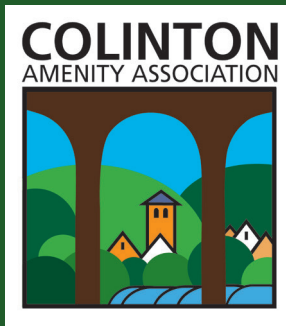


# Colinton Magazine



A Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation No. SC007466 [www.colinton-amenity.org.uk](http://www.colinton-amenity.org.uk) [caa@colinton-amenity.org.uk](mailto:caa@colinton-amenity.org.uk) Winter 2024

Produced and distributed by volunteers to 3,600 Colinton homes and businesses



Update on Colinton's  
'Gateway Mural'  
See page 16



# Colinton Magazine

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**Colinton Magazine** is brought to you by the Colinton Amenity Association, our neighbourhood's longest-serving volunteer charity, working to keep Colinton safe, happy and welcoming.

*Colinton Magazine* is changing and will become an annual publication. We will report on planning, environmental and transport issues; both resolved and pending the time of publication. We will offer news and features on interesting things happening in Colinton or that shine a light on our local history. This will be complimented by regular updates through our social media channels.

## Reader contributions

We are always keen to hear from our readers. If you have an idea for a story or want to write one for us or send in photos, please email us at [magazine@colinton-amenity.org.uk](mailto:magazine@colinton-amenity.org.uk) or write to the CAA Secretary (address below).

## Advertise in Colinton Magazine

Our design and print costs are offset by the appreciated support of local businesses. We encourage all our readers to support local shops, services and businesses so advertising in *Colinton Magazine* is an excellent way to tell locals what is on offer, where and when. If you would like to take out an ad, get in touch. We can also throw in advertising space on our website, at a discount. And we can sort out the artwork for you and advise on photos, wording etc. Find out more at [advertising@colinton-amenity.org.uk](mailto:advertising@colinton-amenity.org.uk)

## Join Colinton Amenity Association

We would really encourage you to join the CAA to help keep Colinton rated one of Edinburgh's (and Scotland's) best neighbourhoods and to support the continued existence of this magazine. For details go to our website at [www.colinton-amenity.org.uk](http://www.colinton-amenity.org.uk). For news and updates on local amenities and services, like us on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/Colinton-Amenity-Association](http://www.facebook.com/Colinton-Amenity-Association)

## About us

Colinton Amenity Association (CAA) is a voluntary charity set up in 1927. Our main aim is to preserve and enhance Colinton's amenity. Our work is organised by an executive committee elected by our members. We represent members' views to bodies such as Colinton Community Council, and to officers of the City of Edinburgh Council.

## How to contact us

Post to CAA secretary Wendy Evans, 65/1 Bonaly Road, EH13 0PB

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Front cover: Colinton Village Pharmacy. Photo: Eddie Banks



# Chairman's Report

## Tim Lawson Chair of Colinton Amenity Association



As I start to write this report, I have to confess some mixed emotions. This issue of *Colinton Magazine* will be the last one in this present format – a collection of news reports and our well-loved eclectic mix of historical, subject-orientated and Colinton-rich articles, garnered and pushed into shape by a small collection of Colinton Amenity Association volunteers with the help of a professional magazine designer, and delivered to each household in our area by a small army of volunteers, completely free-of-charge. The problems we have had financing the Magazine over the last five or so years have been well circulated and debated. The fall-off in local businesses buying advertising space worked well in the 2010s, but less so in recent years as advertising on social media and other outlets increased, so CAA ended up covering the shortfall of many hundreds of pounds for each issue. We held out for as long as we could, but this approach is unsustainable and so we have had to rethink our approach. I feel sad that something I have spent a decade directly involved in is having to end, but the world evolves and we have to move with the times.

The plan is to replace *Colinton Magazine* with a type of yearbook, reporting on all the great things going on locally, supplemented with articles about the Colinton locality and selected local people and what they do. It is planned to be a larger publication than the former 32-page format, but still in full colour and printed on quality glossy paper.

We will again be asking local businesses for their support – to be printed quite late in the year so that it remains a vehicle for augmenting a 'sense of belonging' to Colinton and its environs. It will be delivered free to CAA members, and available, for a small charge, to other residents from local outlets (tbc).

This in itself will not provide the short-term information about events and local societies' programmes, so we will explore setting up an online 'e-newsletter' that will be produced every one or two months: we are looking for local residents to help with this, particularly some of the younger members of our community who may well be better placed to produce this in a modern, energetic way. Do contact the CAA Secretary if you would like to help.

CAA and CCCT continue to organise the merger between the two organisations. We are just checking the finer points and potential legalities, but hope everything is tied up by the end of the year. We think we have a way forward so that the extraordinary fundraising and project work undertaken by CCCT over the years continues to be celebrated.

Although CAA will be the organisation maintaining the various projects henceforth, CCCT will continue to be a distinct group within CAA looking after 'local heritage' issues. This will be part of a reorganisation of the structure of CAA as we approach our centenary celebrations in 2027.

CAA has continued to pursue a number of enhancements to village amenity. These were mostly reported in the last issue of the Magazine, but a combination of a lack of manpower on our part (our active membership could usefully be bigger to 'spread the load') and having to deal with others whose communication with us has not been very responsive, have meant that things have moved rather slowly. A lot of energy has been expended to trying to find a resolution to the Dell Road footpath into Colinton Dell, now closed for over **four years!** We are grateful that Cllr. Jason Rust managed to bring a Motion before a meeting of the Full Council in August resulted in support that a resolution had to be found. As I write this report we hear that – magically – movements are afoot to reopen the footpath by the end of November after some minor engineering works. Such a shame that it has taken so long, but one of our great circular walking routes can now be re-established! Four new 'finger signs' are being manufactured for attaching to two of the fingerposts in the village, hopefully improving route information for visitors looking for the Colinton Tunnel Mural.

Now that planning permission has been granted for a revised version of a mural in Cuddies Lane, residents will have noticed that work has started with a mural of a scene at the old smiddy having been attached on the wall of Colinton Village Pharmacy (see cover). The funding of phase 2 of the project started at *Art in the Park* and we hope it won't be too long before we can start to see work on the main Cuddies Lane wall taking effect.

We hope that a few more residents will make themselves known to us, and be prepared to help CAA (with CCCT) continue to work to protect and enhance our natural and built environment. Please let the CAA Secretary know ([secretary@colinton-amenity.org.uk](mailto:secretary@colinton-amenity.org.uk)) if you can give us a little time and energy, or to ask for more information.

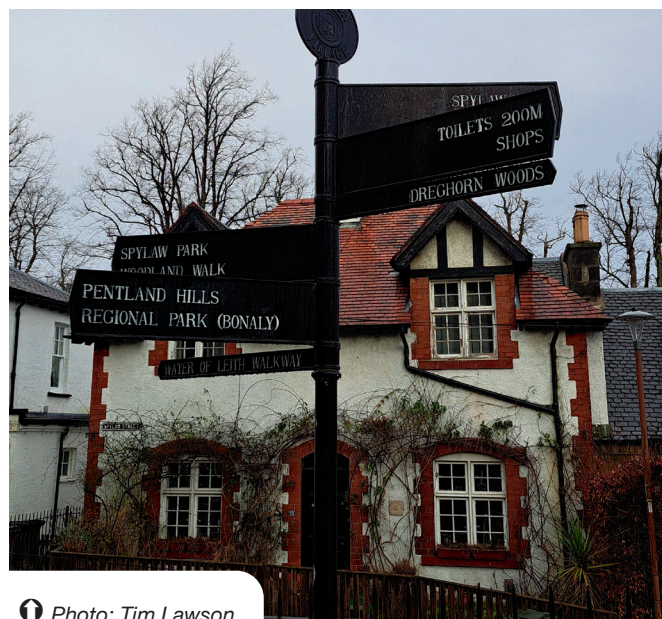


Photo: Tim Lawson



# Planning Convener's Report

By I M Gotts

The most important planning event in Colinton is currently very much alive, in the form of a Pre Application Consultation occurring in Colinton Bowling Club on 16<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> October between 3pm and 7pm. The application, by the DIO (Defence Infrastructure Organisation), is for an intensification of existing use of the Dreghorn Barracks site, all in connection with the proposed closure and disposal of the Redford Barracks. Ahead of closure, the relevant existing uses will be relocated to Dreghorn Barracks and Glencorse Barracks and the forthcoming application relates to the former. The proposed development is for:

***'Technical, accommodation and support facilities including a new medical centre, new offices, new accommodation blocks, new stores, new garage and workshops, a new sports pitch and car parking'.***

The plans on display illustrate the proposed layout of the new development. It is contained within the existing Dreghorn Barracks area and on the advice of the Council planners, it stops well short of the area occupied by

the former Dreghorn Castle and its related designed landscape. Nor does it have any impact on Dreghorn Woods. Although in Colinton terms this is a substantial development, I am quite comfortable with it and as things currently stand, I am not alerting the Executive to a perceived threat to our environment or amenity. I will however monitor progress and review and report on the planning application, once lodged.

