

Soundings

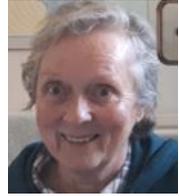
Portobello & Joppa Parish
Church Magazine

July & August 2021



Portobello and Joppa Parish Church

From the editor



I recently read a book published in 1987 about elderly Glasgow people's reminiscences, and suddenly realised that one chap being quoted, Noble Boyd, was one of my father's very many cousins. He says, "I mind the day I fell in the duckpond at Carolside Farm. I was leaning over for taddies and I just toppled in. Came out all green and slimy – my, what a mess and what a reek there was off me. Didnae half get a skelpit leatherin' – oh dear aye!"

I don't think I actually met this cousin, who was 16 years older than my father and who lived in Glasgow all his life, but I remember his unusual name and it was interesting to "hear" his voice from the past. I wonder if it was his father - my great-uncle Tom - who gave him the leathering, or his wife – who my aunt always said was rather posh. Different times!

Our children and grandchildren are rather more gently brought up – and given less freedom, which has its disadvantages, maybe. But they're just as lively and fun, as we saw in the Promotion Service that Stewart mentions and as you can read in Robbie's reminiscences later in the magazine. I think this is the first time that the phrase "an absolute nostalgic banger" has appeared in "Soundings".

We also have news from the Breakfast Club and Junior Drama, both of which sound fun as well. There's a report from the Book Group (still on Zoom). Shirley gives us more thoughts about Palestine. And – hurray, hurray – the Coffee Club is aiming to start again on September 6.

And there are the usual features – thanks as always to all contributors.

The next edition of "Soundings" will be in **September**.

Pam



From the minister

Dear Friends and Neighbours,

Puppets (re)telling the story of the Prodigal Son/Forgiving Father?
A Springer Spaniel helping with a reflection?

Doors opening and closing for a hymn?

Crafts, children's reflections, jumpers and 'It's a wonderful world?'

Breakfast Clubbers leading prayers?

What does this have to do with PJPC?

All of this was a part of our Promotion Sunday on 20 June.

It's a Sunday when we have often read out the names of the babies recently baptised, children involved with our Sunday Stars, marked those who were leaving the Breakfast Club and thanked all of the volunteers who have given so much time and energy, with Michelle's help and encouragement and guidance, to create a wonderful atmosphere.

This year was a bit different. Not only was it online but we felt that it would be good to approach it using technology and participation in a slightly different manner. And thanks to all of those who pitched in!

It got me thinking.

Promotion. Of course. We celebrate all of the growth in understanding and faith. We give thanks for the time and energy people contribute as part of their commitment to our church and to Christ's call to nurture one another.

It struck me that we were also promoting something else that will be hugely important in the years to come.

Almost a dozen people were involved in creating that service. Dozens more contributed photographs.

We were promoting participation in the creation of worship that we hoped and prayed would be pleasing to God in its mixture of humour, thoughtfulness, joy and laughter.

And participation in the creation of worship, drawing on the gifts of all the ages, will be so important in the days ahead.

Huge changes, as I hope you all know, are coming to the Church of Scotland.

We will be working more with other churches and we have the opportunity to contribute our time, talents and resources. Not just to observe and watch, but to roll up our sleeves and get involved.

A harbinger of things to come.

We are richly blessed as a congregation. Let's share those blessings with one another and with the community and the wider world. For it is by sharing God's gifts that we receive.

Stewart

Breakfast Club

Over the past few weeks, we have been having Bible discussions with our two groups of Breakfast Clubbers outside on the grass.



Due to the Covid restrictions we have had to have a group at 2.00pm for the new Breakfast Clubbers and at 3.00pm for the older ones, which has been really good. But now that restrictions have eased a bit we can now have them all in one group, which is fantastic.

One of the best things, though, is actually being together *in real life* instead of being on Zoom.

We normally start Breakfast Club with their “Highs and Lows”, in which they let us know what has been the best part of their week and what has not been so good. This gives us a chance to talk and trust each other about our own experiences and to become more confident with each other. We then do a short game for 5 minutes. Wink, Wink Murder and Detective Puzzle games seem to be their favourites. This is followed by our Bible study, which they seem to enjoy and hopefully they can relate to some of the stories in their own lives.

