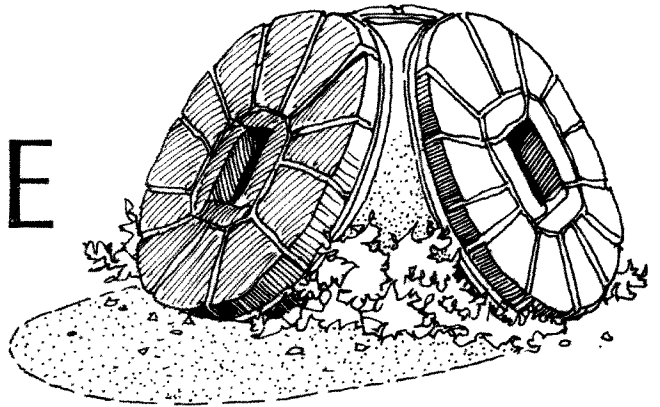


DEAN VILLAGE NEWS



No. 71 Winter 1982-3
Issued free to members of the Association

20p

THE SHOP

Drybrough's application for change of use to a pub (see DVN No. 70) was withdrawn. Now Smart's, who own the property, have applied for permission to make it into a "wine bar and bistro". Does that sound nicer than a pub? Its licence would be a public-house licence; and, as for the restaurant aspect, it would probably make it easier for the licensee to get an extension (possibly till 2 a.m.).

According to the plans the building would be extended over the whole site, and the single storey extension would present a blank wall to the alley leading to 21-25 Dean Path Buildings. The public accommodation — ground floor only — would be for over 200 customers. The two upper floors would be a house for the manager.

The Association has lodged a very strong objection to the change of use, on the grounds that the local residents **do** want a shop (for which this buildings offers the only hope) and **do not** want a wine bar and bistro, with the disturbance and traffic which that would bring. We have also objected to the extension and alterations, which would eliminate the outside stair and engulf a building of traditional style whose proportions are appropriate to its site.

The Cockburn Association has lodged a similar objection to the extension and alterations. They leave it to the residents to express their opinion on the **use** of the building. We understand that a number of individuals have indeed lodged objections to this change of use. This should strengthen the case against it which the Association has presented.

D.L.F.

WELCOME

to the residents of the new flats in Convening Court. We tried to get Convening Court properly resurfaced, but have been unsuccessful: the Highway Department is reluctant to do more than patching because of possible disruption of the surface when the Tannery site is developed. (i.e. when the cows come home.) It seems that it will not be until then that the parking area belonging to the new flats will be landscaped, for it consists of six spaces, with landscaping, which form part of the overall plan for the Tannery side. It does not correspond exactly to the existing hard standing. We are helping the new owners to clear up possible confusion.

D.L.F.

THE PLAYGROUND

(corner of Damside and Dean Path)

The question of its future was raised in DVN No. 70. Eighty-six residents signed a petition in favour of its being made into a garden, with seats. No one has expressed a contrary opinion to the Association. So we have requested the Director of Recreation of the District Council that this be done. We hope that this will be possible, at least on a temporary basis, in spite of the problem of divided ownership.

FOOTBALL IN DRYING AREAS

An approach has been made to the Association about football in the drying-“green” of Dean Path Buildings. The writer of the letter also hoped that the District Council would do something. The reply had to be that this was a matter for the proprietors and tenants of Dean Path Buildings. It is up to them to decide on a prohibition, if they wish, and to enforce it.

If football has long been prevented in Well Court, this is presumably because the proprietors have always forbidden it — first the owners of the whole property, through their caretaker, then the individual proprietors and tenants. The prohibition does not depend on a by-law, as some have supposed.

D.L.F.

Coloured Post-Cards of the Village

We have obtained a fresh supply of this reproduction of a painting of the Village in the 1870's before the building of Well Court and Dean Path Buildings. It shows three buildings which still survive: 39 Dean Path, 27-29 Dean Path (Convening Court) and Burnside's shop.

These post-cards can be obtained, at 10p, from the Secretary or at meetings. (Contrary to information given to us earlier, folded note-cards are not available).

THE STINKING BRAE

This is an unofficial name for the steep roadway between the footbridge and the slip road to Belford Road. As reported in DVN No. 70, the lack of a legal title to the roadway is an obstacle to progress in the development of the vacant ground south of the river. So that a legal title can be created, the District Council is using the Compulsory Purchase procedure. This was the subject of the public notice fixed to the railings a few weeks ago.

The Association is not raising any objection to this procedure, but a gentleman who walks that way four times a day has expressed alarm lest the right of way (which undoubtedly exists) be lost. In law, a right of way continues to exist whoever owns the surface over which it passes; and we have no doubt that the development scheme, when completed, will have a pedestrian way between the footbridge and Belford Road; but during the construction permission might be too readily granted for a temporary stoppage. So your Secretary has expressed concern about this, pointing out that a temporary diversion via the Broad Stairs (beside Drumsheugh Baths) would not be acceptable, for the route is not only longer but involves more climbing, which would be a hardship for old people.

D.L.F.

OBITUARY

You probably knew Mrs Margaret Purves at least by sight, as she went for her daily walk with her husband (she rather short, he very erect) up Bell's Brae and Queensferry Street. It was less well known that their daily destination was Joppa, and in finer weather Musselburgh. She must have loved the sea.

She had lived in Well Court since her marriage 58 years ago. She was reserved, but “a sweeter and kinder person you couldn't find anywhere” says a neighbour. She leaves two daughters, one of whom is in Canada. Our sympathy goes out to her husband.

