

THE BULLETIN

THE MAGAZINE OF
CORSTORPHINE CRAIGSBANK
PARISH CHURCH

Where **Life** is celebrated, **Love** is affirmed, and **Grief** and **Joy** are shared



All Are Welcome



Craigsbank Church Centre
East Craigs Church Centre
www.craigsbankchurch.org.uk

Late Summer
2024



DATES FOR YOUR **DIARY**

'Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path' Psalm 119

Autumn Services 2024

All morning services start at 10.30am

September

- Sunday 1 Craigsbank – Communion service
- Sunday 8 East Craigs – Communion service
- Sunday 15 Craigsbank – Harvest Thanksgiving
- Sunday 22 East Craigs – Harvest Thanksgiving
- Sunday 29 Craigsbank halls – Café Church

October

- Sunday 6 Craigsbank
- Sunday 13 East Craigs
- Sunday 20 Craigsbank – Voting on Basis of Union
- Sunday 27 East Craigs

November

- Sunday 3 Craigsbank
- Sunday 10 East Craigs – Remembrance Sunday
- Sunday 17 Craigsbank – Communion service
- Sunday 24 East Craigs – Communion service

'Don't judge each day by the harvest you reap but by the seeds that you plant' Robert Louis Stevenson

TREKKING FROM COAST TO COAST



On my cross-country trek this summer I admired many a woodland forest and farmland crop cycling from Stranraer in Ayrshire to Berwick-upon-Tweed just across the border. How lush the mountainsides of the Galloway Forest Park stood to the west of Dumfries and how fertile the grain fields lay in the Tweed Valley to the east of Kelso. I crossed many babbling burns and sprawling rivers, met lovely, interesting people on route, and had the stimulating experience of cycling through all kinds of changing Scottish weather.

I managed to cycle the almost 200 miles peacefully in four days, grateful for the civil grace that is generally offered to cyclists on out-of-town Scottish roads. At day's end I pitched my wee tent and camped outside Newton Stewart, Dumfries and Hawick. Apart from the wide range of flora I cycled through and all the types of farm animals I cycled past, I was blessed to see many birds of prey and waterfowl, various types of deer, and smaller animals.

Two inspirational community hubs impressed me as I stopped for a light lunch at each. The first was the Catstrand Arts & Visitor Centre in New Galloway in the picturesque Glenkens area. Getting off the bicycle in dreich weather the welcome was hearty and the food very tasty. But what really caught my attention was the number and variety of community-building arts events they offered in the wee artistic restaurant and the modest performance hall in this reconfigured former school building. No wonder it was recently voted the Cultural Champion of the region. The other was the Old School Hub and Cafe in the tranquil and scenic Valley of the White Esk. Having just summited a few steep ridges, my tired legs appreciated the lunchtime stop in the truly welcoming hub with its cafe and bar. They had similarly tastefully converted an old school into an artistic community centre that included a pleasant playground, community garden, quaint village shop, spacious art exhibition hall and a performance lounge.

Both of these creative community hubs are testimonies to how people's wellness is enhanced when art, community and hospitality are combined in existing buildings.

I could write about some of my experiences of the beauty of nature in Dumfries and in the



Borders areas, but I reckon JB Selkirk captured it so well in his lovely poem a century ago, 'A Border Burn':

*Ah, Tam! Gie me a Border burn
That canna rin without a turn,
And wi' its bonnie babble fills
The glens amang oor native hills.
How men that ance have ken'd about it
Can leeve their after lives withoot it
I canna tell, for day and nicht
It comes unca'd for to my sicht.
I see't this moment, plain as day,
As it comes bickerin' owre the brae,
Atween the clumps o' purple heather,
Glistenin' in the summer weather,
Syne divin' in below the grun',
Where, hidden frae the sicht and sun,
It gibbers like a deid man's ghost
That clamours for the licht it's lost,
Till oot again the loupin' limmer,
Comes dancin' doon through shine and shimmer
At heidlang pace, till wi' a jaw
It jumps the rocky waterfa',
And cuts sic cantrips in the air,
The picter-pentin' man's despair;
A row'ntree bus' oot ower the tap o't,
A glassy pule to kep the lap o't,
While on the brink the blue harebell
Keeks ower to see its bonnie sel'.
And sittin' chirpin' a' its lane
A water-waggy on a stane.
Ay, penter lad, thraw to the wund
Your canvas, this is holy grund:
Wi' a' its highest airt acheevin',
That picter's deed, and this is leevin.*

Alan Childs


UNION WITH OUR NEIGHBOURS

Many of you will know that since 2018 the General Assembly has been working to develop a Radical Action Plan to restructure the Church of Scotland, essentially downsizing the Kirk. Since then, subsequent General Assembly decisions confirmed the plan to reduce the number of ministry posts across the country by about 40% as well as significantly reducing the number of church properties. This was done partly because of the steep continued decline of church members, declining finances, high costs of maintaining too many old buildings, and partly because the Scotland we live in today has very different patterns of church-going and belief from those of earlier generations. Radical changes had to be made for the Church of Scotland to remain viable and effective.

