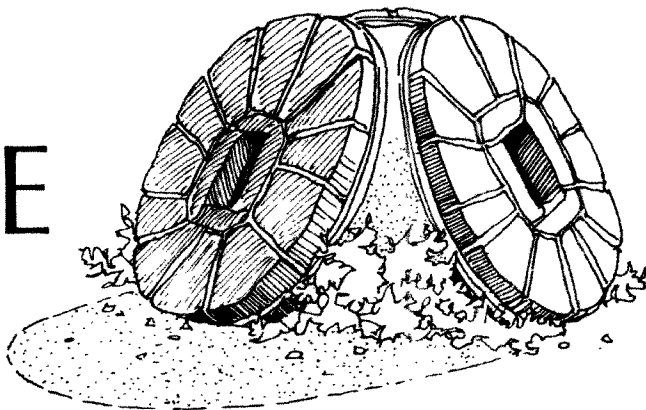


DEAN VILLAGE NEWS



No.93

Winter/Spring 1989

DRUMSHEUGH TOLL (1-3 Belford Road)

"The steep site is brilliantly exploited. It is stolid and cosy towards Belford Road, with broad eaves, a squat crenellated tower, a half timbered bay window and a canopy over the door in the angle; highly picturesque towards Bell's Brae, with more half-timbering, a big, studio-windowed gable, a red sandstone octagonal turret and a dizzily elevated balcony. The detail has much charm, e.g. the cement base-course stamped diaper-fashion with a Gothic capital H, the beautifully leaded glass and a modicum of ironwork." (The Buildings of Scotland: Edinburgh.)

It stands on the site of the toll-house where travellers used to pay for using the old Queensferry Road, which crossed the Water of Leith at Bell's Mills (Belford Bridge). The present building (1891) was designed by George Washington Browne. The lower stories included stables for Cabbie Stewart's horses; the two upper stories were a house and studio for the painter Charles Martin Hardie. (In addition to the H's on the base course, there are Scottish thistles, and American eagles for his wife.)

By the 1970's the lower stories had been renovated and extended as offices for Cobb Blyth Associates, and the two upper stories divided. The studio section was separately occupied, and the rest of Hardie's house divided between the Waddell School of Music (the street floor on Belford Road) and the Edinburgh Society of Musicians (top floor). Cobb Blyth have bought and renovated the part previously occupied by the Waddell School. We rejoice to see that much-needed repairs have been carried out and the long neglected principal entrance splendidly restored.

The Society of Musicians' club-rooms are entered at No 3. Recitals are given there every Saturday evening and on some Saturday afternoons. Occasional visitors as well as new members are welcomed - and you don't have to be a musician. They also let their rooms (large or small) for meetings, parties, recitals, music exams... Apply to Irma Robertson (225 5938).

The Dean Village Association is going to hold a social evening there on February 21st. See "Diary".

PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENTS

Belford Road/Bell's Brae: It seems that the site, with planning consent for an office block, has been sold yet again. We do not expect any building in the near future.

30-32 Damside (including a shop): Smart's application for permission to demolish it and landscape the site has been turned down. We very much hope that Smart's will either restore it themselves without delay or put it on the market, for other parties are interested.

Quality Mark Wholesale were refused permission to open on Sundays. But, strange as it may seem, it is not an offence for them to do so unless they continue for 28 days. They began Sunday trading on November 27; so they could go on up to Christmas.

High Green: Arthurstone Developments hope to start construction in March. Before that the eastern branch of "lower Belford Road" is to be pedestrianised. The western branch and the steep brae running down to the river will be legally stopped up and eventually replaced by a new public road. While building is going on it will be dangerous for the public to cross the site; so we must expect a temporary closure order, which has not yet been advertised. The Association will try to ensure that pedestrians will always be free to walk along the riverside section of Hawthornbank Lane.

TRAFFIC PROBLEMS

There are problems at the junctions of Belford Road/Douglas Gardens and Belford Road/Sunbury Street and Mews. We have begun to discuss these with the Traffic Management Section of the Highways Department. What problems do you experience? What steps do you think might help to mitigate these problems? e.g. a roundabout at the foot of Douglas Gardens? Double yellow lines to stop parking at junctions? Because of expense or legal processes, nothing can be done **quickly**, but we might start things moving.

D.L.F.

FREE!

If you are over 60 and live alone (or with another person over 60), you can have your gas fire and / or cooker checked yearly free of charge, to ensure that they are working safely. Phone Scottish Gas.

NOT FREE

The story has been going around that owners of listed buildings can get a grant to cover the entire cost of repairs. This is not the case.

(a) They can get the same grants as any other owner to put their building into a good state of repair and to modernise a sub-standard dwelling. A 50% grant. Applications to the Housing Dept of the District Council.

(b) The Historic Building Council for Scotland **may** give an additional grant for a listed building defined as "outstanding" or which is in an "outstanding" conservation area. (The Dean Village is one of these). Applications to the H.B.C. at 25 Drumsheugh Gardens. But to be even considered for one of these an applicant must get comprehensive repairs done, as in (a), and the grants will still not add up to 100%.

(c) For any building of historic or architectural interest, the District Council **may** give a Conservation Grant (from a very limited fund) **towards** the cost of restoring original features, stone repairs etc. (not for normal repair and maintenance.) Applications to the Planning Department, 1 Cockburn Street.

A grant for Well Court?

The Association has been informed that one of these Conservation Grants from the District Council might well be awarded for repaving Well Court. It is private property. The proprietors would have to make a contribution. The examples quoted to us suggest that the grant would be at least 50% of the cost, and possibly as much as 80%.