Over the past couple of weeks some of the younger ones have wanted to talk about climate change and what the Church(es) can do to help. A couple of the younger ones went on a Zoom conference with other churches a couple of weeks ago and reported back to us with some fantastic ideas we can do to help – more on that later, though.

Sunday, 20th June was Promotional Sunday which sadly meant that some of our older members will be moving on. They will be sadly missed but “once a Breakfast Clubber, always a Breakfast Clubber” and they are always more than welcome to come back to us to help out or lead activities – and they know that we will always be here for them.

To help them move on, we had fun games for them in the afternoon. Two of the older ones who were leaving – Tom and Emily – as well as Stewart joined us for the games. We played Wink, Wink Murder, High and Low card game and Family Fortunes.

Jamie

Junior Drama

Junior Drama have been busy filming a movie “12 Angry Pigs” – well, actually the “10 Angry Pigs”. We had an exciting, exhausting and fun time filming the movie, which is based on the classic movie “12 Angry Men” which starred Henry Fonda.

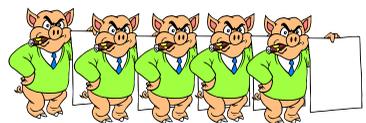
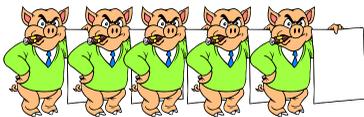
Charlotte and Jack did the filming between them but unfortunately, due to my lack of “how to make a movie” skills, we didn’t get it finished in time. The children are keen to come back and finish it though so we’ll plan for another couple of days filming over the next couple of months and we will update you on how it goes...

We also filmed the “Prodigal Son” for Promotional Sunday using puppets. Again Charlotte did the filming and Lois, Adele and Rosa used their skills and talents working the puppets. Well done to them all.

We are still having games night on Zoom on a Thursday night, which is really fun. The children enjoy organising their own games for us to play, which is great. We’ve played the Memory Game, Detective Game and Murder Mystery amongst others the children have organised so well done to them.

Well, that’s all for now. Junior Drama wish you all well and keep safe.

Jamie



Shirley tells us some more of her experiences in Palestine. She says, "2007 is a long time ago but there has been deterioration rather than improvement since then, so I think the stories are worth telling."

Lucy from Bethlehem

Visiting Palestine in 2007, Ian and I were invited with 2 others to have lunch with Lucy, her mother and their neighbour at their home in Bethlehem. Our group of 20, led by a former minister of the Scots Kirk in Jerusalem, had spent the morning learning about the work of WI'AM (The Palestinian Conflict Resolution Centre), an organisation which provides individuals, families, groups and neighbourhoods with peaceful alternatives to conflict. The organisation had mediated in thousands of conflicts all stemming from the same root cause, the continued Israeli occupation, the deterioration of economic and political prospects and the violation of human rights. It had trained hundreds of volunteers and had run seminars in conflict resolution in senior schools and colleges. Lucy, who worked with WI'AM, had a degree in Theology and was studying for a Masters in International Law. She could spend 4 hours a day travelling to her classes in nearby Jerusalem due to checkpoint delays. After lunch Lucy's mother proudly peeled for us sweet juicy oranges grown in her own town of Bethlehem.



Coffee Club

The Coffee Club will, hopefully, resume on Monday 6th September at 10.00 in the Session Room.

We look forward to seeing all members and any new members who might like to join us for coffee/tea and home baking plus lots of chat.

There should be plenty to talk about!!

See you then.

Pat Joan



Book group - *The Girl with the Louding Voice* by Abi Daré



This tale of a young girl's struggles to fulfil her dream of getting a proper education was liked by the whole group. The story telling was compelling and drew the reader into the trials and tribulations of young Adunni as she moved from a childhood filled with safety and dreams to her adolescence, where after the death of her mother her life completely changed.

It is the heart-rending story of a young girl's determination to improve her life and fulfil her childhood ambitions.

The narrative, with its queer accents, odd grammar and phraseology, endeared itself to the readers.

