



Dean Village News

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www.deanvillage.org

Damside Park

The Old School Playground between Dean Path and Damside is now to be known as Damside Park. At the Annual General Meeting of 2012 the plan to upgrade this area into a children's playground, a rest area for residents and visitors and a source of information about the history of Dean Village was approved. Since then the Dean Village Association has been waiting for ownership issues to be resolved and an assessment of costing. Part of the area is owned by the estate of the late Craig Richards, and the executors have agreed to the planned development of the park.

The project has now been placed with Edinburgh and Lothians Greenspace Trust. The bulk of the funding will be borne by Edinburgh Council and the remainder will be raised by ELGT from other sources. The project has now been put out to tender.

The Dean Village Association would like to place an information board in the Park describing the heritage of the area, and the history of the various buildings. This will cost around £2000, which will have to be raised by the Association. The committee will be presenting this subject for approval at the Annual General Meeting in April.

When the work is completed there will be a Grand Opening Ceremony to which all residents of Dean village are invited.

Quiz Time

Radio 4's *Round Britain quiz* is an event spread over 12 weeks in which arcane questions are put to teams representing various regions of the country. Each team consists only of two persons, and each week there is a contest between teams from two of these six regions:- Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland, North of England, South of England and the Midlands. The final match of the series took place on Monday 2nd December between Wales, the defending champions and Northern Ireland. If Wales won, they would be champions again, but if they lost they would draw with the Midlands team and there would be a countback of points won to decide the winner.

There are six points awarded for each question, which consists of several parts. The question master can deduct points for failure to answer a section, or if he has to give clues to aid the panellists.

This match had some local interest. The Welsh team received this question:- What links a flat Tibetan bell, a former Liberal Democrat leader and a solo space cowboy? Put your answers in chronological order.

Is your appetite whetted? Try this one given to Northern Ireland:- What game would you be playing if the answer was:- the national bird of India with the first Hitchcock film made in colour in the domain of Demetrius of Phaleron?

Ponder these awhile . Answers on page 15.

Wanted

Dean Village School photos late 1940s/early 1950s

My name is Francis jack. I attended the Dean Village School between 1946-1953 and would like to hear from people who might have photos of the school, the area and its pupils from that time. If you have these and are happy to share, or would like to get in touch, please email me at francismjack@gmail.com



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My Friends in the Cemetery XIX by David Perry William Henry Playfair (1790 - 1857)

William Henry Playfair was the great Edinburgh architect responsible for many of the most beautiful neo-classical buildings in the New Town. He came from a very talented family.

His grandfather was a kirk minister at Benvie, near Dundee, who had four sons. The eldest was John (1748 - 1819) who, on the death of his father in 1772, became responsible for the upbringing of his brothers. At the early age of 18 he had attempted to become the professor of Mathematics at Mareschal College (now part of the University of Aberdeen). He later succeeded in this objective in 1785 at the University of Edinburgh and subsequently exchanged this to become Professor of Natural Philosophy in 1805. Younger brother William (1759 - 1823) was a man with a variety of skills - engineer, draughtsman, economist and statistician - mixed in with some criminal activities. He was also a talented mathematician who pioneered the use of graphical techniques such as line graphs, bar charts, pie charts and circle graphs, all used to this day to illustrate financial statements. Between John and Edward came brother James (1755 - 1794), an architect whose most noted building was Caithness House, Aberdeenshire. He moved to London where he lived at Russell Square and became the father of William Henry.

On the death of his father, William Henry moved to live with his uncle John in Edinburgh. He continued his studies and, after qualifying as an architect, set up a successful practice. In 1817 he won a competition to complete the design of the Old College of the University of Edinburgh on South Bridge, based on proposals originating from Robert Adam. The building was completed in 1831.

He went on to design many major projects, among them: Dollar Academy (1818), Calton New Town including Regent Terrace, Royal Terrace and the Observatory (1820), the building which is now the Royal Scottish Academy (1822), the Royal Circus (1823), St. Stephen's Church (1827), the Surgeon's Hall (1830), Donaldson's (1851) and the National Gallery of Scotland (1839). The Playfair Project, completed in 2004, joined the Royal Scottish Academy and the National Gallery of Scotland with an

underground link.

