

FREE!



OUTDOOR ART IN BALERNO, p11



CHIEFTAINS U16 WIN NATIONAL CUP, p47

C&B NEWS

CURRIE • BALERNO • JUNIPER GREEN • BABERTON MAINS • COLINTON



BREAKING BARRIERS, p7



REMEMBERING MARION MILNE, p24



PERFECT GAME

Oriam's New Indoor Tennis Centre opens, p46

Photos: Oriam / Greig Anderson, Mike Wilkinson, Tempest Photography Ltd, Roger Jonathan.

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 winter and summer 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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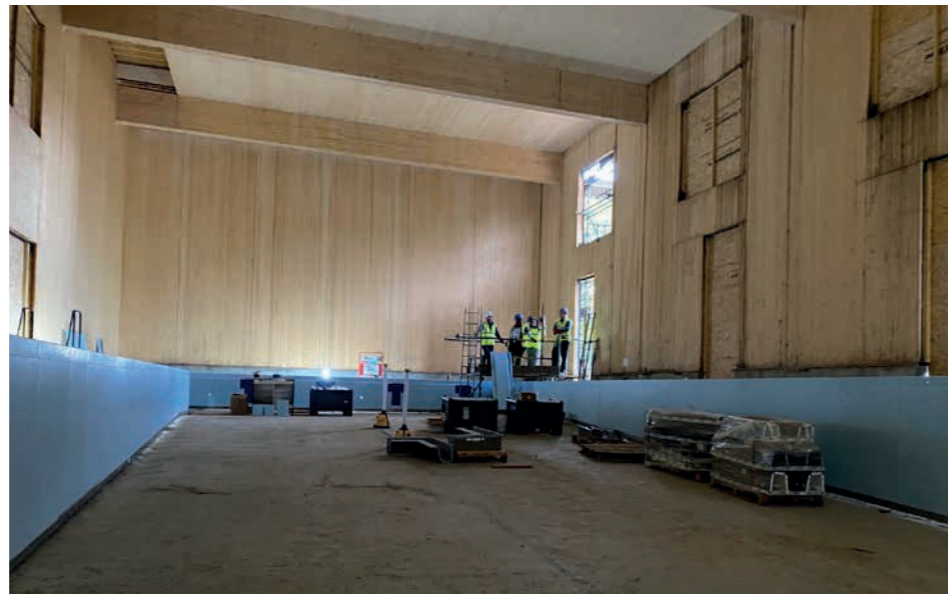


DEADLINES FOR NEXT ISSUE

ADVERTISING & LISTINGS: 13 FEBRUARY
EDITORIAL: 18 FEBRUARY
ISSUE DISTRIBUTED: 29 FEBRUARY



It's apparently been slowly dying for many years, but January's Storm Isha claimed half of the tree opposite Lymphoy Stables, Currie. Photo: DP Edgar.



With just a year before its scheduled opening, work continues at the new Currie Community High School, including (above) the new swimming pool and (below) the HFT Mezzanine. Photos (taken on 23 October): Kevin Kealy



Meantime, Storm Isha also blew this garden shed across four gardens along Lanark Road West where it became wedged between a tree and a greenhouse—amazingly, the latter was completely undamaged! Photo: Hamish Leal.



Above: The C&B News entry for this year's Balerno Christmas Tree Festival. (We didn't win. Sob!) Photo: Gail Rankin.

Below: a new fence helps mark the boundary of Campbell Park, Colinton, from road traffic. Photo: Shona Harrower.



Our last issue was just about to arrive in the shops when we learned of the death of the former Chancellor of the Exchequer, Alistair Darling on 30 November. While best remembered for his pivotal role in the 2008 global financial crisis, it was as the first MP for Edinburgh South West that he featured most often within the pages of C&B News—such as this front page announcement of his election victory in 2005. Belatedly, we pass on our condolences to his family.

Above: Friends of the Pentlands enjoyed a well-earned Christmas Dinner at the Steading Bar and Restaurant, Hillend. Photo: Rob Melville.

Left: It's best not to always expect sunshine and blue skies when walking in the Pentland Hills, as Balerno Ramblers are well aware. Photo: Roger Jonathan.



BRIEFLY... CLIMATE READY?

The City of Edinburgh Council (CEC) has launched a draft "Climate Ready Edinburgh Plan", outlining the city's response to the climate emergency. The deadline for public feedback is Sunday 7 April. More details (and a link to the Plan): <http://tinyurl.com/bdfzdu6>

GRAFFITI

Projects such as the Colinton Tunnel Mural and graffiti "tolerance zones" were highlighted at a CEC-hosted "graffiti summit" in January which brought together police, politicians, heritage organisations, residents and street artists. CEC recently invested £750,000 enhancing its dedicated graffiti task force.

PLANT TREATY

CEC has also agreed a city-wide Plant-Based Treaty Action Plan to "improve access to plant-based foods among residents, promote food security and lower emissions". <http://tinyurl.com/42y76sz9>

POTHOLE BLACK HOLE

The overall condition of Edinburgh's roads is improving (albeit from a very low level), although the acclaimed "pothole killer" machine is yet to be seen near the Pentland Hills. However, independent auditors suggest CEC will have to continue spending an additional £8-10 million a year to avoid our streets and pavements deteriorating so badly again.

'TOURIST TAX'

Should the proposed visitor levy for a guest at the Riccarton Inn, Currie be exactly the same as for someone staying at the Balmoral Hotel, Princes Street? *The Sunday Herald* reported that the Scottish Government is considering introducing council tax-style "banding" for different types of accommodation, which would likely add to the potential bureaucracy.

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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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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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Save the Date! Currie Beer and Curry Festival Returns

ALASDAIR GORDON
CURRIE, BALERNO & DISTRICT ROUND TABLE

This year's Currie Beer and Curry Festival will be on Friday 7 and Saturday 8 June. We'll be putting on our tried and tested formula of 30+ real ales, authentic curry and live bands. If you're interested in sponsorship opportunities, please get in touch. As always, all profits go to local charities and good causes.

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Ambitious Pentlands Nature Project Receives £100K Funding Boost

REBECCA BARR
PENTLAND LAND MANAGERS ASSOCIATION

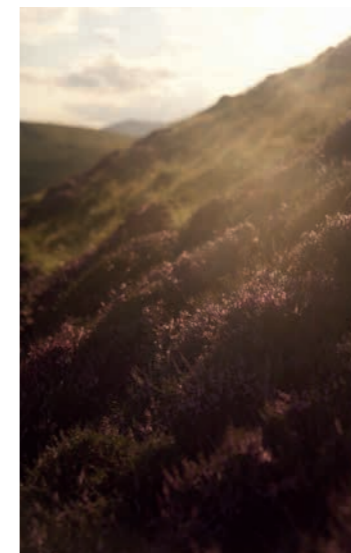
Prospects for an ambitious nature enhancement project across half of the Pentland Hills Regional Park have received a major funding boost—and the public is being asked to contribute their views on the initiative.

Project L-AND (L&) is a partnership between nature recovery consultants Ecosulis and the Pentland Land Managers Association (PLMA), who have come together to explore the potential for habitat creation, carbon sequestration, flood management and water quality improvements.

"We are working with farmers, land managers, local conservation groups and communities to co-develop a plan that is scientifically informed and optimised for environmental benefit and habitat connectivity," explained Neil Melleney, Project Lead at Ecosulis. "We also want to connect people and nature for social, educational, health and wellbeing benefits."

The project has been awarded a £100,000 development grant from the Facility for Investment Ready Nature in Scotland (FIRNS), delivered by NatureScot in collaboration with The Scottish Government and in partnership with the National Lottery Heritage Fund.

The Pentland Hills are mostly



comprised of small family farms. Investment in nature can provide diversified income streams to secure rural jobs and maintain rural communities. The cluster of farmers are the first Wildlife Estate Scotland (WES) collaboration which promotes best practice in wildlife and habitat management.

"Farmers can have a greater impact for nature by working in collaboration with others," said WES's Caroline Pringle, Wildlife Estate Scotland Project Manager. "This funding provides essential professional support to develop an ecologically optimal, landscape-scale plan for the cluster."

NatureScot Chief Executive Francesca Osowska added: "I'm inspired by the creativity and ambition of projects such as project L-AND which show us as we scale up our efforts to halt biodiversity loss and create a nature-rich country for us all. A thriving natural capital market – that benefits the restoration of our rivers, coasts, rainforests, peatlands, farmlands and urban green spaces – is great for communities and great for nature."

• The public is being asked to comment on what developments they would like to see to help shape the future of the Pentland Hills. The survey should take around 10 minutes to complete: www.l-and.co/

BRIEFLY...

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BONALY ROAD

Colinton residents continue to raise concerns about the increasingly poor condition of Bonaly Road close to the Scout Centre, which is being seriously eroded by the adjacent burn. The main challenge holding back any repair work is determining who – if anyone – actually owns the strip of land concerned.

ELECTION CANDIDATES

Current Colinton/Fairmilehead Ward Councillor Scott Arthur has been selected as the Scottish Labour candidate for the Edinburgh South West constituency in the UK General Election expected during 2024. The SNP has confirmed that their candidate will be current incumbent Joanna Cherry QC. Other party candidates will be announced in due course.

SHORT STORIES

Attention fiction writers! A £3,000 top prize is up for grabs in the 2024 Edinburgh Short Story Award. Stories can be on any subject, and up to 2,000 words. (There's also a £750 prize for the top previously-unpublished author.) Deadline: 29 February. £10 entry fee. More details: <https://www.scottishartstrust.org/short-story>

'SOOKER-OOTERS'

Blocked drains are not just a common occurrence across the upper Water of Leith valley; it's a feature across the whole city! C&B News has learned that, unfortunately, The City of Edinburgh Council currently owns just four drain-cleaning machines to deal with the challenge.

'GREEN BRIDGE'

The legal "dotting the 'i's and crossing the 't's" enabling The City of Edinburgh Council to take on longterm responsibility for the maintenance and repair of the new Bavelaw Green Bridge in Balerno continues >p7

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Juniper Green Graduate Breaking Barriers

ALEX SCHWEITZER-THOMPSON
TAILORMADE MEDIA

Juniper Green resident Enoch Oyelakin recently celebrated completing the innovative "Breaking Barriers" programme at the Edinburgh Napier University's graduation ceremony held in the city's Usher Hall.

The programme, established by the Scottish charity Enable in 2018, supports and empowers young people with a learning disability to study at Edinburgh Napier University while also undertaking work experience at the course's corporate partner, international professional services provider EY.

Enoch, along with six other young participants from Edinburgh, graduated with a Certificate of Applied Business Skills.

"It's a good programme because it's providing me with the skills that are required for a work placement. I am very happy and excited to graduate," said Enoch.

Only about one in 12 school leavers with a learning disability currently go onto university education, compared with nearly half (45.1%) of all students. Only 45% of disabled people are currently employed, compared with 81% of non-disabled people.

"My son's participation has been a truly inclusive journey for us," said Enoch's mother, Funmi Oyelakin. "Before the programme, he was very shy and couldn't get into any programme. He felt rejected but now his confidence is up. He feels



Above: This year's Breaking Barriers graduates, including Enoch Oyelakin (far right). Left: Enoch was "very happy and excited to graduate". Photos: Mike Wilkinson



he can now go ahead and be part of the workforce. It has demystified the world of work."

The co-founder of the "Breaking Barriers" programme, Enable CEO Theresa Shearer, added: "Since 2018, the Breaking Barriers

programme has made it possible for students who have a learning disability to access the life-shaping experience of university that is a rite of passage for so many, yet it is currently available to so few disabled young people."

EY partner Phil Milne explained: "Many disabled people are overlooked during traditional recruitment processes, so by making inclusive processes you are accessing talent that is untapped. A more diverse group provides more diverse thinking, which leads to greater innovation and creativity."

• For more information on the course, visit: <http://tinyurl.com/44vehhre>

BRIEFLY...

p5>>>

at the pace of an arthritic snail, which means work to complete the pedestrian bridge can't yet be undertaken. C&B News believes this is certainly not the fault of the volunteer project managers at Balerno Pathways Ltd.

TRUE GRIT-TERS

Wonder why some areas seem to get preferential treatment when it comes to gritting during winter? This page on the CEC website outlines how they prioritise roads, pavements and cycleways. Priority 1 roads include principle roads, bus routes and those leading to emergency services. Priority 1 pavements include routes to hospitals, care homes and schools as well as "higher altitude areas to the south and south west of the city". <http://tinyurl.com/3v57zrwu>

'WALKING TOGETHER'

The impending union of the Church of Scotland's present Colinton and Juniper Green congregations – to form the provisionally-named Edinburgh Pentlands Parish Church – will involve selling both existing manse and buying a new one. The two current congregations are likely to vote on the proposed union before the end of April.

PLANNING APPLICATIONS

Balerno: Proposed new detached single garage to replace existing garden shed, 22 Ravelrig Gait. (24/00087/FUL) Comments by 1 February.

Balerno: Demolition of deteriorated single storey extension to farmhouse, refurbishment of building and construction of two side extensions, 1A Mansfield Farm, Mansfield Road. (23/07366/FUL) Comments by 2 February.

Juniper Green: Remove existing flat roof garage to form single storey extension: creating bedroom/sitting room, ensuite

>p9

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Community for Food is Now a Charity!

CAROLINE BROWN
COMMUNITY FOR FOOD

We started our local food initiative project back in March 2020, initially feeding three local families out of the boot of my car. We then moved to The Corner Cafe during the Covid-19 lockdowns. Nearly four years on, Community for Food (CFF) is now based at the Juniper Green Village Hall—with a team of more than 30 volunteers, supporting between 40 and 50 local families every week.

Oh, and we're now officially recognised by the Scottish Charity Regulator OSCR—charity number SC053004!

Our mission remains that no local schoolchild goes hungry, and we now extend our services



to all six local schools. We partner with most local groups and organisations in some capacity and feel we are really part of the community.

A huge thanks to all our supporters, whether it is food donations, monetary donations or their time. Our regular donors have kept us afloat in the tough times and – now that we're a charity – we hope we can boost their donations through "Gift Aid".

Lastly and by no means least we would like to thank our own families—our partners and kids who have supported us so we can support others. You are the hidden heroes!

• For more information, check our website: communityforfood.com or email us at: communityforfood@gmail.com

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Christmas Card Competition 2023



GORDON MACDONALD MSP
 SCOTTISH PARLIAMENT

Last year marked the 10th anniversary of my annual Christmas Card competition. Each year since 2013, I have invited local primary school pupils to submit their entries with prizes of vouchers totalling £100 generously provided by a range of local supermarkets.

for 2023 was Sainsbury's at Longstone, who also generously provided sponsorship for the first.

The competition provides an opportunity for local children to display their creativity, with the winners having their design printed on my Christmas card.

the response from schools and their pupils and our first prize winner was from Nether Currie Primary.

It is with thanks to the schools, staff and pupils that the competition has been – and I hope will continue to be – very popular.

Edinburgh Leisure 'to do more' in Upper Water of Leith Valley?

PAUL FISHER COCKBURN
 C&B NEWS

Edinburgh Leisure accepts that it could "do more" for residents in the upper Water of Leith valley, in particular around Balerno and Currie, but recruitment of additional staff remains a challenge.

In response to questions raised by C&B News, Public Relations Officer Kerry Teakle explained: "We recognise that there are

opportunities to do more for this community and Edinburgh Leisure will continue to work with the City of Edinburgh Council on the development of the new Currie Community HS, which is scheduled to open in 2025 to not only promote opportunities to work for us but also for the local community to get active."

Edinburgh Leisure is a City of Edinburgh Council-funded, but "arms-length" company which manages its sports and leisure facilities across the city. This

includes the "community" access to Balerno and Currie High Schools.

Despite recent local media reports of a significant budget shortfall leading to the closure of up to eight facilities across Edinburgh, the reallocation of Covid-related funding has ensured some stability—for now at least.