The storyline explored the difficult and often delicate issues of domestic abuse, slavery, human trafficking, male dominance, family loyalties, and grounded them in the setting of rural village life. The place of girls in Nigerian society was well described and difficult to believe when viewed from our comfortable western society. How would we in the West with our monogamous relationships come to terms with first, second or third wife status?

There was a feeling of predestination in respect of the storyline and one felt throughout the book that all would be well with Adunni; but there were many twists and turns, and the clever storytelling helped keep up the tension.

Her move into Lagos, having been duped by her 'Agent', showed just how trusting and naïve she was. However, it was while being 'employed' by Madam that she meets up with Ms Tia Dadda, who will eventually be her saviour. It provides yet another twist to the story and one is often left wondering yet again if Adunni had made the right choice or decision. Was the relationship between Adunni and Tia Dadda completely believable?

This was an excellent read, a page-turner and one to be kept and read again.

George



A call to prayer

“In comparing and grading and competing, they... miss the point.” 2 Corinthians 10, 12.

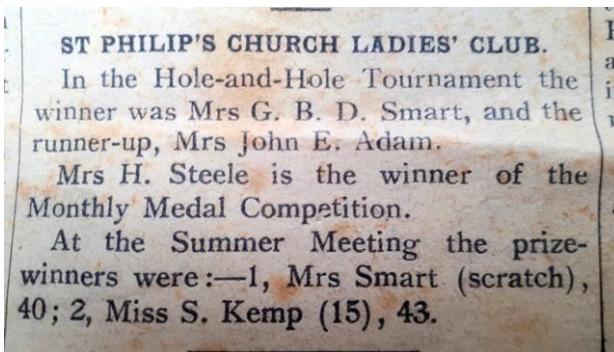
If you’ve lost your joy in serving the Lord, maybe it’s because you’re comparing yourself to others and trying to be like them.

Paul said, “Do your own work well... don’t compare yourself.” (Galatians 6,4.) Paul continually dealt with critics and his answer was always the same: avoid comparisons, resist exaggeration and seek only God’s commendation. He refused to be distracted by criticism, or compare his ministry, or engage in fruitless debates.

Author John Bunyan said that if his life was fruitless, it didn’t matter who praised him, and if it was fruitful it didn’t matter who criticised him.

Contentment is available as long as we keep our eyes on the King of Kings.

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From The Edinburgh Citizen and Portobello Advertiser, 23 July, 1937. Mrs Adam was the minister’s wife and Mrs H. Steele was the Lord Provost’s wife – and a relative, I think, of Henry, Maureen’s husband. Anyone recognise the other names?

Pam

Gardening with George - More plant lore from
George Anderson, horticulturist and star of the small screen.



By the time you read this, we will be past the longest day. So far, the month of June has been very dry, a bit breezy in places and, as one expects, warm. All these elements make for an interesting time in the garden. As the days shorten, plants recognise the change in day length, and they change their growth patterns accordingly. Leeks planted out in the area vacated where the early potatoes were lifted from will now be putting on lots of leaf growth, preparing themselves by building up their energy stores (their thick stems that we enjoy in soups and stews) in readiness for the coming winter. Dahlias, chrysanthemums and sunflowers all flower as the days shorten and would continue to flower for much longer if it was not for the sudden sharp frosts of late autumn that draw a halt to it all.

Mid-summer is the time to start thinking about taking softwood and semi-ripe wood cuttings of some of the more tender of our summer flowering plants. Fuchsias, geraniums, salvias and diascia cuttings should be about 3-4 inches long (75 –100mm). They are best taken first thing in the morning when they are full of water and nutrients. Prepare the cuttings by removing the bottom two pairs of leaves either by cutting them off close to the stem with a sharp knife or by gently pulling them off. Next, cut the stems just below a node (just below where a leaf joins the stem). Make the cut with a sharp knife - clean cuts heal more quickly - and then dip the cut ends of the stems in a little rooting hormone to speed up the rooting process. Then I use a mix of equal parts of a peat-free general-purpose compost and perlite and sharp sand. Insert the cuttings round the edge of a clean plastic pot, water them in and then cover them with a polythene bag secured by an elastic band. Sit the pot somewhere in the shade and hopefully the cuttings will be rooted within a month or so. Once rooted, the cuttings should be potted into new compost and left to root before winter.

