



Dean Village News

Issue 179 March 2018

www.deanvillage.org

Dean Village Association - the first years

These are extracts from the News in years 1973/4.

In August 1974 a reception was held in the Mission Hall, Bell's Brae, to welcome all new residents who had moved into the new buildings going up in Dean Village. This was the first time that the newsletter was delivered to all households in the village, and all residents, members or not, were invited to attend.

West Mill: The first residents were moving into the flats at West Mill and already making their presence felt. One resident, newly arrived, spotted a white figure of a woman standing in mid-stream below the weir just before midnight. Was this the ghost of some drowning tragedy?

Another resident asked if it was necessary to address the flats at West Mill as "2A Dean Path". Was not "West Mill, Dean Village" more descriptive - easily identifiable and more attractive? The editor advised residents to use the more attractive appellation, and acceptance would soon become general. (*Obviously not!*)

In 1974, a bronze plaque was placed beside the entrance door. the plaque recorded the previous history of the building and its conversion to its present state. Trees were planted in the grounds on the south side of the river.

Building sites: The committee were keeping their eyes on three sites. New plans has been submitted to the Planning Committee by Weir Construction Ltd. for housing on the Tannery site. There were also revised plans for the Sloan Garage site at the west end of Belford Road. But causing most concern was the big hole in the ground next to Drumsheugh Baths. The owners of contiguous buildings had a feu charter control over the height of buildings on this site. These owners were coming under pressure from the developers to relinquish this right. The Dean Village Association would support any move to prevent a disproportionate and unwelcome development.

RMJM was congratulated for a sympathetic and attractive modernisation of the old bottle store (formerly stables belonging to James Stewart, Cab Operator)) on Bell's Brae. In the November 1973 issue of the News, a Mrs. Dagger of Dunedin wrote that her husband was a relative of Cabbie Stewart. She had lived in 12 Hawthornbank and remembered the time when the old coach house was full of horses, and Bell's Brae was a busy street.

The old Dean Village: Four consecutive issues contained references to a series of lectures given by Mr. Cumberland Hill in 1866 about "Dean Village". (*Heir Hunters was on while typing this, and 1866 was the year Dr. Barnardo set up his children's homes. Ed.*) At that time the community around the river was called "The Village of the Water of Leith". Dean Village was at the top of Dean Path. One piece referred to Dean House, the large manor house that originally belonged to the Nisbet family, passed into the hands of John Learmonth, and was pulled down in 1843 to make way for the cemetery. The house had painted ceiling panels which could be seen on the ground floor of the National Museum of Antiquities in Queen Street.

Mr. Hill's lectures were published in 1874 as "Historic Memories". The book was available in the Edinburgh Room of the Central Public Library.

Whytock and Reid: The history of this company goes back to 1871 when R. and H. Reid, Cabinet Makers of 9-11 George Street, bought the land at Sunbury. In 1876 Alexander Whytock combined with the

Reids and transferred all their works to Sunbury and Bells' Mills. In 1885 Sunbury House was demolished and the cabinet works built. Now Whytock and Reid are withdrawing from their offices at 7 Charlotte Square and moving entirely to Sunbury Place. The editor wished them well in their new location.

Incidents on Dean Bridge: A rather horrific report came from the diary of Mrs. Mabel Goddard, who lived in Learmonth Terrace. The year was 1885. *On our way to school my sister and I had to walk across Dean Bridge. It was notorious at that time for the number of suicides. One day my sister and I saw a man climb onto the parapet and just disappear. I went to the headmistress and told her what I had seen. She reproved me severely for having mentioned it. It did not strike me with a sense of horror at all. I saw others. One especially. A very ordinary man - I could not see his face as he was walking ahead of us - probably going home just as my brother and I were doing. Suddenly, but quietly, he leaned over the low parapet and stepped over. He held on with his hands just long enough to give my brother time to catch hold of him. But the weight of the hanging man was too much. The memory haunts me still, for I was old enough to realise the horror of it. For a moment I thought my brother would be dragged over too. I left Edinburgh shortly after and when I returned the authorities had heightened the parapet of the bridge.*

The 1974 AGM: The Association's assets had grown to £490.68. The main drain on resources was production of the monthly Newsletter. The taxi service still ran at 10.00 am on Tuesdays and Thursdays, free to pensioners, and cost £35.85 p.a.

The committee wished to know why some residents had not joined the Association. They had aimed to visit all households, but had managed only half. The reasons given were apathy, lost track of joining data, subscription not acknowledged, or had no time to become involved.

What were the biggest worries? Traffic and parking, danger to children playing in the streets, noise due to revellers.

What did villagers want? A children's playground, a pub, access only traffic system, craft shops, meetings held on different nights, evening classes, whist drives, barbecues and art exhibitions.
(OK, OK, I know. One out of nine is pretty poor!)