Edinburgh Leisure can be contacted by calling (0131) 458 2100 or using the contact form on their website: <https://www.edinburghleisure.co.uk/>



C&B News noted that Balerno High School was closed – unlike most other Edinburgh Leisure-run venues – for the entirety of the recent festive season. Why was this the case?

The opening hours of community access to high schools is different than at the main Edinburgh Leisure venues, such as the Royal Commonwealth Pool and Meadowbank. While Balerno Community High School was closed for the festive season, this was consistent with community access at the other city high schools.

C&B News has anecdotal evidence of growing frustration among residents at the reduced access to community facilities at Balerno High School. There is also the case of the Pentland Gymnastics Club which, now having lost its regular training space at the school, will therefore no longer be able to compete in competitions this year—affecting hundreds of local children in the process.

The loss of Pentland Gymnastics Club is down to several issues, wider than just staffing.

While staffing is one of them that is not the

whole story. Recruiting lifeguards and swim coaches has proved challenging in the locality.

Edinburgh Leisure's Recruitment Open Days are open to any individual and are held at one of Edinburgh Leisure's central venues, often the Royal Commonwealth Pool, where we can accommodate the large amount of people who attend from across the city. However, we tend to find that people wanting part-time roles at our venues, including the high schools, tend to prefer to work in the city-centre rather than wishing to travel to the outskirts of Edinburgh.

We are taking steps to work with the local community to promote employment opportunities, which will have a dual benefit, in creating opportunities for local people and the provision of local services.

The wider issue for the Pentland Gymnastics Club has been that they have operated out of Balerno and Currie High Schools. They had to relocate from Currie HS to Balerno due to the issue of RAAC enforcing closure of the gym hall at Currie HS. Their usage at Balerno HS has been reduced due to the hall space being used for school exams, which is outwith the control of Edinburgh Leisure.

BRIEFLY...

p7>>>

shower and enlarged entrance hallway, 6 Baberton Mains Avenue. (24/00125/FUL) Comments by 5 February.

Balerno: Removal of oak tree, Bella Vista, 200B Mansfield Road. (24/00075/TPO) Registered 11 January.

Currie: Demolition of existing shed and barn and construction of two new houses with associated roads, drainage and infrastructure, Middle Kinleith Farm, Harlaw Road. (24/00127/FUL) Comments by 9 February.

Colinton: Adding fabricated open metal trellis/panel atop existing stone wall in front garden, not to exceed total height of 1.5 metres (5 feet), 455 Lanark Road. (23/07391/FUL) Comments by 16 February.

Colinton: Removal of existing pitched roofs, wellheads raised and new pitched roofs installed, forming 1.5 storey arrangement; new entrance porch and extension to existing garage, 70 Dreghorn Loan. (24/00221/FUL) Comments by 16 February.

PLANNING DECISIONS

Balerno: Single storey extension to side, 23 Gillon Drive, Ravelrig. (23/06985/CLP) Granted, 4 January.

Colinton: Remove conservatory, construct dining room and rear extension, install roof windows, remove french doors and alter opening to create window, remove driveway and form permeable parking area, 36 Woodhall Road. (23/06800/FUL) Granted, 8 January.

Colinton: Extension to read (as amended), 41 Redford Loan, Redford. (23/04983/FUL) Granted, 9 January.

Colinton: Proposed roof windows to provide additional natural light to kitchen, 5 Harlow Road. (23/06874/FUL) Granted, 9 January.

Juniper Green: Reduce crown of ivy-covered sycamore in west part of woodland, 40 metres south of 521 Lanark

>p11

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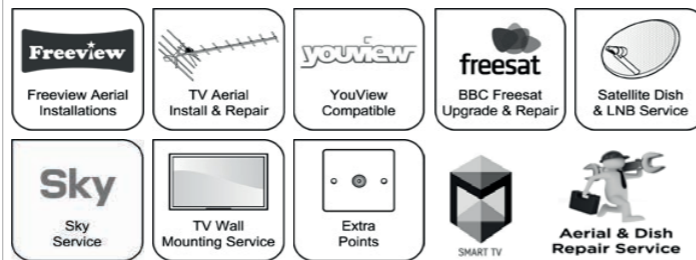
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Thank you from Charity Crafters

SHONA MOYES
CHARITY CRAFTERS

We want to thank everyone who came along to our sales at Currie Library and Currie Kirk Christmas Fair in November, where we managed to raise more than £1,000 of profits. It was wonderful to see everyone and to watch all our crafting efforts over the year being bought.

We must give a special thanks to the team at Currie Library who gave us so much support, not just on the day of the sale but throughout the year. The library provides us with the space to meet and lets us display some of our craft for sale at the counter and in their "Warm and Welcoming Corner". We are very lucky to have such a wonderfully helpful and friendly service in our community.

Due to the generosity of everyone who bought our craft we have been able to donate to the following groups and good causes: The Meeting Place; The Palm Café; The Colinton Tunnel Mural Project; 42nd Pentlands (Currie) Scouts; 31st Pentlands (Juniper Green) Scouts; 51st Edinburgh (Balerno) Scouts; Currie Football Club; Hub@531; and Lothian Sound.

We are now concentrating on new craft items for our next sale, which will be just before Easter.



Fundraising Concert for Local Pipe Band

ANGELA MCLAUCHLAN
BALERNO & DISTRICT SCHOOLS PIPE BAND

The Balerno & District Schools Pipe Band are holding a fundraising concert in the Balerno High School Concourse, starting at 7pm on Wednesday 28 February.

Doors will open from 6.30pm. The concert is an opportunity to enjoy a Scottish evening with our

talented young pipe band and other performers.

Last year's concert was a big success, and we are hoping there will be lots of interest this year too.

• Concert tickets (£10 adults; children and teens free) can be bought from pipe band members, on the door or by emailing: bdspbconcert@gmail.com



This winter Balerno Art Club held some woodland workshops. "We started with initial pencil sketches indoors, accompanied with live music by a local composer and musician. We then headed out to the beautiful private woodland space for impressionist style painting - and we even had time for an organic hot chocolate and cookies! Yum!"

• For more details about Balerno Art Club, email: Balernoartclub@gmail.com, call 07591990020 or visit [everychildisanartist](https://www.instagram.com/everychildisanartist) on Instagram
Photo: Cara MacDonald

More Community Chest Grants

MIKE ROWE
CURRIE BALERNO ROTARY

The Pentland Community Chest, funded and managed jointly by Currie Balerno Rotary and the Balerno Village Trust, provides grants of up to £600 towards projects of value to the local communities. Applications received from local clubs and organisations

are considered in June and December each year.

For the half-year period up to 30 November 2023, grants were awarded to the following:

- Balerno and District Pipe Band; Balerno Children's Gala Association; Community for Food; Compass Playgroup; Friends of the Pentlands; Harmeny Trust;

Juniper Green Bowling Club; The Mill Café; Nether Currie Primary PTA; Pentlands Men's Shed; Ravelrig RDA.

We are delighted to be supporting such a range of organisations, showing the Pentland Community Chest to be effective across our local community.

• The next deadline for applications is 31 May 2024; the awards will be made the following month.



BRIEFLY...

p9>>>

Road. (23/07170/TCO) Granted, 10 January.

Balerno: Alterations to garage frontage, replacement windows and formation of two storey front bay window, 1 The Lade, Mallyen Mills. (23/07122/FUL) Granted, 11 January.

Currie: Completely remove numerous trees that have grown together and now strangled by ivy, 105 Lanark Road West. (24/00016/TCO) Not make a tree preservation order, 15 January.

Balerno: Reduce height and spread of oak tree, 1 Larchgrove. (23/07275/TPO) Granted, 16 January.

PLANNED ROADWORKS & ROAD CLOSURES

Balerno: Mansfield Road area, re: development of Threipmuir car park. Ongoing parking restrictions on Mansfield Road and East Farm Rigg.

Balerno: Lanark Road West, carriageway resurfacing between Bridge Road and Ravelrig bends. Road closed 7.30pm - 6am each week night; signed diversion via A70 - B7031 - Kirknewton - A71 - Curriehill Road. Four to five weeks from 15 January.

Juniper Green: Clovenstone Gardens from north east corner near Clovenstone House, electric cable connections. Temporary traffic lights: two or three-way as required, working westwards. 15 February to 8 March. (Expected at Clovenstone Road junction from approx 26 February.)

Juniper Green: Lanark Road between Baberton Avenue and City Bypass bridge; lane closures and temporary traffic lights as required for Cityfibre remedial repairs. Seven to 10 days from 25 January.

Oxgangs: Oxgangs Road North at (closed) Oxgangs Farm Drive; two-way temporary traffic lights, for BT/KN ducting installation. 11-16 March (approx).

LOCAL UPDATES • LOCAL UPDATES

Launching Friends of the Hub@531

ANNETTE WILSON
DEVELOPMENT OFFICER, HUB@531

During 2023, our groups and activities in the Hub@531 were supported by a very small, dedicated group of volunteers. Without them, there would be no community hub at all! But, given that “many hands make light work”, we’re looking for more people so we can continue to provide the range of events we put on, and make best use of this fabulous community facility.

So we are pleased to launch “Friends of the Hub@531”. As a “friend”, you’ll receive information on all the events and be able to suggest what things you would like to participate in. With your suggestions and enthusiasm you can help steer best use of our great community space.

By joining Friends of the Hub@531, you will have the opportunity to get more involved—it’s really fun and rewarding, and a great way to meet others and strengthen our community.

Also, if you have skills you would like to share then you will hear about what we need! For example, right now we have a newly-built storage unit that needs to be painted, and we would love to offer some new crafts at our monthly crafting events.

We would be delighted to welcome some new members to our team to simply open up for events and help offer others a cup of tea.

• To join Friends of the Hub@531, please email: hub531lanarkroad@gmail.com

As The City of Edinburgh Council approaches the adoption of City Plan 2030, work is already beginning on the next, City Plan 2040! (See: <http://tinyurl.com/3nnkxw4m>). CEC has extended the deadline for public comment on its draft Participation Statement, the summary of when and how the Council is likely to engage with the public. The closing date for comments is now 1 May 2024.

• To share your views, please respond online via the Council’s consultation hub, email: cityplan2040@edinburgh.gov.uk, or write to: City Plan 2040, G3, Freepost CITYPLAN.

‘Be Fair to the World: Choose Fairtrade!’

LESLEY HENDERSON
BALERNO FAIRTRADE VILLAGE GROUP

In January 2024, not only frost made Balerno’s three schools steam, but their young artists too – backed by great staff – racing to finish this year’s Balerno Schools Fairtrade Art Competition entries. Like the last two decades’ many entrants, they’ll soon be running the world, so it’s good that they already enjoy thinking about sharing, caring for our world and each other, and showing us how to “Be fair to the world—choose Fairtrade!”

So what’s next? We’re organising a “Fairtrade Morning”, on

Saturday 2 March between 10am and noon, held in both Balerno Parish Church Halls, letting us all bring practical support for Fairtrade/Fair Trade (FT). Back stalls selling FT foods and crafts. Pedal yourself a Scotmid-sponsored FT banana drink on Edinburgh Bike Cooperative’s “smoothie bike”. Try the scavenger hunt. Learn how Transform Trade, custodian of the “Traidcraft” brand, makes life-changing, eco-friendly deals with producers and workers alike. Try free FT samples, thanks to the Co-op. Win an FT hamper, or a tasty cake made by Balerno’s brilliant FT Mill Café. Enjoy the Guild’s refreshments and glorious baking, with a children’s activity corner close by. Perhaps even bend the ears of your favourite local politicians, so loyally supporting FT all these years.

Robert Aldridge, the Right Honourable Lord Provost of Edinburgh, will speak about Fairtrade/Fair Trade at 11am, and will also present the young artists’ prizes, generously supported again by Scotmid. You will be able to admire a display of winning artwork, and let our young artists and their grown-ups know that all their New Year steam was so worthwhile.

Longer-term news of FT locally will keep for next issue. But it’s looking good: not just “ancients chugging on”, but lively new younger interest, bringing strong, promising eco and trading experience. More next time!

• To get in touch with Balerno Fairtrade Village Group, email: balernofairtrade@gmail.com

SW20 Benefits from Co-op Local Community Fund

PAUL BULLEN
SW20

We’re delighted that SW20 – South West Edinburgh 20 Minute Neighbourhoods – has been chosen to benefit from the Co-op Local Community Fund.

As you can imagine, the last 18 months have been really challenging for small community groups like ours. We’re urging local members to choose us as their cause so we can deliver our project and help more people in south-west Edinburgh.

After our successful trial of a free cargo bike hire scheme, supported by the Cargo Bike Movement, we have expanded our e-bike hire range with our own eCargo bike



and a step through eBike.

We are currently raising funds towards the purchase of a professional bike trailer which would enable local people to shift large items around their communities for free and more sustainably

When members buy selected Co-op branded products and services, 1p from every pound

spent goes to support the local causes like ours.

• Co-op members can select us as their local cause by visiting <https://membership.coop.co.uk/causes/83248>

• For more information, and to book our e-bikes, visit: <https://hellow20.wixsite.com/sw20ed>



Round Table Coastal Walk

ALASDAIR GORDON
CURRIE, BALERNO & DISTRICT ROUND TABLE

In our now customary update on our coastal wanderers, their current location is Leith. Progress seemed to pause to take in the local bars and contemplate their route options, but February should see them reaching South Queensferry and ready to cross the Forth!

• Email: enquiries@cbrdt.com

LOCAL UPDATES • LOCAL UPDATES

Edinburgh Horrors with Balerno SWI

SHEILA MASON
PRESS SECRETARY, BALERNO SWI

There was a good turnout of members to our January Zoom meeting—given that we didn’t have to go out in the cold! Catriona wished us all a Happy New Year before introducing our speaker Bruce Jamieson, who also appreciated being able to deliver his talk with slides – wearing his slippers – in the comfort of his own home!

Bruce had been a tour guide for Ghost Walks in Edinburgh and he gave us a very enjoyable talk with

lots of history, all accompanied by drawings of what/who he was describing. We were glad that we weren’t on a “live” tour as much of what he described happening in Edinburgh during the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries was exceedingly gruesome.

For example: Philip Stanfield was murdered by his awful son Philip, who tried to say his father had killed himself—whereas he had hit his father over the head. Philip’s destination was the noose but the rope broke on the day, forcing the hangman to strangle him. All really “cheery” for a dark winter’s night!

Our tour round Edinburgh finished with the story of Mary Queen of Scots’ private secretary David Rizzio, murdered in 1566 and buried in the Canongate Kirkyard. Bruce mentioned that

on one occasion he visited the grave alone only to find a black cat sitting on the grave!

Catriona thanked Bruce for a very interesting and informative talk.

Members then shared their favourite Christmas Card – all very varied – before we all signed off to get our own cuppas.

Happy 2024 to all our fellow Rural Members.

• Balerno SWI welcomes new members. We normally meet at 7.30pm on the first Tuesday evening of the month – except during July and August – in the Balerno Community Centre, Main Street.

• Our next meeting is on Tuesday 6 February 2024, with “Upcycling” in mind.



“A big ‘thank you’ to everyone that gave their time to Currie, Balerno and District Round Table, most recently the Santa run,” writes Alasdair Gordon. “Every bit of help was greatly appreciated, from first time helpers to seasoned regulars including Currie Chieftains, Ravelrig RDA, the Scouts, Community for Food, and Harmany School. A huge thanks to Western Toyota, who for a second year have loaned us a brand new vehicle that was transformed into Santa’s sleigh. We are now looking forward to 2024 and awarding funds to local charities and good causes. We’re especially interested where the money can make a difference in the local community and it will leave a lasting legacy.”