On Calton Hill he designed monuments to his uncle Professor John Playfair and to Dugald Stewart. But the strangest project was to create a replica of the Parthenon to honour the fallen in the Napoleonic Wars and underline Edinburgh's reputation as “the Athens of the North”. However money ran out before this folly was completed.

He took as an apprentice David Cousin who, in 1831, left to start his own practice. David became a specialist in designing cemeteries: Warrington (1842), Dean (1845), Dalry and Roseburn (1848) and Newington (1848). He later became a Dean Cemetery resident.

Playfair left the Church of Scotland to join the Free Church following the disruption of 1843, and thus lost his right to burial in the parish churchyard. He died after a long illness and so he found his way into Dean Cemetery, his protege's masterpiece, and has one of the largest memorials on the back wall which adjoins the Scottish Modern Art Gallery 2.

A Millennial Plaque has been installed inside the main entrance of the East façade of the Old College Quad. The inscription reads "In honour of William Henry Playfair 1790 - 1857 Architect and Designer. Architect of Old College and New College, alumnus of the University" Playfair's New Town house and office was at 17, Great Stuart Street.



The Water of Leith Walkway

The Water of Leith walkway stretches from the outskirts of Balerno down to the Custom House by The Shore at Leith, a distance a little over 12½ miles. In the last issue of the Dean Village News the walk from Slateford to Dean Village was described.

Stage 4: - Dean Village to Leith.

From the centre of the village start down Miller Row. As you pass by West Mills look over the wall and see the archways down by the river. When the mill wheels were operating the water went straight through, but the water was diverted to come out of the side when the wheels were at rest.

The lower weir provided a head of water for the mills further downstream. The first you come to is the site of Lindsay's Mill, where three old mill wheels rest, probably taken from West Mills when they ceased to operate. Look over the fence and in the centre of the river is a flue pipe to discharge effluent gasses. This whole site became a distillery in the early 1900s, and the worm tubs that cooled the distillate were situated over the river. On your left are the offices of RMJM Ltd, architects of the Scottish Parliament building, on the site of Jericho, a six storey granary built in 1619, but which burnt down in 1967.

Further on are offices in a quaint castellated building built in 1912 by publisher William Nelson on the site of Mars Mill, which opened in 1580. You then pass under the magnificent Dean Bridge, built by Thomas Telford in 1834, at the request of Lord Provost Learmonth who wished to benefit from the growing Georgian expansion of Edinburgh to his lands to the north of the river. Built for horses and carriages, it has been strengthened over the years to take modern traffic. Look over the wall and under the bridge, on a rock you will see an otter. Or rather, a statue of one which appeared about six years ago by an unidentified artist.

Further along you pass St. George's Well, known as the "Inky Well" a pumphouse built in 1810 to provide drinking water. Another 100 yards farther is St. Bernard's Well, a pump house built in 1787 by Alexander Naismith for Lord Gardenstone. The statue is of Hygeia, the goddess of Health and Well-being, promoting a healthy lifestyle. The serpent, winding up the pillar is a symbol of rebirth, as the ancients considered this to be result of the shedding of its skin. The Well was refurbished in 1887, the interior decorated by Thomas Bonnar and the statue replaced by David Stevenson. The latest refurbishment has just been completed as the last of the Twelve Monuments project by the Edinburgh World Heritage Trust.

Continue to Stockbridge, cross the main road and go down the steps by the river. Here are the new flood defences, with high walls to prevent water going into houses and businesses. At the far end of the path the river goes under Falshaw's bridge, opened in 1877, and widened in 1956. Sir James Falshaw was an engineer and a

pioneer of the railways between 1831 to 1862 and Chairman of North British Railway Company from 1882 to 1887. He was Lord Provost of Edinburgh from 1874 to 1877. Carry on along the river and to your left is the Grange, home of Scottish cricket. You could go straight on to the Botanic Gardens. But to continue your river walk turn right down Rocheid Path. On the far side are the Colonies, eleven parallel terraced buildings, the lower levels with doors facing one way, and the upper floors with outside stairs facing the opposite way. The Colonies were built between 1861 and 1911 by the Edinburgh Co-operative Building Company as low-cost housing for artisans.

