



# Dean Village News

Issue 176 Spring 2017  
[www.deanvillage.org](http://www.deanvillage.org)

## **The first Dean Village Association**

In the 1930s Dean Village was in a state of decay. The ochre Baxter's Tolbooth was used as an Episcopal Mission Church, an offshoot of St. Mary's Cathedral in Palmerston Place. The Schoolhouse provided education for the village children and also for children from the Orphanage. Well Court, built in 1884, provided fifty flats and Dean Path Buildings, completed shortly thereafter, held another twenty five flats. Burnside's general store was doing good business in Damside. At the far end of Damside was Leggett's tannery, which provided the main employment in the village.

Those were the good parts. West Mill was empty and in a state of dereliction. Bell's Brae House was falling down, but there was a small sweetie shop at the front. Houses up Dean Path, Bell's Brae and on the south side of the river, including the Tudor-style Hawthornbank Buildings were in a poor state of repair. And they did not comply with the newest sanitary standards.

The following is an edited article from the Edinburgh Evening News of the 14th August 1934 which describes the Dean Village experience. *A stony pathway (Leith Brae) winds down from Belford Road to the metal footbridge under which the dirty Water of Leith passes. This river has little appeal to the lovers of beauty. Across the bridge are tenements*

*and houses on all sides, many derelict and in a state of collapse. To the left, through a series of narrow closes and steps lies the tannery, from which comes a most horrid smell. A flight of steps go up to Dean Path. This is a main street, on which is a post office and a stretch of shops. Below is Well Close, where the Hall hosts weddings, parties and various functions.*

However some of the residents had lived in the village all their lives, as had their fathers and mothers before them. There was a strong community spirit. And so, in the summer of 1935, Joseph Grassick, a resident of 37, Dean Path, founded the Dean Village Association. Grassick, born in 1901 at the same address, was a cement worker and later a boot repairer. Over the next three years he strove to promote the community spirit in the village. Dances were held in Well Court Hall, picnics were held on the slopes of the Grassy Green, and athletic events were held. (The Grassy Green was a slope from Belford Road down to the river where the modern Hawthornbank Flats are now. Children often slid down the bank on tin trays, trying to avoid plunging into the river.)

But, strangely, in the summer of 1938, the Association was wound up. The reason given was that there was no suitable venue available for meetings. This was unfortunate, because one year later, in the August of 1939, the chief sanitary inspector of Edinburgh Town Council announced that ninety-one houses in the village would be subjected to demolition due to their unsafe and insanitary condition. The displaced inhabitants would be found accommodation in other parts of Edinburgh. They were given two weeks to object.

Joseph Grassick once more rose to the occasion. A series of public meetings was held. Mr. Grassick proclaimed "*The spirit which animated the Association still existed and in that spirit which is harnessed to the efforts which have been made and which yet remain to be made on behalf of the campaign to keep Dean villagers in Dean.*" He had no wish to stand in the way of progress, or to stand in the way of those who wished to leave, but new houses were required to be built

to replace those to be demolished. On September 2nd the Dean Village Protection Committee was formed, with its central message “Rebuild in the Dean”. Joseph Grassick was Secretary. A petition would be circulated requesting the rebuilding of Dean Village.

Then, two weeks later, war was declared, and the Corporation abandoned the whole project. The United Kingdom Government decreed that all housing should be preserved during the coming hostilities. So once more, Joseph Grassick's ambitions were thwarted, as there was no need for the Association. He and his wife moved out of Dean Village in 1941 to another part of Edinburgh.

It would be another thirty-three years before the present Dean Village Association would be formed. But that is another story.

### **Quiz Time**

Round Britain Quiz, Radio 4's extremely difficult quiz, goes out in the last three months of the year. Teams from the North and South of England, the Midlands, and from Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland compete for the title of champion. Here are three, rather aqueous, questions from the series.

- 1). Which African river might be said to connect these English towns:-  
a Durham mining town with a tragic history  
a town that became world famous for its IPA  
the childhood home of two of a famous foursome where a third is now commemorated?
- 2). Why would Clancy's Red, Ryan's Black and Lear's Green leave you all at sea?
- 3). Which of these is the shortest:-  
the leader of the Untouchables.  
the chairman of "I'm sorry. I haven't a clue!"  
the male half of a thirties criminal duo?

Answers on page 13

## **Environmental activity in Dean Village**

**Bell's Brae:-** Between 9<sup>th</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> January, Edinburgh moved further into the future with a laying of an optical cable by a company who could not spell Edinburgh (we were advised to contact them via edinbrughcore.com.)