Leonardo Da Vinci

Around the year 1590 many of Leonardo's drawings were bound together in an album by sculptor Pompeo Leoni. This album entered into the Royal Collection during the reign of Charles II.

In this album there were several blank pages. Scholars knew that Leonardo had drawn on these pages because there were indentations. But the drawings had faded and become invisible over time.

Now modern technology has revealed that the drawings are studies on hands, thought to be for his later work "*The Adoration of the Magi*". Apparently Leonardo used a stylus that contained a high content of copper. Over time this copper had mutated into a colourless copper salt. Using specialised apparatus at Harwell, Oxfordshire, the drawings have now been revealed. The two blank pages, with a photograph of the revealed images, will join more than two hundred drawings in an exhibition entitled "*Leonardo da Vinci: A Life in Drawing*". The drawings will be given a UK-wide audience.

They will be on show in various cities in the UK from February 12th 2019, then on to Queen's Gallery, Buckingham Palace from May 24th. They will be on show at Holyroodhouse from November 22nd 2019.

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 report produced. The second and final part of the feasibility study, which would consider the environment of the whole of the Dean Valley from Stockbridge to Dean Village, will be awarded shortly.

DVRL will be asking cyclists to give their experiences and opinions about the usage of Miller Row. This will become active in April. Please go on to the DVRL website and follow directions. A pedestrian survey will be carried out at a later date.

Those interested in the history of the old mills of Dean have the opportunity to obtain a print which shows the wooden Great Lade running behind St. Bernard's Well, painted by Hugh "Grecian" Williams, in return for a donation of £250.

Planning applications in Dean Village

Belford Mews (18/00239/FUL, renewal of 14/02924/FUL)

An application was submitted on 21st July 2014 for a dwelling house to be built at the end of Belford Mews, past numbers 11 and 11a. A tree and plants would be removed. The house would be built on three levels, following the contours of the slope down to the river,

There were a number of objections, including that the building would not be consistent with others in Belford Mews, that the landslip across the river was an example not to be followed, and the building would intrude upon the historic visual aspect of the village. Despite objections the plan was approved in August 2015, but no work took place. The application has now been renewed, but the date for further objections has now passed,

Belford House and Douglas House (14/04512/FUL): - No further activity

RMJM Offices (14/05243/FUL): - The conversion of offices into residences is nearing completion.

3/4 Belford Road (14/04445/CLP): - No further activity

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The Dean Conservation Area

The Dean Conservation Area was defined by the City of Edinburgh Council (CEC) in 1975, and extended further in 1977 and 2004. The eastern boundary is Telford's Dean Bridge. The southern boundary goes along the centre of Belford Road to Belford Bridge, and then along the river to the western boundary of the Scottish National Modern Art Gallery. The boundary then goes north, taking in St. George's School until reaching Ravelston Dykes. The northern boundary is along the centre of this road until reaching Queensferry Terrace where it turns north onto Queensferry Road. Then along this road until Dean Path where it turns south along the boundary of Belgrave Crescent Gardens and back to Dean Bridge. All those living in households within this area are residents of Dean Village.

The Planning Committee of CEC published a Character Appraisal of the area in February 2004. This appraisal defined the key elements that contribute to the special historic and architectural character of Dean Village and its surroundings. The objective is to provide guidance to the planning authority with regard to developments within the area. The appraisal defines the essential character of the buildings and landscapes, describes views and the natural heritage, and suggests uses and activities.

The status as a Conservation Area carries implications. Developments and extensions to existing properties are restricted. There are rules about satellite antennae, and construction or alteration of gates and fences. Trees are covered, defined as having a diameter exceeding 75mm at a point 1.5 meters above ground level.

There are opportunities for enhancement. The management of natural habitats forms part of the Water of Leith Management Plan in association with the Water of Leith Conservation Trust. Improvements in street lighting would be welcomed, as would repairs to railings and barriers to the river.

Those wishing to seek further information may see the 2004 Dean Conservation Area Character Appraisal on the CEC website. There are many splendid photographs.

The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie



A view of the old Dean Bridge from below the lower weir

In 1978 STV screened a version of Muriel Spark's story of Miss Jean Brodie. The whole series, with one episode following another, was shown on True Movies on Sky in February. The story was spread over seven episodes, each examining in detail a particular event. As the initial credits rolled, a series of old photos of Edinburgh, presumably taken in the thirties when the story was set, were shown. One of these was a photo of the old Dean road bridge, which must have been taken from the southern bank below the river opposite Lindsay's Mill. On the right is the forbidding structure of West Mills, beyond which is the southern end of the Schoolhouse. On the left is Bell's Brae House. The upper structure of the Hawthornbank buildings may be seen. Beyond that building would have been the High Green. The tall buildings along Belford Road may be seen in the distance.