Otherwise, there is currently an application for limited new car parking in support of Edinburgh Pentlands Parish Church formerly Colinton Parish Church. Members of the Church and users of the Swing Café will be very aware of the shortage of off-road parking in the immediate area and the application is designed to address this problem. The only serious option is to use part of the manse garden immediately beyond the cemetery surrounding the house at 8 Dell Road. Every effort seems to have been made to minimise any adverse impact through low key design, screening, and the use of environmentally sensitive materials. The Manse is a B listed building and the proposed development is located within its setting but the degree of impact is quite limited, and its screening from the C Listed southern cemetery, will also result in limited impact. The 'famous' Yew Tree in the Manse garden will not be affected.

It might be possible to argue that the scale of proposed parking is excessive while there is continuing uncertainty about the long term future of the Parish Church and any opinions would be welcome.

# Road and Transport Convener's Report

By Alex Robertson

Dreghorn Loan road surface remains an absolute horror show. Reviewing City of Edinburgh Council (CEC), Capital Allocations for 2024/25 shows that there is carriageway resurfacing planned before March 2025. Bonaly Road was resurfaced throughout the summer. Carriageway Surface Treatment (spray on road surface) has been signed off for Woodhall Road (I assume to fix the holes that opened up after the last application). Woodhall Bank has also had footway asphalt replacement signed off. There is a proposal for raised table and an uncontrolled pedestrian crossing plus footpath widening at the top of Bridge Street. The final layout of which is still in discussion with Colinton Community Council (CCC). Anyone with opinions on this design should reach out to CCC to engage in the conversation.

CEC reports that 36% of Colinton residents have access to offstreet parking and therefore could be interested in or have the ability to access home charging for an electric car. Their report estimated that 10% of cars in Edinburgh will be electric by 2026, which is positive for air quality

and noise reduction, but at the end of the day a car is a car, causing traffic and congestion and potentially more road damage than a similar sized fossil fuel car. Road damage is not linearly proportional to vehicle weight, or even linearly proportional to axle weight. The relationship between axle weight and road damage is to the fourth power. Doubling the axle weight of a vehicle causes 16 times more damage to the road. So a 2000kg Tesla causes potentially 3.2 times more damage than a 1500kg Corsa but the Tesla causes potentially 2.8 times less damage than a 2600kg Range Rover. The ubiquitousness of larger vehicles on our roads could be considered a large part of the rapid increase in how fast road surfaces deteriorate.

Wester Hailes Community Trust have announced they plan to open a mobility hub later this year which will also include a tool library (both linked to similar work in Colinton by SW20). It's great to see expansion of these sorts of services to a neighboring area.

SW20 have been granted a lease for their mobility hub container to be placed behind Colinton Library in the car park. The container will hopefully be in place soon. The tool library will remain operating out of the Shed in Spylaw Park. The tool library remains very popular, as does the free bike rental programme of a cargo bike and a step-through electric bike offered by SW20. The team are considering a mural on the container to make it 'à la mode' for Colinton.



|                                                                                                                                    |                                                 |                               |                                    |
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# At last! Re-opening of the Dell Road footpath...

By **Tim Lawson**

Some four-and-a-half years ago, as the covid pandemic hit us, a small landslide occurred in Colinton Dell that encroached (slightly) onto the lower footpath downslope from the main Water of Leith Walkway, which exited into Dell Road adjoining the northern cemetery by the parish church. The Council felt obliged to close the footpath while public safety was assessed; soon other considerations would distract those concerned as we entered a period of lockdowns, social distancing, etc. Attempts by CAA and local homeowners to press the Council to find a solution to the effects of the landslide and to re-open the footpath have been very protracted and incredibly frustrating for those involved. Indeed, little progress was made until local councillor, Jason Rust, brought a Motion before a meeting of the Full Council in late August, demanding that Council Officers met with local people and found a way to resolve the impasse: his Motion passed by 35 votes to 25.

In early October, a small group representing CAA, the Colinton Tunnel Project, a local homeowner and a representative from the Parish Kirk Session, together with Cllr. Rust, had



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📍 Path blocked below steps with landslide beyond



📍 Path blocked below steps with landslide beyond

an on-site meeting with the Council's Engineer from the Dept. of Parks and Openspaces and a contract engineer working on other council projects elsewhere in the city. The meeting was very positive and fruitful. By the time our discussion was finished, it had been outlined how the Council would approach resolving the problem and re-opening the footpath in a projected timescale of a month or so rather than several more months and years as we all feared!

In summary, the process will be carried out over three stages...

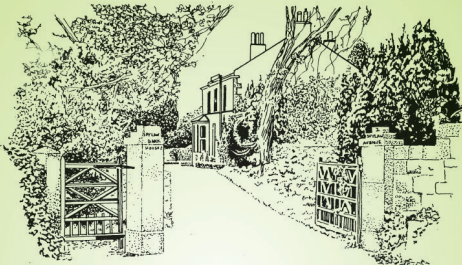
1. The problem of rainwater runoff from the end of Dell Road will be dealt with by the installation of a plastic grating across the road, leading into a buried pipe via filtration through gravel, which will be run down the slope to the river. This was seen as being more cost-effective and more quickly implemented than a whole new drainage system which would entail digging up the road; this may have to be considered at a later date if the proposed measures are found to be inadequate.
2. The footpath will be remediated by a minor re-routing away from the area where it has failed and infilling, followed by an attempt to stabilize the steep slope here. The discussion around alternative methods such as bridging over the gap and 'rock and anchor' techniques, come with additional problems, including cost implications.
3. Three trees in the vicinity would be removed down to their bases, leaving their root structure intact and allowing regrowth in time. These trees, severely covered in ivy, look very precarious and likely to be felled by strong winds, causing further damage to the integrity of the slope and threatening the wall of the cemetery and adjoining graves.

It was hoped that stages one and two could be achieved by the middle of November, and therefore you may well see the benefits of this remedial action by the time this issue of the Magazine is published. Hopefully the removal of the trees in the third stage can be done before the end of the year, but this requires access to the end of the road by a motorised crane to lift the fallen timber.

Our thanks go to Anne-Marie Birch of Dell Road, Eddie Banks of CAA – both of whom have ensured that Council Officers have not been allowed to forget about this problem – and to Cllr. Rust for insisting that the matter was brought before the Full Council to force a proper consideration of how the footpath could be re-opened. Hopefully, this important local routeway will remain open once again for a number of years.

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## What's in a Name?

This new publication from Colinton Local History Society has the answers to all your questions about our area's place names.

**D**id you know that The Gallolee was named after a field in the Dreghorn estate; that Thorburn Road was built to provide access to cottages built by the Aged Christian Friends Society and named after the mother of R A Macfie of Dreghorn; or that The Shoot was a short cut to Colinton Station?

While we all know that Colinton has a long and interesting history dating back a thousand years, we may not be as aware that reminders of that history are all around us in the form of street and place names. Have you ever wondered where the names *Bonaly*, *Woodhall* and *Spylaw* came from; who was the Grant of *Grant Avenue*, the MacFie of *MacFie Loan* or the Jane of *Janefield*?

Wonder no longer. Earlier this year, members of **The Colinton Local History Society** got together to develop a new guide to Colinton's place names. Covering around 150 street and place names and natural features within Colinton, it answers these questions and many more. Some names will be familiar, others not so well known. For example, do you know where *Adams Well*, *The Turlies* or *Chucklie Knowe* are located?