As a result, each presbytery was allocated an agreed number of posts to be distributed as that presbytery decided, through what is known as the Presbytery Mission Plan. In what was then Edinburgh Presbytery (we have since joined with the Presbytery of West Lothian), the number of ministry posts was to decrease from 78 to 48 – this included parish ministers and ministry support workers such as youth workers, parish assistants and deacons who were funded not by individual local churches, but by

the central church. After a lot of hard work and planning, and various Presbytery meetings and Kirk Session meetings, a plan was agreed for the whole of Edinburgh and West Lothian Presbytery. Everywhere across our own presbytery and in every other presbytery is required to make radical changes, not just us.



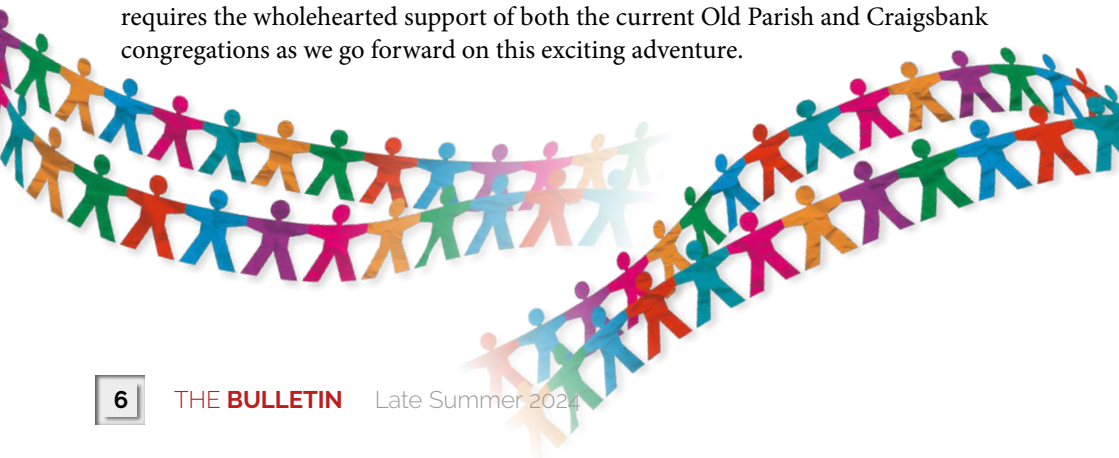


It was agreed by Presbytery that in our area of Edinburgh, the ministry posts in our local grouping of five congregations – St Andrews Clermiston, Craigsbank, Corstorphine Old Parish, St Annes, and St Ninians – should be reduced from five to three-and-a-half ministry posts – with St Ninian’s, St Annes and St Andrews becoming a united charge with one minister and a part time ministry support role which could be a pastoral worker or youth worker or whatever they decide is needed.

Meanwhile, and **this is the bit that concerns us**, the Old Parish and Craigsbank were allocated two posts within a union structured as a team ministry. The reason for retaining both, contrary to the downsizing impetus elsewhere in Presbytery and the country, is the rapid growth in population in the extraordinary large number and areas of new housing developments to the west of Maybury Road – which will be within our Parish. Therefore, one of the posts would be allocated as a pioneer minister in the vast new housing development while the other post would be as the minister of the united charge of Craigsbank and the Old Parish. So, Alan and Moira would remain in this area, but one would be the pioneer minister in the western expansion, and one would be the more traditional parish minister for the united parish.

How will that work in practice?

Pioneer ministry is a specialist field, with the pioneer minister working in an environment that changes every day – new houses, new communities, new habits forming – and being part of that community as a church presence, but not yet necessarily with a church premises to which people can be invited. Instead, pioneer ministry means finding new ways and times of worship such as gathering for meals or groups, growing disciples, forming relationships, working with schools and others to support and encourage and build faith. The goal is to form a new worshipping community in due course, but initially pioneering involves sensing the work of the Spirit of God amongst the local people, serving flexibly and responsively. For the pioneering ministry to succeed to the west of Maybury requires the wholehearted support of both the current Old Parish and Craigsbank congregations as we go forward on this exciting adventure.