I have been using a garlic spray this year to ward off some of the more common garden pests. It comes as a liquid concentrate which you dilute and then spray on to the plants you wish to protect. I use it on gooseberries to deter Gooseberry Sawfly,

which attacks the foliage of the gooseberry bushes and can, in severe cases, completely denude the whole plants in a matter of a few days. I apply the spray once a week from the middle of April onwards and so far it has been successful. I also use it to control carrot root fly. In this case I apply the diluted spray over the foliage of the carrots whenever I weed them or thin them. The garlic spray masks the scent of the carrots and confuses the adult carrot fly. The spray is also supposed to be successful in deterring slugs and snails determined on nibbling the leaves of hostas. However, I have not found it successful in this respect and so have had to revert to the use of organic slug pellets.



In the glasshouse the tomatoes are growing well and now in mid-summer they require feeding once a week with a high potash liquid fertiliser. Potash is the nutrient that adds flavour and colour to the fruits and encourages strong steady growth. My pots of annuals will need to be dead-headed regularly from midsummer onwards. Cutting off the spent / dead flowers prevents the plants from setting seed and so encourages a longer flowering period. Just what you want from your colourful pots.

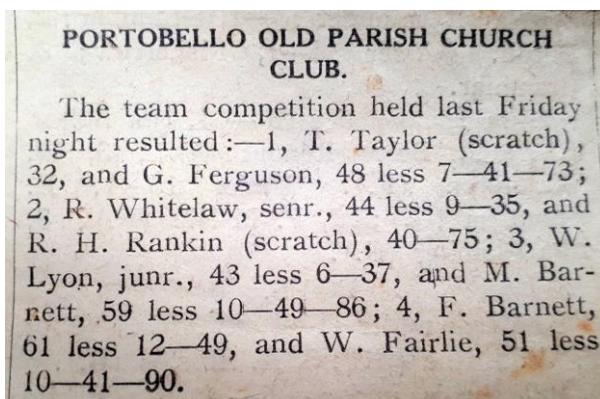
Enjoy the summer, keep watering your pots and troughs, and stay safe and well.

Happy Gardening.

George

More names from The Edinburgh Citizen and Portobello Advertiser. Are these familiar to anyone?

Pam



The not-so-ancient mariner remembers

I was walking along the prom recently and met Sandra Anderson. It was really great to see her and catch up on her news. The Prom is like Piccadilly Circus. It is said if you stand there long enough you will see everybody! I was at church recently and was able to have a good wee chat to Fiona who, as ever, played wonderfully. Stewart was also on good form and he read from “Vesper Flights” by Helen Macdonald, which I am now going to get. However, his story of an injured swift which had been brought back to life by the writer triggered a memory for me which I thought you might like to know about. I do get feedback and people seem to enjoy my ramblings.

One of the ships I sailed on during my sea going career was an old, ugly ship which had absolutely no concession to comfort in any way. There was no air conditioning, there were communal wash facilities even for officers, and there was only a very small bar/recreation room. I joined her in Malta, as my company took over the ship from her previous managers, British India Line. She was a Tank Landing Craft now called the “RFA Empire Gull”. Built to be driven on to the beaches of Normandy, she was functional with no frills whatsoever. She was flat-bottomed, awful in any kind of sea, slow (eight knots with a following wind) and with temperamental engines.

I was treated with a great deal of suspicion by the people on board when I joined. This guy from this new company was going to change everything in their comfortable existence. It took a while for the ice to break, but by the time we had sailed from Malta to Famagusta in Cyprus via Tobruk in Libya, we were all the best of pals. It was in Famagusta that a few more of my RFA colleagues joined the ship and the “high heid yins” from the Ministry of Defence, London, arrived on board.