**Miller Row:-** At the end of December and the beginning of January, self seeded trees that were growing out of the walls around Lindsay's Mill (where the mill-stones lie) and riverside walls down as far as Dean Bridge were cut down. Ivy that was growing on the wall was removed, so that now there is a clear, rather bare, view of the river and the land either side.

**Landslip area:-** the river path from Dean Village to the Sunbury area is still closed off. The Council require that all walkers and cyclists take the sign-posted diversion. Reports say that steps have been made from the middle of the affected path up the hill towards Broomielaw House. Meters are in place to measure the rate of movement of the land down the hill. It looks as though there may be a very long time before the matter is resolved.

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## **Planning applications in Dean Village**

**Belford House and Douglas House (14/04512/FUL):-** Application to demolish Belford House and modify Douglas House into residential property. A report dated 12th October 2016 states that this application be granted subject to a legal agreement. The complexities of site ownership has prolonged the legal agreement which has not been concluded. An extension to the end of January was requested and granted. An unconfirmed report suggests that the developers, AMA Ltd., are concentrating their efforts elsewhere, and so there may be a few more years elapsing until work starts.

**RMJM Offices (14/04253/FUL):-** Conversion of offices into residences. Work is proceeding apace by Sundial Properties, as evidenced by the extensive scaffolding along Miller Row.

**3/4 Belford Road (14/04445/CLP):-** Building of residences on derelict site. Extensive archeological work is being carried out. The site was cleared, and archaeological digs have revealed old walls and foundations.

# Recycling your waste

## Are you de-cluttering or downsizing? Do you want a full clearance service?

All charities provide a free uplift for large or bulk items in good condition that are no longer wanted or have been replaced. The Council now charge for this service. As a result fly-tipping has increased around the Council bins. Large pieces of furniture and similar items are either crammed into the bin (preventing their normal use by residents) or left untidily about.

Charities would welcome usable, good quality items that would be of interest to those who are unable to afford to buy new. Thus these things would no longer clutter up our streets, and others would benefit.

The following types of goods would be welcomed by charities:

Small items of furniture	Pictures and mirrors
Jewellery	Accessories (handbags, shoes etc.)
Clothes (clean and nearly new)	Bric-a-brac
Books	CDS and videos

Some charities will help to clear houses and apartments if you are either moving house or coming to the end of your tenancy.

The following charities may be contacted:-

Edinburgh Furniture Initiative (EFI)	0131 557 7900
Bethany Christian Trust	0131 5618904
British Heart Foundation	0800 915 3000 (bhf/org.uk/free)
St. Columba's Hospice	Sarah Munro at 0131 555 0625
Community Health and Advice Initiative (CHAT)	0131 442 2100

If you **absolutely must** put a large item in a Council bin, please try to break it up into the smallest parts possible. They will go into the bin more easily, and take up less room. Large cardboard boxes can be taken apart and folded flat.

## **The First Photographers**

An unmissable exhibition will soon arrive at the Scottish National Portrait Gallery in Queen's Street - that of the early photographs of the collaboration between David Octavius Hill and Robert Adamson. The two first came together in 1843, just four years after the invention of photography had been announced to the world. Hill, a well known painter in Edinburgh, was then 41 and Adamson was 22 years old. Adamson and his brother knew Sir David Brewster, himself a close collaborator of Fox-Talbot.

Hill and Adamson came together because Hill wanted to commemorate the Disruption - the separation of the Free Church from the Church of Scotland. Hill asked Adamson to take the photograph of each minister, some four hundred in all, so that he could later commit them all to canvas. They then went on to take many more photographs of landscapes and the working people of Edinburgh. They each brought their skills - Hill was able to compose the scene and relax the participants while Adamson brought the technical expertise. Sadly their work only lasted four years as Adamson died young at the age of 26. Hill died in 1870, and is buried in Dean Cemetery. His grave is marked by a superb head sculpted by his second wife Amelia Paton, who also sculpted the statue of Dr. Livingstone in East Princes Street Gardens.

The exhibition, snappily entitled "A Perfect Chemistry", starts on the 27th May and lasts till 1st October. Well worth a visit.

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## **Edinburgh Orchestra Ensemble**

The Edinburgh Orchestra Ensemble, founded in 2009, is dedicated to making music of the highest possible standard. If you are a musician and would like to join us we invite you to attend rehearsals which take place on Monday evenings between 7.30 and 9.45pm at the beautiful Society of Musicians building at 3, Belford Road. These are not auditions, but are a means of determining whether you would like to join us. This arrangement may be useful to those who may be interested in developing their musical skills but are not sure if this is the right place for them.