Along the river path you come to a new bridge across to the Glenogle swim baths. Further on your left is a beautiful ornamental garden, privately owned, but opened to the public on occasion to support charities. You could go left here and enter the East gate of the Botanic gardens. But go right across the river into Canonmills.

Cross the road and go down Warriston Road. The flood defences here are now completed. The riverside wall on your left is high, and you need to be on tiptoes to see over it. You pass by a floodgate, and the wall is lower here. There is now a second set of floodgates and both these are closed when the river is high. Warriston Road passes under an old railway bridge, now the Warriston Path cycle and walkway. There is a new flood wall and high walkway until you reach St, Mark's Bridge. Cross over into the park.

The path proceeds through the park close to the river. It passes under an old railway bridge and emerges by a weir. Continue along the path until it comes to a junction at Stedeastgate. Victoria Path is to the left, but you carry straight on. The river and the walkway separate here. You can continue along the walkway and join the river as it meanders back. But to keep close to the river follow a sign to the left up stairs to Newhaven Road. The river now goes through an industrial area. Turn right on Newhaven Road until you reach the river and go down the slope to the riverside. The path goes over a bridge to the right and then over another bridge to the left, before emerging at Anderson Road. Go left and shortly after right opposite Bowling Green Road. After 20 yards there is a path to your left which leads back to the river. The path rejoins the walkway from which you deviated earlier.

The river now widens, as does the walkway. It passes under Great Junction Street Bridge and now there is only a quarter of a mile left to get to Leith. There are some stones here with carved poems or quotations.

You emerge at Sandford Place in Leith. Go over the bridge and in an open area there is a metal representation of the course of the Water of Leith from Balerno to Leith. Journey's End... You can now get either a 22 bus to Lothian Road or a 36

The Convening Court hand rail

In 2007 a request was made to Clarence to place a hand rail down the steps of the Convening Court. A job number was issued, and we waited for action. Several years passed, and no handrail appeared. In the severe winter of 2011 it was sorely needed. From time to time reminders were sent to Clarence to no avail.

Following the AGM of 2013, this requirement was pointed out during a walk through of the village with our councillors. And, thankfully, a beautiful handrail appeared in November 2013, placed down the centre of the steps. So now it is possible to ascend or descend the steps, whether you are right- or left-handed, with the rail to aid you.

At the bottom of the steps you still have to negotiate a slope without any rail. A hole in the concrete surface has been filled, and a rocky step on to Upper Damside has been stabilised. But perseverance has paid off, and let us give thanks for progress.

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5 Croall Place, Edinburgh EH7 4LT

Tel: 0131-557-0577 - Fax: 0131-557-5759

Email: mark.lazarowicz.mp@parliament.uk

Annual General Meeting

Notice is hereby given for a proposed amendment to the Constitution. In order to have a greater flexibility of arranging a date for future Annual General Meetings the committee proposes the following:- Item 5 of the Constitution to commence “The General Meeting of the Association shall be held annually in **April or May** for the purpose of receiving a Report from the Committee and electing the Committee for the year following.” (Addition in bold print).

The main business of the meeting will be a discussion on the improvement and maintenance of the environment in Dean Village. Since the last General Meeting, meetings with our councillors have resulted in a number of improvements- replacement of setts in the centre of the village, the provision of the Convening Court handrail, and the repair of the telephone box among others. However work remains to be done with particular reference to the maintenance of privately owned property. Opinions of all residents would be welcomed.