The title role was played by Geraldine McEwen. She gave a restrained, if somewhat creepy, but entirely brilliant picture of Jean Brodie. The age of the series is reflected in the colour quality and the poor sound. The series is available on DVD.

Events in Dean Village

Annual General Meeting. the 47th AGM will take place on Tuesday April 10th in the main lounge of Lynedoch House on Belford Road, starting at 7.30 p.m.

Friends of the Cemeteries week: There will be a walk through Dean Cemetery on Sundays May 13th and 20th. Meet at the gates of the cemetery at the top of Dean Path at 2.30pm. £5 per person

Dean Village Association walks:-

Cemetery Walk:- There will be a walk through Dean Cemetery on Sundays June 17th and July 29th. Meet at the gates of the cemetery at the top of Dean Path at 2.30pm. £5 per person.

Village Walk:- There will be a walk through Dean Village on Tuesday June 5th, Thursday June 28th and Tuesday July 10th. Meet at the top of Bell's Brae by the old Kirkbrae House on Dean Bridge at 7.15. £5 per person.

St. Bernard's Well:- The Well will be opened to the public on the following Sundays between noon and 3.00pm - April 1st, May 6th, June 3rd, July 1st and August 5th.. The DVA will also open the Well on Doors Open Sunday in September from 11.00am till 4.00pm. All welcome. Entry free.

Belgrave Crescent Gardens Opening: - These gardens will be open to the public on Sunday 2nd September from 2pm till 5pm. Entry £4, children free.

Advertise in the Dean Village News

Quarter page £4

Half page £8

Full page £16

: **Belgrave Crescent Gardens Opening**

Belgrave Crescent Gardens will be opening to the public under the Scotland Gardens Scheme on Sunday, 2nd September from 2.00pm till 5.00pm. This will be a unique opportunity to visit a very special garden area at the centre of the wonderful city of Edinburgh. Our members treasure this special retreat and now invite our neighbours and anyone else interested to join us on this special day.

Experience our spectacular views of Dean Bridge, view the lower weir which once provided power for many mills all the way to Canonmills. Wander the higher ground with herbaceous borders and extensive lawns. We will be serving teas and delicious home-baked cakes. There will be a children's play area and probably a plant sale too.

Put it in your diary now so that you will remember when September comes. Entry will be at one of the gates on Belgrave Crescent. Entry fee will be £4 per person, children free. Our chosen charity is Fresh Start who will be there to tell you more about their work helping the homeless get started again. We look forward to seeing you.

Edinburgh Orchestra Ensemble

The Edinburgh Orchestra Ensemble, founded in 2009, is dedicated to making music of the highest possible standard. Following a very successful Mendelssohn concert, we are preparing to embark on a new programme featuring Brahms' very popular *Hungarian Dances*, and also pieces by Berlioz (*Hungarian March*, *Dance of the Sylphs* and *Minuet of the Will-o'-the-Wisp from the Damnation of Faust*).

For this programme a much larger orchestra is required. There will be vacancies for strings (all sections), woodwinds (Piccolo, oboe and bassoon) and brass. Two harps are also required for this particular programme. There will be open rehearsals at the Edinburgh Society of Musicians, 3 Belford Road, every Monday in April from 7.30pm till 9.45pm. We look forward to welcoming new musicians as well as old friends.

Please check our website edinburghensemble.org/gallery.

We also have a facebook page: - Edinburgh Orchestral Ensemble.
and a Facebook profile - Edinburgh Orch Ensemble.

My Friends in the Cemetery XXXI by David Perry

James Edward Ross Salvesen

James Salveson is commemorated with a large pink granite stone on the right hand side of the left path up from the main gate. A descendant built the houses at Back Dean off Ravelston Terrace.

James was a member of the shipping family founded by Christian Salveson who came from Norway to Scotland in 1851. With his two sons he converted coastal cargo ships into whalers. By 1910 the family had one of the world's largest whaling fleets, the ships all registered at Leith. They hunted in the South Atlantic, and Christian demonstrated his love of Edinburgh by calling his land base in South Georgia "*Leith Harbour*". Whale oil was used for lighting lamps, lubricating machines, making soap and margarine and also glycerine for explosives. The oil at this time was a highly valuable commodity, but now all these items are made synthetically so there should be no need for any more whaling.

As whale numbers greatly diminished due to the number of ships whaling, the British Government put a tax on ships using South Georgia as a whaling port where they could butcher the whales and extract the oil. Consequently, factory ships were bought by companies to process the whales offshore. Salveson was one of these. Eventually a world-wide moratorium was placed on whaling, and a quota system introduced. This has led to whale populations to recover to some extent.