The **traditional ministry** is more of a known quantity – conducting worship, school chaplaincy, pastoral care, community links over the area currently cared for by Craigsbank, East Craigs and the Old Parish. The minister and teams will continue to make connections, encourage faith, respond to changing times and habits, as well as bringing together two congregations.

Since the beginning of this year a steering group, consisting of seven members from each congregation, has met monthly and we have discussed and discerned where we might be being led and what is possible in this new partnership. One of our challenges has been the question of buildings – the five churches in our area grouping have been instructed to dispose of at least one church building, in line with the General Assembly’s general instruction.

Here are the five areas our steering group have discussed, provisionally agreed to by both Kirk Sessions, and which we now want to let the wider congregation know about to give you an idea of our direction of travel:

1. Alan, the current minister of Craigsbank, becomes the pioneer minister in the western expansion, and Moira from the Old Parish becomes the parish minister of the united parish.
2. Two different styles of Sunday morning services will be held every week, one in the Old Parish and one at East Craigs centre: one service being contemporary and family-focused, geared towards the younger (and possibly less ‘churched’) people of our parish, and the other a more traditional service. Each week the venue for these services will alternate.
3. Craigsbank church sanctuary and halls would be retained as a basis for missionally reaching out with the love of God to the greater Corstorphine and west of Edinburgh area through performing and creative arts. The halls and sanctuary have already been used for various performances over the years and have even more potential as a community hub serving the greater area creatively. The sanctuary would still be used for united services for the two congregations on the typically four times of the year when there is a fifth Sunday in the month, providing an opportunity for the whole congregation to come together and meet and mingle. It could also be used for some of the larger services to accommodate the whole enlarged congregation, such as Easter Sunday.

We recognise there are many challenges involved in this proposal. Congregations love their own churches because they are so much more than bricks and mortar. They are places where couples have been married, children baptised, and the lives of loved ones celebrated. They are also places where we meet friends and share memories and feel safe. Not having weekly worship in Craigsbank would mean that members there are being asked to make an enormous change in their lives and we do not underestimate the courage that change will require.

Also, having two services in different places at the same time presents its own challenges. People might be tempted to attend what they consider to be



'their' church every fortnight when the traditional service is being held there, and to take a week off in between. We hope that will not be the case. Instead, we hope our members see the necessity of change which will lead to growth and find, in travelling between the Old Parish and East Craigs, new fellowship and friendship. There is parking at both East Craigs and around the Old Parish and the number 31 bus stops within a few minutes' walk of both churches regularly, taking a whole 11 minutes to travel from one church to the other.

And we will need your help. You might choose to come along to the family style worship where kind, caring, encouraging adults will be needed to welcome younger families to more informal worship, café church or messy church, and this in itself will be a bit of pioneering ministry, a wee bit unknown, but very much needed in our churches where young people are missing.

To establish and develop our shared services, to keep the show on the road, we will need flexible and willing people to volunteer for door duty or tea duty, to travel from one place to another and actively meet with people from both congregations. We similarly need volunteers and prayerful support of the pioneering to the western expansion as this is essentially our collective 'baby' that needs to be nurtured into existence.

4. That we commit to reaching out to younger demographic groups in our future parish, without neglecting our current membership. The Church of Scotland has embarked on a national Growing Young campaign over the past few years that we are planning to engage in actively to help us to reach out more impactfully to younger generations and grow our church membership amongst them too.
5. There should be a number of working groups to help the new united congregation function. The steering group, proposes that we form new working groups, such as:
 - a logistics group overseeing finance, properties, IT and HR.
 - a worship group which will help to plan and lead our two different weekly worship services.
 - a pastoral group to help visit and care pastorally for our members and parish.
 - a mission group, looking out into the parish to share the love of God in relevant ways and to grow disciples of Jesus Christ.
 - a social group helping to grow friendship relationships amongst people and to bring the two congregations together.
 - a pioneering group (supporting the work in the western expansion).
 - a creative arts ministry group developing the Craigsbank buildings into a missional creative and performing arts community hub.
 - a Growing Young group to help the congregation grow our ministry to younger generations

These are broad groups which will contain various smaller groups, but these are our 'starter' groups which will realise their strengths and needs as they develop and become established. Please think prayerfully about where you might offer your help and talents.