‘Streets Ahead’ in Balerno

ANNIE MACDONALD
PESTICIDE FREE BALERNO

Few of us in our lives are entirely untouched by cancer: be it personally, or through our families, friends or work colleagues. World Cancer Day (this year on Sunday 4 February) aims to raise awareness of both how cancer impacts people’s lives forever and how everyone affected can get the support they need.

Prevention, it’s said, is better than cure and so we are proud to say that, as a community, Balerno has been taking proactive steps since 2020 to rid our streets of the well-known cancerous chemical Glyphosate, which was being used by the City of Edinburgh Council simply to treat the street weeds.

Balerno is now using manual

methods to remove the weeds whilst awaiting the introduction of safe alternatives like foamstream/hot water. Safe alternatives are already being used successfully elsewhere in the UK.

Glyphosate is the main ingredient in most weedkillers used by councils. CEC are aware of its harmful nature and have been discussing this issue since 2016, when the World Health Organisation announced that the chemical was a probable carcinogen. Glyphosate has attracted much media attention over recent years, following several high-profile legal cases

Pesticides can cause harmful effects on our health, during an extended period, usually following repeated or continuous exposure even at low levels—over time, they can accumulate and contribute to cause very serious illnesses just like cancer.

Long term pesticide exposure has been linked to the development

of Parkinson’s, asthma, allergies, respiratory problems, depression, anxiety, ADHD, and cancer, including leukemia and non-Hodgkin’s lymphoma.

Vulnerable members of society are particularly susceptible to pesticide exposure: babies, children, those pregnant/nursing mothers, disabled people, those susceptible to chemicals, or with chronic illnesses, and elderly people.

Governments, local councils, schools, and companies across the world are more and more making proactive changes away from the unnecessary use of pesticides in our public spaces to treat weeds.

We can congratulate ourselves here in Balerno for our community being progressively... Streets Ahead!

• To learn more, visit <https://www.pesticidefreebalerno.com/>, email pesticidefreebalerno@gmail.com or text/call 07979 717485

31st Pentland Scouts Looking for Help

ALLAN LEAL
SCOUT LEADER, 31ST PENTLAND (JUNIPER GREEN) SCOUT GROUP

We are very fortunate to have a sizeable plot and our own Scout Hall, but this needs maintenance and upkeep – hedges trimmed, fences painted, floors cleaned – which is more than leaders alone can manage, especially when they are responsible for running successful sections.

If you have some spare time at the weekend or during the week and are handy with a lawnmower, paintbrush or hedge trimmer, and would be willing to help out, do please get in touch!

We hope to put together a dedicated crew who can keep things shipshape in between larger maintenance projects—and we’ll supply all the tea, coffee and biscuits you can reasonably manage!

We run some exceptionally successful sections but are also victims of our own success.

We have two full Squirrel Dreys, two full Beaver Colonies, two full Cub Packs and a very full Scout Troop. We have waiting lists at all ages and run the risk of members of younger sections not being able to progress when they are the right age, as there are simply no spaces available.

To enable us to offer Scouting to more young people we need more leaders and volunteers.

This is a great opportunity for students, or others looking to work in childcare, to improve their CV, or for adults of any age to get involved in developing and leading young people in our community.

We have space for all sorts of skillsets and no particular experience is required in advance. Whether you have a passion for the outdoors, camping, hiking, crafts, computing or anything in-between, we would be keen to hear from you.

You don’t even have to become a leader: if you think you can help with our accounts, administration, programme planning, or catering, then you would be very welcome too.

• Email: 31stpentlandscouts@gmail.com

Snapshots of the Past



The Ranges—a Historic Currie Name

DOUGLAS LOWE
CURRIE & DISTRICT LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

A little before Christmas I was asked questions about “The Ranges” in Currie: where they were, and for some background. As a regular hill walker I knew fine where they were, but what else did I know about them? Very little, it appeared!

To reach “the Ranges” you have to ascend the Kirkgate. This ancient thoroughfare was called the “Road to Biggar” on the Taylor and Skinner’s road map of 1775. Earlier, in 1666, General Tam Dalziel and his Mosstroopers had followed this road on the way to attack the Covenanting army at Rullion Green. It was a drove road leading over the Maiden’s Cleuch to the large sheep markets, held at House of Muir until 1871.

At the top of the Kirkgate you go straight on past the white house “Crossroads” (shown as “The Lone” on old maps), then follow the track for roughly a mile to the end of Whiteside Plantation. The rough lumpy grazing ground over the wall on your left, dotted with odd remnants of brick buildings, is all that now remains of “the Ranges”—rifle ranges which were popular and well-used in their day, hosting many shooting competitions.

The War Office had created this new rifle range at Malleny for the Queen’s Edinburgh Volunteers—later the 4th/5th Royal Scots (Queens Edinburgh Rifles). It was officially opened on 27 May 1885 with a shooting match between the officers, non-commissioned officers and men of the Edinburgh Brigade. The rifle range was well constructed, with a number of targets set up at different distances—one even at 1,000 yards (914 metres). Soldiers were usually brought by train to Currie station and then had to march the two miles or so uphill to the Ranges—in full kit!

There was a plan around the turn of last century to have a light railway constructed from Balerno goods station up to the rifle ranges but, despite the route being surveyed, it remained on the drawing board.

Having had the soldiers suffer on this bleak upper moorland site for a few years, in 1901 the War Office arranged for construction of a pavilion, containing a caretakers house, hot and cold water, lavatory accommodation, cooking and other facilities. Oh, and a telephone!

This new technology might have been helpful a few years earlier, in 1887, when one of the volunteer markers was accidentally shot. The marksman had been firing at a target – the figure of a man against a white background – and unfortunately took a shot while the marker was standing in front of the target. The bullet, fired from just 700 yards (640 metres) away, passed through the man’s body and still hit the target.

Two of the shooting party were medical students and helped the injured man: one bandaged the wound while the other ran the two miles down to Currie village for a doctor.

It’s worth noting that the accident occurred at 2.30pm. The injured man was subsequently transported in a spring cart to Edinburgh, but didn’t arrive at the infirmary until 8pm, and died two hours later. This I find inexplicable, given that the Caledonian railway – with a regular service along its Balerno branch line, was at the bottom of the Kirkgate and would surely have provided a speedier option.

After 1913, once the War Office set up Dreghorn Army Camp on Redford Road in Colinton (including rifle ranges within the camp grounds), the military mostly withdrew from Malleny. The ranges continued to be used for several years: the likes of the Edinburgh and East of Scotland Rifle Club used it for competitions well into the 1920s.

The pavilion was subsequently used as a shepherd’s house. Sadly, there is no evidence of it now; indeed, there’s little evidence of the rifle ranges at all, apart from the enduring name.



Main and above: The Ranges in use during the early 20th century. Far right: no sign of the Ranges in the countryside today. Photos: Douglas Lowe

• For more information on Currie and District Local History Society, email: secretary@curriehistory.org or fill in the contact form at <https://www.curriehistory.org/contact/>

THIS MONTH IN... 1984 LOCAL HISTORY AS REPORTED BY C&B NEWS.



Left: Some of the children from Currie, Balerno and Juniper Green who took part in a sponsored fun run to buy a breathing monitor for the Special Care Unit at Simpson Memorial Maternity Pavilion. With them are Irene Grant (chairman of organisers the Currie and Balerno Ladies Circle), Nursing Officer Margaret Lang, and some of the nurses from the unit.

PAUL FISHER COCKBURN
C&B NEWS

Three stories dominated the front page of this 90th edition of *C&B News*: and they didn’t include editor Joyce Ross’s apology for the late arrival of the previous issue—the paper’s usually well-established production schedule having been interrupted, once again, by Christmas and its inevitable holidays. Let’s just say the writing was on the wall for those bespoke January editions: just three years later they were finally consigned to history!

So too, the previous month, had Woodhall Paper Board Mill in Juniper Green, which “after years of speculation” finally closed its doors: 71 people, most of whom lived locally, lost their jobs as a result. But this wasn’t just a matter of a single employer shutting up shop, even with all the inevitable knock-on effects that would have for other local businesses, such as their haulage contractors. As local historian John Tweedie explained, there had been a mill of some kind at Woodhall since at least 1747—there was a map to prove it! The closure, he said, meant “the end of an industry which [had] brought work and population to the area for over 200 years”.

“The future of the site, the machinery and the chimney are as yet unknown,” the paper added. The site – including the chimney landmark – would eventually be demolished and cleared, although it’s an indication of the slow world of planning that various applications for housing were frequently knocked back down the decades. Construction of the eventually-approved four large houses only began in the latter half of 2023—almost 40 years later!

While previous planning applications regarding the Woodhall site had often raised a hue and cry locally, it was likely nothing compared to the “stormy” meeting hosted by Balerno Community Council on 12 January 1984, which provided an opportunity for some 200 local residents to express their clear opposition to a new quarry on Ravelrig Hill. Despite assurances by representatives of the

company King & Co, that “the visual impact of the quarry would be negligible owing to its situation and the masking effects of the earth spoil mounds which would be planted with screening trees,” the audience was – as the reporter delightfully put it – “far from happy”.

Time and again, in the Q&A which followed the company’s initial presentation, questions were raised about “the really important issues”—dust, noise, vibrations and the impact of the quarry on the local environment—including from increased road traffic in and around Balerno. “There was no doubt that the community wished strong objections to be made to the Planning Department concerning this proposal,” the community council reported elsewhere in the issue, while promising that it would put its own objections to the scheme “in the strongest possible terms”.

Finally, in January heavy snow had finally arrived along the upper Water of Leith valley; indeed, it was of sufficient depth to require snow plows to help keep some of the main roads open. At least, as the editor pointed out, the drifts “still make a beautiful picture”.

There were, as usual, reports of local fundraising efforts. Most notable, in terms of photography, were the local children from Currie, Balerno and Juniper Green who had taken part in a sponsored fun run – organised by the Currie and Balerno Ladies Circle. This had raised more than £400 (around £1,250 in today’s money) towards buying a new breathing monitor for the Special Care Unit at the Simpson Memorial Maternity Pavilion at the city’s Royal Infirmary.

A small aside: this issue, *C&B News* very briefly thanked Balerno SWI “for their kind donation to [its] funds”. Four decades later, we’re pleased to continue a long tradition of now being the provider of donations to local good causes, for which we thank both our advertisers and readers. We wouldn’t have our annual surpluses without you!

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31st Pentland Scouts Celebrate 100 Years

ALLAN LEAL
SCOUT LEADER, 31ST PENTLAND (JUNIPER GREEN) SCOUT GROUP

The 31st Pentland (Juniper Green) Scout Group – originally the 31st Midlothian Scouts – celebrates its centenary this year.

The group originally met in St Margaret's Church Hall, Juniper Green – that explains the name, even though the Troop now meets on Lanark Road West in Currie! The inaugural Scout Master was William Steven Jnr (of the Police Station, Juniper Green) and it began with 21 Scouts.

By the 1930s the Rover Scouts – at that time the most senior section – took over Grahams the Builders, now our current site at 45 Lanark Road West in Currie. The new hall – still on the site today – was officially opened on 20 November 1971. In subsequent decades, the group has expanded from just Scouts – only boys at the time – to Squirrels, Beavers, Cubs and Scouts—all of which have welcomed both boys and girls for many years.

We have a number of events planned for our centenary year and would love to engage with former members and supporters of the 31st. Ex-cubs, beavers, scouts, rovers, ventures, explorers, leaders, parents and supporters are all encouraged to get in touch via email to make sure they are kept up to date with events through the year.

We already have a lot of photos in the archive but they are mainly of Scouts, so if you have any of the other sections they would be especially welcomed!

Please feel free to share your memories, photographs, etc—as well as making any donations of memorabilia which may be of interest. You can email us at



31stpentland-scouts@gmail.com or find our Facebook group by searching for 31st Pentland (Juniper Green) 1924 – 2024 100 Years.

Top: Pentlands Scout Troop during the 1950s. Above: Pentland Scouts in Holland, 1957.

We hope to be able to keep offering Scouting for the next 100 years but it is the quality of our adult volunteer team which makes that possible. If you're interested in helping, do get in touch: 31stpentland-scouts@gmail.com



Back in 1984, the original Eastern Scottish (then-operator of bus services connecting Balerno and Currie with central Edinburgh via Lanark Road and Lanark Road West) introduced a significant route reorganisation. Long-established service 52 (between Balerno and St Andrew Square) was renumbered 64 and 65 – depending on which parts of Penicuik they went on to serve after heading south from central Edinburgh) while service 66 retained its terminus at the capital's bus station. Here is single-decker service 66A (A?), on its way back out west. It's heading up North St Andrew Street, now the preserve of the city's trams. Photo: James A Cockburn.

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George Armstrong
PAUL FISHER COCKBURN
C&B NEWS
Back in our July/August 2016 edition, C&B News commemorated the then-90th birthday (on 23 May 2016) of Currie resident George Armstrong. Sadly, we've been informed that it's now time to bring his story to a close.
Following surgery a few years ago, the mobility of the former grocer's apprentice, soldier, beat policeman, law lecturer and Currie District Councillor had

BY GEORGE! HE'S 90!
One of Currie's well-known older residents has reached the ripe old age of 90 years. George Armstrong of Lanark Road West reached his milestone recently. Born on May 23, 1926, in Edinburgh, he was educated at North Merchiston Primary School and Darroch Junior Secondary Schools, leaving at the age of 14 to become an apprentice greener.
Two years later, he achieved his City Police as a Cadet. In 1943, he volunteered for flying duties with the Fleet Air Arm and, after basic training at Lee-on-Solent, he was sent to St Louis, Missouri, where he was trained to fly by the US Navy. The following year, however, his training was interrupted owing to a broken leg sustained while playing Park Golf Club, and, until recently, the Pentland Bridge Club.
From 1972 to 1975, George served as a Currie District Councillor. In addition, he was a regular contributor to this publication with his many 'Cup Shop Tales' regarding his time in the Police Force.
Unfortunately, just as George retired, his wife, who had been battling cancer, passed away. She was, however, a very kind and caring person. George was never short of visitors, including friends from the area, neighbours, and members of the many local organisations he had previously supported—such as Currie Kirk Congregational Board, Ratho Park Golf Club, and the Pentland Bridge Club.
Sadly, after being admitted

to hospital on Hogmanay just past, George died unexpectedly on 3 January 2024, aged 97. His funeral was held on 17 January. A resident in Currie for more than 60 years, George led a full life, and always had an entertaining tale or memory to recall his varied past!
He'll be greatly missed but never forgotten.

Cooking the Books

Ah, February. The bleakest of months. Winter is dragging on, the air bites your face, and Spring seems but a distant dream. Then, to add insult to icy injury, everything in the shops goes pink and red. That's right: it's Valentine's Day. A day devoted to love and saccharine sentimentality. It is a day that some adore, others fear, and quite a few roll their eyes at.

One of the mainstays of Valentine's Day, beyond the card with a terrible poem, choccies and red roses, is the Romantic Dinner. A lot of people go out. Some might light candles at home, stick on a bit of Kenny G and serve up a meal to woo the person they cherish above all others. And where might you go to search for ideas for such a meal?

One place you might look is in a book devoted to love and food by a woman who spent her life writing about romance. Look to *The Romance of Food* by none other than the mistress of the romantic novel, Dame Barbara Cartland. I was gifted this book and, I must say, I rather love it. Not because the recipes are amazing, but because it is a tome of wonder. In it, Barbara has her personal chef write out the recipes for her favourite food, and under each of them, she writes a personal note, telling you about how this relates to love, or why she likes it so much. A lot of these notes have spurious claims such as: "Tomatoes are predominantly alkaline" – they aren't actually, they're quite acidic – "a very important food for women who wish to produce sons". There is also: "paprika is a sex stimulus", and that eating game is a good way for helping women "attract men when one is no longer young".

