and chronic conditions like Crohn's disease, ileostomy and mental health disorders. More than 50,000 people in Scotland live with Crohn's Disease and Ulcerative Colitis.

These conditions can be life-changing events, made even more difficult by having to deal with the stigma associated with disability.

Incontinence is a major issue planners have conspired to make more complicated, and have forgotten that "When you need to go, you need to go!"

Public toilets continue to disappear: the one on Ardmillan Terrace was recently demolished while the Haymarket toilets were not rebuilt as promised. Edinburgh lists only a dozen accessible loos serving the entire city, a few needing a "Radar key" to access. A walk along Princes Street becomes getting from one safe loo stop to the next—hotels, shops, cafés and galleries. I've certainly witnessed an unpleasant altercation between a steward and concert goer seeking access to a disabled toilet to empty her colostomy bag: "There's nothing wrong with you!" the Albert Hall functionary insisted.

The Scottish Government recently commended 12 year-old Grace Warnock, from East Lothian, as a pioneering disability campaigner. She created a new, inclusive toilet sign which can now be seen on the doors of a few Scottish disabled toilets, including the Scottish Parliament.

We must demand planners realise the real need, and the need for hygienic conveniences.

£25 PRIZE CROSSWORD

THEMED CROSSWORD 33 BY PUZZLECHOICE.COM

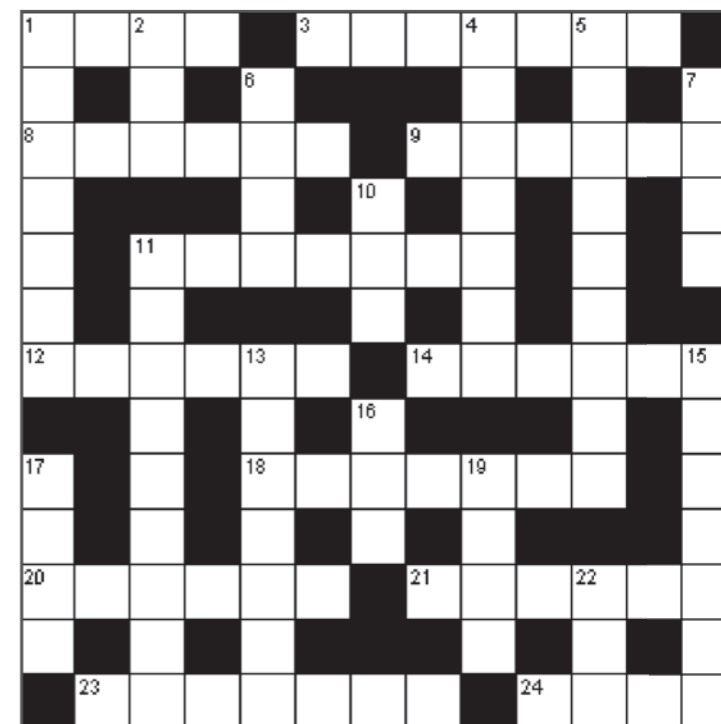
To enter, please photograph the completed puzzle and email to: editor@candbnews.com before noon, Friday 17 November 2023. Good luck!

ACROSS

- Spice made from the covering of the nutmeg seed. (4)
- Kernels that explode when exposed to dry heat. (7)
- Substance that curdles milk in making cheese and junket. (6)
- Rich, frothy, dessert made from whipped egg whites and cream. (6)
- Small dried seedless raisin, used in cooking. (7)
- Sour to the taste. (6)
- Main course. (6)
- Cook quickly over high heat in a wok. (4,3)
- Large shrimp sauteed in oil or butter and garlic. (6)
- Highly seasoned fatty sausage of pork and beef and usually dried. (6)
- Salad of apples and celery with nuts or raisins and dressed with mayonnaise. (7)
- Edible green seeds of a leguminous plant. (4)

DOWN

- Dark sweet or semisweet dessert wine from Sicily. (7)
- Metal container for food or drink. (3)
- Small piece of toasted or fried bread; served in soup or salads. (7)
- Red or black edible berry; usually smaller than a blackberry. (9)
- Sweet juicy fruit. (4)
- Meat from a calf. (4)
- Glass container. (3)
- A small thin sausage. (9)
- Lacking taste or tang. (7)
- Oblong cream puffs. (7)
- Dish baked in a pastry-lined pan, often with a pastry top. (3)
- Chopped meat mixed with potatoes and browned. (4)
- Open pastry filled with fruit or custard. (4)
- Beer. (3)



NAME

ADDRESS

POST CODE PHONE

Please tick here if - on being selected as the winner - you would be happy to be contacted to arrange a bank transfer instead of receiving a cheque.