The steering group has a remit to produce 'a basis of union as a team ministry', which we hope will be approved by Presbytery by the end of this year. These five points of proposal are at the core of the basis of union and team ministry that we want to present to our Kirk Sessions and our congregations. You will then be able to vote to accept or not – before presenting the same proposals to Presbytery by the end of this year.

The role of the Elder

As part of the overall union the two Kirk Sessions will become one, and elders will be tasked with working out how this new church will evolve and develop, building trust and friendship within the church as well as in the community we serve. Elders will be given the opportunity to continue as active elders or to use the opportunity to step back, should they so wish.

You can imagine how much time has been given to these discussions. Elaine Thompson and Jane Walker, the Session Clerks from Craigsbank and the Old Parish, have worked together brilliantly. Bold and brave decisions have been put forward and graciously debated and accepted. Possibilities are emerging, but we recognise that there is a certain amount of sacrifice, uncertainty and the unknown, and a leap of faith required by all of us.

A very practical way of being part of the union is in deciding a name for the new congregation – we will be asking for suggestions over the next few weeks, something that reflects who we are and where we are, so get your thinking caps on, please. Send suggestions to administrator@craigsbankchurch.org.uk or mention it to Elaine or Jane by 10 September.

The likely timeline for the unification process is as follows: decide on a new name by the end of September; have both congregations vote on the formal Basis of Union by the end of October; formally become one congregation on 1 January 2025; and implement the changed worship services just after Easter.

Your prayers and gracious consideration in all this will be most important.





DOORS OPEN DAYS 2024

Routes, Networks and Connections



Craigsbank sanctuary is an uplifting, striking place of peace representing the innovative designs of the 1960s. Together with the older halls, the complete set of buildings represents the ongoing responses to the local community's 'Living History' from the original Church Planting in 1937, then the post-war developments and finally in 1966 the unique Sanctuary designed with references to local worshipping communities from the 17th Century.

We will once again throw open our doors for the Edinburgh Doors Open Days festival over the weekend of 28 and 29 September (co-ordinated by Napier University).

Since Craigsbank first participated in Doors Open Days, almost 600 festival visitors have enjoyed our buildings and events. This year, we will be open on both days (Sat 10.00am – 3.00pm and Sun 12 noon – 3.00pm) and offer musical and artistic events, exhibitions, guided tours and refreshments. The theme is Routes, Networks and Connections. Do encourage neighbours and friends to come and discover what is behind our doors.

'Doors Open Days is Scotland's largest free festival, celebrating places and stories, both new and old. Last year, over 100 venues opened their doors to the public, celebrating the rich history and vibrant culture that defines our remarkable region.'

Here's a tiny taste of what visitors had to say last year...

- Fantastic experience. Wonderful building: everyone so friendly and helpful.
- Thanks for taking part in Doors Open Day – loved the building and music
- So impressed! This 'hidden gem' is amazing. Intriguing architecture. Even more I admire the way you form and run your church community.
- A delightful space, we really enjoyed our visit. First seen from the top deck of the Glasgow bus.
- Beautiful...Magical...Spiritual
- It was a thrill to find such a beautiful modernist building in a part of Edinburgh we did not know. The quality of light and the serenity of the building make it very special apart from its functional success.
- Very beautiful building, inside and out.
- What a joy it is to have discovered this incredible place.
- The nicest church I have visited in a long time. Architecturally stunning and a surprisingly warm and inviting space. A reflection of the congregation, no doubt.
- This church has the WOW! factor from the moment you catch sight of it and on entering – so unexpected to see the configuration which is so dramatic and inspiring. A wonderful space for worship – what a lucky congregation you are to have this gem.

TAKE THE WEIGHT OFF

A new bench is now in place, on the path at the west side of Fauldburn Park, for all walkers to enjoy a rest and admire the summer flowers and fruit trees planted by the Eco Group with the help of Edinburgh Council Gardening Team. Our thanks go to the late Esther Davidson who initiated the project, attentive to the need of many for a resting spot. And to the Edinburgh Airport Community Fund which financed the project and Anne Currie and the Eco team for making the application.

In the Autumn the tiny team hope to arrange a visit from a fruit tree expert who will advise on care of the trees. Recently Liz Brash from the group had a visit to Victoria Park to see how their 'Friends of the Park', as a larger group, are doing great work in caring for the area. Come and swell the numbers and help care for the area in this part of East Craigs.



ANYWAY FROM MOTHER TERESA

People are often unreasonable, illogical and self centered;

Forgive them anyway.

