



Dean Village News

Issue 184 December 2019
www.deanvillage.org

Invitation to a Dean Village Social Evening

The Dean Village Association invites residents, both past and present, and those who have an interest in Dean Village, to attend a social evening from 7.00pm to 11.00pm on Friday 3rd April 2020 in the Clarendon Suite of the Edinburgh Grosvenor Hotel located at 5 - 21 Grosvenor Street, Haymarket, Edinburgh.

Your host will be Patrick McCole who was born and brought up in Dean Village. This evening will provide an opportunity for everyone to meet each other and be able to see a selection of old photographs of Dean Village from bygone years.

A hot finger buffet supper will be provided. To ensure your place at this event, please contact Patrick at patrickmccole@hotmail.com. Tickets will be £15.95 per person. Please book by Fri Jan 17th.

Dean Village Association – the middle 80s

This was the time when major developments were occurring in the village. The derelict and run-down areas would be replaced by modern flats and houses. Dorothy Forrester was Secretary of the Dean Village Association and was also editor of the Dean Village News. Dorothy filled the News with plenty of detail. The following notes are taken from issues 76 to 83 (Some of these may now be seen on our website.)

Well Court: - On Saturday 23rd June 1984 villagers celebrated the centenary of Well Court. Entertainments of all sorts were held during the day, and there was a ceilidh in the evening. Village walks were held during the week. There was an exhibition at the Art College, Lauriston Place, showing Sydney Mitchell's drawings of Well Court and Telford's plans and drawings of Dean Bridge, along with historic photos and paintings. One painting of great interest was Sir William Fettes Douglas's *View of the Village in 1878*, from John Ritchie Findlay's house at 3, Rothesay Terrace. This painting also featured in *The Scotsman Magazine* of Friday June 8th, 1984.

Dr. Michael Cuthbert had previously given a talk on the development of Dean Village at the April AGM. In the 19th century, mills declined, and the Skinnery, with its rats and smells, did not improve matters. The Douglas' painting showed the old houses in the heart of the village which JRF had replaced with Well Court in 1884. An article of 1896 suggested that the work was undertaken to prevent a possible eyesore being created there. *Well Court became a remarkable group of picturesque dwellings, model homes for the industrial class. They have houses which are comfortable, and the beauty of their architecture will exercise an elevating and refining influence on life.*

On the opening of Well Court on 4th July 1884, JRF was not keen on ladies being either members or on the Hall committee. He realised that ladies were admitted to all sorts of organisations. But although ladies were making themselves equal to men in many respects, they did not have the business training of men. The Hall was meant to be a clubroom for men only. Mixed clubs had always failed, and there were doubts about the propriety of a mixed association.

High Green: - In the spring of 1984 the developers had submitted their plans for 43 flats, 30 garages and 16 parking spaces. Dean Village Association had examined them and basically approved, but required real slates and clay tiles for roofing, and natural stone for some of the walls and steps. The plans were approved and arrangements were made to close the “Stinking Brae” down from Belford Road to the footbridge. Walkers were advised to use the Broad Stairs by Drumsheugh Baths, or the “Wee Stairs” further along past the old Hawthornbank building.

But then there was shock news. In the autumn of 1984 the developers pulled out of the plan altogether. The purchase of the land from the Council had never been completed. DVA advised that the land should be left in wilderness, although having some care about the countryside amenity. For surely the Council would eventually sell the land to another developer.

Inner Damside: - Smart’s had started some work on developing the area of Legget’s Skinnery. Plans for 6 houses, 26 maisonettes, and 33 flats with 61 garages and 30 parking spaces had been approved, despite opposition by DVA, the Cockburn Association and others. One condition was that a three metre strip be left along the riverside to allow for the construction of the Water of Leith Walkway by the District Council. A wall of gabions (wire cages filled with stones) had been built to prevent flooding the building area. The riverside land now become more prone to flooding, as the activities of the developers had narrowed the watercourse. The Council planned to make a walkway from the Dean footbridge to Belford Bridge, bypassing the weir by some sort of stepped arrangement outside the building wall, hopefully starting in 1986.

The Planning Dept of the District Council was considering names for streets. The DVA recommended that the name Damside be continued for the setted way into the area as a reminder of the lade which led from the upper weir to West Mill.

Then, in 1986, work ceased. Was this going to become another development casualty?

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The Schoolhouse was put up for sale in the spring of 1984 for £100,000 to be completed by May. James Potter Construction was the successful bidder and submitted a plan for 2 houses, 2 maisonettes and 16 flats in 1985. There would be changes to the sizes and positions of windows. The DVA put in a strong objection, with particular reference to the parking problems that would arise due to the number of cars. Damside was a largely pedestrian area, and should be preserved as such. Further decisions were awaited.

Miller Row: - the new office for Robert Matthew, Johnson-Marshall and Associates was nearing completion in the summer of 1985.