Dean Village Events

Village Walks: these will take place on the following days:

Tuesday 3rd June, Thursday 26th June, Thursday 10th July
Meet at the top of Bell's Brae by Kirkbrae House at 7.15pm. There will be a fee of £3 per head which goes to the Dean Village Association. Children free

Cemetery Walks: the following cemetery walks have been arranged:

Sundays 15th June, 29th June and 20th July
Meet at the Cemetery Gate at the top of Dean Path The fee will be £4, £3 of which goes to the Dean Village Association and £1 to the Cemetery Trust for the upkeep of the cemetery. Children free.

St Bernard's Well: the Well will be opened to visitors on the first Sunday of the months May, June, July, and August and the Sundays of the Edinburgh Festival (17th, 24th and 31st August) from 12 noon till 3pm. The Well will also be opened on Doors Open Days Saturday, September 27th, and Sunday, September 28th, from 11am till 4pm. Entry free.

Damside Park: the newly created Damside Park (at the junction of Dean Path and Damside) will be opened at a date to be determined.

Flood Defences: At a meeting of the Water of Leith Flood Prevention Scheme (Phase 2) stakeholders, the convener said that the original budget was £35.4m, but only £19.9m was available. Consequently a new, reduced, scheme has been proposed which will only cost £25.5m. The £6m shortfall would be sought from other sources. Thus only minimal work would be carried out at Damside, Belford Bridge, the Edinburgh Sports Club and Coltbridge. So may we wave goodbye to the adjustment of the metal footbridge?

Belford House/Douglas House; The developers of these two offices (AMA Ltd) are expected to send a revised planning application to the Council sometime during the year. Those interested parties should consult the Council's Planning website.

2014 Annual General Meeting

Notice is hereby given of the forty-third Annual General Meeting of the Dean Village Association to be held at the Dean Parish Church Hall on Tuesday 29th April at 7,30pm.

Agenda

1. Apologies
- 2 Minutes of the forty-second AGM
- 3 Matters Arising
- 4 Chairman's Report
- 5 Secretary's Report
- 6 Treasurer's Report
- 7 Election of Office Bearers
 - a) Chairman - Barry Mackay
 - b) Vice Chairman - Javier Albert
 - c) Secretary - David Perry
 - d) Treasurer - Vacant
- Election of Committee Members:
Caroline Gerard, Conrad Hughes, Mignonne Khazaka, Pat Sinclair, Wendy Taylor
- 8 Amendment to the Constitution: Add the words "or May" after April in the first paragraph of item 5.
- 9 Membership Fees
- 10 Damside Park
- There will now be a break of 10 minutes
- 11 Discussion on environmental issues
- 12 Any other business

INVITATION

All residents of Dean Village are invited to the Grand Opening Ceremony of the newly created Damside Park. We welcome everybody to this great new amenity in Dean Village. The date is to be determined but will be a Saturday afternoon. Notices will be displayed throughout the village

Please come and support your local community. It would be helpful if you would inform our social secretary Mignonne Khazaka at mk@greeninvcap if you intend to be there.

Winter Nature Notes by Barbara Mackay

Much to the consternation of our country born and bred 12 years old grandson we have put up a squirrel feeder, a metal one in green, the lid of which clangs each time a clever squirrel lifts it to get at the peanuts. With a nut in its paws it frolics to the top of an ivy covered wall and munches with dainty eating movements. He bodes no interruptions either from fellow squirrel or bird, seeing them off with speed and agility. Fascinating and somehow endearing to watch as they may be, they damage crops and trees. Bark stripping is a favourite pastime as they like the sweet tasting sap as it rises in early summer. During the 40s and 50s the damage they caused was so extensive that the Government offered one shilling (50p) for every tail handed in. They live in dreys, spherical shaped nests high up in the branches of a tree, or in tree hollows. Untidy dreys are likely to be occupied by crows whereas the well maintained ones are the homes of squirrels. They are easily startled little beasts, their bushy tails curling up over their backs when they are afraid.

Birds are coming back in numbers to gardens. Tits are most numerous, followed by Blackbirds with their enchanting songs. A senior Long Tailed Tit, sent to check on food supplies in the Village visited us; he was quickly followed by a clutch of them. They haven't returned but I know they will. We also had a brief call from a vivid Great Spotted Woodpecker and a handsome male Chaffinch alighted with remarkably clear colouring, a rich pink on his breast, a blue cap and a prominent crown. It is said the chaffinch is the first spring songster, singing when claiming its territory; this beau could have all the territory he desired!