If you are kind, people may accuse you of selfish, ulterior motives;

Be kind anyway.

If you are successful, you will win some false friends and some true enemies;

Succeed anyway.

If you are honest and frank, people may cheat you;

Be honest and frank anyway.

What you spend years building, someone could destroy overnight;

Build anyway.

If you find serenity and happiness, they may be jealous;

Be happy anyway.

The good you do today, people will often forget tomorrow;

Do good anyway.

Give the world the best you have, and it may never be enough;

Give the world the best you've got anyway.

You see, in the final analysis, it is between you and your God;

It was never between you and them anyway.

Inscribed on the wall of Mother Teresa's children's home in Calcutta, and attributed to her.



WHEN ANIMALS GET THE NEIGHBOURS TOGETHER

A summer's parable

One of the children's books I have on my shelf is *Six Dinner Sid*. It's about a cat who lives comfortably in his neighbourhood between six houses, being overfed and pampered. The neighbours don't visit or talk to each other, and so everyone thinks that Sid is only their cat. Time passes and Sid gets a cough and needs to see the vet. When the sixth person takes poor Sid to the same vet, he puts two and two together and realises that Sid is everyone's cat, everyone's shared joy and responsibility. For the first time, the neighbours are forced to look each other in the eye and talk. All thanks to one cat.



A few weeks ago, we experienced a situation that reminded me of this story. As you know, the whole of Britain is sort of an island (made up of many islands) and we are surrounded by sea. And where there is sea, there are seagulls. By the way, apparently they are no longer seagulls. Just gulls. So, park gulls, McDonalds gulls, highway gulls. And we have gulls – church gulls. Yes, some gulls live on the roof of Craigsbank.

On that particular Sunday there was a cacophony of gulls squawking at the church. Alan was on leave so we were unaware of the drama. But not so the neighbours who live behind the church. Uncles and aunts and children went to investigate. What they discovered was some gulls trapped in an air vent, in a metal protective box high up on the roof. The gulls screeched and squawked incessantly. Not only the imprisoned ones, but other gulls were also putting up a racket. The street gulls and even the cricket-field gulls came to sit on the roof and call out. The people from the neighbourhood stood and felt sorry for the church gulls. One lady knew what she had to do. She called the RSPB, and before long they turned up with screeching tyres. They assessed the situation, looked at the risks and some safety concerns were raised.

The women decided that it was dangerous for them to climb up onto the slanted tile roof. They turned to the crowd. 'This problem,' one said. 'Is the church's problem. You will have to let the priest or minister know. If they cannot solve it, then maybe call the fire department.'

At this point you may wonder why we as the manse family adjacent to the

church were unaware of the commotion? Maybe it was because the cacophony inside our household (watching the Olympic games, loud music from the children, Spek's barking and chickens' clucking) might have masked the gulls' calls.

The worried crowd returned to their homes and the minister was informed of the state of affairs. Only once the police choir finish their Sunday evening practice could the extendable long ladder be retrieved from the church hall. Then some curious choir members, Alan with a long ladder, and me with a fishing net and patchwork blanket geared up for action.

One of the choir members is a paramedic and he held the ladder steady, but I think he was worried that there were too many risks and hoped that first aid would not be needed.

Meanwhile I had prepared a packet of chicken breasts for the gulls, in case the rescue attempt failed. Then at least the gulls would have dinner.

The team effort of climbing, holding hands, shouting advice and neighbours peering over fences and cheering was mercifully successful as three gulls were caught in the fishing net and then released one by one. Each gull soared high into the sky and was greeted by their fellow neighbourhood gulls.

Our human neighbours applauded and the poor ambulance man breathed a sigh of relief when the reverend finally stood safe again with his two feet on solid ground.

Istie Childs

SUNSHINE ON FAULDBURN

On 22 June the Eco Group and the Children & Young Families Group from Craigsbank & East Craigs Church organised a Fun Day and Picnic at Fauldburn Park. The idea arose from the wish to have an event which would attract young families and generate a community spirit.

After days of rain there was some apprehension as to whether we would need to resort to plan B – the church hall. However, our prayers were answered and at least 20 families enjoyed an afternoon of activities ranging from football, touch rugby, rounders and obstacle races to the delicate task of keeping the Jenga Tower standing. Drinks and biscuits were distributed to the children to build up their strength between activities. The parents were able to join in the activities or enjoy being spectators and chatting with each other.

Everyone agreed it had been a day to remember. And one to repeat.



