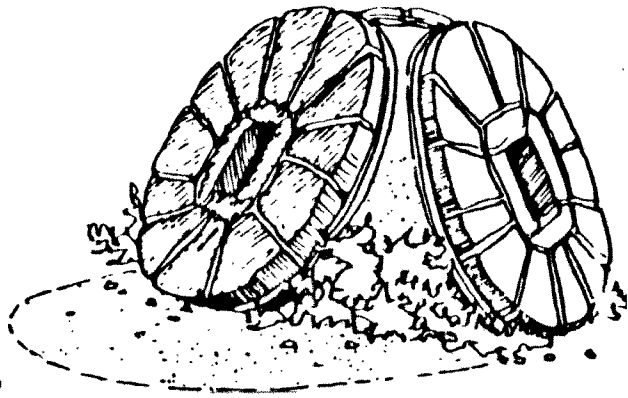


DEAN VILLAGE NEWS



No. 111 Winter/Spring 1995

JOANNA LAWSON DIED 10th SEPTEMBER 1828 AGED 10 YEARS
ANN BLACK DIED 9th OCTOBER 1836 AGED 7 YEARS
HELEN ANN HAY DIED 10th APRIL 1838 AGED 7 YEARS
MARIA SMART DIED 29th NOVEMBER 1846 AGED 7 YEARS
ELLEN CHRISTIAN HENDERSON DIED 16th JUNE 1850 AGED 12 YEARS
MARGARET PEARSON DIED 21st MAY 1852 AGED 11 YEARS
GEORGE ANDERSON DIED 29th APRIL 1856 AGED 7 YEARS
JANET WHITEHEAD DIED 16th JUNE 1865 AGED 12 YEARS
JOAN ELIZABETH OGILVIE DIED 25th MARCH 1866 AGED 10 YEARS
ELIZA AGNES RAMAGE DIED 5th JANUARY 1869 AGED 10 YEARS
ELIZABETH HELEN PATERSON DIED 29th DECEMBER 1880 AGED 8 YEARS
SYDNEY ELLIS SMITH BORN 12th MARCH 1879 DIED 22ND FEBRUARY 1888

These inscriptions are in a little cemetery for pupils of John Watson's Institution - now the Gallery of Modern Art. It is beyond the high stone walls which enclose the former playgrounds. To find it, go through the gateway at the far right-hand corner of the car park, leave the path which goes down to the footbridge and walk across the grass, parallel to the wall but a few yards away from it. Then a narrow winding path leads between trees and bushes to an open space in the angle formed by two walls. The graves are marked by small square stones with the initials of the twelve children who are listed on stones set into a wall.

The first of the "destitute children" were admitted to the Institution on August 12th 1828, after a medical examination had shown them to be "of a sound constitution both in body and mind". There were to be 25 boys and 25 girls

in the first intake. The normal age at first admission was to be between 5 and 8, but some older children were accepted in that first year. The Master and Matron were detailed to examine the children over eight, as well as their parents and other relatives, to satisfy themselves that such boys and girls were morally sound. Joanna Lawson, healthy and morally sound on entry, died of "croup" (probably diphtheria) in the Institution on September 10th, her mother being with her at her bedside. The following day a Meeting of Directors, hastily convened, decided to *appropriate a portion of the Ground belonging to the Institution for the Interment of any of the children who should die while in the house and that Joanna Lawson should accordingly be interred there tomorrow at three o'clock*. All the children attended the funeral, and the Directors hoped that it would make a good im-

pression on their minds.

On the central tombstone there is the text:

Jesus said: Suffer the little children to come unto me, for of such is the kingdom of Heaven. Was that intended by the Directors to encourage meek acceptance of early death? Of the 25 boys and 25 girls chosen in January 1828, three had died before the Institution opened in August. By 1832 117 children had been admitted; seven of them had died. Since the next date after Joanna Lawson's is 1836, it is evident that not all of the children who died in the Institution or at home while in the care of John Watson's Trust were buried in the little cemetery. If their parents chose to make other arrangements, the Directors usually contributed £5 towards the funeral expenses.