OCTOBER 2023 WINNER!

Our congratulations go to Ian Hall from Currie, randomly selected from all correct entries to receive our £25 prize.



EASY

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Pentland Art Club Award is a Family Affair

ROS SALTON
PENTLAND ART CLUB

As previously announced in *C&B News*, the Chalmers Brown Award is determined by popular vote at Pentland Art Club's annual exhibition. There were a number of excellent paintings in the running this year and the winner was finally revealed at our AGM on 5 October.

Sarah Brown garnered the most votes for her work in oil: "Janet and Adrian in their garden". It is a delightful piece, sensitively rendered, and clearly painted with love—the subjects being none other than her grandparents.

Alas, Sarah was not able to receive the award in person at the AGM but accepting it on her behalf was – by happy coincidence – her very proud and thrilled grandmother Janet Dyer.

Janet, an acclaimed plant illustrator (see *C&B News* October 2020), is no stranger to the award herself, having won it twice; but at 22, Sarah is the youngest ever recipient of the much-coveted plaque.

Sarah, who was surprised and absolutely delighted to have won, graduated this summer from Duncan of Jordanson College of Art in Dundee with a first class degree in Fine Art.

Artistic "gene-ius" evidently runs in the family.



Top: Sarah's award-winning painting, "Janet and Adrian in their Garden". Above: Sarah's grandmother, Janet Dyer, receives the Chalmers Brown Award on her behalf. Left: Sarah at her recent degree show.



World Premier in Balerno

WENDY WILLIAMS
BALERNO MUSIC FESTIVAL

Despite the conflicting attractions of "Strictly" and the rugby there was a capacity audience in Balerno Parish Church to hear the magnificent Forth Valley Chorus.

This choir of Barber Shop singers are usually a hundred strong but, while only 50 would fit on the platform, the sound was still amazing. As the British winner of the regional Sweet Adeline competition they are off in November to compete at the International Final in Louisville Kentucky, and our audience were the first to hear some of their competition numbers.

The songs varied from rock to ballads and each was performed in wonderful four part harmony. They had the audience in the palm of their hand from the first note to the last, an evocative medley of well-known Scottish tunes woven together by their conductor, David Sangster.

The evening was finished with a short reception in St Joseph's Hall where the audience could meet the "stars" and wish them every success in America.

This was the second event of this year's Balerno Music Festival. The previous Sunday, we had also been in St Joseph's for our "traditional" Jazz Party. It was an evening of great music supplied by our friends Stirling Crisis, ably accompanied by their vocalist Jenne. The cameo appearance by a 92-year-old double bass player, Ted, also made the event memorable. The Mill provided some very tasty snacks, and the wine flowed.

The Balerno Music Festival may be short, but this year has certainly been very sweet.

• Visit: <https://www.balernomusicfestival.org.uk/>



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What's On

To submit entries for What's On, please email [Catriona, whatson@candbnews.com](mailto:Catriona.whatson@candbnews.com), including: Day/Date, Event Title, Venue, Time, brief details, and contact phone/email details as appropriate.

WEEKLY

NOVEMBER

MONDAYS

THE MEETING PLACE: Currie Scout Hall, Forthview Crescent, 10am – 4pm. A community cafe for those 65 and over, all carers and anyone looking for good company. Free exercise class, refreshments and games. For further information email themeetingplacejcb@outlook.com

COME FOR A CUPPA: the hub@531lanark.com Juniper Green, 10.30am. Pop in to have a cuppa, biscuit and a chat, join in a board game, or simply come sit in the warmth and read a book. November programme: Introduction to playing bridge (6 November); Music Appreciation (13 November); Hand Reflexology (20 November); St Andrews Celebration (27 November).