***What's in a Name: The Story of Colinton's Place Names*** lets you see the history of Colinton through its place names in an engaging and informative way. It covers the areas of *Hailes* and *Spylaw*, *The Village* and *Colinton Road*, *Woodhall*, *Bonaly* and *Laverockdale*, *Redford* and *Dreghorn*, and *Craiglockhart* and *Redhall*. It contains a section describing the historical development of Colinton and includes references to notable residents and buildings. Fully indexed, it is illustrated with historical photographs from the Society's archives, and with maps which have been specially created for each area to show the location of the places mentioned.

***What's in a Name: The Story of Colinton's Place Names*** is now available from the Society, from Colinton Post Office, the Swing Café and other local retailers and on Amazon at a cost of only £6.99.

Or better still, come along to one of our meetings in Dreghorn Loan Hall, take out a membership and qualify for a special Member's discount.

- Contact [info@colintonhistory.org.uk](mailto:info@colintonhistory.org.uk)
- For more information or visit our website [www.colintonhistory.org.uk](http://www.colintonhistory.org.uk)
- All profits from sales of the book go to support the activities of the **Colinton Local History Society**.

## WHAT'S IN A NAME?

*The Story of Colinton Place Names*



**Cllr Jason Rust**

City Chambers, High Street, Edinburgh, EH1 1YJ

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# The Stones are Merely Sleeping

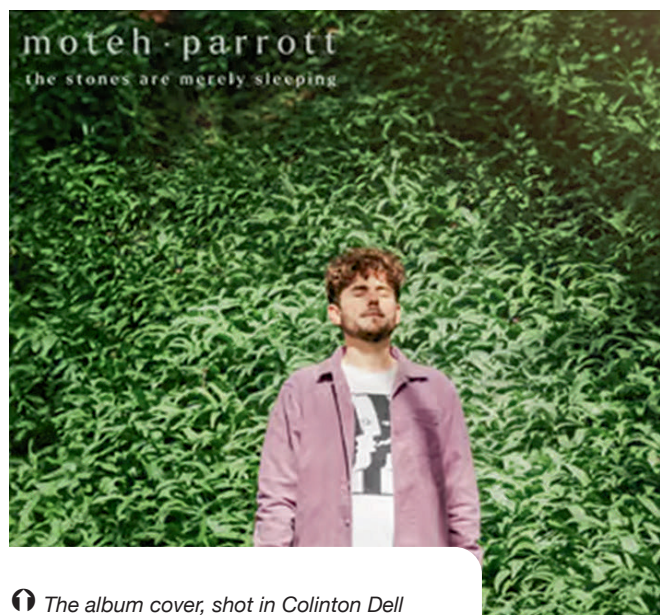
The new album by Colinton based musician Moteh Parrott

**You** do not have to look further than the cover of Moteh's new album, released in September, for the Colinton connection to be staring you in the face as the cover photo was shot here in the wild garlic by the Water of Leith!

Not only that, but the music video for "Undertow", the recently released single from the album, features some shots from the within the Colinton Tunnel.

Moteh, shortlisted for BBC Radio Scotland's Singer-Songwriter of the Year Award in 2019, moved to Colinton in 2021 with partner Melody. They both love the community and village feel and the easy access to both city and green spaces. You may have seen him perform at Art in the Park in 2022.

Work on this album started as long ago as 2014, but the pandemic and an unfortunate wrist injury and surgery delayed progress until this year. The album combines a signature indie folk-rock sound with elements of Celtic music, bringing together upbeat anthemic songs and reflective lyrics, with open-tuned electric guitar and cello accompaniment. His themes vary from world events such as war and climate



The album cover, shot in Colinton Dell

change, to universal human experiences of love, loss and wider spiritual questions.

When he is not being creative, Moteh teaches songwriting, guitar, bass and ukulele, as well as doing production work from his Colinton based home studio.

**For further information on Moteh Parrott** please go to <https://www.motehparrott.com>

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# From The Soviet Gulag to Arnhem

This new book by Colinton resident Nicholas Kinloch recounts the incredible story of the epic wartime journey of his grandfather Stanley Kulik.

**A**s a young boy, Nicholas Kinloch liked nothing better than listening to his Polish born grandfather, then settled in St Andrews, telling of his remarkable wartime experiences. As he got older he began to realise that his grandfather's story was one that should not be lost, and so for 6 months or so made a weekly visit to St Andrews to hear and to record the whole story. Though by then in his 80s, his grandfather had a clear memory of his journey, and of all the names and places involved. After some research by Nicholas into the broader history of the war, he was ready to write the story – a story that reads like the plot of a Hollywood film.

A brief summary: Stan was born in eastern Poland, and was aged 15 when the Nazis and Soviets invaded. In February 1940, in the middle of the night, his family

were put on cattle wagons by the Soviets and taken to a Russian gulag where if you didn't work, you didn't eat – but Stan managed to survive.

After the Nazis invaded Russia, he managed to join the Polish army, and aged just 17 spent months travelling solo through Russia, Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan. Having to beg, borrow and steal just to survive, he worked on cotton farms and slept on the ashes that people threw out from their fires in order to stay warm. Eventually, Stan reached Iraq, where he worked in a camp which processed Polish refugees. Still a teenager and too young to join up, the Army faked his age and he was then taken by ship via India to Scotland, where he joined up with the Polish Parachute Brigade just over the water in Fife.

His adventures were not over though as he was then dropped at Arnhem and, trapped behind enemy lines, avoided capture thanks to the Dutch underground who hid him in local houses or in the forest, constantly moving him as the Nazis searched for him. They hid him until he could be rescued – they disguised a truck like a Red Cross vehicle, hid him in the back and tried to drive straight through enemy lines.

If that has whetted your appetite, the book is called 'From the Soviet Gulag to Arnhem', available by order from local bookshops as well as on Amazon.



From The Soviet Gulag to Arnhem, book cover

## Gordon Macdonald MSP

Member of the Scottish Parliament  
for Edinburgh Pentlands Constituency



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### Monthly Advice Surgeries

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|--------------------------|---------------------------------------|
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| Carrickvale Comm. Centre | 2 <sup>nd</sup> Friday of month, 10am |
| Currie Library           | 3 <sup>rd</sup> Friday of month, 10am |
| Oxgangs Library          | 4 <sup>th</sup> Friday of month, 10am |
| Ratho Comm. Centre       | 5 <sup>th</sup> Friday of month, 10am |

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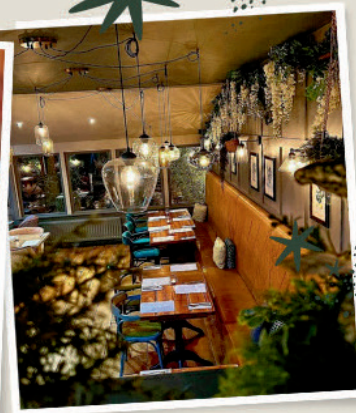
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# Charles X of France – the Colinton Connection

Cameron Webster recounts the fascinating tale of a Bourbon King in exile at Baberton House.

**C**harles X of France was a man who was impacted by some of the biggest social shifts in European history. As the younger brother of Louis XVI, he never expected to become King but through revolution, wars and political upheavals found himself on the throne of France from 1824-1830.

Born in 1757 at the Palace of Versailles, Charles was given the title Comte d'Artois by his grandfather, Louis XV. Described as one of the most flamboyant princes in Europe, he led at Versailles a life of unrivalled luxury, amassing huge debts in the process. Upon his brother's ascension to the throne in 1774, Charles' expenditure on gambling, clothes and entertainments got even more excessive. He had befriended his sister-in-law Marie-Antoinette on her arrival in France and became a member of her inner circle at the Petit Trianon.

In the 1780s the political situation in France took a dramatic turn, with years of financial mismanagement leaving the state close to bankruptcy. Louis XVI had looked on the American War of Independence as an opportunity to prove dominance over France's old enemy, Great Britain, and had funded arms and soldiers for the conflict. This had produced very little benefit for France but had depleted the national treasury. The King's response was to call together, for the first time in around 150 years, the Estates General (France's parliament) in order to try and rectify the problem of the country's finances. However, this provoked tensions between the three estates which represented the different parts of French society – the clergy, the aristocracy and the rest of the population. Eventually the representatives of the rest of the population declared themselves as the National Assembly. This was the beginning of the French Revolution.

