



COLINTON NEWS BULLETIN

MAY 2021

GRADUAL EMERGENCE

It feels as if we are gradually emerging from a long period of hibernation. One by one, we are venturing out of our homes which have sheltered us during the past 14 months. Some are still tentative after such a long period of shielding. Others, emboldened by a newly injected confidence, are discovering the world and its inhabitants as if for the first time.

There is an old saying "Absence makes the heart grow fonder" and I can detect in the eyes of those whom I meet in the village or at the church door, an appreciation of each other that I had not noticed before. By the grace of God, we have braved the storm and are now beginning to pick up the pieces it left behind.

I wonder what we will find on closer inspection. No doubt, there will be fragments of our former lives that cannot be put together again, the loss of which we will need time to grieve. There may be other pieces that we are happy to sweep up and let go of, because they have come to the end of their usefulness in our lives. If we look closely, there may be signs of new life growing in place of the old. Perhaps there will be a part of us that has been undergoing a metamorphosis in tandem with nature awakening from its winter slumber.

At the heart of the Christian story is the process of death and resurrection. The season of Easter has invited us to celebrate a Saviour who died and rose again, sweeping us up in the cosmic cycle of ever-renewing life. This year, our shared experience of being given a new chance

at living consciously feels more precious than ever. We know that it will take time to work out what this new life can look like. We will need to make space for mourning those many people who have died and to say goodbye to certain aspects of life that will never return.



And, if the witness of countless generations who went before us is to be trusted, we now have an opportunity to rebuild and to invest our energies in a world that is full of hope and promise.

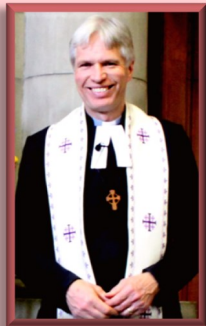
Let us support one another as we move forward, listening particularly to the small voices in and around us and remembering Jesus' words:

"Whatever you did for one of the least of these, you did for me."

(Matthew 25, verse 40)

With love and admiration,
Your Minister,

Rolf



Rolf Billes
Colinton Parish Church

WELCOME TO COLINTON NEWS BULLETIN FOR MAY

When I was a young girl, the first day of May started with a pre-dawn climb to the top of Arthur's Seat and, as the daylight appeared, some fresh morning dew was scooped up and liberally applied instead of make-up. I shan't be doing that this year, but like so many of us, will look forward to holidays, sunshine and time with friends in the coming weeks. Another May tradition, which I doubt is observed these days, was the of giving of "May baskets", a small basket of sweets or flowers, left anonymously on neighbours' doorsteps ...now wouldn't that be something nice to reinstate.

In this issue we have an update on the former Coach House at Spylaw Park and steps being taken to re-open the Swing Café, as well as regular articles and news.

My thanks to all our contributors and do contact me if you have information which you would like to share in the June/July issue of the *Bulletin*. Please send news, updates or other items to me at the following email address:

colinton.news@colinton-parish.com

Let's hope we can return to the printed magazine soon. Take care and keep safe.



Editrice Kathy



Moira Shirreff

**Pastoral Care
Development Worker**

PASTORAL CARE

It is wonderful to enjoy the lighter, brighter and longer days of Spring, as we make our way towards Summer. This is always such an uplifting time of year, as we see the green leaves and blossoms adorning the trees and delight in the spectrum of colours displayed in the different varieties of flowers which are appearing in the gardens around us.

There is a real sense of life opening up too, as we move step by step out of our winter Lockdown. How great it is to be able to do, for the first time in months, the things we took for granted in past times – having a haircut, being able to travel more widely, shopping in different types of shops and eating out in coffee shops and restaurants, to name a few. Life feels a bit more “normal”!

But above all else, we can now do the one thing that we all yearned to do during Lockdown. We are able to see family members and friends in person and spend time in their company – what a joy that is!

However, among the joys of seeing some of those we love, we remember that there are still many of us who have family and friends living in countries

abroad and long for the time when we'll be able to meet up with them too. The Apostle Paul reminds us of the strength there is in the cord of deep love that holds us together, even when we are apart.

