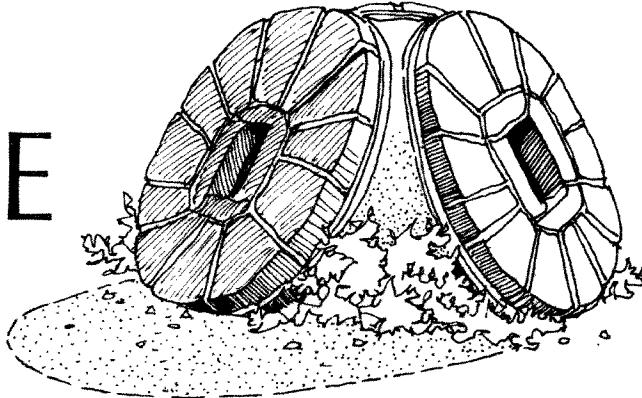


DEAN VILLAGE NEWS



No. 74 Autumn 1983

25p

Issued free to members of the Association
FROM THE DEAN BRIDGE

The river runs at the bottom of a deep valley, among rocks and between gardens; the crest of either bank is occupied by some of the most commodious streets and crescents in the modern city; and a handsome bridge unites the two summits. Over this, every afternoon, private carriages go spinning by, and ladies with card-cases pass to and fro about the duties of society. And yet down below, you may still see, with its mills and foaming weir, the little rural village of Dean. Modern improvement has gone overhead on its high-level viaduct; and the extended city has cleanly overleapt, and left unaltered, what was once the summer retreat of its comfortable citizens. Every town embraces hamlets in its growth; Edinburgh herself has embraced a good few; but it is strange to see one still surviving - and to see it some hundreds of feet below your path. Is it Torre del Greco that is built above buried Herculaneum? Herculaneum was dead at least; but the sun still shines upon the roofs of Dean; the smoke still rises thrifitly from its chimneys; the dusty miller comes to his door, looks at the gurgling water, hearkens to the turning wheel and the birds about the shed, and perhaps whistles an air of his own to enrich the symphony - for all the world as if Edinburgh were still the old Edinburgh on the Castle Hill, and Dean were still the quietest of hamlets buried a mile or so in the green country.

R.L. Stevenson: *Edinburgh*

THERE ARE THIEVES ABOUT

Yes, always. Opportunists ready to take anything available to them: a handbag left for a moment beside a deck chair, or as a car was being unloaded; a child's bicycle from his mother's doorstep; furniture from an entrance hall; wallets from an office; even plants from a common stair. These are all recent cases known to us. Talk about them. Let us know of any other cases. This will remind people to BE CAREFUL.

FOR YOUR DIARY

Events for the autumn, beginning with illustrated talks by two speakers whom we know to be excellent.

Wednesday, September 28: Stanley Jamieson - Edinburgh's Coast-line.

Wednesday, October 26: Basil Skinner - The Edinburgh of Thomas Shepherd: A glimpse of our city through an artist's eyes, 150 years ago.

Saturday, November 5: Bonfire and Fireworks.

Tuesday, December 6: Crime Prevention - a police film, presented by one of their Community Involvement Officers.

Indoor meetings will be held at 7.30 p.m. in
Dean Church Hall, Ravelston Terrace, by
kind permission of the Minister and Kirk
Session.

MISS ALICE BENNETT

We are in touch with this lady of 91, whose family moved back from London and into 10 Hawthorn Buildings when she was about seven, she thinks. (So they may not have been among the very first tenants, for the "Swiss Cottages" were built in 1895.) She writes: "We entered from Belford Road, past the Turkish Baths, Broad Steps, red block, railings, then down steps at the side of the grey block, turning left across the larger of the two wooden bridges. Cruikshank to the right, Bennett to the left" (now 29/2 Belford Road). "The toilet in the centre shared by both families . . . Our playmates were the Joneses in the grey block, the Broadwoods in the red block. Their father was in charge of the office at the Dean Bridge" (Stewart's Cab Office, now part of Basil Skinner's house) "and blew the whistle for the cabs to leave the stance in Queensferry Street. Many happy birthday parties we spent with the Hatelys in 13 Belford Road. Mr Dickson's carpentry business next door I remember well" (The pend at No 14 used to give access to the old building on the Broad Steps, which is now an architect's office.)

"I attended the Mission Sunday School" (in the Baxters' Tolbooth at the foot of Bell's Brae) "and the Dean School along with children from Craigmyle Poorhouse, the Dean Orphanage and many more from Well Court and Dean Path whose names I remember — Gordons, Smiths, Robertsons, Beveridges, Malcolms."