As I had been first to arrive in Malta I had been gradually going through some of the processes now required of the ship with those officers who were remaining. The “highest heid yin” asked to meet me. He started by apologising for sending me to this ship, which they had taken over without even visiting her. She was the “ugly duckling” of a packet of ships including the ill-fated “Sir Galahad” and her sisters. He then said that when he returned to London he would see I was relieved and sent to another ship.

By this time I had become very fond of my new home and was not happy that he was so disrespectful to her!! I simply said to him, "I am very happy here. I love this ship, I love the people, who I have now got to know well and I want to stay". Aghast, he took me at my word - nine months later I was eventually relieved, but only so that I could actually get married!

However - to the story triggered by Stewart's reflection this morning. We were plodding along between Crete and Malta. There was a northerly wind. This time of year was the migratory time for swallows and similar birds as they headed north. These birds have a long migratory flight and they are hindered in many ways by the vagaries of the wind, but also many of them are caught in nets as they fly over hill, cliff and mountain tops. They need all the help they can get to reach us here.

Anyway, one night I finished my communications duties. As usual with no air conditioning, the very large porthole was open to try to catch the breeze to keep me cool. Communications were tough with the WW2 equipment which I was still expected to use! No radiotelephone of any kind. All communications were by Morse code, flags or blasts on the ship's horn! Can you imagine the confusion that that caused in a busy port? Sometimes funny to see, and we all enjoyed the spectacle of other ships getting out of our way, especially in Grand Harbour, Malta when the American Navy were visiting!

Anyway, as usual I did my work, switched off the radio equipment, locked the door and went for a well-earned beer before sleep overnight.

Next morning after breakfast I went to work, unlocked the door and there before me was the most incredible sight I have ever seen. There were hundreds of swallows and similar birds all sitting perched on my copper aerial connectors, bookshelves, equipment and my seat. Literally everywhere there was a perch, there was a bird, all of them crouched in exhaustion.

I then realised I had left my big porthole open and also the light in the radio room had been left on. My rush for a thirsty beer had been too hasty!

I shut the door and went off to find the captain, a lovely man, and asked him to come and see. He was absolutely incredulous. Obviously as our ship had sailed through the night, the light from the room had beckoned these exhausted birds to a place of rest. The fact they were exhausted was shown in the fact that none of them moved when I opened the door.

I shut the door and went for a cup of tea and when I returned a couple of hours later, they had all gone. We had watched them as they flew out of the porthole to continue on their journey. I hope they made it, and I hope we helped.

Before I could do anything else, I then had the most awful cleaning job I have ever had to undertake, cheered on by totally unsympathetic comment from my so-called shipmates. There was not much communicating done that day but we were going nowhere fast!

I reflected that that would not have happened on a brand-new ship with all air conditioning and mod cons, to which I was to be transferred. These were the joys of an old, ugly bath tub of a ship, which I loved dearly.

I left my porthole open and the light on the next night, just in case there were any potential stowaways, but to my secret sadness, there were none the next night.

If that happened now I would have taken tens of photographs on my mobile phone, but I was not a camera person in those days. But it does go to show how communications have moved forward since my encounter with hundreds of swallows.

I hope you are all well and looking forward to continuing relaxation of things if the “Delta” virus will allow. It seems endless, but surely we can look forward to singing again! I hope so! Enjoy the summer!

Best wishes,

Sandy



Brain-teaser - Alison

Here are some names from the Bible. The letters of each name have been put into alphabetical order. Rearrange them into the correct order and you'll find a three-word message spelled out by the **first letters of the answers**.



First word – use the first letters of the answers to make the first word

DEGINO – a military leader who appears in the Book of Judges. (Hint – hotel rooms.)

AHOPR - a Moabite, daughter-in-law of Naomi in the Book of Ruth.

ADEILN – famous for his way with lions

Second word – use the first letters of the answers to make the second word

AAHRS – the wife of Abraham and the mother of Isaac

AEHIJL – a famous prophet

ABEEHILTZ – the mother of John the Baptist (Hint - Lilibet)

AOMNSS – strong chap – till he had a haircut

Third word – use the first letters of the answers to make the third word

AANOR – brother of Moses

AALRUSZ – rose from the dead

ELKU – one of the four evangelists

(It was tempting to make one answer ABDEEKINOZ – which would have been Adonibezek, a Canaanite king. But that might have been a bit much. No, I hadn't heard of him either.)