Love is patient, love is kind.

It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonour others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth.

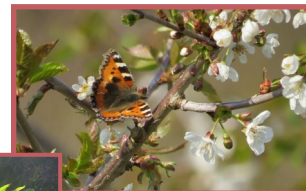
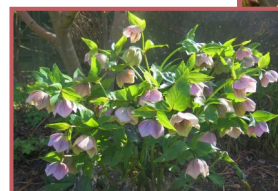
It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.

Love never fails.

May the love of Christ be with us and hold us in our waiting and may the time soon come when we can embrace all the ones we love.

Many blessings

Moira

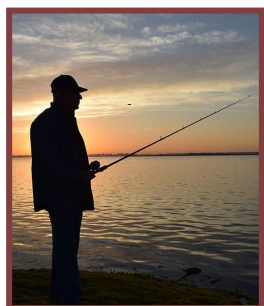


*Butterfly photo:
June Scott*

CATCH AND RELEASE

Some years ago, I read about a settler in the Far East. He ran a farm and owned a large bungalow, with an extensive garden and all the usual native staff.

He became aware that, each week, his gardener rowed out to a small island holding what appeared to be a full bucket, then returned later but with an empty bucket. This required some investigation.



To his surprise, he found that the gardener was catching snails, which were damaging

the garden. Being a Buddhist, who was taught that all life is sacred, his religion forbade killing them, so he took the snails to the small island and released them there.

After fishing for many years, I had a similar experience. One day, whilst out fishing on a reservoir, I caught the most beautiful rainbow trout. It had fought so well that I felt it deserved to be released, so gently unhooked it and watched it swim away. Ever since that day, I have adopted the practice of ‘catch and release’. This is more fun and it leaves fish in the water which might then be caught once more.

My strangest experience of catch and release was just a few years ago, when I was fishing the River Tweed at Stobo, Peeblesshire. As night fell,

I continued with a few more casts. Then I realised that something was wrong with my line and, on reeling in, I found that the line was going straight up in the air. I thought it was caught in a tree and after laying down my rod, carefully started to pull my line in. To my surprise, it was flying around in circles above my head. Drawing it closer, I found that I had actually caught a small bat – the little creature must have been attracted by one of the fishing flies. The bat was very calm and seemed unhurt, so I carefully removed the hook from its wing and let it fly off unharmed.

A very unusual catch and release, but probably a one-off.

Dennis Seatter

AN UPDATE ON THE SWING CAFÉ

Colinton Parish Church is extremely proud to have successfully operated the Swing Café for more than 20 years. However, towards the end of 2019, the Kirk Session realised that it was now time for 'The Swing' to have a revamp. Consequently, the Review Group was formed and started planning for a relaunch of The Swing. Due to popular demand, it was then decided to introduce afternoon teas and extend the opening hours. This would allow those who work to have the opportunity to enjoy the delights of the café together with their children after school and at the weekend. Plans were progressing apace when Covid-19 struck.

The Review Group continued to meet, via Zoom, to review and plan and we are now excited at the prospect of opening our doors once more, which will be on **Tuesday 31 August**. This is on the condition that the Scottish Government has lowered the current Covid-19 restrictions to at least Level 0.

Opening hours will be Tuesday to Saturday from 10.00am to 4.00pm. Monday will be used for food preparation and planning for the ensuing week.

With these increased hours, this naturally leads to there being a demand for additional volunteers, to ensure The Swing continues to be a successful venture. If you would be interested in being part of the already established team of 57 volunteers, we would love to hear from you. Young people working towards their Duke of Edinburgh Award, or President or Queen's badge, are more than welcome to contribute towards their volunteer

hours. Working as part of The Swing team would also help build experience for their CV and enhance future employment opportunities. Please spread the word.

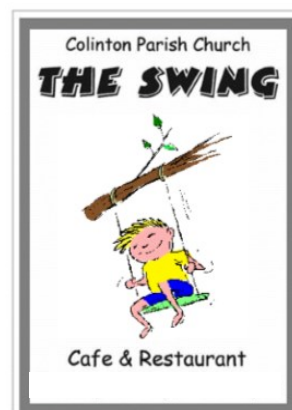
The plan also includes recruiting a **Catering Manager** to take up the post from early July, so that the menus, displays and layout, including a soft furniture area, can all be considered, planned and implemented in advance.