A SESQUICENTENARY

I too wondered what it was: it means a centenary and a half. The Dean Bridge was opened to traffic in 1832 — not as sometimes reported, in 1831 — and to mark this “sesquicentenary”, a ceremony is taking place on November 24th for the fixing of a new plaque. It is a replacement of the one put up in 1957 for the bicentenary of Telford's birth. (It was stolen last year).

The Department of Highways of Lothian Region has issued an interesting leaflet for this occasion. Copies can be obtained free from the Department, at 18 Market Street, and we hope to have some for our members at our meeting on February 1st, when the speaker will be the author of this leaflet, which is an abridgement of his chapter on the Dean Bridge in a pamphlet: *Our Engineering Heritage - Three Notable Examples in the Edinburgh Area*, published by the Institution of Civil Engineers (Edinburgh and East of Scotland Association), Second Edition 1981.

THE HOUSE ON THE BRIDGE

Under this title, Mr Basil Skinner has written a most interesting account of Kirkbrae House at the top of Bell's Brae, the house in which he and his family have lived since 1955. The original building is almost three hundred years old and has been an inn (the Baxters' House of Call) and a home for various people. It was there before the Dean Bridge and the New Town houses of Randolph Cliff and Lynedoch Place were built. It was Cabbie Stewart, one of its most colourful occupants, who embellished the old house and added the extraordinary tower house to the west.

Copies of this very lively description may be bought from the University Extra-Mural Department, 11 Buccleuch Place, Edinburgh 8, or direct from Kirkbrae House, price 50p.

R.B.H.

FUNERALS

More on the Dean Cemetery

(See also D.V. News 67)

The company which owned the Dean Cemetery used to provide hearses for funerals. In an early prospectus it was said that the Directors would “continue to remove all obstacles to the universal adoption of Hearse Funerals, which they strongly recommend in preference to the unseemly and unhealthy practice of Spoke and Shoulder Funerals.” But in spite of this effort to promote their own hearse-hiring trade, it seems not to have been profitable: in 1850 the Directors sold their hearses to Mr John Croall.

The exaction of tolls on the occasion of funerals seems to have caused some trouble about 1847. According to the Turnpike Act tolls should not have been exacted from parties going to or returning from funerals of persons who died and were buried in the same parish (in this case St Cuthbert's). So the Secretary of the Company was instructed to intimate to the Clerk of the Cramond Road District that tolls would no longer be paid in such circumstances.

When they published a pamphlet in 1945, on the centenary of the cemetery, they were hoping to build a crematorium, but there were difficulties about siting it within 200 yards of a dwelling-house (the lodge of Daniel Stewart's College).

The above information is derived from that pamphlet.

D.L.F.

ALLOTMENTS

About twelve people have expressed interest in having allotments within the grounds of the Dean Education Centre. They hope to be allowed to use the area of a long-established garden which lies between the main building and Belford Road, opposite the future Gallery of Modern Art. Any more applicants? Contact the Secretary.

DEAN DIARY

Mr Kenneth Sanderson, a fairly new life member of the Association, has twice recently been our benefactor: he facilitated our access to Belgrave Crescent Garden on a memorable day last summer; and on October 12th he delighted members with a slide show and talk on wildlife in Kenya.

The Autumn Double: It has been the third year of a new tradition: we spend a weekend cleaning up the area and save the more combustible rubbish for a bonfire on Hallowe'en or November 5th. Sometimes there is not enough; then committee members connected with the building or demolition business manage to find more. This was especially necessary this year after spoilsports had set our pile ablaze several days beforehand. So thanks to Adam Zyw, Mike Lawton and all those who lugged junk over from Well Court. The fire was so hot that it seemed to dry up the rain in mid air! In fact the weather cleared just enough for the firework display to be possible. Then we had grand hot soup made by Frances McKail. Who else would have undertaken to feed over 100 people? Thank you, Frances. And the evening was rounded off with music and dancing.

A WELCOME TO NEW RESIDENTS

If you have a new neighbour, you will no doubt give them a welcome, tell them about milk deliveries, times of rubbish collections... and when it will be their turn to clean the stair. Will you also tell them about the Association and encourage them to join and to join in? Please let a committee member know about the newcomers; we'll give them a complimentary copy of the most recent "D.V. News".

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Christmas Party on Monday December 20 in the Concert Room of Edinburgh Society of Musicians at 2 Belford Road. For our annual game of "Pass the Parcel", please bring an inexpensive gift. Tickets (75p) from Ian Cowie, 20 Well Court (226 3984), or Dorothy Forrester, 13 Belford Road (226 5843). We shall arrange lifts for those who need them.

The Dean Bridge — an illustrated talk by Roland A. Paxton, a civil engineer who seems to know more about the bridge than anyone since Thomas Telford himself. He will show slides of the hollow interior as well as the outside.

Tuesday, February 1st at 7.30 p.m. in Dean Church Hall, Ravelston Terrace.

Beer & Skittles at the Sheep's Heid, Duddingston, on **Tuesday February 15th**. You can have fun without any previous experience. £1.75 for skittles and food. Book with Ian Cowie, 20 Well Court (226 3984) by February 12th. Depart from Damside in shared cars at 7 p.m.

Conservation in the New Town — an illustrated talk by Desmond Hodges, Director for the Edinburgh New Town Conservation Committee.

Tuesday, March 15th at 7.30 p.m. in Dean Church Hall, Ravelston Terrace.

DEAN VILLAGE ASSOCIATION

Treasurer: Ian Cowie, 20 Well Court
Secretary: Miss Dorothy Forrester,
13 Belford Road, EH4 3BL
Editor: c/o the Secretary

Ordinary membership: £1.00

Senior Citizens: 50p

Life Membership: £15

If you receive the quarterly DV News by post, will you add 50p to cover the cost?