Getting to know you – Robbie. Robbie has been coming to St Philip’s / PJPC all his life and has been a member of Sunday School / Sunday Stars, Breakfast Club, Messy Church and Junior Drama, choosing to get baptised when he was 10 years old. Robbie has just gone into S4 at Portobello High School where, surprisingly, he loves Drama and Music!

Q. What is a favourite hymn, and why?

A. I really love “You are a Star” by Fischy Music as it’s an absolute nostalgic banger (even though I would never admit it). I was star struck when I met them when they visited the church – that was a great day.

Q. What is an early church memory?

A. The crèche room was a whole vibe. I remember playing with kitchen things – the oven and the pretend food – also with the train tracks at Messy Church.

Q. What are you reading at the moment?

A. “The Hate U Give” by Angie Thomas.

Q. What’s your earliest childhood memory?

A. I think I remember being at Loch Awe just before I was 3. I remember being outside and a bridge area.

Q. In an alternative life, what job would you have chosen?

A. I would always like to be a bus driver or work in transport some way. I would love to write new bus routes.



Q. How did you find lockdown?

A. It changed things – I couldn’t have my last year of Junior Drama. I think I adapted well but it was really sad. I missed all the drama and church and things were not the same.

Q. What extra tasks have you done / are you planning to do before lockdown is completely over?

A. I am wanting to get in a healthier routine and do more cooking at home.

Q. What are you longing to do once lockdown is completely over?

A. Go to Barcelona again. I am really excited to go back to church and Breakfast Club camp. That is a must-do.

Q. What is your most prized possession?

A. A picture of Dracula from the Junior Drama show that Jamie drew – it was my favourite show.

Q. Tell us something that not many people know about you.

A. I was a master of “Just Dance” (a game on the Wii) back in my day.

Q. What luxury would you take to a desert island?

A. A large interesting novel.

Q. What do you do to relax?

A. Watch TV shows that I really like, especially sitcoms like “Friends”, “Modern Family” and “Gavin and Stacey”.

Q. Where would you go in a time machine and why?

A. I would want to go back to the 2000s as the music was really cool – everything about it looks fun.

Q. What is a favourite quotation?

A. “Love thy neighbour” because it is talking about being caring and understanding.

Q. What kind of music do you listen to?

A. Pop punk, pop, it can vary a little bit.

Q. What do you miss (or not miss) about being a child?

A. I like the fact that I now get to do the things I was not able to do when I was young. I can go out with my friends where I want.

Q. How would you like to be remembered?

A. As someone who made people feel loved and made them feel brighter.

Q. What gets you up in the morning (apart from your alarm clock)?

A. Nothing, I want to sleep in! Leave me alone! 😊



Q. What makes your heart sing?

A. The musical “Grease”, the TV show “Glee”, doing musicals with others like Junior Drama Group.

Remembering

- 29 May** Audrey Ridley of Portobello
2 June Sheena Murray of Portobello
6 June Ian Thomson of Portobello
7 June May Fleming of Joppa
12 June Bill Davidson of Portobello



Baptism

- 13 June** Abigail, daughter of Scott and Jenny of Danderhall

LIFE AND WORK JULY 2021



The Church in 2121 Looking ahead 100 years

General Assembly Six pages of reports and pictures

‘Being a Christian Doesn’t Prevent Bad Things’ Interview with Paul Mitchell, sports broadcaster and Church elder

Planting for the Future The Very Rev Albert Bogle explains how sowing seeds will allow shoots to be shaped for the future

eXp and Me Eleanor Preece, 17, describes her experiences with the Christian youth project in Dunoon and Cowal

A Wilderness Menu The Very Rev Dr Derek Browning shows how God’s hospitality continues in times of both wilderness and plenty

A Black Isle Church John R Hume considers a church with connections to early Christianity

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MAGAZINE/DIARY DEADLINES

September 2021

October 2021

November 2021

Sunday 22nd August 2021

Sunday 19th September 2021

Sunday 24th October 2021

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Photography by Kim Kjaerside