# 2017 Annual General Meeting

Notice is hereby given of the forty-sixth Annual General Meeting of the Dean Village Association to be held in the lounge of Lynedoch House at 23 Lynedoch Place in Belford Road on Tuesday 25th April at 7.30pm.

## Agenda

1. Apologies
- 2 Minutes of the forty-fifth 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, Charlie Hughes, Pat Sinclair,
- 8 Membership Fees
- 9 Dean Valley Regeneration Ltd
- 10 Other environmental concerns
- 11 Any other business

There will now be a break of 10 minutes

David Perry, secretary of the Dean Village Association. will give a talk on the history and origins of St Bernard's Well.

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Our current programme includes pieces by Tchaikovsky (*Romeo and Juliet Fantasy Overture* and *Slavonic March*) and Prokofiev (*Overture on Hebrew Theme* and *Symphony No. 1 "Classical"*).

We recruit all the year round, and there are always vacancies for brass and string players. And for particular pieces we may have vacancies for a wide range of musical expertise. Our website is [edinburghensemble.org](http://edinburghensemble.org), and you may contact us by e-mail by [ContactUs@edinburghensemble.org](mailto:ContactUs@edinburghensemble.org). Also on [Facebook.com/TheEdinburghOrchestral-Ensemble-220831581314510](https://www.facebook.com/TheEdinburghOrchestral-Ensemble-220831581314510)

# Dean Valley Regeneration Limited

The first phase of the feasibility study which was funded by Sustrans and concerns only the safety and maintenance of Miller Row has been completed and a draft report circulated to interested parties for consideration. The final report will be completed after inclusion of the feedback.

The committee of DVRL agreed that raising of funds was necessary so that future activity can be maintained. DVRL has access to a very fine watercolour by Hugh “Grecian” Williams (1773-1829) which depicts St. Bernard’s Well in rural setting, with the old mill lade carrying water from Dean to Stockbridge clearly drawn behind it. Such is the detail that water may be seen leaking from the lade. The plan is to produce a limited edition of fifty glycé prints. Any person who donated at least £250 to help promote the work of DVRL would be given one of these numbered prints.

## Results of Dean Valley Regeneration Questionnaire

The Trustees of the DVRL wished to consult the members of Dean Village Association about their usage of Miller Row. Two hundred and fifty questionnaires were sent out with the last edition of the Dean Village News to members of the Association. Forty replies were received, which, for this type of exercise, is a very big response. There were twenty-two replies from women and eighteen from men. An overwhelming number (88%) was from over fifties. This result probably reflects the age profile of the membership of the Association.

The predominant reason for using the walkway was to get to the shops in Stockbridge (63%), followed by using Miller Row as a means of maintaining fitness (53%). 58% of respondents walked to Stockbridge and back several times a week. This pathway constitutes an essential lifeline to many of our residents as a way of getting to the shops and other amenities in Stockbridge.

Of the responders 85% were walkers, the remainder being total or occasional cyclists. So perhaps it is not surprising that a principal desire for an improvement along Miller Row was a speed limit for cyclists (63%). Other improvements required were a better attention to cleaning up litter and leaves (63%), lighting along the Row (55%), a more even surface (43%) and better drainage (18%). 58% of respondents said that they would use Miller Row more often if improvements were made.

Many respondents commented on how much they valued the walkway. There

was general agreement that there should be improved care and maintenance, but considered that there was no need for major changes. There was frequent reference to clearing up the landslip that occurred above the upper weir, but that does not fall into the remit of DVRL, whose interest only extends as far to the west as the metal footbridge across the river from Damside. The Dean Village Association will monitor the situation and report at the AGM in April.

### **Dorothy Forrester Memorial Bench**

The committee is arranging with the Council to place a black metal bench somewhere in Dean Village, as a tribute to our late Secretary and Honorary President, Dorothy Forrester. The memorial plaque will read “*Dorothy L. Forrester 1922-2012 Secretary of the Dean Village Association for 25 years*”. She lived in Belford Road, and latterly in Lynedoch House. The original plan was to place the bench next to the Society of Musician’s building opposite Lynedoch House. But officials have now decided that this position will invade the privacy of nearby residences and be a possible source of antisocial behaviour. The eventual site is yet to be decided.

### **Sue Light**

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## **My Friends in the Cemetery XXVIII by David Perry Charles George Hood Kinnear 1830 - 1894.**

Charles Kinnear ARSA was a fascinating man. He was born in Kinloch House, by Colessie in Fife on the 30th May 1830, the son of a banker in the family firm. His mother was Christian Jane Greenshields who was very well off. He had private schooling while living in the family house at 125, Princes Street. He went on to obtain a degree from Edinburgh University. He then trained as an architect under William Burn and then David Bryce.