The King quickly began to lose his grip on the situation and a series of violent attacks on the monarchy - the storming of the Bastille, the storming of Versailles - rendered the King virtually a political prisoner. It was after the storming of the Bastille in 1789 that the King ordered his brother, Charles, to leave the country. As an unpopular figure in France, this was both for his safety but also to enable him to act as an emissary for the monarchy in foreign courts. In 1793 the King and Queen, after having been stripped of their titles, were executed.

Charles, meanwhile, was trying to raise funds to finance a counter attack on the new French Republic. However, with this failing, he went into exile in Great Britain and with creditors now chasing him for his enormous debts, he appealed to the British government for help. Their



📌 Jean-Augustine-Dominique Ingres, *Portrait of King Charles X in Coronation Robes*, 1829, Musée Bonnat-Helleu.

answer was to open for his use Holyrood House, which retained its sanctuary status from its time as an abbey, meaning he was safe there from his many creditors. The next few years were spent mostly in London with the occasional stay in Scotland.

It was during this period of exile that Charles was painted by Henri Pierre Danloux whom he had invited to Edinburgh. Danloux went on to paint Charles's two sons whose portraits were gifted to Lord Adam Gordon, the then governor of Edinburgh Castle. Danloux was also introduced to much of the Scottish aristocracy and was commissioned to paint their portraits, several of which are now in the Scottish National Portrait Gallery.

In France, meanwhile, Napoleon had taken control of the Government and in 1804 crowned himself Emperor. However, following his losses in the Napoleonic Wars, he was deposed and in 1814 the Bourbon monarchy was restored. Charles' elder brother (also called Louis) now took the throne as Louis XVIII, and when he died in 1824 without an heir, the throne passed to Charles.

After a lavish coronation ceremony at Reims Cathedral, the new King set about introducing new legislation which not only pandered to the clergy but also began to remove some of the civil liberties won during the revolution. When he tried in 1830 to suspend the constitution, the people of France rose up against this decision and Charles was forced to abdicate, returning once again to exile at Holyrood House between 1830-1832.

**Continued overleaf** 📌





 Baberton House, Juniper Green: Zoopla.

Shortly after Charles' arrival in Edinburgh, cholera broke out in the city. It was probably to escape this that Charles first took the lease of Baberton House at Juniper Green from an Archibald Christie. He extended this lease in order to provide a place for recreational activities and country pursuits for his grandchildren (Henri, Duke of Bordeaux and Princess Louise). It has also been speculated that one of the reasons Charles kept the lease of Baberton was to keep his grandchildren away from any political slander that might be targeted

towards them. This was a very real possibility as Charles had become a divisive figure in Britain. Indeed, one such incident occurred when the Princess Louise was visiting her friend, Alecia Skene, on Princes Street. As the Princess alighted from her carriage, a supporter of Napoleon hurled abuse at her and had to be fought off by Miss Skene's butler. Baberton therefore provided a safe haven for the Royal Family. It is said that the house still has a room decorated with a fleur-de-lys on the ceiling in honour of Charles' time there.

In February of 1832, Charles moved out of Holyrood for two months. This is probably because Holyrood was being installed with gas lighting. The Edinburgh Caledonian reports on the 11<sup>th</sup> February that, 'Charles X and the Royal Family of France have taken Oman's Hotel, in Charlotte Square, and Colington House, to reside in during their temporary removal from Holyrood-house.' Oman's hotel is now Bute House at No.6 Charlotte Square, which Charles used as his city residence until he could return to Holyrood. Sadly records relating to the former King taking Colinton House (misspelt as Colington in the newspaper) are limited. Colinton House now forms part of Merchiston Castle School. Whether or not Charles did take the lease on Colinton house or whether the Edinburgh Caledonian mixed up Colinton House with the nearby Baberton House is something which documentary evidence does not throw much light on. On the one hand, Charles did have a fairly sizable French court in Edinburgh which could possibly have filled both houses.



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① *Henri-Pierre Danloux, Charles Philippe de France, Comte d'Artois (painted in Edinburgh), 1798, Sotheby's London, 24th April 2008, Lot 118.*

On the other hand, Charles also seems to have taken the lease of the Omon Hotel's second property on Charlotte Square at No.4 in order to house his courtiers. Therefore, whether Colinton House would have been needed is debatable.

In any case, the French Royal Family used Baberton House up until their departure from Scotland in late 1832. When they were offered the use of Prague Castle by the Astro-Hungarian Emperor they accepted and departed from Leith to cries of 'God save the King' from the crowds that had gathered at the port. Charles would die only 4 years later of cholera in modern day Slovenia.

**Cameron Webster**, the author of this article, is a 4th Year History of Art Student at the University of Edinburgh with a particular interest in 17th-18th Century Portraiture. Alongside his studies he works for the National Galleries of Scotland and the National Trust for Scotland at the Georgian House on Charlotte Square. It was at the Georgian House that he first started his research on Charles X and his journey from Versailles to his exile in Scotland. He wrote and delivered a lecture entitled "From Versailles to Charlotte Square" on this topic in July of this year. He has also worked as an art researcher for North Lanarkshire Council Museums where he discovered a previously unknown portrait of James VI. He is also writing an article for Art UK about a possibly unknown Peter Lely painting in the collection of NGS.

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# The Colinton Mural

## Proper planning and preparation

Planning and preparation take time, but pay dividends in terms of performance. The idea of creating a “Colinton Gateway” mural along Cuddies Lane was first floated almost three years ago. The concept of using artwork to guide visitors to and from the heart of our village to Colinton Tunnel and the Water of Leith Walkway was more attractive than simply using signposts. It also provided a further opportunity to explore and celebrate the history of our community.

It was clear from the outset that we needed to plan carefully, given that the proposed mural is in the sensitive heart of the village. For the same reason, and because we wanted to create the mural on the back of a listed building in a Conservation Area, we needed to seek advice and guidance from specialist Heritage Planning Officers at City of Edinburgh Council (CEC). We were fortunate that our contact had made a significant contribution to the CEC’s Colinton Conservation Character Appraisal document, which meant that they had an understanding of many of the key issues.

Readers may remember that we first aired our ideas at Art in the Park in 2022, as well as at an earlier week-long exhibition in Colinton Parish Church. Although those

ideas and design concepts were very well received, the advice from the Planning Department caused us to make significant changes before eventually applying for Listed Building Consent and Planning Permission.

The key elements of the advice were to reduce the overall scale and height of the proposed mural, to re-appraise its relationship with its context (the “Village Zone” of the Conservation Area) and to think again about the way in which we intended to use colour and imagery.

## The Design Concept

That advice enabled our artwork team and lead muralist, Chris Rutterford, to develop a final design concept that we believed would be acceptable to the planners. It involves a complete re-paint of the backs of the buildings from Dantes to the Redeemer Church, replacing six different colours with the off-white that characterises Colinton’s Village Zone. That single action will transform the buildings and visually harmonise them with the cottages along Spylaw Street. The scale of the proposed artwork has been reduced, so that it will not be more than one third to half of the height of the buildings. Finally, rather than using bright colours we proposed muted, sepia-toned imagery – reminiscent of an old photograph. The pictures show the new designs and their context.



📍 Main image showing the people, animals and transport that would have been seen at the end of the 19th Century.



📍 From Cuddies Lane, going about ten metres up Spylaw Street. Cows and country wildlife as well as horses.

**Continued overleaf** 📍



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Formal applications were prepared at the beginning of the year by CAA's Planning Convenor, Iain Gotts, with help from Beth Fraser of Architects Karen Parry on Bridge Road. Permission was granted in July, when we also learned that Listed Building Consent was not required.

In the meantime, we sought advice from Colinton Local History Society to ensure that what we proposed to portray was historically accurate and also to learn what people wore and what transport would have been used at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century. Similarly, we learned from several sources about the former blacksmith's forge (smiddy) on Cuddies Lane and met one gentleman who had actually worked there.

## Phase 1 completed

Having been given permission, we wanted to quickly indicate how we intended to proceed. Chris Rutterford and Eddie Banks retired to Chris's studio in Strathyre and created the first major section, to be fixed on the end wall of Colinton Village Pharmacy. The scene shows the smiddy and, in the background, the grandson of one of the blacksmiths who worked there, with his wife. The image, combining muted colour with sepia tones and with a border inspired by the work of Phoebe Anna Traquair, is simply stunning. The finished work, installed at the end of August and pictured here, has attracted a huge amount of positive comment. A small circular infographic panel explains the context. Similar panels will be used in other areas of the mural.