The recipes are, for the most part... bizarre. With names such as "Andalusian Turkey", "Trout In A Pink Coat", and "Chicken With Orange Surprise". The latter recipe calling for chicken cooked with oranges but also



garnished with six lightly bleached chicken wishbones. Therein being the wonderful implication that you must have cooked and stripped six other chickens before even thinking of making it!

All of the photographs of her food are adorned with statuettes and flowers. This book is a thing of wonder and really has to be seen to be believed.

But is it any good as a cookbook? Well, of course I had to give one of the recipes a go. I opted for "Pink Chicken" (I have pictured the original and my own version with my own household ornaments). According to Babs she eats this "very often at luncheon" and makes all the other dishes pink too, including with a glass of pink champagne. It's actually very simple to make. Roast (or boil) a chicken, slice it, make the sauce from cream, mustard, stock, Worcester sauce and tomato purée, pour the sauce over and garnish with small slices of okra. That's it.

I made it and I can tell you this didn't exactly light the flames of romance chez Lyons. In fact, it tastes like a very chickeny Marie-Rose Sauce and was more than a little off-putting. I'm not sure I would recommend the book for its culinary delights, but there is plenty to enjoy, and much to be amused by. So maybe don't make the recipes (unless you really want). Instead, curl up by a fire and read this book to your loved one. May the spirit of Barbara fill your lives with laughter and love. Just not dinner.



with Balerno Resident STEF LYONS



Currie Balerno Rotary were asked in 2022 if they could donate Christmas presents to the children of families supported by the Holy Trinity Foodbank in Wester Hailes, and our members did so.

This Christmas we went one better and asked friends to join us; members and friends were able

to offer presents to more than 80 children—as can be seen above.

Rotary continues to offer financial support to the Holy Trinity Foodbank, and members help every week in the setting up of the foodbank. Providing these Christmas presents, however, proved to be particularly satisfying.

A Fresh Start for 2024

MARK COULL, PS5040
SOUTH WEST COMMUNITY POLICING TEAM,
E DIVISION, POLICE SCOTLAND

Happy New Year! Welcome to PC Charles Scott, who has joined our Community Policing Team and will work with PCs May and Breen covering Ratho, Balerno, Currie, Baberton Mains, Clovenstone, Wester Hailes and the Calder.

We have been busy over the festive period patrolling on foot in the area with particular emphasis on youth antisocial behaviour and housebreakings. I am pleased to say that youth calls are down; however, housebreakings are not. Unfortunately Currie and Balerno have seen an increase in housebreakings where keys for high performance cars are targeted. The QR code (below) will take you to the crime prevention page on the Police Scotland website for advice.

CCTV and video door bells are recommended as are anti-lock snapping locks for your doors. Steering wheel locks for your

car, installing a tracker and theft resistant number plates using one way clutch head screws can also help. Please ensure your home looks occupied when it is dark, especially if you are not there.

We are arranging a day at the reservoirs soon with the Pentland Rangers to talk about ice and water safety during winter. Please keep an eye on our Twitter/X page @PSOSSWEdinburgh for details.

We came a creditable third place in December's Balerno Gala Christmas Tree competition, so room for improvement in 2024!

Your local officers are looking to re-start "Coffee with a Cop" where they will be available for a coffee and chat in the area. Again, we will update our Twitter page and *C&B News*, once details are confirmed.



Rotary Says 'Thank You' Once Again

Currie Balerno Rotary received more than £6,000 in donations during the Christmas period. We are grateful to those who supported us. Every penny will go to charities or good causes, most notably to local food banks and to the Pentland Community Chest, which provides grants to projects of value to our local communities.

We started December with the lighting up of our Tree of Life in the grounds of Balerno Parish Church. People are invited to sponsor lights on the Tree of Life in memory of loved ones or to mark special occasions. Donations accompanying these sponsorships totalled £1,150.

Then came our stall at the Balerno Christmas market, where we sold wooden Christmas trees and snowmen hand-made by Rotarians Colin Aspinall and Don MacLeod. This brought in a further £1,400.

And finally we offered our traditional gift-wrapping service at the Gyle Shopping Centre—pictured here

on a busy Christmas Eve. We invited people to make donations to the charities we support and they did so to the sum of £3,250.

In addition to all of this, a further £800 was donated to our Lend with Care account, from which we make loans to budding entrepreneurs in developing countries. These loans are repaid, making further loans possible.

Once again, we want to thank all those people who gave so generously and we offer our best wishes to all *C&B News* readers for a good 2024.

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



Craft Corner:

Tips for upcycling, art and craft projects by Balerno's Lucie Novoveska

Cushion Covers

If you have had the same sofa or chair for a while and are tired of the same old look, one way to spruce up a room is with new cushions. Colourful or monotone, modern or traditional, big or small, all cushions have something in common—they are easier and cheaper to replace than your sofa. Why not just create a cushion? Or better yet, a cushion cover which will hide your existing tired cushion without the need for stuffing.

What you need: fabric, a sewing machine or needle and thread, and (optional) a zip. You can buy fabric by the metre or a bundle of pre-cuts, but my preferred way is to "upcycle" fabric. Left over fabric from previous projects or old clothes – shirts, dresses, and jackets – are ideal.

You can mix and match fabric pieces, as long as colours and patterns complement the sofa and the room. The sewing machine will expedite the process of making the covers, but sewing the fabric together can be done by hand. Your cushion cover will most likely be square or rectangular shape, so all you need to do is sew in a straight line—my favourite!

Finally, the big question: to zip or not to zip? While a zip presents another level of assembly



difficulty – sewing in an "invisible" zip can be a fiddly task – it does allow you to take the cover off and clean it if necessary.

The cherry on the cake is to make the cushions different colours or patterns on each side. That way you can flip the cushion depending on your mood and get "two cushions for the price of one"! Pictured above are two double-sided cushions made of various Harris Tweed pieces that match our curtains and are (so far) popular with both visitors and occupants.

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Winter Walks

GAIL COUSINS BALERNO RAMBLERS

Balerno Ramblers have been active: walking in drizzle, low cloud, rain, and winter sunshine through puddles, mud, and a wee bit of ice.

The social aspects of our group walks are very important to all our members—having fun, but keeping safe and being

considerate of others. That includes wearing appropriate footwear, using walking poles for balance, and not attending a walk if feeling unwell.

With recent forecast for colder weather, some Ramblers are looking forward to seeing some snow, but remember that walkers must take extra care and be dressed for winter conditions.

In addition to the usual gear

in our 35-litre day sack, we advise taking sunglasses or snow goggles, a spare woolly hat, spare gloves, spare socks (which can be worn as mittens in case we lose a glove) for if our socks get wet, a power-pack charger for our mobile phone, a head torch and spare batteries, a bivy bag, emergency rations, a hot drink, and an extra fleece jumper to keep us warm.

Yes, it's a lot to carry but it is better to be safe than sorry—and better to be warm than cold!

Our groups will carry a group First Aid kit and an emergency shelter in case of poor weather or an incident that requires first aid and/or evacuation by Mountain Rescue. On icy paths Yaktrax Pro seems to be the favoured addition to walking boots for extra grip.

Upcoming Walks

The programme for February and March is still being collated from walks offered by our walk leaders. Our thanks to all our volunteers.

Walks so far include:

- **An Urban Loop:** Craiglockhart Pond, Easter Craiglockhart Hill, Hermitage of Braid, Buckstone Snab, Mortonhall Golf Course/Walled Garden, Liberton Tower, Blackford Community Wood, Blackford Hill, Midmar, and back to Craiglockhart. 10 miles (16 km).
- **Linlithgow, Muiravonside, and Avon Aqueduct:** starting at Linlithgow Canal Centre, the walk follows part of the River Avon heritage trail and part of The John Muir Way, exploring the Avon Aqueduct and Muiravonside country park before returning to the start in Linlithgow via the loch and Linlithgow Palace. An easy 8 miles (12.9 km).
- **City to Beach:** Abbeyhill bus stop past the Hibs ground to Lochend Park. From there, to Seafield and Portobello via the Restalrig Railway Path. Lunch "on the Prom" before heading to Figgate Park and, following the Figgate Burn to Willowbrae Road—to catch a Service 44 bus back to Pentland View

Carpark, Currie or Balerno. 6.5 miles (10.5 km).

The weekend group are offering a Fife walk in February, postponed from December. This circular walk is from Kingseat, over the causeway of beautiful Loch Kitty, up East and West Ninians. (St Ninians, originally a deep coal mine, was a vast opencast mine until its closure in 2013. The site is now interesting for walkers, with the bings or landscape mounds ascended by either steep or longer spiralling paths. On the summits are unique art forms, as well as a "machinery avenue").

The midweek group has a walk from Currie Library, following the Water of Leith walkway to Saughton Park, via the Water of Leith Visitor Centre, catching a Service 44 bus back.

There are also: a circular walk eastwards from Blackness; and a 7 mile (11.3 km) circular walk from Currie Library to Wester Kinleith along the Water of Leith to Torphin, Warklaw Hill, Clubbidean reservoir, Wester Kinleith Farm and back to Currie.

Finally, a 6.5 mile (10.5 km) walk from Almondell Country Park, along the feeder canal to the aqueduct and along the Union Canal. Hopefully there will be snowdrops.

The midweek group is also planning a guided Edinburgh historical-themed walk at the beginning of March. More details to follow.

• 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.

• To sign up for our mailing list email: balernoramblers+subscribe@googlegroups.com

Above: At Aberlady Bay. Photo: Roger Jonathan. Below: A winter walk along the Water of Leith Walkway. Photo: Jacqui Thomson

March Introductory Walk

Saturday, 2 March

Circular walk of approximately 4.5 miles (7.2 km), suitable for all ages. (Details below.)
Start time: 9.30am, from Pentland View car park.
(Estimated finish time: 12.30pm.)

What to wear: Sturdy walking shoes or walking boots, and suitable clothing for wet weather.

What to bring:
• Walking poles, if you have them, in case of wet and muddy ground.

- Drink and snack for break.
 - A mat or poly bag to sit on as ground will no doubt be wet.
 - Money for bus if required.
- The route: The local walk will be easy going.

We regret to advise dogs are not permitted on our walks.

• Contact Jacqui on 07967152841 to receive walk leader's details. Please register with the leader to join the walk.



We speak exclusively with Police Scotland's new commander for South-West Edinburgh.



www.candbnews.com

Chief Inspector Paul Gillespie

How do you think your career so far has prepared you for your current role in south-west Edinburgh?

I've been a police officer for 18 years and I've worked across responsibilities of policing: front line policing, community policing and criminal investigation. I was a response sergeant, a community sergeant and also a detective sergeant and then, on promotion to inspector, I was a community inspector.

I worked over in Fife, in a community called Levenmouth which covers the area from the border of Kirkcaldy up to Lower Largo, and inland as well: it takes in a very diverse community in terms of affluence. There's a lot of deprivation, it's one of the top five areas of deprivation in Scotland. So it's quite similar to south-west Edinburgh as, working from the Pentlands into the city, you've got areas of affluence and wealth and then you've got quite a lot of deprivation and challenges.

As a community inspector and deputy chief inspector, I've dealt with a number of the issues that we're facing here: antisocial behaviour, alcohol and drugs misuse, and mental health. I've dealt with them in Fife, we've got a lot of good ideas coming in to Edinburgh.

What I would say is that in Edinburgh, there are a lot of good partnerships across the police and other agencies—so, local authority, third sector, whatnot. In my mind, I've a great deal of experience in dealing with different issues, community issues. I've also a lot of experience of dealing with MSPs, councillors, elected members, and community councils. I'm looking forward to working with everyone to continue the good work of the police in the area, and to build upon that and improve on it.

What do you think are the main issues affecting the upper Water of Leith valley communities?

In relation to Balerno, Currie, Juniper Green, Baberton Mains, and Colinton, antisocial behaviour is definitely one that has come over my desk. But what I would say is this: we've got a great deal of young people living in these areas who are thriving, who are good young people, who are working well in the community, doing good things for the community, and the issues are being caused by a minority of people.

We have to be quite realistic about what we're facing; but equally understand that antisocial behaviour can have a huge impact on people, be it noise, be it damage, be it violence—whatever it might be. We did see a rise in that over the course of the bonfire weekend across the city, but we did see issues up in Currie around – not

within – the organised event, which we dealt with at the time and continue to deal with.

Antisocial behaviour for me is the main issue and it's one that we're looking to work closely with the community and we already and with the councillors and MSPs with that.

Road safety is also something that's really important, making sure people who are pedestrians or wheeling around the community are safe. We do that through safety messages, but we're also doing punitive enforcement: we had a road safety campaign over the winter where we were out targeting road users who were either under the influence of alcohol or drugs, or committing other road offences around speeding, and whatnot.

We've got a good relationship with Roads Policing department but, equally, our community policing team – who are based up at Oxbgangs – are proactively carrying out road safety patrols and road safety messaging—they're in and out of schools doing a lot of good preventative work.

We're also aware of the key issues around parking. We're working with the [City of Edinburgh] Council to make sure that the new legislation is understood. We don't wish to be seen to be too harsh on people

if there is good reason for parking on pavements, but equally it's the reminder that it's important for our pedestrians and cyclists that they do have footpaths and cycle paths clear for them to use. So road safety is really important to me and I feel for the communities that we're discussing, it's really important for them as well.

House break-ins and thefts of vehicles are a national issue, but we are seeing – across Scotland – an increase in these 'crimes of dishonesty', so my message would be one of home safety, home security—to ensure that people are being diligent, that they're locking their doors, they've got security lights, they've got CCTV, they've got alarms, whatever it might be. We're willing to help with that: we've got community safety officers who can be out speaking with people, offering advice, and we are putting a lot of messaging out through Twitter/X, our Facebook accounts and through our community police officers.

We're doing reassurance patrols, so you will see high visibility patrols out in the area. We're also doing plain clothes patrols in order to catch those responsible. Again, we've got good support from our road policing department who are out doing those patrols as well, and criminal investigation departments (CID). Our investigative side is very, very sound in Edinburgh, and it's incredible how much resource goes into it in order to make sure we get the people responsible and they're held to account, and we recover property back for people.

For some local people the forthcoming sale of Balerno Police Station, even though it's been closed to the public since 2015, is a sign of a reduced police presence in the community. Is one of your challenges going forward simply the public's perception of policing in the city?

Absolutely. Community reassurance is one of the things that I hold very close to my heart, because I live in a community. I expect to see the police. If something happens, I expect the police to get there quickly. So while I'm a police officer, I'm also a member of the public. I understand – through my family, through my friends – what the public expect.

Having been to local community councils, having spoken with councillors, and MSPs, I understand what their constituents are telling them, the thoughts and feelings around Balerno Police Station closing. None of us particularly want to see police stations closing but, in terms of where we sit as an organisation, there has to be progression forward and I would like to highlight the fact that police officers are in a position where they can be more mobile now because we do have technology on our side. Each officer has a mobile device where they can carry out 'paperwork', administrative tasks, while they're out and about; they can conduct inquiries while they're out and about, they don't need to be in a police station as much, other than refreshments or having to speak with a supervisor.

It's not directly linked to the closure of Balerno Police Station but, because of the feedback we've received from the community looking for that further reassurance, we've appointed a further community beat officer. There are now three community officers covering the C&B News area, which I think is hugely important because we also have the Pentland Hills to service. They come with their own challenges, particularly in the summer time when there is youth disorder, anti social behaviour and also water safety messages to deliver. We've a good partnership with the Park Rangers in the Pentlands, and it's important that we're engrained in that—it does have an impact on Balerno and Currie and other areas as well.

We also have a police liaison officer who covers Currie and Balerno High Schools, so we do have a good concentrated community resource in the areas. I understand that bricks and mortar are important for people; it's important to have that

visibility in terms of the police sign being there, but in recent years it's been only administrative staff who have been utilising the building—it's not been a working police station for a long time. From my observations and from the feedback that I've had, service delivery has remained as good as we would expect, and it's up to me as the local area commander to ensure that this continues, and also improves through our community team.