Reminiscences: Several contributions of their memories were made by past residents who had recently visited the village.

DK Johnstone with the help of Dorothy Forrester was able to trace his family back for five generations. William Johnston, born 1699 in Aberdeen, a weaver, moved to Dean and had a son, also William and a weaver, in 1750. He had a son, Charles, born 1781, continuing the family weaving. Charles was recorded in the 1841 census as living in "Brown's Land", the area later to become Well Court. His son, Charles, born 1821, became a skinner and lived at 14, Dean Path. His son James, born 1863, became a maltsman. When Well Court was being built, the family moved to New Zealand, and added an "e" to their name.

W. Hinde started as an apprentice skinner in 1927. On his visit to Dean Village he noticed that the old school bell was missing, as were the children of village and the Orphanage who attended the school. He remembered Big Bill Smith and his horse Prince, and old Jemima who fed the tannery cats that kept the rats down. The village was a hive of industry, loads of pelts coming to the Tannery, and there were whisky bonds in Miller Row. There were a few shops, but the one he remembered most was the one ran by Granny Douglas, which was a favourite spot for the apprentices because she made fantastic toffee cuddies. The shop was at 10 Dean Path (now number 8).

(Continued on page 6)

My Friends in the Cemetery XXXVI by David Perry Samuel John Peploe (1871 - 1935)

Samuel Peploe was one of four painters who together were referred to as the Scottish Colourists. The other three were John Duncan Fergusson, Leslie Hunter and Francis Cadell (See DVN 161, 2012). All the colourists spent time in France and were influenced by the impressionists of that country. All four used strong colours in their work, but they had very different styles. They did exhibit together, the first one being in Paris in 1924 at the Gallerie Barbazanges entitled *Les Peintres de L'Écosse Moderne*. They exhibited in London at the Leicester Gallery in the following year.

Peploe was born in Manor Place, Edinburgh, on the 27th January 1871, son of a bank manager. He attended the Royal Scottish Academy, and then moved to France to study at the Académie Julian and the Académie Colarossi in Paris. Although he was thought to be strongly influenced by Cézanne, Matisse and Van Gogh, he was not an abstract painter, preferring still life and landscapes, albeit with strong colour.

He married Margaret Mackay in 1910, whom he had known for sixteen years. He moved to Paris for two years, but then returned to Scotland where he traveled widely in the country on painting trips. During the 1920s he and Francis Cadell went on several trips to Iona, where they rented a cottage.

Peploe's paintings now achieve very high prices. *Still Life with Coffee Pot*, painted in 1905, sold for just short of one million pounds at Christie's in 2011. Previously *Tulips* had sold for over half a million pounds in 2010.

To find the Peploe stone, walk along the path which backs onto the Modern Art Gallery. Find the Waddell monument - you cannot miss her statue (which is illuminated at night). Take the path down to the Wilson monument and Peploe is opposite on the north path. Samuel John Peploe is listed at the bottom of the main stone.

Hydro-electric scheme in Saughton Park

Those walking in Saughton Park will have seen some activity on the river. A Hydro-electric Power Scheme is being installed.

The first move is to make a temporary dam for the protection of the river and the working staff. The initial stage will be building a reinforced concrete substructure which will channel the water and house the turbine and generator.

The method involves the use of an Archimedes screw. This device was originally used by Egyptian farmers to raise water from the Nile to irrigate their crops. A notice at the site informs us that Archimedes (who was killed by the Romans in BC212) was not the inventor, but was describing its use by the farmers.

The screw used by the hydro-electric scheme will weigh almost ten tonnes and is nine meters long. It will be used in reverse mode. The passage of water down the screw causes it to rotate, drive a generator and so produce electric current. The energy will be used to power the ground source heat pumps in the Winter Gardens.

The work will continue throughout the year. Further information may be obtained at enquiries@bigcat-contracts.co.uk.

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Reminiscences (continued)

JC Fraser was born at 34, Leggets Land on 5th June 1902. He attended Dean School and the Mission Hall Church. As a child he used to go to St. Bernard's Well with a bottle to get a fill of mineral water for one penny. He remembered loads of dripping skins on carts drawn by trace horses, going up Bell's Brae, their hooves often slipping on the setts. There were two shops at the bottom of Dean Path, one run by Annie Bailey who sold paraffin oil. Mr. Fraser's first job was to take Mr. Crichton's dinner up to the cabstand for sixpence a week. He also worked for SMT and joined the Scots Guards, resulting in him working at all the Royal Palaces, and being involved with Trooping the Colour.

Crash, bang, wallop on Miller Row



A tree came down during the bad weather over the weekend of 10/11th August. The tree was on the edge of the bank of the river below Dean Gardens, about one hundred yards down from Dean Bridge. The fall must have been very heavy, as the tree smashed down the railings.