MINDFULNESS SESSION: the hub@531lanark.com Juniper Green, noon-1pm. A guided mindfulness session to help focus on the present moment. Give your mind "a hug at the hub".

BALERNO BRIDGE CLUB: Gibson Craig Hall, Currie. 1.20pm for 1.30pm start. Contact 07504 306062 if interested.

BABY GROUP/BOOKBUG: the hub@531lanark.com Juniper Green, 1.30pm-2.45pm. Meet other parents / carers for friendship and peer support, regular BookBug sessions to learn and share nursery rhymes, songs and stories.

BABERTON SCOUTS GROUP: Juniper Green Church Hall, 7pm-9pm. If you want some more information or would like to join, please email cubs@babertonscouts.org

MONTHLY BOOK GROUP: the Hub@531lanark.com Juniper Green, 7-9pm. Currently full, please email to join waitlist or to start a second group!

COLINTON TOOL LIBRARY: CVE Shed at Spylaw Park, Colinton. 7.30pm-8.30pm. Opportunity for members to drop off borrowed tools. Visit: <https://edinburghtoolibrary.org.uk>, email: hello@edinburghtoolibrary.org.uk

TUESDAYS

KNITTING GROUP: the Hub@531lanark.com Juniper Green, 10.30am-noon, for new and experienced knitters alike.

PENTLAND JUNIOR SINGERS: Balerno Parish Church 6-7pm. Fun, friendship and singing for ages 8-14. New members welcome! More information, pentland_singers@yahoo.co.uk

PENTLAND SINGERS COMMUNITY CHOIR: Balerno Parish Church, 7.30-9.30 pm. Come and share the joy of singing! New members welcome. For further information, pentland_singers@yahoo.co.uk

WEDNESDAYS

PENTLANDS SPORTING MEMORIES CLUB: the hub@531lanark.com Juniper Green, 1.30pm-3pm. Sports chat – anything from Scotland's football glory days to next week's rugby – with likeminded sports fans.

BALERNO RAMBLERS MIDWEEK GROUP: Meet for walks in the Lothians, Fife, the Borders and further afield. For walk details contact M Timmins on 07917878955. Follow Balerno Ramblers on Facebook and also X (Twitter): @BalernoRamblers

THE OCTAGON CLUB: for Adults with learning disabilities. Gibson Craig Hall, Lanark Road West, 7pm-9pm. Contact: Claire Maloney, 07999 410721.

THURSDAYS

PENTLAND BRIDGE CLUB: St Margaret's Court, Juniper Green, 7pm. We play competitive bridge in a friendly atmosphere. Less experienced players welcome. For further information visit: www.bridgewebs.com/pentland/ or email: mthkjb@gmail.com.
PENTLAND ART CLUB:

Balerno High School, 7pm-9pm every Thursday during term time. Relax, share ideas, and learn in the convivial company of fellow artists of all abilities. New members welcome. Contact ros.salton@outlook.com

FRIDAYS

THE MEN'S SHED: Scout Hall, 99 Forthview Crescent, Currie, from 9.30am. We offer various activities and a chat over a cuppa with new and old friends. Come on down! <https://pentlandsmensshed.org>

COLINTON TOOL LIBRARY: CVE Shed at Spylaw Park, Colinton. 5pm-6.30pm. Opportunity for members to pick up reserved tools. Visit: <https://edinburghtoolibrary.org.uk>, email: hello@edinburghtoolibrary.org.uk

BABERTON CUBS and BEAVERS GROUPS: Juniper Green Church Hall. Cubs meet 7:15-8:45pm and Beavers 6-7pm. If you want some more information or would like to join, please email cubs@babertonscouts.org

ALTERNATE FRIDAYS

TABLETOP GAMING IN JUNIPER GREEN/BABERTON/CURRIE: Juniper Green Parish Church. 6pm-9pm. Play board-games, card games and wargames. Everyone welcome, adults, children and their families. For more information contact Eric Ducreux Juniper Green Board-Gamers @boardjg or visit: www.boardjg.co.uk

SATURDAYS

COMMUNITY CAFÉ: Currie Community Centre, 9am-noon. Barista coffee and delicious home baking.