The wild area on the slope down to the river was a favourite haunt of the children, and the boys - in the early years boys only - swam in the pool which we know as the Cauldron. This name does not occur in the history of John Watson's on which I have based this account, but "the Kiddern" is used for the steep wooded bank, and may have applied to the pool as well. The origin of the name is obscure. Could it be a form of "Cauldron"? Lawrence Walker, of Bell's Mills, pronounces it "Kiddren", and thinks it is derived from the Kidron, a stream at Jerusalem. After a Scout troop was formed in the 1920's, *their main task was to bring order out of chaos in the Kiddern. That monumental project continued on and off for years, during which time the Scouts shifted tons of earth and stones. When the girls joined the Guide movement, they were conscripted to assist in realising the Headmaster's vision of making the Kiddern a green and pleasant place. The Guides kept tidy the paths made by the Scouts and planted shrubs gifted by the Curator of the Royal Botanic Garden. Both Scouts and Guides were detailed to care for the neglected School Cemetery, the boys building a trellis round it and the girls planting and training climbing roses. The passing of years, however, destroyed their efforts, and the*

little cemetery, in spite of spasmodic attempts to tend it, generally presented a neglected and forlorn appearance. The Kiddern also, through lack of attention and the unseemly habit in later years of dumping rubbish there, gradually deteriorated, the paths becoming broken down and weeds abounding. (Isobel C. Wallis: *John Watson's School - A History*, published by the John Watson Club in 1982.)

Since the property was acquired by the National Galleries of Scotland, there have been great changes in the "Kiddern": clearing and planting, a new path and footbridge, a Henry Moore bronze, well-kept grass and an inconspicuous path to the no longer neglected cemetery. However, one of our members has suggested that something be done to commemorate the dead children and enhance that remote corner of the grounds.

A bench with an inscription? an explanatory board? a sign-post at least? We mean to discuss this with the Director of the Gallery and with former pupils. What do you think? Go and find the cemetery and make your suggestions.

Dorothy Forrester.

MACINTOSH RED

Not an apple, in this case, but the firm which has moved into the office at 20 Hawthornbank Lane, near the footbridge. John Mackenzie and Terry Butler formed the company a few years ago to develop their overlapping interests in computers and design.

SHOP

In November George and Karen Hennys took over the shop in Belford Road (formerly a post office). They sell food, wines and spirits, washing powder, cigarettes, newspapers, stationery, toiletries and some haberdashery.

Opening hours:

Monday to Friday from 7.00am to 7.00pm
Saturday and Sunday from 7.00am to 2.00pm

"LOCAL" PLAN

The District Council's plan for Central Edinburgh, now in its "finalised" form, covers a wide area, from Ferry Road to Morningside and from Holyrood Park to Ravelston.

The Dean Conservation Area is extended to the north-west to include Ravelston Place and St George's School, and to the north to take in that part of Dean Cemetery which adjoins Dean Church. Stewart's Melville College succeeded in their objection to being included in the conservation Area.

Some other points of interest to us:

The Council has particular regard to the design impact of new development on the special character of conservation areas.

The council is concerned to maintain the predominantly stone-built character of Central Edinburgh and to encourage a greater use of stone or an acceptable and harmonious alternative.

Many of Central Edinburgh's open spaces are of outstanding importance, including . . . those which provide a setting for prominent buildings, notably the sequence of such spaces around Donaldson's School, the National Gallery of Modern Art and the Dean Centre.

Comely Bank Cemetery is one of five which have been acquired by the District Council *in order to protect them and enhance their amenity value and wildlife interest.* They also propose to acquire Ravelston Wood to improve public access and safety.

Shopping frontages are to be protected. Queensferry Street, with Melville Place and Drumsheugh Place, is identified as a "secondary frontage", in which service uses are acceptable up to a maximum of 40% within each section. The Secretary can lend a copy of the Plan.