In 1852, still a very young man, he inherited many properties. As a result he did not need to work. For the next couple of years he toured Europe, spending some time in Italy. On his return he became the assistant of John Dick Peddie, (1824 - 1891), who had started his own architectural practice in 1845. Then, in 1856, Peddie was involved in the creation of Cockburn Street, which would link the Royal Mile to Waverley Station. He invited to Kinnear to become a partner, who then brought with him a large and welcome cash injection. Kinnear is best remembered for his medieval, Scottish baronial design of Cockburn Street

In the same year that Kinnear became a partner, he received a further large inheritance. However his love of architecture drove him on, despite not needing financial support. The firm of Peddie and Kinnear went from strength to strength. Notable works include the Scotsman Office (1860), the municipal buildings in Aberdeen, branches of the Bank of Scotland and numbers 1 and 2, Rothesay Terrace.

In 1878, Peddie wished to follow a political career, and retired from the firm. Kinnear formed a partnership with Peddie's son, John More Dick Peddie and formed the lesser known firm of Kinnear and Peddie. They designed Longmore Hospital and Craiglockart Hydropathic and the Bank of Scotland's George Street branch.

Kinnear had other interests as well as architecture. In 1856 he was a founder member of the Photographic Society of Scotland with David Bryce, Sir David Brewster and David MacGibbon. He made a

photographic study of Milan that year. Together with a Mr. Bell of Potterow he designed a new kind of camera with a bellows movement that allowed adjustment of the focus. He took this camera on a study tour of Germany and France. Many of his photographs were shown in exhibitions between 1886 and 1889.

In 1859 he joined the Midlothian Coast Artillery Volunteers (a forerunner of the Territorial Army), and his role in the architectural firm decreased. He rose through the ranks to become a Major, and provided finance for the regimental headquarters in Grindlay Street in 1866.

In November 1894 he died suddenly from a heart attack while at work in his office. He was buried with full military honors in the northern extension of Dean Cemetery, not far from his second business partner John More Dick Peddie.

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### **Josee has moved**

Residents in the centre of Dean Village will have been accustomed to seeing Josee going shopping with her basket on wheels and her two dogs, which often got a lift in the basket. Latterly her friend Win accompanied her back and forth to Stockbridge. In December Josee moved out of the village to Duddingston. Win helped by looking after Josee's dogs.

Josee Mobbs lived for many years in the converted 17th century flats at 6, Dean Path.. She herself had been a health visitor and nurse. She used to act, and performed in dance and ballet. She has a beautiful voice and used to train people in elocution and good, clear speaking. She used to take part in poetry reading competitions. Anyone who has chatted with her knows she has a sharp brain and a wicked sense of humour.

As a young woman she got a job as a nanny to the great concert pianist, Moura Lympany, who was expecting a baby. In high expectation, Josee set off for New York. Sadly Moura suffered a miscarriage before Josee arrived.

She is doing well In her new home, and often stays with Win and her beloved dogs. She sends her best wishes to her friends and admirers.

## **The Mystery of the Abandoned Car**

Early in February a car was parked - no, abandoned - against the wall of Well Court just a few yards down Damside. It was a rather smart Alfa Romeo 2.0 T Spar, registration number SO52 UWR. Well, it would have been smart if the passenger side had not been severely crushed. It remained there for several weeks, despite accruing several parking tickets. There were reports of someone sleeping in it. The police came to examine it from time to time. An attempt to remove the car to the pound failed because the lorry could not get close enough.

After complaints to the police about the obstruction of passage of larger vehicles down Damside, it was eventually removed on 22nd February. If anyone can shed any further information about this mysterious car, the Editor would be pleased to share it.

### **Future events in Dean Village**

**The Annual General Meeting** of the Dean Village Association will take place on Tuesday 25th April in the lounge of Lynedoch House in Belford Road, starting at 7.30pm.

**The Annual Water of Leith Clean-up** will take place on the afternoon of Sunday 14th May. Meet by the Old Bridge at 2.00pm. Equipment will be provided.

**Village Walks** describing the history of Dean Village will take place on the following dates: - Thursday 8th June, Tuesday 27th June and Thursday 20th July. These will start at 7.15pm. Meet at Kirkbrae House at the top of Bell's Brae. Charge £4 per person

**Cemetery walks** will be on Sundays 18th June, 9th July and 30th July. Meet at the cemetery gates at the top of Dean Path at 2.30pm. Charge £5 per person, of which £1 goes to the Dean Cemetery Trust

**St. Bernard's Well** will be opened to visitors from midday till 3p.m. on the first Sundays of each month starting in April, and the Sundays of the Edinburgh Festival in August. Entry free.