Tree sculpture

This Lowry-like sculpture appeared on a sewer cover just upstream from Dean Bridge in September. Sadly, it only lasted a few weeks.



The river in spate.

Following a relatively dry summer Edinburgh suffered a very heavy rainfall over the first weekend in October. As a result the level of the Water of Leith was raised dramatically. Your editor calls this a seven-stoner - that is on the slope to the river down from Damside, the level was seven stones below the gate. Another marker is the otter by Dean Bridge - completely covered.

The river then is a magnificent sight - but thankfully at least four feet below flood level. Below is a photo of the Gormley man at Powderhall. All the men survived, a tribute to their now firm anchorage.



There was another downpour two weeks later, and the river rose to a similar level. The river flow at its highest covered much of the riverside land on the Hawthornbank side, emphasising that there have to be very specialised plants to survive there. A dipper chirped sadly there as it could not do any dipping. When the river level went down by next morning the Gormley man at Stockbridge wore a cape of assorted herbage. Also at Stockbridge the floodgate was closed as a precaution to prevent water entering Veitch's Square. On both these occasions, flooding was not a danger.

Update on the landslip above the upper weir

The City of Edinburgh Council has raised legal proceedings against a number of parties in respect of this landslip. The causes of the slippage must be identified and measures taken to prevent further slippage. Only then can steps be taken to reopen the riverside path.

Public safety and future amenity of the area remain paramount. Technical investigations are proceeding well and the Council is in close communication with all relevant parties to identify a suitable solution. Then agreement will be required between the Council and neighbouring owner(s).

The Council have authorised funding to meet the cost of specialist engineers to design and provide estimates for the necessary retaining works. So there would appear to be no resolution some time soon.

Miller Row

There has been a great deal of activity at the top of Miller Row. These were the offices of Robert Matthew, Johnson-Marshall and Associates now converted into houses and flats. The area under the flats has been the last part to be modified.

A firm of stonemasons has been working there. They have put a number of windows into the wall on Miller Row. There was a rumour to the effect that a café would appear there. However there has been no alteration to the original plans, as can be seen on the Council's Planning website. Therefore, this area is likely to be the planned car park for residents and visitors, which will be accessed from Bell's Brae.

Past issues of Dean Village News

We are starting to put back-issues of the News on the Dean Village website. Early issues numbers 64 to to 138, spanning 1981 to 2004 (with some gaps) may be seen, together with all issues 158 to 181 from 2011 to 2018. Also in the documents section are the constitution of the Association, the minutes of the last two AGMs, and the audited accounts of the last three years. Go to deanvillage.org/documents.

**Alcedo Atthis on the Water of Leith
as seen at the Dean**

contributed by Dean Viillage Association member

The view of this bird gives delight
To those permitted the sight
of something elusive, it is quite exclusive
to see such beauty in flight.

This kingfisher will never know.
It literally does just go with the flow
up and down stream.
It's its spotters who dream
of this ornithologist's beau.

It seems to have the best of the call
It is neat, and surprisingly small,
Iridescent blue, orange under-hue,
And feet that glow red below all.

With a beak, which is larger than thought,
It can take any guppy that's caught.
It has the stealth of cats, the silence of bats,
and skills which its parents have taught.

It is the bellwether of the state of the stream
It thrives because the water is clean.
Now the otter is chipper, as is the dipper,
because today, diving and fishing's a dream.

But before, when the river ran white
with mill washings. and sewerage a blight.
It was impossible to see how there could be
a stream whose water be bright.

But industries shut, sewers enclosed,
access encouraged, walkways proposed.
The town found a new pleasure,
called it riverside leisure,
and Riparian rules were imposed.

A Grade A river has resulted.
A green route that now is exulted
From Balerno to Leith,
Bird, beast, and leaf,
Bring new life to what man had insulted.

Josie Mobbs

Josie Mobbs, one time resident of Dean Village, was spotted one Sunday in October, being wheeled along Belford Road in her wheelchair by her friend, Win. There were frequent stops as passers-by paid court to her. She looked wonderful and was in fine form. So she is very well looked after in her care home.

Josie lived for many years in the seventeenth century building, converted into flats in the 1960s, at 6 Dean Path. She was a well-known figure in the village, taking her two dogs for a walk, although they often got a lift in her wheelie basket. A resume of her life appeared in Dean Village News Issue 176 in the spring of 2017.

Changes in Car Parking Arrangements

The Planning and Transport Department of Edinburgh City Council are proposing to increase the number of residential parking places throughout Edinburgh. A number of pay-only parking places will be converted into shared parking spaces.

In addition there is a proposal to convert part of Belford Road between Drumsheugh Baths and Douglas Gardens from Zone 1 to Zone 5. This proposed change would improve the availability of permit parking space for residents of the Sunbury and Hawthornbank of the village. Consultations regarding these proposals took place in the spring. Further developments are awaited.