SATURDAYS/SUNDAYS

BALERNO RAMBLERS WEEKEND WALKING GROUP: a busy walking group with a programme of interesting walks in a variety of locations. Some walks may be more challenging than the mid-week programme. Visit: www.ramblers.org.uk/balerno or www.facebook.com/Balerno-Ramblers, email: enquiries@balernoramblers.org.uk, or follow on X (Twitter): @BalernoRamblers

DAY BY DAY

NOVEMBER

WEDNESDAY 1 NOVEMBER

PENTLAND PROBUS CLUB: Juniper Green Parish Church Hall, 10am. "Operation Unicorn". an illustrated talk by Tim Purves. New members welcome. Further enquiries from Club Secretary Leslie Hannaford on (0131) 453 3012 or email lesliehannaford@blueyonder.co.uk



"THE LIT": COLINTON PARISH CHURCH LITERARY SOCIETY: Dreghorn Loan Hall, 7.30pm for tea, coffee and wine, with talks commencing at 8pm. "Travelling Scotland with One Yellow Welly": Reta MacLennan (above) gives us an insight into the real work of a Quality Adviser with the Scottish Tourist Board Membership £15 for full programme of 17 meetings, or £3 per meeting for visitors. New members are assured of a warm welcome.

THURSDAY 2 NOVEMBER

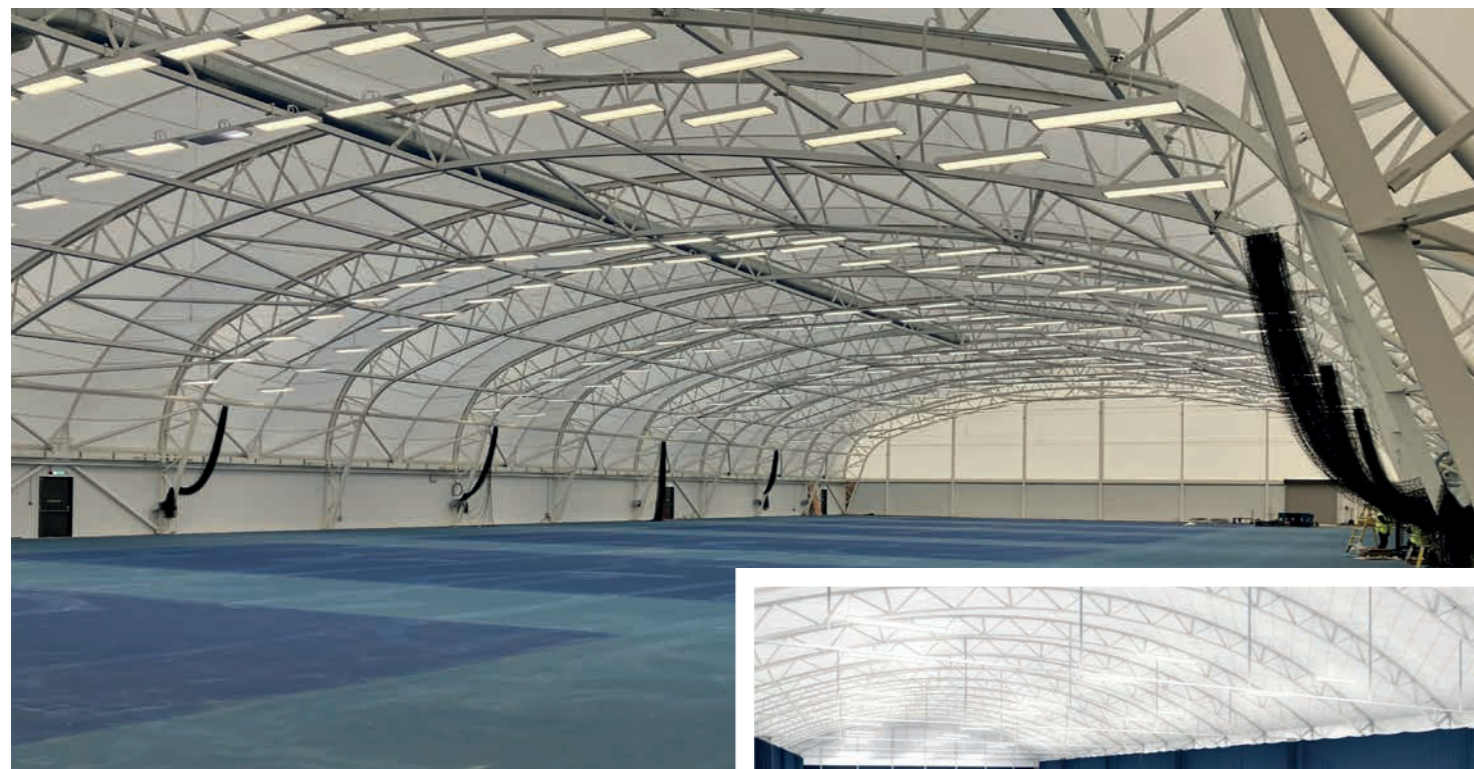
BALERNO COMMUNITY COUNCIL: Balerno High School, 7pm. Annual General Meeting.