SOME MEMORIES SHARED



We were greatly saddened to hear of the death of Rev Robert Kerr, at the age of 70, who served this congregation as Community Minister from 1980 – 1983 (and as student minister before that from 1978 – 1979). Robert and his wife Anne were great friends to the congregation, with many close friendships continuing long after they emigrated to Canada including Donald Clark and Doreen Henderson who visited them there. And of course, George and Liz Grubb.

Robert and Anne were married in 1975 and moved into East Craigs in the summer of 1980 to take up the newly created post. He had a good and fun-filled working relationship with Rev George Grubb and was heavily involved in the Young People's group. The highlight of that involvement was a wild minibus trip to Mull where the group conducted a service in the local church, tamed the local minister's garden and burned an unwanted organ.

He was also the first chaplain to the newly formed Boys' Brigade Company at Craigsbank in 1980.

Robert moved with his young family from Edinburgh to Vancouver and then on to become the ordained minister of the church of St Columba in Parksville, a city on Vancouver Island, in 1989. He retired in April 2016.

Robert and Anne last visited Craigsbank in May 2019 when they joined us for tea after the service and went for a meal with the 'not so young' people's group.

He is survived by his wife, Anne, and their two sons James and Philip.

The following appears on the website of the Knox Presbyterian Church:

The Reverend Robert Kerr died on August 3rd. Robert served the congregation and community at St. Columba Presbyterian Church, Parksville from 1989 to 2016. He was known to many through his service in Presbytery, Synod and General Assembly work. His wisdom and humour will be greatly missed. As a man of deep faith, we have comfort knowing he is in God's eternal keeping and presence. A memorial service will be held at Trinity Presbyterian Church, Campbell River on August 31st at 11am. Please pray for comfort for Anne, and their children James and Philip.

With thanks to the friends of Robert who remember him fondly.

Joy-filled baptisms

We welcomed the Hendersons through baptism on Easter Sunday, 31.3.24: Colin, Nikki and Isla.



Those we have lost in recent weeks

- Margaret MacColl, 11.3.24
- Nan Prentice, 19.4.24
- Betty Hendry, 29.6.24
- Rev Robert Kerr (in Canada), 3.8.24

Remember their families in your prayers and the good times we had in their company.



RAMBLERS IN DUNBLANE

Here are a few photos of the Community Garden in Dunblane where our Rambling group hope to take their next walk. The date is still to be decided but we hope these photos might tempt you to join in. The poem on the rock particularly appealed:

*God's Garden
The kiss of the sun for pardon
The song of the birds for mirth
One is nearer God's heart in a garden
Than anywhere else on earth*
By Dorothy Frances Gurney



Keep an eye on the website for updates on dates and times.
Christine and Penny



AN OLYMPIC HERO – 100 YEARS AFTER.



2024 marks the centenary of an amazing athletic achievement.

Douglas Lowe won the 800m gold medal in Paris and he repeated that feat in the 1928 Olympics. Despite this there has been little mention of him. There has been greater mention of another athlete who struck gold in the 400m and bronze in the 200m, at the 1924 Olympics, before retiring from athletics altogether the following season. Despite this short career his life story has attracted far more interest than Olympians with more medals and more appearances.

It has been impossible to ignore the centenary of Eric Liddell's success. It was the subject of constant comment by broadcasters, the press and social media. In addition, there has been widespread coverage of the activities of the Eric Liddell Community who operate out of a converted church building at Holy Corner, Edinburgh. Commemorative events included an Eric Liddell exhibition in the Scottish Parliament; a memorial service at St Giles; a pathway across the Meadows renamed in his honour; a plaque commemorating his success in the area of the 1924 track.

There are two films based on Eric Liddell's life story. 'Chariots of Fire' won an Oscar for Best Picture and three other Oscars. It ended with Liddell winning his gold and finished with a caption which stated that he returned to China and died in a Japanese camp. The second film was released in 2016 and starred Joseph Fiennes as Liddell. It was released as 'the Last Race' and also titled 'On the Wings of Eagles'.

It told the story of his reaction to the occupation of China and his decision to remain there after the Japanese invasion whilst his wife and children departed for Canada. He stayed behind to look after children in the Japanese camp where he was interned. The film had limited cinema release and had minimal press attention.

The fact that he had two Biopics leads to an obvious question – what made Eric Liddell so different from other athletes?