## The next steps

We now need to raise funds to carry out the rest of the project. Part of it is a painting and decorating job, which is best carried out by professionals. At least two coats of masonry paint will be need to cover some of the existing strong colours. The mural itself will again be created on marine ply boards in the studio. Doing it that way means that many of the unsightly cables and areas of pipework will be at least partially concealed.

We are actively seeking funding from a range of grant-making bodies, but individual donations will also help us to reach our overall target of £28,000. We have already reached one-third of that, which is why we were able to complete the first stage of work. Personal donations can also be boosted by a further 25% through HMRC's Gift Aid scheme, which adds a further £25 to every £100 that is given.

On a similar note, would a painting and decorating company be prepared to offer their services at a reduced charge (or even free!)?

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① A design drawing develops into finished work – the idea (above) and the reality (on the front cover)

② The 30cm diameter infographic panel that accompanies the smiddy mural that appears on the front cover of this magazine



This was the site of Colinton Smiddy (blacksmith) from the 18<sup>th</sup> Century until the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century.

William Oliver was one of many blacksmiths to work here. His grandson still lives locally.

The mural's border crawls on the style of celebrated local artist, Phoebe Anna Traquair.

Cuddies Lane was probably named because horses, "cuddies" in old Scots, used it to reach the smiddy and the Water of Leith crossing at the foot of Spylaw Street.

The Waddell family operated the smiddy from late 19<sup>th</sup> Century. As "horseless carriages" replaced horses, Waddell's also moved with the times, becoming motor mechanics and installing two petrol pumps on Bridge Road.

Colinton Village Pharmacy was established in 1952, just four years after the NHS began.

# Colinton features in City Art Gallery exhibition

**Tim Lawson** shares a couple paintings of local landmarks that were recently exhibited at a city-centre art gallery.

Some readers may have visited the City Art Gallery in Market Street during May to early October and looked at the retrospective of the art of one of Edinburgh’s most influential artists. *Adam Bruce Thomson: The Quiet Path*. Thomson (1885-1976) was Edinburgh-born, and was among the earliest intake of students to train at Edinburgh College of Art, formed in 1908. He went on to teach at the College for a further 40 years, supporting successive waves of young artists and influencing their work.

The exhibition showed just how versatile Thomson was, working in a range of media and using diverse subject matter – still life, architecture, portraiture and landscape. Of particular interest were many drawings and paintings of Edinburgh subjects, and some from farther afield, including four of views of Colinton back in the 1930s. Two are shown here. One shows a schematic view with Colinton Parish Church as a background with the stone bridge over the Water of Leith turned to a new orientation. The other painting shows a depiction of the impressive cedar trees, now located in the grounds of the Colinton Surgery but back then were in the grounds of Merchiston Castle School.



Photos: Tim Lawson

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# Questions and Answers

**Scott Arthur answers a few questions about his recent election as Member of Parliament for Edinburgh South West**

## Did you expect to win?

Not really, on the 4th of July I was somewhat unexpectedly elected to be your MP. Of course, I did everything I could to win but deep down I thought we had a mountain to climb. My campaign team, led by Cllr Jenkinson, turned a 33% deficit into a 13% lead.

This is a humbling result, particularly given the formidable track record of the incumbent – Joanna Cherry KC.

## What happened after the result was announced?

I was elected on a manifesto of “Change”, and the win certainly changed my life. When the result was called at 5:30 a.m., I was holding a healthy majority of 6,217 and an envelope marked “Member of Parliament.” Inside was a letter confirming I was expected in Parliament just three days later. Within a few hours, Parliament had arranged my travel and hotel.

I spent Saturday with my family and activists, and on Sunday the congregation at my church prayed for me – an incredibly moving moment.

Following this I met the other Scottish Labour MPs in central Edinburgh, along with Anas Sarwar MSP and the Prime Minister. This was another incredible moment – they had transformed our party and made it electable again.

The next day, I entered Parliament for the first time for training. The day ended with a meeting of the

 Scott - “In the House”



Parliamentary Labour Party – all 412 of us. The group is too big for any room available in Parliament, so we met in Church House (the Church of England HQ). This meeting was incredible – we were the government, and the people trusted us to serve the country.

## Have you been to Downing Street?

I attended the Chamber on the Tuesday morning after the election for a training session, and the new Labour MPs alone managed to more than fill the government benches. The Scottish Labour MPs had to leave the training a little early, however, as the Prime Minister had asked to meet us in Downing Street. I was in such shock I can't remember all the details of this visit, but I am happy to confirm I saw Larry the Cat! I have visited twice since then, and have made a point of remembering all the details.

## What have been the big challenges for you?

My life since being elected has been a rollercoaster – setting up my office in Edinburgh, appointing staff, accessing my Westminster office and finding somewhere to live in London. The biggest challenge is, of course, understanding the rules and etiquette of Parliament. It has taken time, but I have now mastered “bobbing” – the practice of literally bobbing up and down to ask a question of a Minister.

## Have you given your maiden speech yet?

I was quick to deliver my maiden speech as part of the King's Speech Debate, and Colinton residents will be pleased to hear I managed to mention the fantastic Colinton Tunnel and Tippereth – two things which help define the area. Indeed, it has been great to use my position as MP to generally promote businesses, community groups and projects in my constituency. I do this with the aim of making it a better place to live, work and bring up a family.

Indeed, my hope is that over the term of this Parliament we will make the country a fairer one to live in and do business. This will happen despite the situation we inherited. An early step we have taken is to give an estimated 200,000 Scots a pay rise with changes we are making to the Living Wage. We have asked that setting the Living Wage takes into account the cost-of-living crisis, and that we end the nonsense of paying people less simply because of their age. The House of Commons Library tells me that this simple change could benefit 1,200 of the lowest paid workers in my constituency.

## Parliament looks confrontational, is it?

Although there have been a few difficult decisions and political disagreements, I feel all MPs are united in the belief that the lives of people in our country need to improve. We should never forget that.

Elections are a reminder that we are all equal in this country, but it pained me that during the campaign many constituents felt that they were less equal than others.

All MPs have a duty to keep on listening to voters now that the election is over. The first-past-the-post system means that I was elected on just 40.9% of the vote, and I know that some of those voters still want to be reassured that they did the right thing. I am here only because I promised to work with other parties where possible, and to listen to everybody in my constituency, no matter their sex, gender, background, faith, age or birthplace. I will keep listening to people, even if they voted for my opponents or did not vote at all.

## Your constituency stretches from Haymarket Station to beyond Balerno, and you cover it all?

I think I had a track record of working hard in my 7 years as a Councillor for Colinton, Oxgangs & Fairmilehead, and I look forward to doing the same as I serve the much bigger Edinburgh South West Constituency.

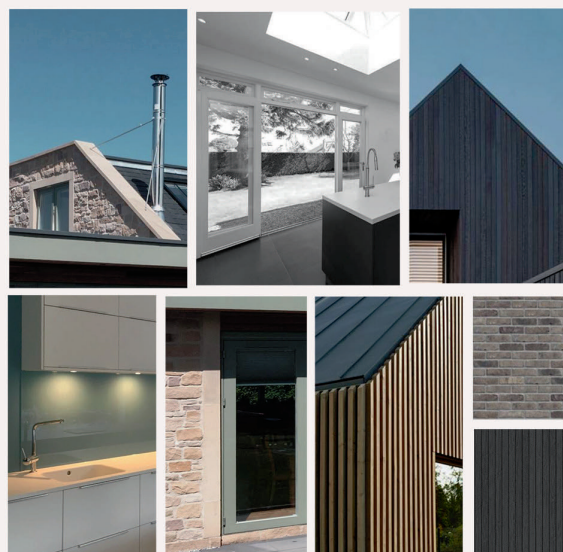
**Dr Scott Arthur**  
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## Art in Park 2024 – A Day to Remember!

Colinton Village Enterprise is very happy to report that our biennial village fair, which took place on August 31st this year, was a resounding success! Of course, the weather played no small part on the day, with blue skies, sun and actual warmth! What more could our team of CVE Trustees, CVE Members, and other volunteers, not least the excellent cohort from Firrhill High School, have wished for?