There are further plans to introduce parking controls on Sunday afternoons, to have Visitor Permits, and to improve pedestrian road crossings by having waiting restrictions at junctions and crossing points.

There is a proposal that a double yellow line will replace the single line at the corner of Sunbury Mews with Belford Road. The pavement has recently been widened there, and bollards provided, following a series of incidents involving the overhang of the block of flats.

Dean Village Association has been informed that there is a further proposal to introduce virtual parking permits. The Council will then have the potential to move from physical to electronic permits. At first, during a changeover period, both physical and electronic permits will be issued. Further consideration will be given to making this change.

When the proposals are formally advertised, there will be an opportunity to submit objections. Will you be able to remember when the time has come to renew your permit? You know what will happen if you forget.

More details are available on the website: - www.edinburgh.gov.uk/parkingactionplan and at [/trafficorders](#).



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Events in Dean Village and Edinburgh

Holyrood Palace: - An exhibition of eighty drawings by Leonardo de Vinci will be held here, starting 22nd November and continuing until the middle of March.

Social Evening :- All are invited to an evening at the Clarendon Suite of the Edinburgh Grosvenor Hotel on Friday, 3rd April at 7.00pm. Tickets £15.95

St Bernard's Well:- The Well will be opened on the first Sunday of the months from April to September, 2020 and on Doors Open Sunday.

Village and Cemetery Walks will be conducted during the summer months. Dates to be arranged and will be displayed on notices in the village and on our website deanvillage.org

DVA Annual General Meeting will be held on Tuesday April 14th at 7.30pm in the lounge of Lynedoch House.

Nature Notes by Tim Steiner

They say that in death there is opportunity...and in the case of the demise of a goldcrest in Damside recently, an opportunity to study this elusive “king of the birds”. In life, they’re so hard to see, in part because as they are Europe’s smallest bird, but they are common throughout almost all of the UK. Smaller than a wren, a typical adult might weigh only six grams (a fifth of an ounce), yet the female can lay a clutch of up to twelve eggs. They don’t seem to visit our feeders but keep an eye out for them through the winter, although their green/grey bodies are well camouflaged in the bushes, the broad yellow stripe on their heads is the giveaway clue.

Although their tiny size means they may be unlikely candidates for the honour of king of the birds, such a reference comes from many sources, some from long ago: one was written by Aristotle. Greek mythology comes to the Village News!

Now we are back into the grips of the dark months, it’s a good time to recognise how different species have different comfort zones. Amongst the birds, the dippers and kingfishers seemingly are never more than a metre or two from the water, whilst the tits stay in the bushes as much as they can. Yet the blackbirds and robins are content to be on the ground, rummaging around in the fallen leaves. Each is an expert in its own spaces, and this helps us realise how many different habitats our precious bit of the city provides. But in this assessment, we should give a nod to the woodpigeons and herring gulls. Seemingly ubiquitous and not always welcome visitors in our village, credit to them for having the adaptability to thrive in our urban spaces.

Advertise in the Dean Village News

Quarter page £4

Half page £8

Full page £16

It's a *Braw* Café

Meg and Florencia wish you all a happy festive season and a wonderful 2020.

To help you all at this busy time of year we will be taking festive orders by email: cafebraw@hotmail.co.uk or text 0774368521.

Arrangements for orders are as follows:

Final day for festive orders is December 21st.

Braw will be open between 10.00 and 12.00 on Christmas Eve for any last minute collections.

New Year's arrangements to be agreed on ordering.

(As ever, those with mobility issues will have their order delivered.)

New Years Day Arrangements.

On 1st January 2020 from 11.00 till 15.00 hrs. we will have essentials such as milk and bread. ALSO our usual filled rolls, steaming coffee and hot chocolate. Plus the essential hangover cure - IRN BRU!

End of 2019 dates

Closed December 6th and 7th for family wedding.

Saturday, December 21st we close at 15.00hrs till the end of the year.

Except an opening on Christmas Eve from 10.00 to 12.00 for collection of festive orders.

Opening dates in the New Year: -

January 1st from 11.00 to 15.00 hrs.

Then closed until Tuesday January 10th when we resume normal opening hours from 08.00hrs.

I hope we can all take the time this year to connect with the people who really matter to us...EVERYONE. Much happiness to you all.

Meg xx

Dean Village Association

Committee 2019 - 2020

Chairman: Barry Mackay, chair@deanvillage.org

Vice-Chairman: Javier Albert

Secretary: Don Jardine, secretary@deanvillage.org

Treasurer: Bob Morley, treasurer@deanvillage.org

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Committee members: Charlie Hughes, Conrad Hughes,
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The deadline for articles for the next edition of
the News is

30th March 2020

If you would like to submit an article for the
News please e-mail the Editor

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