We are very much looking forward to welcoming you back to The Swing this coming August to sample home-made soups, lunches and a variety of scones and cakes. We have missed being an active part of the Colinton Village community and I am sure you have missed visiting The Swing in its beautiful setting.

Please do get in touch if you would like to become one of our volunteers, or indeed are interested in the role of Catering Manager, which is a paid position involving 20hrs of work per week - the contact details for the office are below. In the meantime, the Review Group will continue to plan ahead with enthusiasm and excitement.

Sheila Porteous
Swing Café Review Group

Contact details for the Church office are
0131 441 2232 / church.office@colinton-parish.com



From the Session Clerk

It is great to record that in-person services have resumed in Colinton Parish Church. As you will probably already be aware, we are limited to a maximum of 31 households at each service, in order to maintain two-metre distancing and a maximum of 50 people in the building. This may occasionally result in disappointment for some when we are fully booked (as was the case at Easter) but on most Sundays it appears to be a limit within

which we are able to work. It will help those making the arrangements for each Sunday service if you could book by the end of the preceding Thursday, if possible.

We are starting to explore with some groups if activities in the Loan Hall can restart. A suitable **Risk Assessment** will need to be put in place by **each group** and the nature of the group's activities needs to be such that, as restrictions gradually ease, they are allowed within the Scottish Government rules. If you are part of a group which previously met in the Loan Hall and would like to explore re-starting, then please contact **Sheila Porteous**, via the Church office.

The Property Group has reported that the repairs to the Ladies toilet

in the Loan Hall are now complete. Unfortunately, various items on the outside of the Loan Hall are now requiring attention, such as some repairs and replacement of harling. Additional work is also required on chimneys at the Manse. Last year we did not progress various items of property repair due to the difficulties in arranging work because of the Covid-19 restrictions, but it is already clear that our property repair expenditure will be much higher this year.

Finally, at the meeting of the Kirk Session which was held in March, we were pleased to congratulate our Minister, **Rolf Billes**, on the 25th anniversary of his ordination as a Minister.

Ian Morrison

THE FORMER SPYLAW PARK COACH HOUSE... AN UPDATE

Colinton Village Enterprise SCIO (Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation) has completed its purchase of the former coach house in Spylaw Park from the City of Edinburgh Council.

This was made possible via Community Asset Transfer legislation under the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015. We are especially thankful to the Scottish Land Fund which provided advice, support and funding for the purchase.

Exciting times lie ahead as we endeavour to transform this building into a community hub,



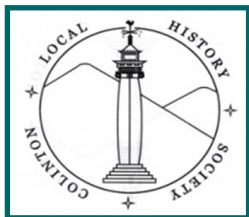
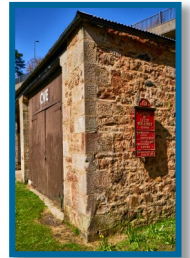
where the building's historic past will inspire creativity, connection and participation for generations to come. Please contact CVE SCIO's Trustee **Mike Harrower**, our Volunteer Co-ordinator, if you can donate your time to assist with immediate repair and maintenance needs of this property. He can be reached on email at colintonvillage@gmail.com.

Of course, we would also be delighted to hear from you if you wish to donate funds towards our ambitious development project!

Please take a look at our new website - cventerprise.org - where you can learn all about our organisation's history and ambitions and where you can sign up to become a CVE member.

Thank you

Photo credit:
Ian R.C. Cowie



WHO WAS JANE JOHNSTON?

As our season of talks has finished until the autumn, I thought that I would take this opportunity to present a few of our research articles about some well-known and not so well-known, past Colinton residents, in the hope that you may find them interesting.

The first one is a little-known lady, **Jane Johnston**, who was researched by **Richard Illingworth**. Jane was born in Edinburgh in 1809. She married John Johnston in 1828 and they had eight children. After her husband died, she moved with her children to Colinton and developed into a very shrewd businesswoman. She rented a cottage around the area where the **Colinton Inn** now stands and it is from one of her five rooms there that she started her grocery and spirits business in competition with the local Inn.