We've got a community inspector, who works from the Wester Hailes and Oxbgangs stations, overseeing the community team and the community policing response and partnership work. We've got two community sergeants, we've got 10 community officers – three of which are for the

“While I'm a police officer, I'm also a member of the public. I understand – through my family, through my friends – what the public expect.”

Do you have a message for C&B News readers?

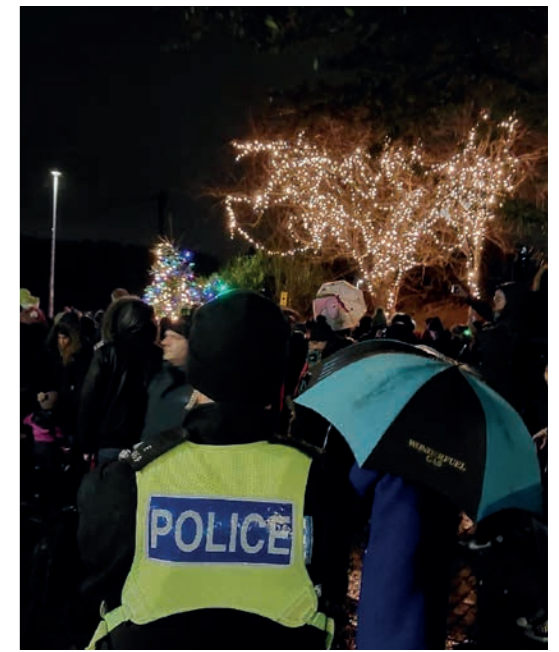
Absolutely; coming into Edinburgh, I'm extremely proud to be the local commander for the south-west of Edinburgh. I've given myself a bit of time to familiarise myself with the area, and to familiarise myself with my staff who are now delivering an outstanding service each day. I've got a team of committed and professional officers at every rank from police staff who work in the police station and deliver a service at the front counter and over the phone, to the response teams, to the community policing teams, to the investigative teams.

I'd encourage everybody in the communities to contribute positively and constructively to the policing response and offer constructive feedback. We don't always get it right, we could always get better, and it's important that I'm able to reflect on how things have went and offer feedback, training and development relevant to my staff.

Again, I would just encourage that people do phone the police if they've been the victim of a crime, or if they see something they think the police should know. I would encourage people to tell us if there are issues; if we know what they are, we can then react to them in the correct way.

For example, just now we're planning for the spring and summer [time] where we're aware antisocial behaviour will start to rise as more young people are out in the area. We're looking at patrols, we're looking at how we carry out prevention work with the young people at school, and through the clubs and whatnot. We also having an interventions—so those who have been involved in antisocial behaviour during the last 12 months, we're looking to work with them, to ensure that they understand their impact of their crimes on the victims and community, and looking to work with them around what's going to stop them from committing these offences again. That will – based on my previous experience, and having worked on some other projects in a similar area – have a positive impact on the community.

Again, I would just encourage that people do phone the police if they've been the victim of a crime, or if they see something they think the police should know. I would encourage people to tell us if there are issues; if we know what they are, we can then react to them in the correct way.



Above: Local Police participate in the switching on of Balerno's Christmas Lights.



POLICE SCOTLAND
Keeping people safe



Remembering Marion Milne

**RICHARD HENDERSON
BALERNO BLETHER**

Marion Milne was amongst the most warm-hearted and generous people one could ever hope to have met. Her death is a tragedy not simply for her family but for our entire community, both within the church and more widely.

She was essentially a very modest lady who would never wish to push herself to the front of any queue. As one of Balerno Parish Church's three recently installed Joint Session Clerks, she had quite simply responded to a call to serve in what is always a difficult and pressured appointment; and she was already making a difference after less than a month in post. Her death, suddenly and without warning, shocked and saddened the entire community.

Marion had been an Elder of Balerno Parish Church for many years, and she was a mainstay of many aspects of both church and

community life. Her work for many years has had a youth orientation both in the "day job" and also in the community. For some years the latter had included looking after the increasingly important and highly-regulated area of safeguarding the interests both of children and of vulnerable adults.

This area of responsibility calls not only for maintenance of detailed records; it calls also for the pastoral skills looking after people who may be the subject of concerns. The Safeguarding Officer is a key link in one of the most sensitive areas in which church members are called to serve; Marion was a perfect fit for that role; efficient, discreet, sympathetic and empathetic.

For many years Marion had run the Girls Brigade company in Balerno; youth work is rewarding but involves a huge commitment of time and energy which Marion gave willingly, as she did also as a member of the Parent Council of Balerno High School.

Parent Council work led to membership, on their behalf, of the Balerno Community Council,

where she was widely loved. That work for BCC went far beyond the dry debates about potholes and planning, and even into the more relaxed areas of decorating BCC's tree at Balerno's annual Christmas Tree Festival. In her day job at Nether Currie Primary School, where for many years she was Administrator, Marion was involved significantly in the successful running of the school, ensuring that it was a happy and efficiently managed place.

Add to all of this her work with the Pentlands Gymnastics Club and one is left with the impression of someone who was always willing to help wherever she was and with whatever was asked of her, discharging posts of great responsibility which are all vital to the functioning of our modern society, and she did that with good humour, tremendous energy and great commitment. She was a pleasure to know and to work with, and we all appreciate not only the tremendous benefit her presence brought to whatever she did but also the huge loss her premature passing means for us all.



BOOK OF REMEMBRANCE

On an online Remembrance Book set up by Nether Currie Primary School Parent Council and PTA, numerous people have left their thoughts about Marion Milne, who has been described as "just an amazing lady [...] always so cheery, kind and caring", "always a lovely friendly voice at the end of the phone", and "much more than the School Secretary/Receptionist, she was the heart of the school".

On behalf of staff, pupils and parents/carers at neighbouring Currie Primary School, acting head teacher Michelle McAndrew added: "Many of us knew Marion and called on her regularly for advice. If we had a question that needed answered, Marion had the answer! We all felt a huge sense of loss when we heard."

Deborah Findlay, Business Manager at St Mary's RC Primary School in Leith, also praised Marion's support of fellow school professionals: "She was always on hand for me with a helpful answer or suggestion when I first became a school administrator".

Road safety officer Mark Symonds described her as "the most positive and organised person I've had the pleasure to work with. She was great at ensuring Nether Currie got what it needed from us."

Nether Currie Primary was one of the first local schools to join Currie-based charity Community for Food, with Marion becoming a key contact and supporter. "She always sought for equity and went above and beyond to ensure those less fortunate were well looked after," CFF wrote. "The vast amount of donations she coordinated was astonishing, she always included us in any donation drive, whether it was ensuring Easter eggs were collected for all our families or delivering donations from the school or the Balerno Parish Church. She was always happy to help, always with a smile, and she will be deeply missed by our team of volunteers."

And as I have said countless times over the last few weeks, she was everything to everyone but not least Mum to Sarah and wife to Geoff.

Marion lived a life of service, much like the late Queen Elizabeth... a comparison I think she would love! She dedicated herself to so many different groups and organisations but gave fully of her time and energy in equal measures to each one. She found ways to bring people from the different parts of her life together, creating new links and strong bonds. Pentland Gymnastics and Nether Currie are now in partnership together because of Marion. She truly understood the meaning of community.

Marion's commitment to service came from her strong Christian faith and her desire to always do the right thing. Her love for people made her the kindest person I know and in fact, when I asked the children at school for words to describe Mrs Milne, kind was the word that came above everything else.

Her ability to notice and remember showed just how much she cared about people. From a simple conversation, she would squirrel away what had been said and then bring it back at just the right time in order to build you up or make you smile. I think of a time when I returned from a weekend break and told her that I was going to start a new tradition of bringing back a Christmas tree bauble from every place I visit from now on, and in the Christmas bag which Sarah passed on to me after

her Mum died, there was a new bauble for my tree with my name on it. A simple thing which highlights how much she could make you feel that you really mattered to her.

But it was all the hidden things that Marion did which had the biggest impact on people. She knew those who needed help, whether it was practical help with shopping, support with filling out forms online, ordering extra school lunches for those families who might sometimes forget or finding funded places for children in clubs whose families might not be able to afford the fees. All of these things were done quietly and with total discretion. But I also knew that she was providing emotional support and love for many of our families and children, both past and present. This is where she made the biggest difference in life and where we will feel her loss so keenly.

We can't replace what Marion was to Nether Currie and all the other organisations she was part of, but we can try to live our lives the way she did, with love, kindness, loyalty and service at the heart of everything.

And finally, with Marion now at the right hand of her Lord, I suspect that she will be organising His files into Tesco, Waitrose, Asda and M&S shopping bags... just in case.

We all love you, Marion. Rest easy in that knowledge.

**PAUL FISHER COCKBURN
C&B NEWS**

Unlike most of the people who filled Balerno Parish Church for a celebration of her life on Monday 22 January, I can't say I knew Marion Milne at all well.

She was a semi-regular contributor to *C&B News* of articles about Nether Currie Primary School. She was someone I met and chatted with at most meetings of Balerno Community Council. Shockingly, it was only a month before her death that I even connected the two as being the same person!

My strongest memory of Marion remains meeting her for the first time. It was at the March 2020 BCC meeting, the last "before Covid" and a week before I was (successfully) interviewed for the editor's role at *C&B News*. On hearing this, she immediately checked I had the most recent issue and then passed on her newly acquired copy of *Konect Balerno*—so I could get an idea of the "competition", she suggested.

I doubt she thought of that action again, but I still recall it nearly four years later; a simple example of her modest, helpful approach to people—especially those she had only just met. Clearly, we have lost someone really special.

The sudden and unexpected death of Marion Milne, on Saturday 16 December 2023, was a genuine shock to many people in Balerno and the wider communities of the upper Water of Leith valley. She touched so many people's lives, it feels only right to share as many tributes to her as we can...

**KIRSTEN H JOHNSTON
HEAD TEACHER, NETHER CURRIE PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Imagine a typical weekday. It is 6:30am and the phone beside my bed buzzes.

It's Marion: "Morning Mrs J, I've just had a shower thought, we'll need to make assembly a bit earlier today because P1 need the hall at 2:00pm."

Me: "Morning lovely. Funny, I was thinking exactly that. I've emailed the staff to let them know. Thanks, see you in a bit."

Buzz, buzz. Marion: "Did you remember that we have visitors coming at break time?"

Me: "Oh no! I totally forgot. I'll stop at Tesco on my way in and get some biscuits."

Marion: "Don't worry, I did it last night on my way home."

Me: "You are amazing. What would I do without you?"

Never for a second, did I think that we would have to find an answer to that question so soon and so suddenly.

You see, Marion, in our eyes, was the cornerstone of Nether Currie Primary School. She was the light that filled the corridors, the love that everyone needed, whether they knew it or not, and she was a fountain of knowledge of just about everything. She was, in all but name, the true Head of the school.

LETTERS etc!

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



Illustration: Marjorie Beaumont

MILLBANK MUTTERINGS



by TAURUS CERAMICUS BARBATUS
199: ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

Artificial Intelligence probably developed from complicated calculations associated with scientific and military objectives. But now AI covers answering phones, translating—and potentially replacing common sense, intuition and instinct with machines.

It is only as good as its designers but if programmed to avoid answering awkward questions, or providing that irritating list of irrelevant FAQs, you are muzzled. Flawed humans change their minds but machines need reprogramming. Unfortunately, as we regard machines as infallible, AI needs controlling. Remember, many appalling prosecutions of Post Office staff arose (and still arise) from reliance on the defective “Horizon” software.

Just because you can do something is not a good enough reason to do so. AI should be sufficiently adjustable to balance economic life with the social needs of human and animal populations, and nature.

Until computers can program computers with built-in human empathy, AI needs disinterested people to eradicate misleading, inadequate or wrong information. Could our plastic card accounts be auto-debited to a person or organisation? We must ensure AI remains a tool, and doesn’t dominate us. When we become slaves to our technological gods, what’s “our” future?

Keeping human tellers in supermarkets and ticket office staff at railway stations retains some humanity whereas their mechanised replacements allow big companies to dominate us.

What are our values? People need people. Remember the trouble caused by the Luddites? Humans are naturally inventive so AI will continue expanding.

But if AI could contrive it, I would like self-repairing teeth.

Oops!

This issue we’re not so much highlighting a previous error, as explaining something we do. As some readers may have noticed, we now include – within the “Briefly” columns on our news pages – details of local planning applications and subsequent decisions by the City of Edinburgh Council. We hope that at least some of our readers might find this information of interest—even of some use.

However, it has been pointed out that we don’t include ALL the relevant listings. Why? Partly, it’s simply down to space—or rather a lack of it available in each issue (despite most issues now being 48 pages). Mostly, though, it’s because The City of Edinburgh Council releases their planning lists on a weekly schedule while C&B News comes out monthly. One consequence of this disparity is that there seems little point in us including details of applications for which the deadlines for public comments have already passed.

Another factor: CEC lists all planning applications and subsequent decisions by Council Wards, but C&B News doesn’t cover (as a rule) the likes of Firhill or Ratho. So, to keep things simple, we follow the geographical boundaries of our relevant local community councils, thus reporting on planning issues of concern to the CCs for Balerno, Currie, Colinton, and Juniper Green & Baberton Mains.

Pavement Parking

May I bring to your readers’ attention some difficulties that arose in planning for the introduction of the pavement parking ban?

When the legislation was passed in 2019 we considered how we might be affected. Our street is fairly narrow and we were accustomed to having one car on the driveway and the other half-on/half-off the pavement. We thought that by widening our existing driveway then both cars could be clear of the pavement.

We got quotes and chose a company that had the added advantage that it was “approved” by The City of Edinburgh Council to carry of the task of lowering the kerb. We were happy to pay the additional £1,440 to have the kerb dropped to match the widened driveway. There had been an initial indication that there would not be a problem with dropping the kerb, so when the driveway neared completion the company applied for the permit, but it was refused.

I was able to have a telephone conversation with the official and was told that the refusal was because: “There is a rule and if we were to give permission then others would demand it.”

I wrote to all four local councillors explaining the situation and stating that I understood the need for a rule in central Edinburgh, where there are many streets with walls and railings which have been given protected status, but I could not see the logic of applying the rule in suburbia where very different conditions occur. One councillor took up the matter and eventually responded that there was a rule and nothing could be done about it.

It would seem that trying to do the right thing does not necessarily work when faced with blanket rules which do not treat each case on its merits.

I would be very interested in finding out if other readers have had similar problems, or could suggest how this matter could be resolved.

Ian Yule
Balerno

Remembrance

With reference to the letter in [the December/January] edition regarding the noise of shooting during the two minutes silence on Remembrance Day.

While I can sympathise with the anonymous contributor in relation the disturbance caused, I must point out that they are incorrect to say that the event remembers all those who lost their lives in conflicts around the world. It only remembers British and their allies’ lives who were killed.

Shamefully, it certainly does not remember those killed by the British, whether that be in fights for independence in African countries or, nearer home, Ireland or indeed those killed in Britain’s name in more recent conflicts in the Middle East.

Brian Kelly
Currie

Plea to Riders

Continuing on from Ms MacLennan’s letter on the subject of horse manure on the Water of Leith Walkway, I would like to also comment on my increasing despair experienced as a resident of Blinkbonny.

Frustrated with this horse toilet corridor, I found myself counting the pats one particular day: 13 in all, at varying stages of decay, many of which were now adorning the parked cars having been splattered by the numerous passing vehicles

Please horse riders, if every horse trotting up and down our road once or twice a day, cumulatively leaves behind their waste, a practically permanent carpet of horse excrement is created for children, elderly and ordinary locals to avoid. The idea of a “catch all bag” sounds a wonderful considerate solution.

Name withheld

INVISIBLE DISABILITIES



5: PARKING—AND CULTURE

WORDS BY M
ILLUSTRATION BY KMCL

We were about to turn across the traffic into the last disabled parking bay when a car shot in front of us into the spot.