Eric Liddell was born in China, went to School in London, attended Edinburgh University and then spent the remainder of his days in China. His sporting career was short lived but remarkable. He played International Rugby for Scotland for a couple of seasons and was capped seven times before giving it up to concentrate on athletics. He competed in one Olympics and then stopped. His career pattern is different from most revered athletes who will attempt to gain as many titles and medals as possible before injuries and age take their toll.

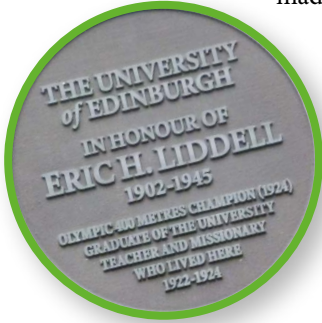
© Kim Traynor

The appeal of Liddell is that, despite his dedication to his sport, his life was focused on a greater goal than success on the track. He was determined to return to China as a missionary as soon as possible. Even a non-Christian he was an example of someone who considered that there was more to life than the sporting arena and saw beyond his short moment of glory.

That does not mean that Liddell didn't put in enough effort for his sport. Whilst studying for a science degree he toured the country preaching as well as training. He was known to make good use of his time and was in control of all aspects of his life. This is why 'Chariots of Fire' contains an obvious plot hole.

'Chariots of Fire' is a fictionalised account of his life. It contains characters who did not exist and events that did not take place. In the film Liddell only discovers that the heats for the 100m race are to be on a Sunday when he boards the boat to France. It seems highly unlikely that Liddell and his trainer would have prepared for the Olympics in ignorance of the timetable of events. The fact that he also competed in the 200m, and won bronze, before he ran the 400m was not mentioned. Despite this you are likely to encounter blogs from preachers who base their writings on the belief that the film version is true.

In reality Liddell was well aware of this problem months before the Olympics. The reason that he won the 400m, in world record time by six yards,



© Alexandquan

is that he had been training for that event and not the 100m. There was a long running dispute with the British Olympic Association (BOA) over which race he should be running. But Liddell was not to be turned. Eventually the BOA caved in. In the months leading up to the Olympics he had been the subject of press criticism for renouncing the 100m as he was the British record holder in the 'short dash'. He was labelled as a sprinter who would be unable to last the 400m distance. The fact that he won meant that there was a sensational result for the newspapers to print.

In short Liddell's triumph in the 400m was not as a result of a sudden last-minute 'Damascene conversion' to a race he had not trained for. It was something that had been many months in the planning.

If there is any biblical passage that summarises this chapter of his life it is 2 Timothy 1.7:

'For God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power and love and self-control'

Graeme Henderson

BACK FOR AUTUMN

New faces always welcome

- Craigsbank Toddle Tots returns to its usual slot on Wednesdays, 10.30am – 12 noon. Now back.
- East Craigs Fellowship Group will start back on 26 September at 2.30pm with a musical interlude.
- Lunch Club resumes in the Craigsbank small hall on 18 September with lunch served at 12.30pm.



Lift up your voice this Autumn!

- Junior Music Makers (pre-school to P5) and not-so-junior Music Makers (P6 to S2) both restart on Thursday 12 September. These groups meet in the sanctuary at Craigsbank. The youngest group from 5.00pm – 5.45pm and the older group from 5.45pm – 6.45pm.
- Our adult singers restarted on Thursday 22 August at 6.45pm, at Craigsbank.

LOOKING BACK WHILE LOOKING FORWARD



As we come to a crossroads in the life of Craigsbank and East Craigs, we can look back on those who came here before us.

On the baptismal roll records, the first name is Michael William Wood. The second is Margaret Adams Campbell. We have, I suspect (but please let me know if you have contact), lost sight of both of these individuals. The third, Ronald Macpherson Small, was baptised in the then new, stone hall-church in 1938.

Craigsbank offered him a Christian grounding for life. His father was an elder at Craigsbank and his grandfather would go on to help

lay the foundation stone

for the sanctuary in later years. His older brother, Ian (or Kiwi to many) returned to Craigsbank and was an elder there until his death. Ronald became known as 'Sam'. He was in the Scouts at our church throughout his childhood and early adult days, and performed in many a play on the stage of the Craigsbank hall.



Following school, Sam did his national service in the navy – a peacetime conscription – and truly travelled to lands so distant that few of us will see them. His service took him to the Republic of Fiji, New Zealand, Sri Lanka, Singapore, Kenya, Aden, and the Gulf of Aqaba, and through both the Panama and Suez canals on HMS Ulysses – a Type 15 Anti Submarine Frigate F17. And, on one occasion, on a fighter jet in the skies above.