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## Answers to Quiz Time

1) Stanley is the Durham town that once suffered a mining disaster.  
Burton-on-Trent is a brewing town which makes the famous Indian Pale Ale.  
Paul McCartney and George Harrison lived in Speke, by Liverpool, as children, which is now home to John Lennon airport.

All the above refer to names of men who explored the Nile.

2) Tom Clancy wrote about the submarine RED October.  
John Ryan wrote about Captain Pugwash and his ship BLACK Pig.  
Edward Lear wrote about the beautiful PEA GREEN boat.

So they are all names of fictional boats.

3) The untouchables boss was Eliot Ness, the chairman of the radio quiz show is Jack Dee, and Clyde Barrow was the associate of Bonnie Parker.  
Thus they refer to Scottish rivers, the shortest of which is the Ness.

There are eleven quizzes each year., and they can be obtained in a set from your favourite internet supplier.

## Spring Nature Notes by Barbara Mackay

In the last Newsletter I noted that there were fewer birds visiting our feeders. In mid-March they appeared to be having second thoughts and were returning, albeit too late for the big count on Garden Bird Day.

One of our members was lucky enough to catch a glimpse of that striking bird, the Kingfisher. He is a dandy in a dark blue jacket and orange waistcoat with white and orange facial make-up to round it off. Don't all our river birds dress up well! The Kingfisher returns punctually to the same spot every day but when he spots a fish all you are likely to see is an iridescent streak as is caught well by photographers. One writer claimed that "only the righteous see the kingfisher". So keep on looking.



**Kingfisher Photo by Conrad Hughes**

In February I saw two birds making for the berries in a car park. The size of a starling they were a beautiful brown with darker colouring around the eyes. They were waxwings, so called because of a tiny marking like red wax on their wings. They can strip a cotoneaster in minutes - so watch your berries!

A pair of bullfinches has also been brightening up the dead wood opposite us. Their bulbous pink chest, the female being paler, makes them easy to identify. Many years ago bullfinches were caught, caged and taught to sing. In the poorer parts of London singing contests were arranged between bullfinches and chaffinches with an elaborate scoring system chalked up on pub tables.

We regularly hear woodpeckers early in the morning although their "drumming" is not up to full strength yet. The Great Spots have become much more familiar visitors at bird tables in recent years, a credit to all who feed our birds. Owls, both male and female, are also very vocal during the nights, their mating calls carrying clearly down the valley. And sleek magpies add a "couture" touch to the whole avian display.

I haven't mentioned spring flowers or cherry blossoms which are returning colour to our gardens and are most welcome. Enjoy the season.

## **It's a *Braw* Café**

Braw is growing up. After five years of service to Dean Village we are improving our layout. This means we can provide more of what you need. Our new customer service fridge will enable you to select from milk, eggs, cheese, desserts, sandwiches, quiche, pies, salad boxes and much much more. As always, you can order whatever you need us to prepare for you 48 hours in advance. We are a small operation and so we are able to cater specifically for you.

At the beginning of June we will be open 7 days a week until 20.00hrs so that our outside seating can be enjoyed while the sun shines. Ever the optimist Braw will take an Easter break this year from Friday 7<sup>th</sup> to 21<sup>st</sup> April.

We look forward to seeing you.

Kind regards to all, Meg.

## **Dean Village News**

This issue of the Dean Village News has been delivered to all residents within the Dean Conservation area. If you have enjoyed reading this issue, or found it useful or helpful in any way, you can help by joining the Dean Village Association and so assist in looking after our village, Yearly membership is £7 (£10 per couple) or life membership is £50 (£75 per couple), There is a concessionary annual rate of £3 single and £5 couple. Membership Secretary - Caroline Gerard.

# Dean Village Association

## Committee 2016 - 2017

**Chairman:** Barry Mackay, chairman@deanvillage.org

**Vice-Chairman:** Javier Albert,

**Secretary:** David Perry, 22 Damside EH4 3BB

Tel 226 7544 e-mail:- secretary@deanvillage.org

**Treasurer:** treasurer@deanvillage.org

**Membership Secretary:** Caroline Gerard

e-mail:- membership@deanvillage.org

**Committee members:** Charlie Hughes, Conrad Hughes,  
Pat Sinclair, David Watt

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

14<sup>th</sup> July 2017

If you would like to submit an article for the News  
please e-mail the Secretary

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