MEMORIES

(Recorded in Well Court Hall, October 1, 1985)

- When you were all bairns what games did you play in Well Court and round about?

Miss L.: Peevers and skipping-ropes... and I remember the diabolos. The boys played with the peeries and whips.. And we used to play hessie (hide and seek) and rounders.

G.S.: Fattie's wheck - a sort of leapfrog - this was rather a brutal game....

Mrs M.: There weren't many homes in the Well Court that didn't have children in it. And I remember periodically a photographer used to come. We've got two or three photographs that were taken sitting on the steps going up to the stairs. They were like the dead-end kids!

Miss L.: The school holidays were a favourite time, and whenever the kids saw them it didn't matter what they were like - they just made a bee-line for either the Hall steps or one of the stairs. They plonked themselves down and waited for the photographer to come out and start...and then he came round selling them.

G.S.: It was an event when the photographer came to the school. We were all told to appear with white collars. I went home and said: "I have to have a white collar". Of course I got a tirade of abuse from my mother: "How do you think I can afford white collars?" So about seven or eight of us appeared without white collars. But the teacher was a woman of resource: she got all the old drawing books and took the covers off them and made paper collars.

- How were you usually dressed when you went to school?

G.S.: Jerseys and trousers - shorts - some of them were long shorts over the knee. If your people couldn't afford to keep you well shod, all those who had bare feet in November were taken up to the High Street and were given a pair of boots (the girls had button boots) and they also got a pair of stockings. You always knew the police - aided lot: there were five holes in the uppers.

- I believe the definition of the holes in the boots was: "These boots don't belong to you."

G.S.: That's right. You couldn't pawn them.

- What did the girls wear to school?

Miss L.: Frocks and pinafores....

L.W.: There was a Thomson family that lived, not in the Village but in Saunders Street. Willie used to tell us tales of coming up Miller Row in their bare feet, to save their boots; and the danders fairly hurt your feet - danders being the clinkers out of the furnaces - they put on their shoes when they got to the bottom of Bell's Brae.

(Can we see those old photographs of "dead-end kids" at our "Let's Chat" evening on February 21st? D.F.)

TO THE SHOPS

We are continuing the long established practice of providing a free taxi to take pensioners up to the West End on Tuesday mornings. Now, in addition, several members who have cars are taking turns to drive old people to and from Safeways at Comely Bank on Friday mornings, departing at 10.30 from Damside/West Mill. (If necessary, the car makes a second trip.)

Since our drivers sometimes go on holiday, or their car breaks down, we would welcome additional volunteers, so that no one need be asked to drive more than once a month. Even if there are two trips, the driver is usually finished soon after 11.30.

Pensioners who have not yet used this service are welcome to do so, regularly or occasionally. If you wish to be picked up at some other point, let me know. On the return trip, passengers will be taken right home with their loads, e.g. to Belford Road or Sunbury.

Dorothy Forrester.

"Dogs deserve responsible owners. Please keep this area clean." Have you seen the notices in Miller Row, near the millstones, put up at the expense of the Dean Village Association?

COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Community Councils were provided for in the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, but a Council is set up only if a certain number of electors in the area request one. The West End Community Council has been active for several years. (The boundaries of its area include Belford Road as far as Belford Bridge, then the Water of Leith to Donaldson's Hospital.) The Dean Village is within the area of Stockbridge Community Council, which has just been set up, with 8 elected members and 7 nominated by Local Interest Groups. The Dean Village Association has nominated Mrs Valentine.

NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH

The residents in Sunbury are glad that they set up a Watch scheme, for it has led to a marked reduction in break-ins. Have the burglars merely gone elsewhere? To make sure that they don't turn their attention to your house, what about setting up a Neighbourhood Watch in the central part of the Village, or some section of it (e.g. the new houses in Damside/Dean Path). For information, advice and pamphlets, apply to the West end Police Station (229 2323).

RECYCLING

Glass: there is a bottle bank behind the Hilton Hotel.

Paper: Take it to the basement of 8 Palmerston Place (beside the church). Keep newsprint separate from magazines etc, please. The Scouts organise this collection.

ALLOTMENT

A plot is vacant at Dean Education Centre, in the garden ground leased to the Dean Village Association. Apply to Bill Myles, 12 Douglas Crescent (337 4781).

DIARY

Tuesday, February 21

LET'S CHAT about the past (and the future?) **Basil Skinner** will show slides of the Village as it used to be. Can you bring a photograph? Wine and savouries will be served. In Drumsheugh Toll, 3 Belford Road, at 7.30 (Lifts up the hill from 7.15) Tickets £2 (pensioners £1)

Tuesday, March 21 at 7 p.m.

A visit to the Mechanised Letter Office in Brunswick Road, off Leith Walk, as **guests of The Royal Mail**, whose General Manager, John Mackay, lives in the Village. A tour of the Sorting Office will be followed by a buffet supper. No charge, but **book** with Dorothy Forrester or Peggy Valentine **by March 13**. Please say if you would like a lift or can offer lifts.

Tuesday, April 25

Annual General Meeting.
Speaker: Graham Duncan, Director of Planning for Edinburgh District.
Venue to be announced.

THE DEAN VILLAGE ASSOCIATION

Chairman: Mrs Peggy Valentine
31/2 Belford Road (225 8942)

Secretary: Miss Dorothy Forrester
13 Belford Road EH4 3BL (226 5843)

Treasurer: Mrs Betty Boyd
10 Randolph Cliff (225 3289)

SUBSCRIPTIONS

Ordinary £2.00 (or £2.50 with postage)
Senior Citizens £1 (or £1.50 with postage)
Life Membership £20.00