She thanks us for offering her a visit to her old home. "Such a treat as again crossing memories with the reality in viewing a room and kitchen altered to a modern flat. I am a very lucky old lady indeed. Health-wise also. Hands are awkward, yes; but feet and legs still allow me to enjoy walking". (We will be arranging this visit in the course of September.)

DUTCH WEDDING

Our Vice-Chairman, Alan Robertson, and Irma Lagerweij were married on July 7th in Irma's home town of Soest in Holland. The bride wore a magnificent layered dress finished in antique lace, while the groom and his best man wore the kilt.

THE SPRING-CLEAN OF THE DEAN —

May 8th

Over a hundred enthusiastic volunteers, ranging from gangs of school-children to a group of ladies from British Home Stores, descended on the river between the Dragonara and St. Bernard's Well armed with plastic bags and Wellington boots. This campaign was only part of the "Keep Lothian Tidy" project to clean up a ten-mile stretch of the Water of Leith between Balerno and Bonnington.

At the end of a busy and tiring day, four skips were filled to the brim with bulging sacks. Coke cans and crisp bags were the most common finds; more unusual discoveries were an old metal cross and assorted articles of clothing, but alas! - no body. Although most of the helpers went home dirty and damp, the end result was a ribbon of green, down at the Dean. Many thanks to all those who shared in the toil and the fun.

I.R.C.C.

ADAM ZYW

A group of 11 mixed media sculptures by Adam Zyw at the **369 Gallery** proposes a stimulating balance between tradition and experiment. An architect turned sculptor, Zyw makes pieces large enough to enshrine a spirit of place or influence the surrounding environment — aspects that clearly reflect his professional life as a lecturer in Landscape Architecture.

Wood features predominantly throughout his imagery in the form of slices or posts hewn directly from tree trunks. Often there evolves a dialogue between ancient and modern as a strip of neon colours a gnarled surface or palely short-circuits the gap defined by two standing posts.

Elsewhere, four tall rustic planks forming a square totem are decked with red pegs, a roughly chiselled block is supported on a system of bundled short lengths, and a green steel girder bends an ear to a neighbouring vertical beam. The most poetic installation is the *Quiet Gong*, an archaic, free-swinging plane topped with shiny steel cusps, while the four *portrait* reliefs, versions of *Man of Ash*, absorb in assembly a measure of geometrical abstraction within their painted bands, clamped plate-glass, metal troughs and blades.

Edward Gage "The Scotsman" 20.6.83

SUMMER

The fine weather encouraged youngsters to play in the river, especially at the two weirs. Not all the children playing in the Village came from elsewhere: some of us are glad that there are more children living here than for some time; we don't want the Village community to consist only of old folk and young adults who have not yet started a family. (That is why the Association has argued for a fair number of family-sized houses in new developments.) It wasn't only the youngsters either: at least two members of your committee (one a pensioner) had a swim in the river.

Playing with water is exciting. Excited children are noisy. That's life! Unfortunately, people living near by did not have much peace on the long summer evenings. We cannot reasonably object to the noise of children playing. The invasion of private gardens is another matter (and Link Housing Association own both banks of the river at West Mill.) When branches were being broken from trees (to make a fire) we sent for the police, who thereafter patrolled Miller Row regularly.

D.L.F.

MIDSUMMER BARBECUE - JUNE 3rd

Despite the weather letting us down again, over 70 folk spent an enjoyable evening round the rose garden in front of Well Court. As well as the illumination from the barbecue, garden candles provided a garden-party atmosphere as people munched their way through barbecued spare ribs, hot dogs and hamburgers washed down with an occasional glass or two.

Many thanks to those who braved the smoke of the barbecues, buttered the rolls (all 200 of them) and served refreshments.

Special thanks must go to our newly acquired chauffeur, Finlay Valentine, who gave up his afternoon to fill up his car with all the goodies and glasses, and there was still room for me in the front seat.

I.R.C.C.

"... and David Bowie thinks the Dean Village is wonderful".

Edinburgh Evening News 29.6.83
(He had been staying at the Dragonara Hotel.)

GARDENS

It was to be a repeat of that sunny Saturday morning in July 1982 when visitors and local people took coffee in the riverside garden of West Mill and, through the big gates at the end of the lane, walked along the bank to enjoy the best view of the waterfall and up the woodland paths to admire the New Town's most beautiful shared garden. We were prepared to postpone it for a week in case of bad weather, but unexpected rain caught us out.