BATHGATE BRASS BAND CONCERT: Gibson Craig Halls, Currie, 7.30pm-10pm. Entry free but donations appreciated. More information available from Currie Kirk office: currie_kirk@btconnect.com

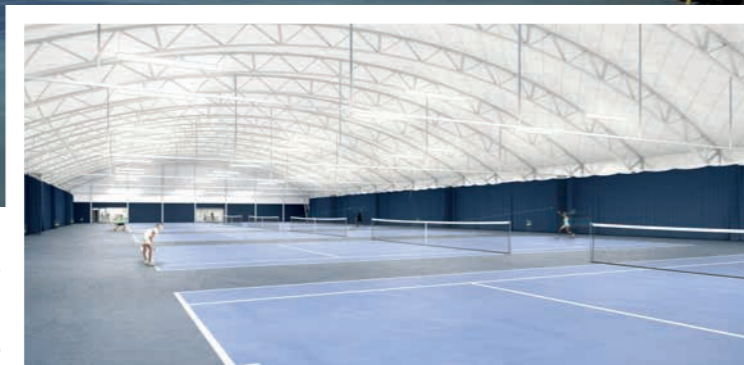
FRIDAY 3 NOVEMBER

THREIPMUIR CAR PARK: Scheduled to reopen; check for updates at www.facebook.com/PentlandHillsRP/ or www.pentlandhills.org/news/article/41/threipmuir-car-park

GARDENING GROUP: Hub@531lanark.com Juniper Green, 10.30-noon. **>p44**



C&B News was recently invited to see the progress being made at the new indoor tennis facility being built at the Oriam sports performance centre at Heriot-Watt University, Riccarton. It's certainly impressive! They hope to open the facility before the end of 2023, and it will be available for use by local residents on a "pay as you play" basis. More information will be available on Oriam's website and social media.



Currie FC and Oriam Walking Football 'Join the Generations'

EWAN CONNOLLY
WALKING FOOTBALL ORIAM

Currie Football Club and Oriam Walking Football (right) are delighted to announce that they have formed a formal partnership which provides and encourages footballing and fitness opportunities for our local communities from the ages of five through to 95—older players are more than welcome to participate too!

"I am delighted that both clubs are working together to encourage parents, grandparents and relatives to continue with football, to reengage with football or indeed to take it up for the first time," said Gerry Butler, Chair of Currie FC.

"Our club has been extremely successful at providing such opportunities for children through to young adult. For those players' parents, grandparents and supporters here is the opportunity to have some 'me time' and for them to participate



rather than watching from the sidelines. I'm really looking forward to seeing our players encourage their older relatives to give it a go."

Ewan Connolly, Chairman of Oriam Walking Football added: "We are very much looking forward to working in partnership with Currie FC and excited by the opportunities that lie ahead. Interest in Walking Football has really grown in

recent years and we're keen to bring the mental and physical benefits of Walking Football to families in our local community.

"It would be wonderful to see the youngsters from Currie FC on the touch line encouraging their parents and grandparents and watching them play the beautiful game. We already have a son-in-law and father-in-law playing side by side and, as Gerry says, who knows—we may have players

across a number of generations playing for both community clubs in years to come."

