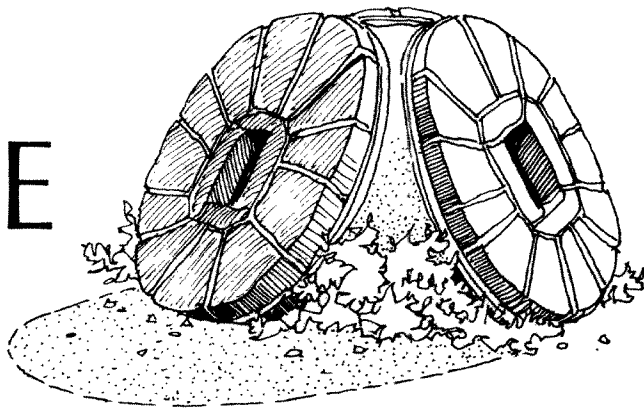


DEAN VILLAGE NEWS



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Issued free to members of the Association

EDINBURGH — an Illustrated Architectural Guide compiled by Charles McKean, with David Walker, and published by the Royal Incorporation of Architects in Scotland.

This compact volume contains hundreds of concise notes on buildings and monuments of all periods, right up to the future, for some are not yet built. (I look forward to seeing the gap site filled in the Grassmarket, and the National Library Annexe in Causewayside.) Nearly all of the buildings are illustrated by photographs or drawings.

Colin McWilliam's introduction gives a fine account of the building of Edinburgh through the centuries, including the Victorian tenements which, "bay-windowed and corner-turreted, barged into Bruntsfield scattering Georgian villas right and left, overran Marchmont and infiltrated Merchiston." Comely Bank's tenements "are plainer, but their downhill enfilade of tall bay windows is brutally effective."

The entries on individual buildings are written with equal verve. Can you identify these (all within a quarter of a mile of the Dean Village)?

No 132 "A wonderful blousy intrusion into West End Edinburgh ... all in blushing pockmarked sandstone."

No 137 "epitomises native Scots architecture, sprouting, like a weed through tarmac, into the international classicism of Charlotte Square."

No 269 "amazing bow-fronted Second Empire mansion"

No 284 "Grand Victorian terraces which, like those just over the Water of Leith valley, bring a touch of Glasgow to Edinburgh, gaining discretion and losing nerve in the process".

Clearly Victorian Edinburgh is second best to Victorian Glasgow: the block at the corner of Shandwick Place and Queensferry Street "would have been improved by some Glaswegian guts." (By the way, Sidney Mitchell, the architect of Well Court, had a hand in it.)

What is there about the village itself? Notes on West Mill, Stewart's Coach House on Bell's Brae (the office of Robert Matthew, Johnson-Marshall & Partners), "Baxter's Granary" (surely it should be "The Baxters'" and it wasn't only a granary. Let's go on calling it "The Baxters' Tolbooth"), Well Court, Hawthorn Buildings. Well Court is a "17th century Scots fantasy for James Ritchie Findlay designed to be seen from his house in Rothesay Terrace." We learn that the clock tower is a scaled-down version of the Tron Kirk's original tower, that the Findlay of the architectural partnership responsible for Hawthorn Buildings was James Ritchie Findlay's son. (Was it the view from Rothesay Terrace which gave him a vocation to become an architect?) On other pages we find entries on Lynedoch House, Drumsheugh Toll,

Drumsheugh Baths, Belford Church. St Bernard's Well is illustrated by an early drawing showing it before the Victorian alterations. One would have welcomed information about the additions which so drastically changed its aspect; we are merely told that it was restored by Thomas Bonnar in 1888.

The only index gives the names of architects. Do the architects who have written and published this guide think that these are more important than buildings? To find a building or a street you have to hunt for a number on one of two maps, which is not very easy even for those who know Edinburgh well.

This is an irritation, and the book is not without errors, but it is both valuable and enjoyable. We can look up well-loved and famous buildings, but we can also have our eyes opened to ones we have ignored, and we make completely new discoveries — a modest private house or the Post Office sorting office off Leith Walk ("great silver industrial shed in wriggly tin, with slender scarlet chimneys, guard rails and escape doors.")