Her business prospered to such a degree that she was not only able to launch six of her children into careers, but accumulated enough money to invest in property. With many of the mills along the Water of Leith expanding, there was pressure from the mill owners to build a railway line. Jane foresaw that this would increase the demand for housing and, in 1863, purchased from the Merchant Company, a plot of land in Woodhall Road, including a narrow sliver of land, which is now the steps from Woodhall Road to the end of the Bridge in Bridge Road. The railway eventually came in 1874, at which time Jane gifted the sliver of land to the Railway Company to give easy access to the village and, shortly after, built her villa named **Jane Villa**, which she then rented out to successive families over the years.

By this time, Jane's public house had assumed the name of the **Colinton Inn** and, with business booming and the new bridge over the railway opened, directly connecting the village with Gillespie Road and beyond, Jane saw a great opportunity for further investment. She then purchased the garden of the old schoolhouse which, at that time, was just down from the Colinton Inn and then, in two phases, built a tenement with 12 flats and shops below, which still stands there today. Although not referred to by this name today, it was called **Janefield** well into the 20th century.

Due to the development of the Inn, Jane moved to a five-roomed apartment in **Janefield**, where she ran her grocery shop, as well as still being the landlady of the Colinton Inn. Before her death in Colinton in 1883, Jane had made further investments in several properties in Edinburgh, showing that she really was a successful businesswoman.

Derek Douglas
Colinton Local History Society



THE 'LIT' COLINTON PARISH CHURCH LITERARY SOCIETY

The Lit continues to work on plans to relaunch the regular weekly meeting as from **OCTOBER**. All guest speakers are being contacted and we await details of government restrictions being lifted. Full updated information will be provided as soon as possible.

Morag Marshall

Climate chaos is causing a hunger crisis

In Kitui, eastern Kenya, eight out of 10 people depend on rain to grow crops. Without water, staple crops, like maize and beans, wither and die. People can't earn a living and they go hungry. People are forced to walk further and further to collect water. This daily burden robs them of the chance to farm and grow food for their families. Elderly women and children are especially vulnerable and often face robbery or conflict, as people battle over scarce resources. Cows, sheep and goats are becoming weaker and weaker. They can't produce milk or be sold. People struggle to cope. Lives are at risk. Families need every last drop to survive this climate chaos. Christian Aid is working with its local partner to build earth and sand dams and rock catchments, so people can harvest water near their homes.

Meet two women - Rose and Florence

Rose provides for her grandchildren who live with her, but extreme weather (from severe drought to flooding) robs her of what they need to survive - a reliable source of water. Every morning, after having nothing to eat, she sets out on a long, dangerous journey to collect water. The full jerry cans are heavy - 40 litres of water weigh 40kg. "Because I am old, I can't walk fast. When I get home (which is six hours later), I have no energy to do anything else."

Rose needs every last drop to survive climate chaos

"When I was young, the rain would fall at the right time and there was plenty of food." She wishes her grandchildren could have the same experience; instead, she hopes that her sacrifices will give them the chance of a better future. There is an earth dam just minutes away from Rose's home. It should be a lifeline but it's not wide or deep enough for everyone's needs. They need a bigger dam to help them capture the rainfall and create a long-lasting source of water for their families.

What happens when the search for water does not consume people's lives? What happens when people have the water they need to thrive?

Florence is a joyful woman, full of life, love and laughter. The women in her farming group look up to her. She's courageous and kind - a survivor. A few years ago, her husband died. Her children were hungry. She had to walk for hours to collect water, as Rose does now. However, with help from Christian Aid's local partner, Florence and her community were able to build a dam together, just 30 minutes from her house. Florence grows tomatoes, onions and chillies on her farm. Her children can eat healthy, nutritious vegetables and she has enough produce left to sell. She also uses the dam to keep bees since the microclimate of plants growing around the dam means the bees don't need to fly long distances to search for nectar. Florence also sells the honey.

"I have been sustained by the earth dam. My life has changed. I am very happy. You can see it in my face - my face is shining. I have strength and power."