When whaling fell out of favour in the 1950s the family moved to transporting sugar from the Caribbean and Cuba. This trade had its difficulties because of American protectionism, forcing ships to go the long way round via Cape Horn. In 1985 the family moved from shipping to logistics, which is the modern way of saying transport by lorry using the "just in time" system. Since the 1990s the company has had several take-over offers, none of which came to fruition. Finally, in 2007, it was taken over by Norbert Dentressangle



**A harpoon gun which would have been mounted in the
prow of the whaling ships of the time**

If you go down to Leith and walk along Shore Road past the ship restaurants you will come across a mounted harpoon gun similar to those which would have been placed in the prow of whaling ships. The harpoon is accompanied by a written history of the Salvesen family together with a photo of Leith Harbour in South Georgia.

James Edward was the Salvesen who brought back the first six penguins from the Antarctic for Edinburgh Zoo. Keeping them alive for the journey in those days was extremely difficult. Nowadays such animals are transported under controlled conditions at 6°C. The penguin walk was started years ago when a keeper accidentally left open a gate. In the early days they walked into town. The walk remains a principal attraction, but is now confined within the Zoo.

2018 Annual General Meeting

Notice is hereby given of the forty-seventh 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 10th April at 7.30pm.

Agenda

1. Apologies
- 2 Minutes of the forty-sixth 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 - Bob Morley
- 8 Election of Committee Members:
Caroline Gerard, Conrad Hughes, Charlie Hughes, Pat Sinclair, Evelyn Whitfield
- 9 Membership Fees
- 10 Any other business

There will be a break of 10 minutes.

There will now follow a general discussion of environmental matters which affect Dean Village.

Past issues of Dean Village News

We have a small number of printed past issues of the Dean Village News back to issue 149 (Autumn 2007). We are starting to put back issues on the Dean Village website. Issues No 168 to 175 may be seen there now. We plan to put all back issues to No. 154 (Autumn 2009) on the website in due course. Go to deanvillage.org/documents.



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Visit the Dean Village Website at
www.deanvillage.org

Dean Village News

This issue of the Dean Village News has been delivered to all residents of Dean Village. If you are not a member and 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.

Nature Notes by Tim Steiner

So precious is sunlight that the plants take huge risks to get it. Trees strive to grow tall to outcompete others, but are then at the mercy of the wind. Others grow wide, needing energy to create hugely strong structures to support their leaves. But what of the ground-based plants? Throughout the summer, most must live in constant shade because of the foliage above. So some race to catch the very earliest sunshine of the new year, before the deciduous plants have had the chance to open their leaves that absorb the light.

The snowdrops are always first, of course, with the crocuses, the daffodils and the bluebells following their lead in turn*. In a benign winter, these will catch some of the early light, beating the trees to it. But how they suffer if there's a late cold snap. The snow we had at the start of March left many of these struggling to get the energy they need for the year ahead. When the children returned home with their sledges from the gardens they told of yellow patches in the snow. A first I assumed that these were of the canine variety, but apparently there were as many purple patches - and all were crocuses, squashed by the snow (and us sledgers).

And we can only imagine how the animals suffered through the same late cold snap. The sight of a pair of redwings, our smallest thrush, squabbling with the song thrushes and the blackbirds for foraging rights in a small path of snow-free ground under the privet in Ainslie Place Bank gardens, showed just how much of their rural habitat was snowbound. And as for the bat flying over Dean Cemetery one evening late in February, he or she clearly came out of hibernation too early, fooled by a few days of warmer weather. Did it have the energy to survive the cold snap? We can only hope.

But spring is here now - not a moment to soon. Hope you enjoy it.

*of the four common springtime bulbs listed, only the bluebells are native to Britain.

It's a *Braw* Café

As Braw approaches her seventh summer serving Dean Village, I write to remind residents and visitors that we are open until 20.00 hrs. from June

As usual I will take a wee break for a week at the beginning of May, returning refreshed and ready to serve up lots of fresh food ready to go.

Please remember to order whole quiche (any size) and scones at least the day before as these items often sell out as soon as I take them from the oven. Just text Braw on 07436803521 with the details of your order.

All the best, Meg

cafebraw@hotmail.co.uk

Water of Leith Walkway

The battle of the landslip between the Council and walkers/cyclists continues between the upper weir and the footbridge at Sunbury Street. A very strong and imposing structure has been erected at the Sunbury end to prevent access. But fit and energetic walkers can manouvre around the upper end. It is much more difficult for cyclists. The erection of this barrier seems to imply that there will be no solution found in the near future.

The repairs to the walls and walkway between Belford Bridge and Donaldson's have been completed.

The flood defences at Roseburn have been completed, so that the walk to Balgreen Road along the Water of Leith is now unimpeded. But works in Saughton Park have led to a diversion there. Follow the arrows.

Dean Village Association

Committee 2017 - 2018

Chairman: Barry Mackay, chair@deanvillage.org

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Committee members: Charlie Hughes, Conrad Hughes,
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The deadline for articles for the next edition of
the News is

14th July 2018

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

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