It was a life he cherished but also one which took him to Christmas Island as part of Grapple Squadron for the Nuclear Tests. On 28 April 1958, at the age of 20, he sat on the deck in his shorts – the summer uniform – with no protection. He was faced away from the explosion until instructed to turn towards it, 60 seconds after the blast.

At the time, it was simply an order carried out. They even played football on the island after the test.

It took 66 years for the government to acknowledge the sacrifice made by those serving in the area who became part of the experiments. At the beginning of this year (2024), they received a commemorative Nuclear Test medal. Sam was one of the 1717 to receive the medal in recognition of his service at that time. It is estimated that around 40,000 British personnel witnessed the nuclear testing alongside military personnel, scientists and civil servants from Australia, New Zealand, Fiji and Kiribati.

Sam now lives in Musselburgh with his wife Elenor. They have two sons and five grandchildren.



OVER 90s AFTERNOON TEA

On 4 August, members of our congregation who are over the grand age of 90, gathered for a beautiful afternoon tea in Craigsbank halls. Homebaking from our hospitality team, beautifully laid tables with fine-china and laden cake stands, and exceptional company all combined to create a celebration of the life of the congregation.

Photographs by Jackie Rankine



THE GOOD WORK OF THE CARE VAN

The Care Van runs throughout the year to help the homeless in Edinburgh City Centre. More than 30 Churches within Edinburgh have a care van team(s) and take turns in taking out the van in the evening. The van goes out every night except for the night of the fireworks display at the end of the Edinburgh festival.

Ten volunteers from Craigsbank go out in groups of four. Christine (as team leader) selects who goes out, based on availability. Two serve and the other two deal with any clothes we have taken and go out to chat. Each team member goes out in the van roughly five or six times a year.



SUPPORT SERVICES

Cruse Bereavement Care provides support after the death of someone close including face-to-face, telephone, group support, as well as bereavement support for children.

Phone: 0845 600 2227 (Scotland)

ChildLine is a free, 24-hour confidential helpline for children and young people who need to talk.

Phone: 0800 1111

Macmillan Cancer Support provides medical, practical, emotional and financial support to cancer patients, their carers, friends and family.

Phone: 0808 808 0000

Carers UK provides support and information to those who look after an older, disabled or seriously ill family member or friend.

Phone: 0808 808 7777
(weekdays 10am-4pm)

Citizens Advice Service provides information on benefits, employment and housing and help on debt, credit and legal issues.

Phone: 0131 510 5510

Alzheimer Scotland provides information, advice and personalised support services across Scotland.

Phone: 0808 808 3000 (24 hours)

Samaritans is available for anyone struggling to cope and provide a safe place to talk 24 hours a day.

Phone: 116 123

SAMH (Scottish Association for Mental Health) can provide general mental health information and signpost you to your local services.

Phone: 0141 530 1000 (Mon-Fri 9 – 5)

Scotland's Domestic Abuse and Forced Marriage Helpline offers telephone information and support to anyone affected by domestic abuse or forced marriage.

Phone: Lines open 24/7 0800 027 1234

Care and Repair Edinburgh is an independent charity and is part of the Age Scotland family. They are part of the Age Scotland Independent Living services designed to help people live independently for as long as they want and are able. They offer a range of practical services to help people repair, improve or adapt their homes so that they may remain in their own homes in comfort and independence for as long as possible. They can be contacted either by emailing

reception@cre.scot
phoning 337 1111



CHURCH INFORMATION

Your District Elder or District Visitor

Name: _____

Telephone: _____

Email: _____

Minister

Rev Alan Childs

Tel: 0131 466 5196

Email: achilds@churchofscotland.org.uk

Session Clerk

Elaine Thompson

sessionclerk@craigsbankchurch.org.uk

Church Administrator

Sarah Keith

Tel: 0131 334 6365

Email: administrator@craigsbankchurch.org.uk

Office hours:

Monday and Tuesday at East Craigs Centre 9am-12pm

Thursday and Friday at Craigsbank Centre 9am-12pm

PROBLEMS WITH THE PHONE LINE

We are currently experiencing problems with the phoneline to the Craigsbank church office. Please use the temporary mobile number below while we wait for the line to be fixed.

07902 256110

YouTube Channel for videos

www.youtube.com/@craigsbankchurch

This QR code will take you to the youtube website



For more information visit our website

www.craigsbankchurch.org.uk

Many thanks to all who have contributed articles and photographs for this issue.

Craigsbank is a parish of the Church of Scotland
Charities number: SCO14719