FROM BALERNO TO LEITH

A guide to the Water of Leith Walkway has been produced by the Planning Department of the District Council and the Water of Leith Conservation Trust. It has a large-scale fold-out map and, within the book, maps of the six sections

as they are described, explained and illustrated. The line drawings by Stan Wale and John Hannah are good and the text interesting and pretty accurate. However, one map puts the site of the Dean Tannery on the wrong side of the river; and is it correct to call the weir just upstream of the Village "the Damhead weir"? The word "damhead" means "weir". Miss Meg Lee recalls that her mother would say "up at the damhead". The lade was "the dam" - hence "Damside" for the buildings which lined it. This may not be the only weir on the river which was referred to as "the damhead".

But these are relatively minor points. The guide is an excellent publication and a bargain at £2.00, which includes the separate large map. It can be obtained from the Secretary of the Dean Village Association, the Post Office at Balerno, the Planning Office at 1 Cockburn Street and the Water of Leith Conservation Centre in the old school at Slateford - 24 Lanark Road (455 7367), mornings only.

The Trust and the Council have also embarked on a project to produce on-site interpretive boards for the Walkway, each focussing on a different topic. The site of Lindsay's Mill in Dean Village has been chosen for the one dealing with water-powered industry. It will provide a simple interpretation of the surroundings and of the role of the Incorporation of Baxters.

CAROLS

On December 15 we welcomed singers and musicians from Stewart's Melville College who sang carols at our Christmas Tree. The collection for St. Columba's Hospice raised £74.

AN EYESORE

The low wall on the west side of Well Court is in very poor condition. We have found that it can be repaired without charge by the Construction Skills Training Programme of the District Council.

BELFORD MEWS

Gregor Properties Ltd. began demolishing the warehouse illegally, for they did not have planning consent for a replacement. Objectors argue that ten mews houses are too many for this site on a narrow lane. Revised plans make the lane wider, but show the terrace of houses projecting 2.5 metres beyond the present building line at the back. This could have a disastrous effect on the bank as seen from the other side of the river.

A BOLLARD

Religious belief is a funny thing, and over the ages strange objects have been venerated by various sets of believers. There should, thus, be nothing surprising about an object of devotion described in the Independent on Sunday. The object in question is a large concrete traffic bollard situated (where else?) in San Francisco. Several years ago, a lorry driver dumped this rather large, phallic-shaped bollard in Golden Gate Park and since that time hundreds of worshippers have come from as far afield as India to meditate and burn incense in front of the four-foot-high effigy. Some regard it as a lingham - a symbol of one of the chief Hindu gods, Shiva - as the bollard does bear more than a passing resemblance to linghams in India. The bollard is now normally draped with garlands, has religious symbols scrawled on its surface and has recently cured a man of arthritis. The Sceptic, Sept/Oct 1993).

We might well have celebrated with garlands the success of our long campaign for a single iron bollard where the cobbled lane joins Belford Road near nos 30 to 32. There are two or three cases of arthritis there . . .

DIARY

Tuesday February 14 at 7.30pm

GLOBAL WARMING AND YOUR

FUEL BILLS : Simon Lee of the Lothian and Edinburgh Energy Advice Centre. He will concentrate on the sorts of measures householders can take to cut their fuel bills, and place this in the context of global warming. He is also willing to answer specific questions.

In the Seminar Room, Miller Row, by kind permission of RMJM.

Tuesday March 21 at 7.30pm

PICTURES OF THE PAST -

The Dean Village as it used to be.

Slides presented by Dorothy Forrester in the Seminar Room, Millar Row.

Monday April 24 at 7.30pm

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Speaker: Alistair Darling MP, if parliamentary duties do not claim him.

In Drumsheugh Toll, 3 Belford Road.

Sunday April 30 : CLEAN-UP

Tuesday May 9 at 7.30pm

ANTARCTICA : Derek Moss.

In the Seminar Room, Miller Row.

Sunday June 11 : OPEN DAY



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)

SUBSCRIPTIONS 1995/96

Ordinary : £3.00 (or £3.75 with postage)

Senior Citizen : £1.50 (or £2.25 with postage)

Life Membership : £30.00