*Photo credits:
Christian Aid/Adam Finch*

**Blessings for all in need**

You can see Florence's strength and power as she hauls heavy buckets to water her crops. You can see her strength and power as she sings to encourage the women with whom she farms. You can see her strength and power as she takes climate justice into her own hands. She is thankful to people who have made donations to help build the earth dam, but she knows others are struggling and wishes that the same blessings she has received will be granted to them.

CHRISTIAN AID WEEK

Christian Aid Week is, like most other things, very different this year. We are putting out as many envelopes as we can, but not collecting them. There will be an address on the envelope which shows where they can be dropped off. If you don't receive an envelope and would like one, please 'phone or email me. If you would prefer to donate online, we have a Colinton Christian Aid JustGiving page. This is the link:

<https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/Colinton-Christian-Aid-Committee-Edinburgh3>



**Thank you.
Patricia Brignall**

0131 441 1184
patriciabrignall@gmail.com

Readers might like to know that there will be a Christian Aid sale of books, toys, games and jigsaws taking place at

**St Andrew's and St George's West Church
13 George Street, Edinburgh EH2 2PA**

*on Saturday 15 May from 10am - 4pm and
Monday 17 May & Tuesday 18 May from 10am - 4pm*



COLINTON GARDEN CLUB

We have had three extremely successful Zoom meetings this year, with online talks from Colin Wren on work by the National Trust for Scotland (NTS) in the lovely gardens at **Newhailes House**, Nancy Stevens on **Japanese Gardens** and Caroline Thomson on **Backhouse Rossie Narcissus**. The 2020 to 2021 session of the Colinton Garden Club drew to a close with the **AGM** held, via Zoom, on 26th April.

Due to the unpredictability of Covid restrictions, we will not be engaging in any of our usual Club outings or activities during the summer. However, an exciting programme of talks is already planned for our new session, which gets underway in September. With any luck, these will take place in the Dreghorn Loan Hall.

We look forward to meeting everyone again in person. In the meantime, we look forward to a sunny summer of gardening!

www.colintongardens.org.uk

Tulips, CGC. Newhailes photo courtesy NTS. Painting by Lorraine Robinson.



PARISH REGISTER



WEDDING

Saturday 24 April 2021
Christine McGowan Smyth and
John Campbell

FUNERALS

Aileen Thomson 10.12.2020
Elisabeth (Betty) Swanson 11.01.2021
Roberta Martin 27.01.2021
Michael (Mike) Francis Clarke
24.01.2021
David Dick 25.01.2021
Alexander Ian (Ian) Arnot 26.01.2021
Iain Roper-Caldbeck 02.02.2021
Margaret Davie 18.02.2021
Angus Bostock 17.02. 2021
Sheila Mitchell 02.03. 2021
Isobel Paul 11.03.2021



DISABILITY INCLUSION UPDATE

Do you know that you can turn on captions (subtitles) for online church services? This lets you read the words as they are being spoken. You will find details of how to do this in the **Scottish Churches Disability Group (SCDG)**'s newsletter for April. The newsletter also offers an article about hands-on healing and a

story about how one disabled person takes part in church services. You can find the newsletter in 'Word' which is a good format if you wish to read the newsletter on a screen. This is available at:

<http://scdg.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/SCDG-newsletter-April-2021.docx>

and in pdf (a good format if you wish to print the newsletter) at

<http://scdg.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/SCDG-newsletter-April-2021.pdf>

If you'd like to read previous issues of SCDG's newsletter they are available at <http://scdg.org.uk/newsletters/>. If you'd like to subscribe to the SCDG newsletter, please contact the SCDG Newsletter Editor, Barbara Graham, on email at barbara.graham74@btinternet.com or by telephone on 01563 522 108.

Scottish Churches Disability Group also offers other useful information regarding disabled people in churches on its website at <http://scdg.org.uk/hints-and-tips>



COLINTON PARISH CHURCH

Colinton Parish Church of Scotland, Edinburgh (Registered Charity No SC010313)
Dell Road, Edinburgh, EH13 0JR - 0131 441 2232 - www.colinton-parish.com