Those who bought it early got a bargain at £2.50. Now it's £3.50 but worth it.

Answers: No 132 The Caledonian Hotel
No 137 The corner block above Rankin's
No 269 Dean Park Boarding House (Stewart's/Melville College)
No 284 Belgrave Crescent, Buckingham Terrace etc.

BELFORD CHURCH

There is an application for change of use. On the lower floor there would be a "dance training establishment" and art centre, on the upper floor a theatre. We have raised no objection to this. The Cockburn Association has said more firmly that there should be no use of the building as a licenced dance hall or licenced premises of any kind.

Any alterations (not yet specified) would require listed building consent. We have urged that planning permission should be conditional upon the owners carrying out their obligation to maintain this listed building in good condition.

THE TWELFTH AGM

The AGM was held on April 25th 1983 in the Ladbroke-Dragonara Hotel, by courtesy of the General Manager, Mr P.C. Taylor.

Mr Adam Zyw gave up office as Chairman after three years, and Mrs Peggy Valentine was elected in his place. The new vice-chairman is Mr Alan Robertson; Miss Dorothy Forrester was re-elected Secretary; Mr Michael Lawton takes over as Treasurer.

The retiring Treasurer, Mr Ian Cowie, presented the financial statement (of which copies can be had from the Secretary or the new Treasurer). Membership was up from 144 to 177. His proposal for a rise in the subscription rates was passed. (See back page). He had made the point that the DV News alone costs more than £1 per member.

OLIVER BARRATT

The Secretary of the Cockburn Association addressed our members after the AGM. He cited the Dragonara Hotel where we were meeting as an example of a place where constructive criticism by the Cockburn Association had led to a great improvement in the design.

Organisations like the Cockburn Association achieve results by influencing local government. Edinburgh has a good record on planning decisions about other people's property — not so good when the Council itself has an interest (as in the Waverley market).

Currently the Cockburn Association's main campaign is in favour of encouraging people to live in the city and builders to develop gap sites rather than invade the Green Belt. He praised the new houses at Sunbury, but the Dean Village still has two important gap sites. He gave Lynedoch House as an example of how one can build exciting modern buildings in this area.

He was anxious about the future maintenance of Belford Church and of Trinity Church (on Dean Bridge), which the SSEB apparently wants to give up. They would build a concrete transformer station near by.

The Cockburn Association had opposed the application to turn Burnside's shop into a pub, because the applicants wanted to make it

too big. He pleaded for us to accept a **small** pub, which would be frequented mainly by local people who would go on foot, (an unrealistic dream? — Ed.), but the Cockburn Association's policy was to leave such matters to local residents.

On the footpath to Stockbridge he would like to see the high spiked railings replaced by a lower rail where one was necessary, and he suggested some thinning of vegetation, especially near St Bernard's Well, which might be floodlit in time for its bicentenary in 1989.

Have our readers any comments on these ideas? Send them to the Secretary, possibly as letters for publication in our next issue.

THE PATH TO STOCKBRIDGE

Damage to the parapet wall in Miller Row was promptly repaired when we reported it, but it seems to need more than mere patching. We are concerned about the condition of the retaining walls, and of the footpath which may have been undermined in places by water flowing from the gardens above.

We have suggested that a thorough survey be made, and suspect that this will show the need for extensive renovation. This would be expensive, but surely Edinburgh *must* find the money to maintain one of its most precious beauty spots. The District Council would never let Princes Street Gardens become dilapidated, would they? This footpath should have almost as high a priority.

We have also suggested that the path be lit at night. We shall have to produce powerful arguments for this. Will you let the Secretary know how useful it would be to you, whether the lack of lighting is a serious inconvenience, preventing your use of the path at night?

ALLOTMENTS

We are trying to get a good piece of ground near here. Unfortunately, the officials concerned have not yet reached a decision. There is still hope, so if anyone else is interested, let the Secretary know.