The event included our popular old-fashioned games such as the Coconut Shy and a set of Stocks, a large selection of pre-loved books, Bark in the Park (our fun dog show), plus many talented musicians and dancers kind enough to participate free of charge. Bastion, The Clumsy Magician, aka local resident Luis, kindly performed magic tricks to the delight of younger (and older) attendees. We even had Edinburgh's Batman and the Batmobile on site. Once again, the wonderful charity Corstorphine First Aid were on hand to ensure any scrapes, bites, or bumps were taken care of.

Dantes, who are a firm favourite and have been part of the event's history going back many years, ran a busy food stall, as did newcomers Bonnie Events, With a Cherry on Top, and Brew 52.

The Spylaw's pop-up bar made a welcome return, having debuted at Art in the Park 2022. If the queues were anything to go by, a large number of folk were happy to have a drink in the sun while eating lunch or being entertained by a dance or tune. With thanks to Buskin' Sharks jazz, Amethyst, a familiar local duo, and the amazing Ceilidh Caleerie's traditional Scottish dance tunes, not to mention the talented performers from both Mhairi Hogg and Angela Watson dance schools.

This event has really come a long way – some readers may not realise that the very first Art in the Park happened some 20 years ago. It was the brain child of Bill Alexander of Colinton Arts, as a means of helping to promote the work of a few local artists with a small selection of paintings for sale in the park. Bill then rounded up a few willing volunteers to expand the event year on year, and the rest, as they say, is history.

A new CVE stall this year was Angela's Treasures. Angela Miller, our charity's very first secretary, and a local resident, kindly bequeathed her flat and its contents to CVE after she passed away last year. One of our regular and hugely supportive volunteers, Iris Mitchell, managed the stall on the day and presented some of the jewellery, hats and clothes to be sold. The table was a big hit, with funds raised going toward the ex-coach house transformation into Colinton's community hub in Spylaw Park.

Further fundraising continues as we strive to raise around £670,000 in total in order to effect the building works, for which planning permission has recently been granted.



Christmas

By the time of reading, we will have had another Pit Stop Café and pop-up sale of Angela’s Treasures on October 5<sup>th</sup>. Our next event is Christmas in the Park taking place on Thursday, December 12<sup>th</sup> from 5.30pm to 7.30pm. Expect fairy-lit stalls leading to a magical Santa’s Grotto. You can partake of excellent mulled wine, hot chocolate, home-baking, and chance your luck at our ever-popular tombolas.



Planning Permission

Colinton Village Enterprise SCIO has recently received planning permission to develop ‘The Shed’ in Spylaw Park, adjacent to the Water of Leith Walkway/Cycleway, into a community hub. The approved design allows for a Café, workshops, studio spaces, exhibits, and community events.

“This is a significant step forward” said Lorraine O’Shea, the Charity’s Chair. “This building will be transformed into a multi-purpose asset, showcasing a strong marriage of traditional and modern architecture.”

We plan to use the proceeds from the eventual sale of this lovely 2-bedroom flat in Colinton which was bequeathed to us by our first Secretary, which will go a long way towards the renovation and build cost, with additional fundraising efforts, to make this dream a reality. <https://espc.com/property/flat-1-49a-spylaw-street-edinburgh-eh13-0jt/36255594>

To become a member and/or volunteer at one of our events, please email [colinton.village@gmail.com](mailto:colinton.village@gmail.com) or message us on our Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/ColintonVillageEnterprise>

 See plans below





# Crash of a Wellington Bomber in Craiglockhart in 1942

By **Bob Henderson.**

During World War II Colinton escaped any bomb damage but five lives were lost due to aircraft activity within the former parish boundary. This occurred on 14th December 1942 when an RAF Wellington bomber (X3707) crashed in Craiglockhart.

The aircraft was attached to the Telecommunications Flying Unit, later known as the Radar Research Flying Unit which was based at RAF Defford in Worcestershire. Their role was to operate flight trials and test secret new equipment such as airborne radar.

At about 10.37 am on that day the plane had taken off from RAF Turnhouse with three other aircrafts in order to test "special equipment". There was a crew of five including an American from the US Army Signals Corps. After about an hour into its flight the aircraft suffered some kind of equipment failure and was instructed to return to Turnhouse. As the crew reduced engine revs for the landing the port engine failed due to a problem with the fuel system.

The plane went into a stall and overshot the runway as the pilot struggled to control it. Having engine failure at low altitude and low speed meant a crash was inevitable. The Wellington descended towards Craiglockhart and it



 *Inscription on the memorial cairn at Craiglockhart*

is possible the pilot was thinking of trying to land on the playing fields at Meggetland. He just avoided the canal and was heading towards the bungalows in Craiglockhart where a disaster seemed inevitable. Somehow the pilot skilfully manoeuvred his stricken plane in its dying moments and managed to avoid smashing in any of the homes. The aircraft crash landed into the back garden of a bungalow in Craiglockhart View at 11.45 am.

The plane burst into flames on impact and ammunition started to explode. All the crew were killed. The only other damage was some broken windows and a small fire on the roof of the bungalow. The female occupant of the house was said to be slightly shocked but uninjured.

Three of the crew were Scottish, one was English and the other American. The pilot is buried in the cemetery on Corstorphine Hill. The rest of the crew were buried closer to their homes. A memorial cairn (see photos) was unveiled in 2012 on Craiglockhart Road North not far from Craiglockhart View and near to the crash site. The inscription is shown in the attached photo.

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# Auld Spice Ceilidh Band

If ever you have passed by Colinton Parish Church and thought you could detect, emanating from somewhere beneath the Swing Café, the stirring sounds of ceilidh music, you would have been hearing the weekly practice of the Auld Spice Ceilidh Band. Donald Easton, Band Chairman, tells us a bit more about the band.

The Band was formed in 1997 and with three fiddles, two accordions, flute, keyboard and concertina can make up a Band with any mixture of these instruments. Three of the band members are relatively local, hailing from Balerno.

Most of our gigs are in the Edinburgh Area, the Lothians and Fife – playing at Ceilidhs, Weddings, Schools, in Church Halls, Seniors Citizens Clubs, in Residential and Nursing Homes - but we have also played at Otter Ferry on Loch Fyne and in Blair Castle in Perthshire. The Blair Castle gig to celebrate the amalgamation of two Scottish regiments was particularly memorable, and a great thrill to be able to play in such a historic venue.

The biggest venue where we have played was the Assembly Rooms in George Street where for a number of years prior to the Covid Pandemic we played for the Military Ball Trust at their annual dinner and dance. This attracted over 400 dancers and was great fun and a marvellous experience.

To celebrate the 20th Anniversary in 2017 of Auld Spice Ceilidh Band we had a ceilidh in Colinton Bowling Club when over 100 people were here to enjoy and celebrate the occasion. One of the members wrote a tune especially for the occasion called Auld Spice Waltz.

For ceilidhs we are fortunate to have two very experienced Callers who demonstrate the dances and walk through the steps with participants to enable them to enjoy the experience of a ceilidh.

We have an extensive repertoire of tunes for all the popular ceilidh dances as well as sets of tunes for listening and a set of tunes for sing-along events. Particular favourite tunes for a Canadian Barn Dance are Megan's Wedding (not the Royal One!!) and The Craic at Clashmore Hall written by Phil Cunningham. Other favourites are waltzes including well known Scottish tunes e.g. Loch Lomond and a Virginia Reel of American tunes starting with Oh Susanna. We each take a turn on a monthly basis to make up a playlist of sets for our practices and also the programme for any gig that month.

We have our own sound equipment which is more than adequate for the halls we play in. Each venue is different so some forward planning is essential to ensure our sound is perfect. An example of how venues



 Auld Spice Ceilidh Band

vary was when we were playing for a 21st Birthday in the Counting House which is just off Causwayside. The Band were in a corner of the room on the same level as the dancers. During a particular lively Strip The Willow two of the dancers birlled onto the lap of one of our fiddle players. A music stand went one way, he went another and the dancers landed on the floor!! We have learned to cope with most situations.

We are affiliated to the Scots Music Group who run classes in Scottish Music for individual instruments as well as groups of mixed instruments. They are based in the Eric Liddell Centre at Holy Corner.