For permission to hold this event we are again indebted to the Link Housing Association and the residents of West Mill, to the proprietors of Belgrave Crescent Gardens and especially to Mr Kenneth Sanderson who opened the normally forbidding gates.

ALLOTMENTS

We are negotiating for the use of an area at the Dean Education Centre, Belford Road, on the west side of the main building and between the two entrance drives. It was cultivated as a vegetable and fruit garden for the Dean Orphanage until early 1982, but it belongs to Lothian Regional Council, whose predecessors as education authority (the City of Edinburgh) had acquired the building and the land immediately adjoining it a number of years ago. (The Orphanage still own part of the ground - the playing field for example - and the lodge.)

We have enough applicants, but there may be room for one or two more. Contact the Secretary.

FESTIVAL TIME

We had three dry Saturday afternoons for our guided walks, and teas in the garden of Well Court. A great success in terms both of enjoyment and of financial gain for the Association. These occasions generate a lot of good-will, as is the case when we provide guided tours for groups at other times. Not just good-will: Mrs Muriel MacAllan, of Davidson's Mains WRI, generously baked cakes for our Festival Saturdays. We are particularly grateful to her but also to all our other bakers, porters, servers, washers-up and guides.

VANDALISM AND THE POLICE

We have been discussing with the police cases of minor damage to cars etc. We found that they did not know how prevalent this was. They say that they would like us to report even minor cases, every time.

We cannot reasonably expect a police patrol to be constantly in the Village, but they have promised to watch this problem. Is there a pattern? Do those incidents occur particularly on Friday, Saturday and Sunday evenings? At a particular time of night? When youths are returning home from places of amusement in the West End/Haymarket area? Your reports could help to define the problem and to prevent vandalism.

The West End is covered by a foot patrol, whose beat extends to the river; the area north of the river (including Well Court and Dean Path) is patrolled by a car based at Corstorphine; but our whole area is within "C" division, whose headquarters are at Torphichen Place. If your report is not urgent enough to justify a 999 call, you could phone the West End police station (229 2323) or the one at Corstorphine (334 4900).

We are grateful for recent help and advice on a number of subjects from Sergeant Kirk and Sergeant Richardson in particular.

MRS REBECCA DAGGER

Mrs Dagger, now 85 years old, sends greetings from New Zealand to any old friends who may still be alive. Her memories of the Village are happy ones.

CALENDARS AND PRINTS

A pen drawing of the old stone bridge, as a calendar, 75p or as a print for framing, 60p.

POSTCARDS

A beautiful photograph of Well Court from over the river. (This is new.)

A painting of the Dean Village, seen from Rothesay Terrace in 1878, shortly before Well Court was built. (The original is in the City Art Centre.)

We have been unable to have these produced on folded cards for Christmas, or for use as a note card, but why not use them as they are for these purposes? 10p each.

All of the above can be obtained from the Secretary or the Treasurer and at our meetings.

PLANNING APPLICATIONS

The Shop: Consent has been refused for making it into a "wine bar and bistro"; the reasons are exactly those which the Association and individual residents gave: disturbance in a residential area and congestion of narrow streets.

Belford Church: Consent has been granted for change of use from school to art centre/dance training establishment, subject to stringent conditions: for example any alterations would need consent, and there must be no noise nuisance.

HIGH GREEN

McTaggart & Mickel have been carrying out a site investigation, the analysis of which will not be available before mid-October. If the results are unfavourable, the firm could withdraw from the agreement to buy the land from the District Council. We understand that the problem over title deeds is not yet completely resolved either.

It is only when McTaggart & Mickel are sure they can go ahead that they will have plans fully prepared by the architects. Then a planning application will be made . . . We do not now expect any building before 1985.

THE EDINBURGH SOCIETY OF MUSICIANS

is a society of music-lovers (who are not all performers). There are musical evenings every Saturday at 8, at 2 Belford Road (Drumsheugh Toll), and concerts also on alternate Saturday afternoons. Visitors are welcome. Just come along, or contact Miss H. Reid, 5/2 Hawthornbank Lane, or Miss D. Forrester, 13 Belford Road, who can give you information about the current programmes and introduce you if you wish.

THE DEAN VILLAGE ASSOCIATION

Secretary: Miss Dorothy Forrester,
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Editor: c/o the Secretary.

Treasurer: M. Lawton,
28/2 Belford Road.

SUBSCRIPTIONS:

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