A smart, nimble 20-something jumped out and was about to nip off when my wife challenged the driver. “Where’s your Blue Badge?”

She jumped back in and drove off without making eye contact.

I don’t mind how far away from our destination we park—but my carer, who has to push me, does.

The award-winning columnist Melanie Reid, who broke her neck and back in a riding accident back in 2010, has been discussing the habitual misuse and disregard for Blue Badge regulations in her regular “Spinal Column” for *The Sunday Times Magazine*. She cited folk using relatives’ badges to get free parking in Edinburgh. (Sadly, the two disabled spaces by Currie Surgery are often occupied by trades folk enjoying their Greggs breakfast.)

The point is that the badge opens up opportunities and access that would otherwise keep us locked indoors and is a life saver. Do we have to do our own enforcement too?

CULTURE

As the Panto costumes are packed away for another year, a word about culture—and an accolade.

I’ve always thought of “culture” as the stuff that makes life worth living. For me, that’s a concert or a trip to the theatre. Some museums need to recognise that labels to displays in cabinets just above your eyeline in a wheelchair are impossible to read.

What really makes any visit something special is the incredibly kind and helpful staff at the major venues—and I would single out the Usher Hall for particular mention. They have a genuine concern and care for their less mobile and able visitors. Well done.

‘Water of Wreath’

This Christmas, we were keen to make a home-made wreath out of natural materials and, sure enough, Balerno Farmers’ Market came to our rescue. A wee donation secured a grapevine ring from The Friends of the Pentlands, who happened to be practicing wreath making at the market.

In addition, the helpful folk at the C&B News Christmas tree stand gave us evergreen branches. We were on a roll.

With clippers in hand and a foraging spirit, we walked home by the beautiful Water of Leith collecting small clippings of trees, bushes and cones. At home, we added dried fruit and veggies – and yes, that is a garlic and chilli pepper for a splash of colour! – to assemble our weird and wonderful “Water of Wreath”.

We feel lucky to live in a



beautiful place with a thriving community spirit. Long may it continue!

Dr Lucie Novoveska
Balerno

Colinton Community Council, as this signage shows (tied to the fence surrounding a small electricity substation in the heart of Colinton Village), continues to promote itself to local residents. We just hope no one mistakenly assumes that the ominous “Danger of Death – Keep Out” symbol refers to the council’s monthly meetings!



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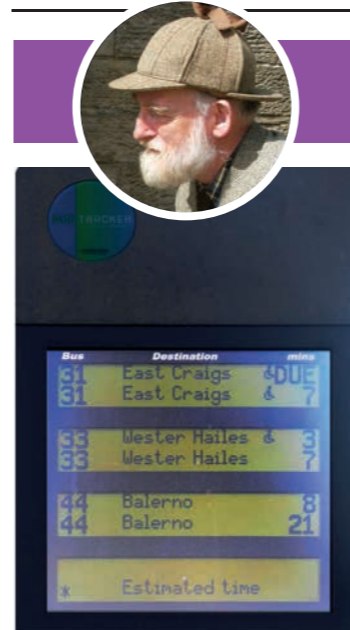
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PLANNING BY ARCHIE CLARK

Caledonian Brewery, Slateford

One of the more interesting parts of the Service 44 bus trip into town is the former Caledonian Brewery in Slateford. Sandwiched between the railway line and Slateford Road, its triangular site abuts the west end of North Merchiston Cemetery. Proposal 23/07312/PAN has been submitted for a partial demolition and residential redevelopment for 170 houses (35% affordable). The site is Category B listed. Founded in 1869 by George Lorimer and Robert Clark, it was the last major city brewery prior to its closure in 2022. During that time it was owned by Scottish & Newcastle and latterly

by Heineken. The buildings include the brewhouse and maltings (1892) and later constructions. In earlier years it was serviced from the adjacent Caledonian Railway. The application has been submitted by Artisan Edinburgh Shandon Ltd. who say that one fifth of the homes will be in the existing listed buildings, and that they would recreate the top-floor skyline of the maltings buildings which were demolished following a fire in the late 1990s. It is not known whether the 130'0" high red brick chimney would be given a second life. The proposals will be on view at St Michael's Parish

Church, 1 Slateford Road, on 7th February between 4.30pm and 8.30pm and on 27th March between 3.30pm and 7.30pm. A dedicated project website will be available - www.streets-uk.com/slateford. A leaflet drop advertising the events will notify around 2,200 properties. The amount of student housing proposed in the area raises the question as to whether there is a need for more. Perhaps an alternative repurposing of the site would be to create more parkland or, as CEC has identified there is a shortage of graveyards, perhaps that alternative should be considered against our dwindling local provision?

Bus Trackers

Unsurprisingly, there have been no obvious developments in the bus tracker saga. Tourists gaze wistfully at the screens as the timetable scrolls up with no corresponding bus appearing. Half-an-hour later, when two buses arrive, they realise that what they thought was a bus tracker, is nothing more than a timetable providing the scheduled arrival, that they can see on the printed timetable in the shelters anyway. Then like the typical Edinburgh citizen who on hearing the one-o'clock gun checks his watch, they disregard the screen as another Edinburgh folly being played out - at our expense.

In the good old days when we had red and green buses (LRT and SMT), it was commonplace for the one to chase the other but, with the disappearance of SMT, one might have expected a single operator would be able to provide a more predictable service, notwithstanding all the holes, potholes and diversions scattered throughout Edinburgh. I suggest that if the 'trackers' are to have any credibility, they are either sorted promptly to reflect the actual bus arrival - or switched off. People familiar with the previous bus trackers expect the new screens to provide accurate information, not guesstimates.

A Cause for Concern

At 50-odd pages, the City of Edinburgh Council's weekly planning lists look daunting. With more than 7,500 applications logged during the past year, you would think that represented a healthy building industry. However that is not the case. Strip away the several hundreds of applications relating to Short Term Lets, and works to trees, and you would find there's little going on except relatively minor works. Remove the PANS (Proposal of Application Notices) for large scale ideas that have yet to be worked out, and the lists look pretty skinny. Tower cranes hovering above a few sites suggest there is real activity but looking at the time it is taking to complete buildings and the number of tradesmen working

on them, outward appearances are deceptive. What you can't see are the depleted stocks of materials at the suppliers, while others are in protracted transit from overseas manufacturers. Recently Stewart Milne, established in 1975, ceased trading. Their order book included housing for several local authorities. Their departure from the construction scene will have a widespread impact not just on their workforce, but plant hire companies, materials suppliers, consultants and those contemplating a career in this volatile industry. There must be concern that health and safety along with a myriad of trades will suffer, as economics whose durability is affected by reduced funds for maintenance. The loss of traditional trades may encourage a DIY industry but we need to train apprentices competent to look

after our built heritage. That extends to the professionals designing and supervising construction who form part of the collateral damage resulting from a builder going to the wall. In 2011, a report advised that Edinburgh's housing requirement included a 44% "affordable" new house build for the following ten years. That shortfall continues. It is clear that depending on developers to build to their standard designs will take decades to make a dent in that figure, and use up acres more land. How can this be allowed to continue? Is it time for government to fund a national building programme to provide higher density Council houses in existing all-purpose communities, at an economic rent thereby providing "affordable" housing and giving gainful employment in construction for years to come? Is government up to the task?

164 Woodhall Road

An application to build a house on the site of a barn in Colinton has been withdrawn. The location is a plateau west of the Cattery behind Woodhall Mains Farm and Woodhall Court, a two-storey stone building built in 1963. The proposal was for a two-storey L-plan, 4-bedroom box-shaped house of "contemporary" design embracing a square lawn.





PLANNING BY ARCHIE CLARK

City Plan 2030 Proposed plan

September 2021



City Plan 2030

The DPEA's target date of 21 November 2023 to complete their investigation of the 1,730-odd documents submitted has passed. Clearly they were well behind when they appointed a sixth reporter back in November last year. DPEA expects their report to be published in February.

Perhaps we need simplified Regional Structure Plans for major infrastructure matters, and relatively small Local Plans, covering areas with similar issues – for example the Colinton to Balerno Valley Community – to speed up assessment.

Time for another review of the way the planning system works? And while we're at it, can we have an Equal Right of Appeal?

Two New Houses for Middle Kinleith Farm?

Application 24/00127/FUL ("Demolition of existing shed and barn and construction of two new dwelling houses with associated roads, drainage and infrastructure at Middle Kinleith Farm, Harlaw Road, Currie") has been lodged by Baberton Mains-based Juniper Projects.

The proposed buildings are two-stories high, each with four-bedrooms and would replace the cattle shed and open-sided barn. The walls would be timber clad with large glass windows under a slated roof incorporating solar panels. Private south or west

facing gardens are included for both. Each house provides only one parking and three cycle spaces within integrated garages. The documents somewhat optimistically state: "It is noted that a public car park is located next to Lanark Road West, and it would be reasonable to drive from the site to the car park to switch into a bus for any journeys into town."

The site is on land previously occupied by agricultural

buildings, in the Green Belt. The last date for comments is 9 February 2024. CEC refused previous application 21/05193/FUL, a decision subsequently confirmed on appeal.

I suspect that CEC will question whether these buildings could really be associated with farm management and the car parking provision is unlikely to reflect reality—with several bedrooms and a guest room in each house, one parking space (as previously required by the Council) seems rather inadequate. The City will no doubt also make reference to NPF4 in coming to its decision.



Badgers at the Botanics

As one who has seen a badger eating fallen plums in their "secure" garden, I have some sympathy with the staff at the Royal Botanic Garden in Edinburgh.

It appears that of the 10,000 tulip bulbs recently gifted to the Botanics, more than 9,000 were dug up and consumed by discerning badgers. They are not the only species to enjoy what the Botanics have

to offer. Foxes and squirrels consider they have equal right of residence there.

RBGE say that the badgers come out at night to seek slugs and snails while their diet of worms results in holes appearing in their lawns.

The solution? Don't plant so many tulips—focus on plants they don't like.

Photo: Edwyn Anderton

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by Jane Robertson

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JOANNA CHERRY MP
EDINBURGH SOUTH WEST

WESTMINSTER BILLS

Shortly before Christmas I attended the memorial service of my predecessor Alistair Darling. His death is a great loss to politics as well as his family. He was a person of integrity, and we need more of them in public life. Where he disagreed, he always did so respectfully. In his tribute to Alastair, Alex Salmond said that despite being in opposite camps during the 2014 referendum campaign, they did not "ever exchange a cross word". This too was my experience, and I was honoured to be asked to attend his memorial service at St Mary's Episcopal Cathedral. May he rest in peace.

At Westminster I introduced a private member's bill to give the Scottish Parliament the power to divide the role of the Lord Advocate into two separate jobs: one as head of Scotland's prosecution service, the other as a minister of the Scottish Government and its Chief Legal Advisor. There is concern that the current dual role may give rise to a conflict of interest or the perception of conflict of interest. If the roles hadn't been hard wired into the Scotland Act, I believe natural reform would have happened long before now.

I voted against the Rwanda Bill and spoke in the debate. While the media and the commentariat have focused on the Tory psychodrama surrounding this bill, we are in danger of not marking the enormity of the attack on human rights, constitutionalism, and the rule of law. Human rights are meant to offer a fundamental level of protection for everyone. If those protections can simply be set aside when they cause problems for a policy goal, they lose the fundamental and universal quality that characterises them. This is particularly the case when they are disappled in respect of a group of people, in this case migrants who have come to the UK without prior permission.



GORDON MACDONALD MSP
EDINBURGH PENTLANDS

HELP WITH UTILITIES

I know that many of you will have continuing worries on everyday living costs. Those concerns are exacerbated with the announcement of an increase in energy bills by the regulator which kicked in on 1 January, the beginning of what could be the coldest three months of the year! So, this, coupled with the withdrawal of the Energy Bills Support Scheme last year, has left many struggling with their energy bills.

However, there is support available provided by the British Gas Energy Trust. It is an independent organisation, separate to, but wholly funded by British/Scottish Gas and was set up to alleviate the detrimental effects of poverty, in particular fuel poverty. The Trust directly supports people in or close to fuel poverty via three programmes: debt relief grants, which can help households with up to £2,000 in fuel debt; a small grants programme, that provides grants for emergency energy vouchers and payments; and money and energy advice support in community-based charities.

I met with representatives of the Trust, including Scottish Gas and Centrica, in the Scottish Parliament last month where they outlined their work—including what they can offer people who are finding heating their home financially difficult through the Individual and Families Fund. You can be a Scottish Gas Customer, or a customer from another supplier with arrears of up to £2,000; however, you should check with your own supplier if they offer energy debt help.

The following suppliers Eon, Eon Next, EDF, Scottish Power, OVO, Boost, SSE and Octopus all have their own funds to support their customers only, so if you are a customer of one of these companies, apply to them directly. More information on the Trust can be found at www.britishgasenergytrust.org.uk. In addition for emergency gas support call 0800 111 999 and for emergency electricity call 105



SUE WEBBER MSP
LOTHIAN REGION

NHS Lothian

Looking ahead to this year I am certainly hopeful that real progress will be made with some of the issues that continue to be raised with me: access to early years nursery places that work for the families; care at home being available to free up much needed hospital beds; and ending the extreme long waits people are facing for operations.

It must have come as a devastating blow to the leaders at NHS Lothian to learn that there will be no new capital projects being built, despite a growing list of new buildings being essential. They are needed as current buildings are part of an aging estate—for example, the condemned Princess Alexandra Eye Pavilion, or the overcapacity experienced at the Sterilisation Unit at Little France, without which instruments cannot be cleaned for the procedures across all the Lothian's hospitals. (When it broke down recently, instruments had to be sent as far as Manchester to be processed.) We need new buildings as, unlike elsewhere in Scotland, Lothian has a rapidly growing population, and the health service has been chronically underfunded – based on our population – for years.

Our health board currently has some of the longest waits for orthopaedic surgery across Scotland. Therefore, a new treatment centre planned out at St Johns – to create more capacity so many of these operations could take place and reduce the waiting lists – is desperately needed.

We were promised 11 new treatment centres across Scotland to tackle long waits, and these formed the cornerstone of the Scottish Government's NHS Recovery Plan. Six will not be built any time soon, yet almost one in six Scots are waiting for treatment. It appears my mailbox this year will look much like that of last year after all.



CLLR SCOTT ARTHUR
COLINTON/FAIRMILEHEAD

ROADS AND PATHS

Perhaps the most rewarding part of being a Councillor is dealing with casework from constituents; it is a chance to impact positively on people's lives. The biggest and most intractable casework issue is housing—evidenced by almost 800 people applying for a single council house in my Ward recently.

Other issues can be more seasonal: this time of year is when complaints about road and footpath condition peak. We went into winter with many roads and footpaths in a bad state, and the cold and wet weather results in further decline.

The current administration allocated £11 million of additional funding to the issue, despite our capital being Scotland's worst-funded local authority. We are listening to the public, and will resurface whole streets rather than take a piecemeal approach. This means that 420,000m² of road and 170,000m² of pavement improvements will be carried out in 2023/24, compared to pre-Covid yearly averages of 225,000m² for roads and 30,000m² for pavements.

In addition to this, we are trialling a state-of-the-art "Pothole Killer" machine which helps automate repairs—so far, it has filled around 8,000m² of potholes.

We won't get footpaths and roads back to where we want them to be in one year, but this investment will help halt the decline.

Indeed, as part of the 2024/25 budget process I am working hard to get additional funding for roads and footpaths. We will invest wisely and prudently to improve the network. In January we agreed the city's latest Transport Asset Management Programme which commits to prioritising projects to make the most efficient use of the funding available, as well as exploring new methods and treatments to maximise funds.

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CLLR GRAEME BRUCE
PENTLAND HILLS

PATH TO SUCCESS

There is no doubt 2024 is going to be a challenging year, as every year that passes appears more difficult than the year before—especially due to the lack of funding where the council has to do more with less resources.