• For more information about community football email: curriefc@virginmedia.com or cfcgirlsfootball@gmail.com

• For more information on walking football, call Deric Oliver on 07803 508401 or email: dericandjoanjoan@btinternet.com

Balerno Tennis Club Hosts Gala and Junior Championships

CLAIRE HOUSTON
COMMITTEE MEMBER, BTC

The sun shone and the stakes were high as Balerno Tennis Club hosted their annual Junior Club Championships on Saturday 16 September.

Children of all ages and abilities entered the event and it was great to see the new courts being put to full use.

The Christopher Cowe Memorial Games Room was also put to very good use as children played table tennis, table football and air hockey between their tennis matches.

Thanks to everyone who came along!

2023 has been a busy year for tennis at Balerno Tennis Club. We have run a number of fun tournaments, including the club Open Day and annual Balerno Children's Gala Tennis Tournament, which saw a record 64 entries!

Club night has been well attended this year, drawing together a number of adult members for fun social tennis on Thursday evenings. We have branched out to "Cardio tennis" lessons every Sunday morning from 10am-11am: a fun fitness workout suitable for all abilities, and all adult players are welcome.

• To book please email our coach, Wendy McKenzie: wendytennis5@gmail.com

It has been another busy year for our junior programme with lessons running on Fridays, Saturdays, Sundays and Mondays throughout the year. Spring and Summer coaching camps were also well attended and junior club nights on Friday evenings proved popular for juniors to come along and play with friends.

• For more information on coaching opportunities, booking courts, our various membership packages for season 2023/2024 (including discounted rates for half-season membership—up to 31 March 2024), and information about holiday camps for juniors, visit: <https://clubspark.lta.org.uk/BalernoTennisClub>



Things Not Quite as They Seem at Currie Chieftains

PHIL THOMAS
CURRIE CHIEFTAINS

Every fourth year, over an eight-week period, the top 20 of the world's rugby-playing countries compete for the Rugby World Cup. The format is that the 20 countries are divided into four Pools of five countries, each Pool seeded on the countries' World Rugby Rankings. Initially teams within each pool play each other in a four-match league, with the winner and the runner up in each league being decided on their league points over the four matches.

Then, the winning teams and the runners-up move forward into a Cup-style knock-out competition consisting of an eight-team quarter-final stage (with four matches), a four-team semi-final stage (with two matches), and a Cup Final to determine the winning country, which may be

heralded as the 'best team in the world' or some such.

Of course, purists will point out that both the league stages and knock-out stages of the competition can be influenced by the seeding and pooling selections made before the start, and arguably that was the case in this year's Pool B—which included Scotland. So, if you are assailed by an English compatriot claiming that England is the best rugby team in Britain and Ireland, based on its progress in the World Cup, just remind them that "things may not be quite as they seem"—and point them towards the World Rugby Rankings.

Away from the distractions of the World Cup, Currie Chieftains started its Premiership season with four good wins between Saturday 2 September and Saturday 23 September. However, they then lost away to Hawick by 35-13 points on 30 September. This was followed, on 7 October,

Above: D J Innes making a break during the game at Marr on 14 October.

by a downpour that left Maleny Park "waterlogged" (a rugby euphemism for "flooded"), and all matches were postponed to 16 December. Then, away to Marr on 14 October, Currie's efforts were significantly affected by the loss to injury of James McCaig (Wing) and Cammy Grey (Centre); and Marr won a hard-fought game 34-28 points.

Thus, with seven rounds played, Currie Chieftains are placed fourth in the Premiership table behind Marr, Hawick and Heriots. However, the teams are covered by a 9-point spread and Currie Chieftains have a game in hand. So, to all who ask about such matters, my response at this stage is likely to be: "Things may not be quite as they seem!"

• Visit: <https://www.curriechieftains.org/>

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Pentlands Book Festival
Listing, p44



Indoor Tennis on its way at Oriam, p3

C&B SPORT

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Currie Chieftains

Things 'may not be quite as they seem' for the Malleny Park team... p47

Photos: Currie Chieftains - Heriot-Watt University / Oriam.

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