Snowdrops are out- a welcome sight. Aconites can be seen on the walkway, their flowers a glorious yellow surrounded by cups of green. Mallards are now pairing up and are quite voluble over the whole procedure. A male and female Goosander sailed past regally but are not regular visitors to this stretch of the river.

I hope that the storms and floods have passed now for the stricken parts of the country and we can all look forward to a pleasant summer.

It's a *Braw* Café

If you haven't popped in to Braw yet, what are you waiting for?! Our outside tables are back out for summer, and we're open weekends and 'til late every weekday.

We serve breakfast all day, and our lunch menu changes daily, with soups, filled rolls, hot suppers, home-baking and lots more. We also stock a wee selection of grocery items for when you're stuck.

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Rates per issue

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Half page £8

Full page £16

This Spring issue goes to all members in the Dean Village Conservation Area.

Join the Dean Village Association

Yearly membership is £7 (£10 per couple) or life membership at £50 (£75 per couple). There is a concessionary annual rate of £3 single and £5 couple. Membership Secretary - Caroline Gerard.

Problems at Hawthornbank Lane.

Hawthornbank Lane is accessed from Belford Road, a little to the east of Belford Mews and Café Braw. The lane goes steeply down towards the metal footbridge and then swings to the right. The tarmac ends and the lane becomes setted. It ascends steeply, narrowing all the while. There is a railing on the right which protects steps that walkers may prefer. At the top of the slope the lane is blocked by a stone pillar. Only pedestrians, cyclists and motor cyclists can progress further.

Residents report that each week at least one car driver attempts to get to Bells' Brae or Dean Path by this route. Once at the road end they have to perform a very difficult reversing manoeuvre. Walls, railings and lamp-posts show damage inflicted by drivers with insufficient reversing skills.

One driver, several months ago, was seen driving up the lane until she could not go any further. She then tried a three-point turn, which turned into a multi-point turn, and in doing so damaged a motor cycle parked there. By the time the witness arrived on the scene, the car had succeeded in turning and had driven off.

On the evening of 28th November a car got in difficulties reversing down the Lane and had become stuck against the wall. With the help of residents the driver managed to come away from the wall, and even accepted an offer to reverse his car back down the Lane. He then resumed his journey.

On another remarkable occasion around Christmas time, a 4-wheel drive Subaru attempted to get to Bell's Brae via Hawthornbank Lane. On realising that there was no way through the driver attempted to reverse the car down the lane, but instead went down the steps until the car became wedged outside number 16. A tow truck had to be called which pulled the car out of its predicament, and then the car was able to reverse safely.

In January a No Through Road (except cyclists) sign was erected on a lamp-post where the Lane narrows by the steps. It remains to be seen whether this additional sign will impinge on the consciousness of drivers who insist on using the Lane as a short cut.



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Answers to Quiz Time

The former Liberal Democrat leader is, of course, Sir Menzies Campbell, known universally as “Ming”. So we are talking Chinese dynasties. Han Solo is the space cowboy, and a Tibetan bell is a shang. So the dynasties are Shang (1600-1046 BC), Han (206BC-8AD) and Ming (1368-1644AD).

Award yourself six points if you got all these right, but the actual years were not required. But give yourself a bonus point if you knew them.

The solution to the second conundrum is as follows. The Indian national bird is the Peacock. Surprisingly the panellists did not know immediately that we are playing Cluedo. So the answer is Miss Peacock with the rope (Hitchcock film) in the library (of Alexandria, the domain of Phaleron)

Wales did win the match and the title. Sadly Scotland were last!

Dean Village Association

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Committee members: Pat Sinclair, Conrad Hughes,
Mignonne Khazaka, Wendy Taylor

Dean Village News

The deadline for articles for the next edition of
the News is

15th July 2014

If you would like to submit an article for the News
please e-mail the Editor at dav12per@btinternet.com

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