THE NEW TOWN

On March 17th, Mr Desmond Hodges gave us an interesting and enjoyable talk on the work of the Edinburgh New Town Conservation Centre, illustrated with slides. (It's a pity that our buildings are not eligible for any of the grants they administer, for their boundary runs along the middle of Belford Road.)

You might like to go on one (or more) of their guided walks between May 8 and September 8:

on Sundays at 10 a.m. from Register House, on Tuesdays at 10 a.m. from St John's Church, West End, on Thursdays at 2 p.m. from the Georgian House, 7 Charlotte Square.

These cost £1. Booking is necessary only for the Wednesday evening walks, when for £3 you get a visit to a private house too, and wine.

DER BIERGARTEN VON DEAN

Smart's application for permission to turn the shop into a bistro has been turned down, but for a few hours on April 28th there was an East German beer-garden at Hawthorn Buildings. Strange lights shone through the rain in Hawthornbank Lane (or rather "Leninallee"). There was a scuffle in the alley behind the Wheelers' house. Was a body dumped in the river? Look out for a three-part thriller, "The Odd-Job Man", on BBC TV next Spring.

The producer had asked for the co-operation of the DVA. We helped her to contact in advance people who might be disturbed. Unfortunately we didn't realize that Well Court would suffer. Is it some consolation to learn that the BBC have given £35 to the Association?

DOG-WALKERS

Why don't they carry a shovel? They have to in New York.

A BOTTLE BANK

You can use the one at the back of the Dragonara.

HONOURS LIST

H. Anthony Wheeler, OBE, FRIBA, of Hawthornbank House, has been elected President of the Royal Scottish Academy. He is a past President of the Royal Incorporation of Architects in Scotland. **John Richards** has just been elected to that position; he is a member of the firm of **Robert Matthew, Johnson-Marshall & Partners**, who have recently received the Queen's Award for Export Achievement, for their work in Africa, the Middle East, South-East Asia and the West Indies as architectural and engineering consultants.

Some years ago they restored Cabbie Stewart's coach-house on Bell's Brae for their own use. We look forward to the fulfilment of their plan to bring all of their Edinburgh offices into the village, in a new building on Miller Row.

FREE PARKING PERMITS!

Did you know that residents' parking permits are free?

It's the **parking** you pay for, either with a season ticket for 3, 6 or 12 months or with stamp-like tokens which you stick on appropriate dates on monthly cards (which are like calendars). These tokens give a whole day's parking for 35p in zone 1, 18p in zone 5. The second system of payment suits those who are only occasionally in the controlled zone during the restricted hours.

Applications should be made — in person in the case of first applications — to the Finance Office (Parking Section), Lothian Regional Offices, George IV Bridge.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Barbecue on Friday June 3 in Well Court at 7.30. Tickets (£2) from Ian Cowie or Mike Lawton.

A Riverside Garden. Saturday morning July 23. (If it's wet we'll postpone this till July 30). 10.30 to 12.30. Coffee will be served.

Guided Walks. Saturday at 2.15. August 20, 27, September 3. Teas will be served in Well Court on those Saturday afternoons.

ADAM ZYW, SCULPTOR

There will be an exhibition of his work in the 369 Gallery (369 High Street, near St Giles) from June 11 to July 1st, 12 to 5.30 p.m. Monday to Saturday.

Items for the DV News will be welcomed by the Secretary — not only articles but news (including births, marriages, deaths) anecdote, letters to the Editor, small ads (free to members). The next issue goes to press early in September.

SUBSCRIPTIONS FOR 1983-4

Ordinary £2.00 (or £2.50 with postage)
Senior Citizens £1 (or £1.50 with postage)
Life Membership £20

THE DEAN VILLAGE ASSOCIATION COMMITTEE 1983-84

Chairman:	Mrs Peggy Valentine	31/2 Belford Road	225 8942
Vice Chairman:	Alan Robertson	6/3 Dean Path	225 5938
Secretary:	Miss Dorothy Forrester	13 Belford Road	226 5843
Treasurer:	Mike Lawton	28/1 Belford Road	—

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Ian Cowie, 20 Well Court
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