We have a website – [www.auldspiceband.co.uk](http://www.auldspiceband.co.uk) where lots of information about us can be found, including recordings of the dances we play as well as quite a few photos.

Auld Spice Ceilidh Band would be delighted to play for an event in the Colinton Area so just log on to the website and complete the Booking Form.







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# Colinton Castle Sports Club, a personal history

**Iain Wright**, one of the original shareholders in the club and an enthusiastic player at club level, runs through the history of the Club from its inception in 1974 to its sad demise in 2023.

## EARLY DAYS

After two years of preparations, Colinton Castle Sports Club was formally opened on 1 October 1974 by the then Chairman of Governors of Merchiston Castle School, in whose grounds the building had been erected. The building had cost £65,000, financed by individual shareholders at £500 each, plus a grant from the Scottish Sports Council and small loans from the School and The Royal Bank of Scotland. Occasionally shares were subsequently exchanged by agreement, but the large majority of shareholders regarded these as long-term investments.

In the mid 1970s, squash was becoming very popular, and during the Club's first year full membership reached 361, with a waiting list of 150 by July 1975.

The Club was managed by an elected Board of Directors while daily operations were undertaken initially by the part time Club Manager and her assistant, who both combined Club management with squash coaching, and later by a full time Manager.

## GROWTH YEARS

The Club had opened with four courts, and such was demand that two more were soon added. In November 1980 two very popular glass-backed courts were added, with tiered spectator seating.

Club competitions ran annually for men, ladies, boys and girls, and senior members (45+), with the winners recorded on Club honours boards. From early days, mini -leagues were organised to enable members to meet others of similar standard. A Club tie was designed by an original member and sold widely.

The top players represented the Club in the Lothian Squash Leagues, in which they performed successfully most seasons. In addition, small groups of members entered the following teams in the Leagues: Royal Bank, Bank of Scotland, Lothian Ladies, Broilers, Ballbusters, Class 88 and C-Rooks.

Over many years the Club hosted several external tournaments, the largest of which was the Scottish Junior Open held annually in late December. Other frequent successful events were the East of Scotland Open, the East of Scotland Closed, the Scottish and British Police Championships and the European under 19 Internationals in April 1975. The Club became recognised for its friendly atmosphere and bar revenue benefitted considerably on each occasion.



 Colinton Castle Sports Club logo

A Social Club Committee was established in the first year. It organised folk nights, a Sunday night bridge club, summer barbeques (with 150 people), and annual Indoor and Outdoor team Sports Days. A Burns Supper and regular discotheques were well supported. A mixed hockey club started in 1983 and organised several very successful tournaments.

Club members enjoyed socialising in the lounge bar after their games, and Friday evenings became particularly popular.

In 1993 Colinton Castle hosted the World Masters event, attracting almost 400 male and female players from 20 countries. It was generously sponsored by Pringle of Scotland and financially supported by both The Foundation for Sport and the Arts and The City of Edinburgh District Council. Social events concluded with presentations at a formal dinner in the Sheraton Grand Hotel.

The Club celebrated its tenth anniversary in 1984 with a buffet, disco and internal squash tournament with 160 members taking part. In 1995 the 21st anniversary was marked with a dinner dance in the Royal Scots Club but sadly the much anticipated 50th anniversary could not take place due to the enforced closure of the Club.

## DECLINING YEARS

Domestic squash began to lose its original appeal and from the early 1990s the number of full playing members in the Club gradually declined. The Club continued to operate with volunteers manning the bar and carrying out cleaning duties, but after a building inspection at the beginning of 2023, the Board was informed that, due to deterioration in the asbestos content throughout, including the squash courts, the building was no longer fit for purpose. The Board was notified by the School that it would not be renewing the land lease beyond July 2023 and there was therefore no option but to close the premises.

Playing members were encouraged to join other local clubs where possible. Shareholders of record were advised of the impending closure, but received no financial compensation. The Club was closed on 8 August 2023. Company records were removed and on 9 April 2024 the Club was legally dissolved at Companies House.

The end of an era indeed.

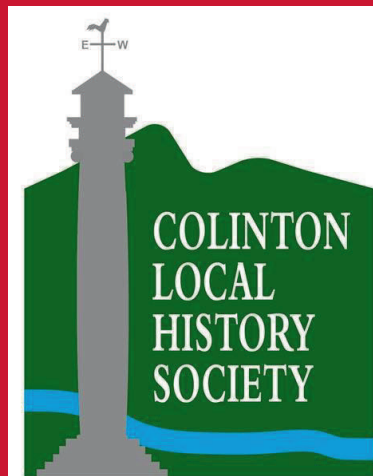


## Speaker Programme

### Autumn 2024 – Spring 2025

All meetings at 20:00 Upper Loan Hall, Dreghorn  
Loan EH13 0DE except those on Zoom (\*) which start  
at 19:30

*Visitors Welcome !*



- **7th October** – Bruce Keith: *Scotland beneath the surface – A subterranean Odyssey*
- **21<sup>st</sup> October** – Bob Cunningham: *The history of Morningside from 18:00 to 1930 – from rural village to city suburb*
- **4th November** – Barclay Price: *Honoured in Edinburgh – bestowing the Freedom of the City of Edinburgh*
- **18th November** – Dave Farries: *200 years of Scottish Firefighting: the legacy of James Braidwood*
- **4th December \*** - Bruce Jamieson: *Robert Braid – Edwardian photographer*
- **16th December** - *Christmas Social*
- **6th January** – Robert Yates & Donald Adamson: *The Coal Mine in the sea – the Moat Pit at Culross*
- **20th January** – Andy Arthur: *The Story of Rockville House, Merchiston*
- **3rd February** – Fraser Hunter: *Rebuilding Roman armour – the story of a remarkable armguard from the Scottish Borders*
- **17<sup>th</sup> February** – Leona Thomas: *Through ice and fire – a Russian Arctic convoy diary 1942*
- **3<sup>rd</sup> March** – Jackie Sangster: *Scottish Women who chose to challenge*
- **17<sup>th</sup> March \*** – *Annual General Meeting and Members Evening*

The Colinton Local History Society encourages and advances the education of the public in the knowledge of local history, particularly regarding Colinton and its historical parish.

Website: [Colintonhistory.org.uk](http://Colintonhistory.org.uk)  
email: [enquiries@colintonhistory.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@colintonhistory.org.uk)



# Colinton Literary Society 2024/5 Programme

**16/10/2024 | Prof. David Purdie**

**The Scottish Enlightenment:** Professor David Purdie reviews the impact of the Scottish Enlightenment

**23/10/2024 | Elizabeth Cumming**

**Phoebe Anna Traquair: Art, Craft and the Colinton connection:** Prof. Elizabeth Cumming speaks about a leading artist in the Scottish Arts and Crafts Movement

**30/10/2024 | Kellan MacInnes**

**The wild swimmer of Kintail:** Kellan MacInnes tells the story of a journey through water to self discovery

**06/11/2024 | Sir Alexander McCall Smith**

**Writing about place:** The setting of a novel as a character - the cases of Scotland and Botswana.

**13/11/2024 | Sir Paul Grice**

**The Scottish Parliament - what next?:** Sir Paul Grice considers the impact and future of devolution

**20/11/2024 | Donald Smith**

**Edinburgh: Our Storied Town:** Donald Smith reviews 900 years of Edinburgh's literary history

**27/11/2024 | Rev. David Todd**

**Edinburgh's theatres:** Rev. David Todd tells the story of Edinburgh's theatres

**04/12/2024 | Buffet supper**

*With music from the Glencairn Ensemble*

**15/01/2025 | Ian Gardiner**

**Gallipoli:** Brigadier Ian Gardiner explains this crucial battle of the First World War

**22/01/2025 | Will Sanders**

**Roots of the Reformation:** Will Sanders takes a close look at the establishment of Protestantism in Scotland in the 16th century