However, I press on and make the case to at least get basic infrastructure investment into the local communities and it is good to finally see work start on the stretch of Lanark Road West from the traffic lights in Balerno to the Hannahfield bends finally being resurfaced. In addition to that, a tree which was heading towards a 45 degree angle over this road, will be removed before it topples down, with the potential to cause injury and harm.

Gritting has always been an issue at this time of year. I have had a number of complaints in different areas of Currie where roads and indeed pavements have been missed by the gritting team. I have chased up with the council to make sure these particular routes are dealt with, which they now appear to be.

It is good to hear the local community councils are working together to look into the Education corridor that would run from Wester Hailes, through Juniper Green and Currie and up to Balerno. Having safer walking routes to schools is a better way forward for pupils, encouraging exercise, and in turn keeping them fit and healthy.

Again, I've heard from different parts of the communities about an increase in house breaking including cars being stolen. Please be vigilant and make sure your property is secure and report any suspicious behaviour to Police.

Lastly, I was asked to help get the white lines refreshed at the roundabout on Riccarton Mains Road which has now been done. This will definitely help with the crossing patrol making it much safer during school times.



CLLR FIONA GLASGOW
PENTLAND HILLS

NEW YEAR, NEW HOPE?

So the festive season came and went in a flash! The weather played its role but the pounding rain didn't spoil the Balerno Christmas light switch on! Well done to the performers and organisers! As mentioned in my last contribution, I had the pleasure of attending the wreath making workshop at Hub 531: what a warm and welcoming event that was, with a great group of local people taking part. There are lots of interesting things happening in this great community resource and I hope to attend again soon.

On my last trip along Lanark Road West it was a relief and pleasure not to be dealing with what seemed like never ending road works, although I know there are still more to be completed. On the subject of roads, the ban on pavement parking is due to be enforced from the end of January and already people are noticing a change. People using wheelchairs, walking aids, pushing buggies and children walking to school now have a safer space to get from A to B. There has been talk of streets being blocked to wide vehicles but, as long as drivers park safely and with this in mind, the benefits will be good for the community. Anything that improves our ability to get out and about safely is great for the community.

If you want to ensure that your views are heard and addressed, please remember that your local Community Councils meet regularly to address a range of issues affecting the local community and everyone is welcome to attend. Community Councils are the most local tier of representation and they are always looking for people who care about their community and want to influence change.



CLLR JASON RUST
COLINTON/FAIRMILEHEAD

LOCAL FAREWELLS

Best wishes to all residents for a peaceful 2024. I was sorry to learn of the passing of two former local councillors towards the end of 2023, both local champions for their areas. Allan Laing (Balerno and Currie) and George Hunter (Craiglockhart and Longstone) were the personification of hard-working community representatives and it was my pleasure to serve on the City of Edinburgh Council with both until they respectively stood down in 2007. Both were very committed to their communities, and their involvement went far beyond standing for election. In a more aggressive and cynical political age, it is worth reflecting on the steadfast and diligent local service of Allan and George.

One issue on which there has been recent progress is on addressing the issue of graffiti in the capital, long raised by myself and colleagues. There are issues as to what is vandalism and what is street art—the Colinton Tunnel mural being an outstanding exemplar of the latter. However, it is obvious that offensive, threatening or anti-social graffiti impacts the amenity of an area. There has at last been much needed investment in the cleansing of the city to enhance the Council's team and improve the look and feel of the capital's streets, as well as further co-ordination with the police to tackle the scourge of graffiti.

CITY BUDGET

In terms of Council business, the Budget will be determined on 22 February 2024. There is no doubt that this will be a difficult settlement with competing priorities in very constrained times.



RICHARD M HENDERSON
BALERNO COMMUNITY COUNCIL

TAKING A WIDER VIEW

I wrote a piece for the February 2017 *C&B News* recounting Balerno Community Council's January meeting. We had concerns about the then proposed closure of the Juniper Green branch of RBS and were working with politicians "to develop ideas to ensure that the upper Water of Leith valley is able to have guaranteed access to banking services". Seven years on, our banks are gone and we are lucky to have a single permanent Post Office for the valley, along with one temporary one.

Two years later (February 2019) I wrote about the deterioration in public facilities and services in our area: "If we don't maintain the services which we depend on, then breakdowns are more likely to affect us, at any time. Maintaining the systems by which public services are delivered is a prime responsibility of government." I'm not going to ask how successful these pleas may have been. I think we all know. We heard at our January 2024 meeting that Balerno High School may have been one of a handful of Edinburgh Council's facilities to have been closed over the 2023 festive period.

So, is this simply a downward spiral? Are there things we can do?

In January 2021 I wrote about the need for Edinburgh to take notice of what people are saying. I wrote: "It is indeed hard to believe that the City have been listening to what communities have been saying is needed in their areas."

Public administration is hard, but it's easier if authorities listen to what people are saying. Balerno Community Council decided at its January 2024 meeting to promote a Local Place Plan for Balerno along with the Village Trust. The City of Edinburgh Council will be bound by law to have regard to such a plan in making its own decisions. Who knows? Local Place Plans may just mark a turning point.

• Balerno Community Council:
<http://www.balerno-community-council.org.uk/>



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NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH

In the face of recent unsettling incidents of anti-social behaviour in Currie, it may seem challenging to find a break in the clouds. Yet, amidst it all, an example of hope has emerged, not only to combat these issues but also to knit the community closer together - the Neighbourhood Watch.

The Police, bound by limited resources and administrative responsibilities, cannot be everywhere at once. If incidents go unreported, they remain oblivious. This is where the Neighbourhood Watch steps in, documenting issues to aid the Police in prioritising and responding more effectively. As a community group, it amplifies our voice in discussions with the Police, reinforcing a crucial message: community engagement is indispensable in addressing and preventing local issues.

Initiating a Neighbourhood Watch on your street is entirely free. Official Neighbourhood Watches yield considerable advantages, including public liability insurance for volunteers, as they represent an established organisation rather than acting as vigilantes. However, the most uplifting outcome is the flourishing of neighbourly camaraderie and unity. When paired with potential discounts from certain home insurers, a local Neighbourhood Watch becomes an attractive proposition.

Neighbourhood Watches serve as a powerful testament to the transformative influence of community groups, irrespective of their size, demonstrating that unity can indeed be a strength and that communities can make a difference.

The Neighbourhood Watch is nothing without the people behind it. Reach out to your neighbour, start a conversation, and together, let's make our community safer and stronger. Your involvement can make a world of difference. Let's stand together for a better tomorrow.

Your Local Community Optician Has Levelled Up!

ANDY CONNELL
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We are excited to announce the newest addition to the Jack Brown Eyecare family—Jack Brown Eyecare Juniper Green, formerly known as Margaret Best Optometrist.

This expansion, along with our established practices in Elder Street and Westside Plaza, enables us to extend our exceptional eye care services to the local community and beyond. Known for our dedicated team of experienced optometrists and opticians, we have built a reputation for delivering personalised eye care and a high level of service to our valued patients. With a commitment to technology and a wide range of frames available at all three locations, we take pride in offering comprehensive eye care to individuals in and around the Edinburgh area.

Unparalleled eye care: We focus on providing you with eye examinations that go beyond just issuing prescriptions. We strive to go the extra mile to safeguard your eye health using the latest technology and tailored services for patients of all ages, ensuring long-term eye health and wellness.

Your vision is our priority: Our opticians pride themselves on offering professional advice and recommendations for your frames and lens options. Taking account of your needs, style and comfort preferences while optimising your vision. Our glasses are supplied and fitted by opticians rather than optical or sales assistants.

Join Our Community of Night Lens wearers: Change your life with Night Lenses: see without anything in or on your eyes. Night lenses and myopia control are just an example of the new services now available at your new opticians.

We're registering new NHS patients now: If you don't have a



Above: Welcoming staff (left to right) dispensing optician Jonathon Fotheringham, receptionist Lesley Ainslie, and optometrist Kat Girdler. Below: the new-look exterior.

regular eye care provider, or would like to experience a different level of care than typically found on the high street, we would love to meet you.

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to welcome new and returning patients.

• For more details, visit: <https://www.jbeyecare.com>, email: juni-pergreen@jbeyecare.com, call (0131) 458 5888, or visit: 587A Lanark Road, Juniper Green, EH14 5DA.



A Christmas to Remember at Dean Park Primary School

NICOLA KURTH, HEAD TEACHER
DEAN PARK PS & NURSERY ANNEXE

Wow! What a festive season we had at Dean Park!

One of the biggest highlights was welcoming the older members of our community to an afternoon tea where P4 sang and our brass players delighted everyone with Christmas favourites. You could feel the love all around!



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The winner is picked at random from all correct entries received.

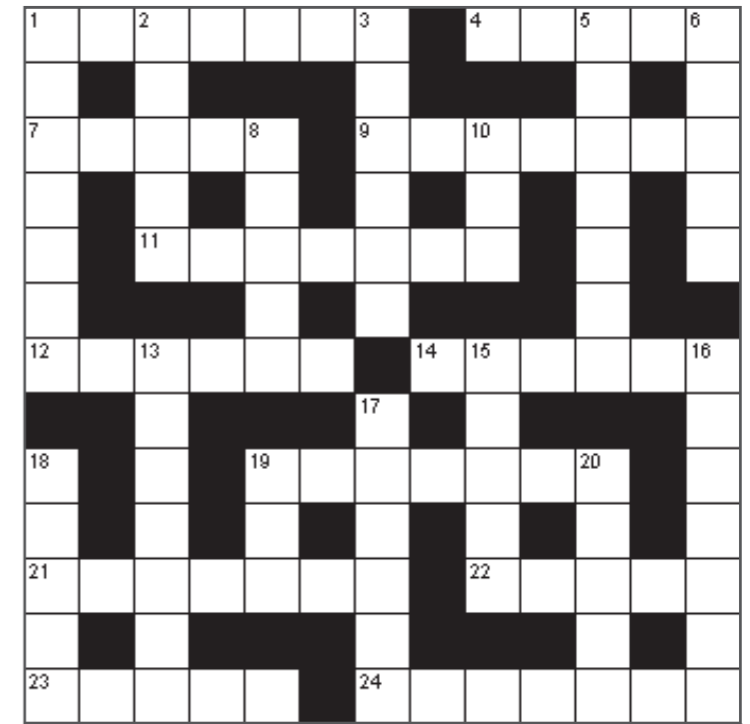
Good luck everyone!

ACROSS

1. Floorshow. (7)
4. Spooky. (5)
7. Detection device. (5)
9. Vertical. (7)
10. Inactivity. (7)
11. Measuring implement. (5)
12. Dictator. (6)
14. Ecclesiastic. (6)
18. Copious. (5)
20. Drawn. (7)
22. Pouch worn with a kilt. (7)
23. Diadem. (5)
24. Admittance. (5)
25. Spiny anteater. (7)

DOWN

1. Transported. (7)
2. Emblem. (5)
3. Tropical bird. (6)
4. Mistake. (5)
5. Dependable follower. (7)
6. Go in. (5)
8. Magnitude relation. (5)
13. Reinforcement. (7)
15. Reasoned judgment. (5)
16. Musical passage. (7)
17. Opportunity. (6)
18. Part of a church. (5)
19. Ahead of time. (5)
21. Obviate. (5)



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.

LAST ISSUE'S PRIZE CROSSWORD SOLUTION:

ACROSS: 1. En Route; 5. Audio; 8. Hyena; 9. Absolve; 10. Ensnare; 11. Tempo; 12. Liken; 14. Atlas; 19. Genus; 21. Unmoved; 23. Noodles; 24. Ad lib; 25. Aisle; 26. Swindle.

DOWN: 1. Echoed; 2. Reels; 3. Unaware; 4. Elated; 5. Asset; 6. Dilemma; 7. Ocelot; 13. Igneous; 15. Timpani; 16. Agenda; 17. Guests; 18. Edible; 20. Solve; 22. Valid.

DEC '23/JAN '24 WINNER!

Our congratulations go to Holly Gilchrist from Balerno, randomly selected, from all correct entries, to receive our £25 prize.

EASY

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

MEDIUM

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6		3		4
	3			1
2		4		
				9

HARD

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	2			8 5
	6	3	2	
7		8		
		5 7	6	
		1 5		3
2		6 7	1	5

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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 FEBRUARY

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@531 Lanark Road, Juniper Green, 10.30am - noon. Come for a Cuppa- 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. We usually have an optional activity going on that you are very welcome to join. No booking needed. February programme: 05/02: Board games—learn Yatzy! 12/02: Celebrate Chinese New Year. 19/02: Smoothie Making. 26/02: Mindful colouring.

MINDFULNESS SESSION: the hub@531 Lanark Road, Juniper Green, noon - 1pm. Mindfulness: a chance to join us for a guided mindfulness session with Raymond. No experience necessary, just an open curiosity about what happens when we pay attention to the inner workings of our mind. No booking needed.

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

BABY GROUP: the hub@531 Lanark Road, Juniper Green, 1.30pm - 2.45pm. Baby Group/ Bookbug: meet other parents/ carers for friendship and peer support. Regular Book-bug 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@531 Lanark Road, Juniper Green, 7pm - 9pm. Currently full; please email to join waitlist or to start a second group!

TUESDAYS

KNITTING GROUP: the hub@531 Lanark Road, Juniper Green, 10.30am - noon. A very popular, welcoming group for novice and experienced knitters alike. Email: hub531lanarkroad@gmail.com

PENTLAND JUNIOR SINGERS: Balerno Parish Church 6pm - 7pm. Fun, friendship and singing for ages 8-14. New members welcome! For further information, email: Pentlandjuniors@gmail.com

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

WEDNESDAYS

PENTLANDS SPORTING MEMORIES CLUB: the hub@531 Lanark Road, Juniper Green, 1.30pm - 3pm. Sports bletcher with a group of enthusiasts who enjoy a great sports story both old and new, questions and laughs (usually at each others' expense) in a very relaxed and friendly environment. Email: hub531lanarkroad@gmail.com

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 Twitter/X: @BalernoRamblers

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

THURSDAYS

SPANISH CONVERSATION GROUP: the hub@531 Lanark Road, Juniper Green, 10.30am - 11.30am. (Not 29/02) Have you been learning Spanish and would like the opportunity to practise what you've learned? We have a new group at the Hub, initially meeting on Thursday to enjoy chatting in Spanish. Email: hub531lanarkroad@gmail.com

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 at the 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>

GARDENING GROUP: the hub@531 Lanark Road, Juniper Green, 10.30am - noon. New monthly group meeting on the first Friday of each month. February: we'll be meeting outside the Hub at 10.30am before travelling together to Campbell Park. Email: hub531lanarkroad@gmail.com if you would like to come along.

BABERTON CUBS and BEAVERS GROUPS: Juniper Green Church Hall. Beavers meet 6pm - 7pm, Cubs meet 7:15pm - 8:45pm. 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, www.facebook.com/Balerno-Ramblers, email: enquiries@balenoramblers.org.uk or follow on Twitter/X: @BalernoRamblers

DAY BY DAY FEBRUARY

FRIDAY 2/SATURDAY 3 FEBRUARY

LEGALLY BLONDE: THE MUSICAL: Heriot-Watt University (JW1), 2.30pm & 7.30pm. A production of the fun, award-winning musical based on the adored film, produced by the Heriot-Watt Student Choir and Orchestra. When booking, please email to confirm which performance you would like to attend: <http://tinyurl.com/23puj8k2>

MONDAY 5 FEBRUARY

HERIOT-WATT ANNUAL PUBLIC LECTURE: James Watt Centre, Heriot-Watt University, 7pm. (Refreshments available from 6pm.) In "Transhumanism—Making Better Humans", Professor John Wyatt explores the startling possibilities of enhancement technology and asks what these advances mean for humanity. To secure your free ticket, visit: <http://tinyurl.com/23nah8ar>

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HISTORY SOCIETY: Gibson Craig Hall, Currie, (back hall), 7.30pm. "Robert Palmer, Schoolmaster, Curler, Maker of Sundials and much more." Speakers Val Wilson and Douglas Lowe (both CDLHS). For further details see: <https://www.curriehistory.org/>

COLINTON LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY: Dreghorn Loan Hall, 8pm. "The Museum of Flight, The work of the conservators." Speaker: Thilo Burgel. For more information visit: www.colintonhistory.org.uk

TUESDAY 6 FEBRUARY

BALERNO SWI: Balerno Community Centre, 7.30pm. See Facebook page for further information.

WEDNESDAY 7 FEBRUARY

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

"THE LIT" (COLINTON LITERARY SOCIETY): Dreghorn Loan Hall, Colinton, 7.30pm (for 8pm start). "The Time of Troubles": Russia's history and how it's shaping a turbulent present. Further details at: www.colinton-parish.com/colinton-literary-society

SATURDAY 10 FEBRUARY

BALERNO FARMERS' MARKET, Main Street, 9am - 1pm. A wonderful range of stallholders bring fresh local and Scottish produce to the market. <https://balernovt.org.uk/farmers-market/>

DEMOCRACY MATTERS EVENT: The Hub@531, Juniper Green, 1pm - 5pm. "Your participation will help shape the future democratic landscape of Scotland, making it a better place for everyone and enabling communities to take back control." Free drinks, snacks and chat.

WEDNESDAY 14 FEBRUARY

"THE LIT" (COLINTON LITERARY SOCIETY): Dreghorn Loan Hall, EH13 oDE,

7.30pm. Jamie Crawford draws from his new book to describe his journeys into lost Scotland. Further details available at <http://www.colinton-parish.com/colinton-literary-society.html>

FRIDAY 16 FEBRUARY COFFEE MORNING: the hub@531 Lanark Road, Juniper Green, 9.30am - 11.30am. Come for a cuppa, a piece of home baking; your donations for the Hub will be gratefully received! Also advice from SP Energy Network on their priority services register for vulnerable people.

MONDAY 19 FEBRUARY

CURRIE & DISTRICT LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY: Gibson Craig Hall, Currie, (back hall), 7.30pm. Talk and speaker to be advised. For further details see <https://www.curriehistory.org/>

COLINTON LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY: Dreghorn Loan Hall, 8pm. "The Galloway Hoard." The speaker is David Bartholomew. For more information visit: www.colintonhistory.org.uk

WEDNESDAY 21 FEBRUARY

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

APPLIQUÉ CRAFT EVENING: the hub@531 Lanark Road, Juniper Green, 7.30pm - 10pm. Make a simple design on a plain tote bag by cutting fabric shapes to attach using hot glue and/or hand stitching. Bags and basic materials will be provided, but you might like to bring along some old fabric / clothing to use in your design - making this an upcycle project! Aimed at adults only. Please book to reserve your space: hub531lanarkroad@gmail.com

"THE LIT" (COLINTON LITERARY SOCIETY): Dreghorn Loan Hall, EH13 oDE, 7.30pm. "The American Civil War." Ian Gardiner gives an overview of one of the bloodiest conflicts of the last 200 years. Further details available: <http://www.colinton-parish.com/colinton-literary-society.html>

THURSDAY 22 FEBRUARY

APPLIQUÉ CRAFT AFTERNOON: the hub@531 Lanark Road, Juniper Green, 1.30pm - 3.30pm. See Wednesday 21 February, 7.30pm

FRIDAY 23 FEBRUARY

APPLIQUÉ FOR TEENS: the hub@531 Lanark Road, Juniper Green, 2.30pm - 4.30pm. Make a simple design on a plain tote bag by cutting fabric shapes to attach using hot glue and/or hand stitching. Aimed at high school age/teens. Free, but donations welcome. Please book to reserve your space: hub531lanarkroad@gmail.com

MONDAY 26 FEBRUARY

COLINTON GARDEN CLUB: Dreghorn Loan Hall, Colinton, 8pm. Members' evening. There will be three speakers including Ian McKee and Liz Windle. For more information visit <http://www.colintongardens.org.uk/>

TUESDAY 27 FEBRUARY

BALERNO FOLK CLUB: Balerno Bowling Club, 5 Ladycroft. Doors open 7.30pm for 8.15pm start. A big welcome back to Other Roads with singer/songwriters Pete Abbott and Dave Walmisley, along with eight-times Scottish Fiddle Champion Gregor Borland. An evening not to be missed. "Members and Guests" welcome.

WEDNESDAY 28 FEBRUARY

BALERNO & DISTRICT SCHOOLS PIPE BAND FUNDRAISING CONCERT, Balerno High School Concourse, 7pm. (Doors open 6.30pm.) "Come and enjoy a Scottish evening with our talented young pipe band and other performers." Tickets (£10 adults, children and teens free) can be bought from pipe band members, on the door or by emailing: bdspbconcert@gmail.com

"THE LIT" (COLINTON LITERARY SOCIETY): Dreghorn Loan Hall, 7.30pm. "The Zoo." The Edinburgh Gilbert and Sullivan Society perform the one act opera by Arthur Sullivan. Further details available at <http://www.colinton-parish.com/colinton-literary-society.html>

MARCH

FRIDAY 1 MARCH

C&B NEWS: Don't forget to pick up your free copy (or copies) of our March 2024 issue! List of distributors available on our website: <https://candbnews.com/>

SATURDAY 2 MARCH

FAIRTRADE MORNING: Balerno Parish Church Halls, 10am - noon. Have fun while you help make the world a bit fairer: enjoy FT stalls; refreshments, baking; children's activities; prize-giving (11 am, St Joseph's Hall) and display of winning artwork from 2024's Balerno Schools FT Competition. Pedal your tasty FT banana drink on the amazing smoothie bike; win a lovely cake, a FT hamper! All welcome.

MONDAY 4 MARCH

CURRIE & DISTRICT LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY: Gibson Craig Hall, Currie, (back hall), 7.30pm. "Are We Nearly There Yet?" Scottish Milestones: Speaker L. Bruce Keith. For further details see: <https://www.curriehistory.org/>

WEDNESDAY 6 MARCH

PENTLAND PROBUS CLUB: Juniper Green Parish Church Hall, 10am. "The Nelson Monument and Calton Hill Curiosities", an illustrated talk by Jackie Sangster. New members welcome. Further enquiries from Club Secretary Leslie Hannaford on (0131) 453 3012 or email lesliehannaford@blueyonder.co.uk

SATURDAY 9 MARCH

BALERNO FARMERS' MARKET, Main Street, 9am - 1pm. A wonderful range of stallholders bring fresh local and Scottish produce to the market. <https://balernovt.org.uk/farmers-market/>

MINI FIGURE PAINTING: the hub@531 Lanark Road, Juniper Green, 1pm - 5pm. Drop in and join the Juniper Green board gamers who will be running an afternoon of mini figure painting at the Hub. Ideal for high school age and older.

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Art Classes

with Jenny Matthews RSW
The HUB@531, Juniper Green

'Flowers in Watercolour' from 7 March,
'Essential Drawing' from 14 March, 10:15-12:45,
suitable for all levels with students limited to 7 in
each class.

Jenny is a graduate of Edinburgh College of Art
and has been a professional artist for 35 years.

Please contact jenny@jennymatthews.co.uk
for more information. www.jennymatthews.co.uk

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Good Start for Balerno Hockey in 2024

MIKE STEWART
BALERNO HOCKEY

Above: the Balerno S1/S2 team, winners of
the east region of Scottish Hockey's Junior
Aspire Tournament. Below: a great turnout
on New Year's Day for some hockey!

There was a great turn out on
New Year's Day for Balerno
High School's first hockey
match of the year—with a 15-a-side
game needed to get everyone on
the pitch!

The talent on show ranged from
international standard – Murdo
MacDonald, Sam Myers and
Robyn Allan – to those who had
to be shown the correct end of
the stick to hold. It was a great
way to freshen up from “the night
before”.

The High School boy's hockey
team also had a successful start
to 2024, with a win for the senior
team against Watsonians Hockey
Club: Noah Gray scored twice
and Harvey Stewart ensured the
final goal which confirmed a 3-1
win. The junior team then had
a hard fought 3-1 defeat against
Watsonians, with the game tied
at one-all until the final minutes.

Boy's hockey at Balerno High
School has continued to grow
with now three teams playing
most weekends, and around 45
boys looking to play. In late 2023,
the Balerno S1/S2 team (pictured)
also won the east region of
Scottish Hockey's Junior Aspire
Tournament and are looking
to continue their winning run
into the national final in May. A
number of boys have also joined
other local clubs with the chance
of more training and games.

• We have set up a Balerno Hockey
Club with Scottish Hockey to
provide summer and social hockey
on a more formal basis for adults
and kids in Balerno. Anyone
interested in playing or helping
should contact Mark Coull:
coullmark412@gmail.com



www.facebook.com/candbnews

Oriam Serves an Ace with Opening of New Indoor Tennis Centre

GREIG ANDERSON
ORIAM COMMUNICATIONS TEAM

A cutting-edge indoor tennis centre opened in Edinburgh at the end of last year, heralding a promising era of growth for the sport in the region.

On 29 December 2023, the Oriam Indoor Tennis Centre (ITC) welcomed its first players onto six new courts on the Heriot-Watt University campus, led by competition winner Patrick Dempsey (5) from Currie who had the honour of delivering the opening serve.

Costing £4.5 million, the impressive 4,000 square metre structure had taken around 18 months to construct, and has been funded in partnership between

Oriam, Heriot-Watt University, the Lawn Tennis Association, the LTA Tennis Foundation, sportscotland, and Tennis Scotland through its Transforming Scottish Indoor Tennis fund.

Work on-site began in September 2022. The ITC has been built using the latest materials to ensure the courts boast some of the finest acrylic playing surfaces found anywhere in the country, ideal for both recreational and competitive matches.

Ross Campbell, Executive Director at Oriam, spearheaded the project from its inception. "The opening of this fantastic new facility provides a huge boost for tennis in the region," he said.

"At Oriam ITC there will be further opportunities for aspiring athletes, coaches and players of all

abilities while cementing Oriam's reputation as Scotland's Sports Performance Centre."

The ITC adjoins Oriam's existing structure along its western boundary, giving players convenient access to nearby changing rooms and other first-class sporting facilities. The arrival of the ITC enhances Heriot-Watt's growing reputation in the sports sector having launched sports degrees in Sport and Exercise Science, Sport Management and Sport Psychology, in partnership with Oriam.

Courts are now available to book for players of all ages and abilities on a pay-as-you-play (PAYP) basis, meaning membership to Oriam is not required and helping ensure as many people as possible can access



Left: Ross Campbell, Executive Director at Oriam, tries out the new facilities. Above: five year old Currie resident Patrick Dempsey delivers the opening serve.

the sport.

Oriam ITC is open seven-days-a-week from 6.30am - 10pm, Monday to Friday, 8am - 8pm, Saturday, and 8am - 10pm Sunday. Courts can be booked up to 14 days in advance online, via the Oriam app or at the Oriam Reception Desk. Oriam members benefit from a 20% discount on all PAYP tennis bookings.

Further information about Oriam ITC, including how to book, can be found here: <https://oriamscotland.com/oriam/activities/tennis/>

KEVIN KEALY
PENTLAND TRIATHLETE JUNIORS

In a remarkable display of talent and determination, local triathlon club Pentland Triathlete Juniors have won the Scottish Junior Club Championships 2023. The young athletes showcased their skills, earning both individual and team wins across a range of age groups.

The Scottish Junior Club Championships is a highly competitive series of events across a range of ages and multisport disciplines including, Triathlon, duathlon and aquathlon. Pentland Triathlete Juniors demonstrated their prowess in swimming, cycling, and running to claim the coveted title.

The Pentland Triathlete Juniors, coached by a team of seasoned professionals and volunteer coaches dedicated to nurturing young talent, have been steadily making a name for themselves on the national triathlon scene. Their commitment to training and their unwavering spirit shone brightly



The youth rugby highlight of December 2023 was the final of the National Youth Under-16 Boys Cup held at Murrayfield. This featured a fine win by Currie Chieftains U16 over Hawick RFC U16 by 32 - 22 points. The match was well balanced going into the last 10 minutes, with the Chieftains leading 20-17. However, tries in the 62nd and 63rd minutes sealed the match for the Mallery team. The Chieftain's try scorers were: A Pierce, J Elliot, B McDonald, S Beaton, B Fraser, and B Smith. L Forge added a conversion.

You can watch the full match, with commentary, on YouTube at: <http://tinyurl.com/yc4uhppn>

Pentland Triathlete Juniors Win Scottish Junior Club Championships

as they faced tough competition from other junior clubs, showcasing the depth of talent in the region and nationally.

The success of the Pentland Triathlete Juniors was not only measured in individual accomplishments but also in their collective strength as a team. The camaraderie among team members plays a pivotal role in the club and makes for enjoyable yet focused training sessions. The victory not only adds another feather to Pentland's cap but also serves as an inspiration for aspiring young triathletes in Edinburgh. The achievement underscores the importance of a supportive community, dedicated

coaching, and a nurturing coaching approach.

As we celebrate the triumph of the club in the Scottish Junior Club Championships 2023, it is a moment to recognise the potential and promise within our local youth. The dedication of these young athletes and their coaches showcases a local vibrant sporting culture and sets the stage for future successes in the world of triathlon.

The Pentland Triathlete Juniors are currently recruiting new members. For more information, please contact the Club via the website <https://www.pentlandtriathletejuniors.org/>



Ups and Downs for Currie Chieftains

PHIL THOMAS
CURRIE CHIEFTAINS

Since I last reported to C&B News, club rugby across Scotland has suffered major disruptions because adverse weather conditions. Out of seven Currie Chieftains' Premiership matches scheduled between 25 November and 20 January, three were postponed because of the weather and related frozen grounds.

In the four games played the Chieftains recorded three wins and a draw. Wins were against: Heriots RFC at Goldenacre (25 November) by 21-29 points; Glasgow Hawks at Balgray (9 December) by 12-16 points; and Glasgow Hawks at Mallery Park (16 December) by 50-20 points. The draw - 24 points each - was against Hawick RFC at Mallery Park on 13 January.

All the matches played were entertaining and showed the strength and depth of the Currie squad. However the encounter against Hawick was exceptional, representing a clash between the two Premiership sides currently leading the league.

Currie Chieftains A are currently in second position in the Inter City Reserve League, while Currie Chieftains B are mid-table in the East Region Reserve League Division 1 and are building for next season.

At present, given their league points position, Hawick RFC, Currie Chieftains, and Marr RFC look to have secured a position in the Premiership play-off at the end of the season—the final play-off position is being contested for by Edinburgh Academical RFC, Heriots Blues Men, Kelso RFC, and Musselburgh RFC.

Dates and venues for the play-offs have yet to be finalised but will be advertised as soon as they can be set. Please also note that the first round of the men's Scottish Cup between Currie Chieftains and Ayr will be at Mallery Park on 9 March 2024, kick off at 3pm.

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

The Chieftains' girls' and women's squads have been developing at the club during the past two years.

Their programme is now founded across different focus areas, with different age and specialism groups, meeting the interests and aspirations of all those involved.

Activities include introductory rugby, the "Grit" strength and conditioning programme, evolution events (U14) and team play (U16, U18) at National 2 level.

If you are interested, please contact James McCaig the Club's Develop Officer (0131) 449 2432.

FREE!



PENTLAND SCOUTS CENTENARY, p16



CHIEFTAINS U16 WIN NATIONAL CUP, p46

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ASPIRING YOUTH

Sporting success for local young people, p46



Photos: Kaitiaki Moneak, Emma Halkayem, Szilvia Erasmussen.