**29/01/2025 | David Dow**

**Burns in context:** David Dow and the Dovecot singers explore the life and times of Scotland's national poet

**05/02/2025 | Stuart Montgomery**

**Edinburgh: the silent city.** Stuart Montgomery presents a portrait of Edinburgh in lockdown

**12/02/2025 | Jamie Crawford**

**Stories of changing landscapes:** Jamie Crawford uses landscapes to tell a story of transformation

**19/02/2025 | Louise Gardiner**

**The Royal Letter Book:** Louise Gardiner explores Royal Correspondence in late 14th Century England

**26/02/2025 | David Lyle**

**Trial by Jury:** David Lyle and soloists present Gilbert and Sullivan's ever popular opera

**05/03/2025 | AGM - Hanna Dyka**

**Pavlo Tychyna:** Hanna Dyka introduces us to the work of a leading Ukrainian poet and his connections to Scotland

## Colinton Garden Club Programme 2024/2025



- **September 23rd | Peter Hart of Kirklands Garden, Fife**
- **October 5th | Plant Sale**
- **October 28th | Lynn & Keith Youngs:**  
"Flowers of the Swiss Alps"
- **November 25th | Kath Hay:**  
"The Rise of Rhubarb"
- **December 9th | Christmas Party**
- **January 27th | Dick Alderson of Dalgety Bay Community Woodlands**

- **February 24th | Members Evening:**  
Speakers - Richard Ennos, David Bryce, Cliff Dalley
- **March 24th | Kevin Frediani of University of Dundee Botanic Gardens**
- **April 28th | AGM and Crafts Competition**

Website: [www.colintongardens.org.uk](http://www.colintongardens.org.uk)

Meetings in the Upper Hall, Dreghorn Loan at 8.00pm. New members are always welcome.  
Meetings in the Upper Hall, Dreghorn Loan at 8.00pm



## CCCT and CAA Merger – progress in the last year

by **Simon Lloyd**, CCCT Board member

At the outset of this project to bring together Colinton Community Conservation Trust (CCCT) and Colinton Amenity Association (CAA) it was acknowledged that it would not be a quick process. That has turned out to be the case...

Progress has, however, been made in that we now have a draft agreement which sets out the broad principles under which the two organisations can become one. Both the Board of CCCT and the Executive Committee of CAA have been considering the agreement from their own perspectives. This has helped CCCT to understand and document the assets, the responsibilities and the agreements with City of Edinburgh Council, details of which had faded over time.

A second draft of the agreement has been shared and to move things forward discussions will now take place with a legal advisor and OSCR. This process will accelerate agreement and hopefully enable it to be formalised within the coming months.

On a much more positive note, CAA and CCCT have been meeting together to align our activities. Most notably CCCT and CAA took a single joint stand at *Art in the Park*. The day was most successful, and we believe demonstrated to the village our intention to work together and to streamline some of the local organisations whose activities significantly overlap.

Statutory responsibilities remain for both organisations and therefore CCCT has continued to hold board meetings regularly throughout the year and its AGM will take place in November to which all members will be invited. Equally, CAA will be holding a separate AGM for their membership. There will be an opportunity at both these meetings to hear further about, and to discuss, the progress on the merger of the organisations.

**Colinton author Elspeth MacGregor has written a very exciting book aimed at children between three and seven years old.**

It is the story of a little boy called Charlie who has a very loud voice, and his Auntie Elspeth thinks it could be put to good use as a

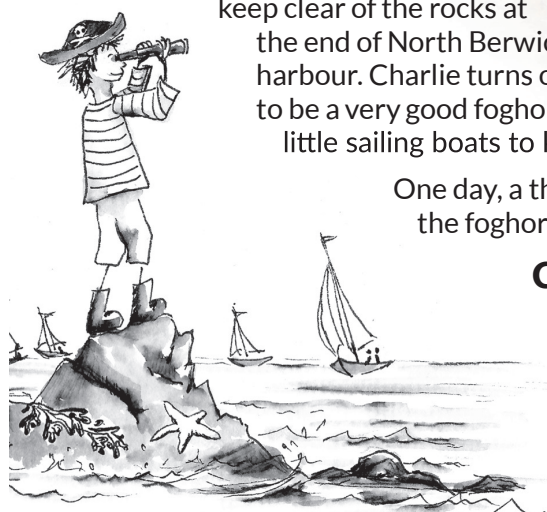
foghorn warning boats to keep clear of the rocks at the end of North Berwick harbour. Charlie turns out to be a very good foghorn and has a busy summer warning little sailing boats to keep clear of the dangerous rocks.

One day, a thick fog comes down and a challenge arises: the foghorn on the Bass Rock has failed!

### Can Charlie save the day?

You can find the answer in the book "A Foghorn Called Charlie" which is on sale for £8 in Colinton Post Office, the Swing Café and the Water of Leith Visitor Centre and at the Seabird Centre in North Berwick.

**All profit from this book will go to charity.**



## A FOGHORN CALLED CHARLIE

**Elspeth MacGregor**

# Anyone for... Croquet?

By **Kenny Pollock.**

**Colinton resident Kenny Pollock, of the Meadows Croquet Club, introduces us to the wonderful game of croquet.**

Many of you will tune in each summer to the tennis championships at Wimbledon, an event organised by the All England Club. But did you know that the club's full title is the All England Lawn Tennis and Croquet Club? No doubt many pub quiz aficionados do, but probably only the hard core aficionados know the club started life as simply the All England Croquet Club.

Like many sports the exact origins of croquet are lost in the mists of time. One theory is that it's derived from an old game called pall-mall (derived from the Latin words for ball and mallet), which is where the famous London street Pall Mall derives its name. Another says that croquet was introduced to England from Ireland in 1852, where a game called crookey was played in County Louth. In reality there's probably an element of truth to both theories.

In England the game really took off in the 1860s, helped in no small way by the advent of the modern lawn mower as it can only be played well on a lawn that is flat and finely cut. The fact that it could be played equally by both sexes was a boost too, with many well-to-do young ladies seeing it as a good excuse to escape their chaperones for an hour or two. The heyday of the sport didn't last too long however and by the late 1870s it had largely been eclipsed by lawn tennis. For the next 90 years or so the sport remained very much a minority one, played largely by the upper classes with access to croquet lawns at stately homes, although it did make a brief appearance at the 1900 Olympic Games as a demonstration sport.

 *Would be - In whites for a match*



 *Relaxed summer afternoon club session*



In the 1960s however a bit of a revival took place. An increase in leisure time and the introduction of a simplified version of the game saw player numbers start to rise and while still very much a niche sport now counts over 10,000 players in the UK, more if you include "back garden players". It's also played in about 20 other countries around the world, particularly the US, New Zealand, Australia and Egypt.

There are two versions of the game played - Association Croquet and Golf Croquet. The latter is the simpler, more accessible form of croquet and is played by the majority of players. The basics of the rules can be picked up in five minutes. Essentially each player has two differently coloured balls which must be knocked, using a mallet, through a series of hoops. The first ball through each hoop scores a point. All very simple and straightforward you are no doubt thinking. However that's where skill and tactics start to play their part. The clearance between a ball and the hoop is only around 1/8th of an inch so accuracy is vital, plus a crucial part of croquet is knocking away (or clearing) the balls of your opponent. Good players will often be thinking two, three or even four shots in advance. Think of it as billiards meets chess, but played outside with big sticks!!

One of the great joys of croquet is that it can be both super competitive and very sociable, often at the same time. For some players it's a great way to get one over on their friends, for others it's a pleasant catch up on a sunny afternoon. It's also a sport that can be played equally by men and women, and by people of all ages. And I do mean all ages. One regular Edinburgh player is now over 90 and still winning matches.

There are currently seven croquet clubs in Scotland, with three of these being in Edinburgh. The season runs from early April to late September. Ideally it's a game suited to warm, sunny afternoons, but Scotland being Scotland play still goes on when the rain comes down. A feature of many of our sports admittedly. Has it ever been played in Colinton? Not that I know of is the answer, though I wouldn't be surprised if Dregghorn Castle had a croquet lawn in its day. There are however quite a few regular players who live in the village.

It's genuinely a very friendly and welcoming sport played by all sorts of people and nowadays far removed from the posh upper class image it has had in the past. All three Edinburgh clubs are always on the lookout for more members so if this article has piqued your interest then do a search for "Scottish Croquet Association" or for my own club "Meadows Croquet Club" where you'll find contact details and all sorts of other information. All you need is a pair of flat shoes (trainers or similar) - mallets etc can be borrowed from the clubs. Hopefully we'll see you on a lawn next season!

"There is actually still a croquet lawn in use at Wimbledon. Maybe now that Andy Murray has put down his tennis racquet he'll be picking up a croquet mallet instead."



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