



# Dean Village News

Issue 185 March 2020  
[www.deanvillage.org](http://www.deanvillage.org)

## **Dean Village Association – the late 80s**

In the autumn of 1985 the development of High Green was abandoned. Opinion was moving in the direction that High Green, the area between Belford Road and the river, should be kept as an open space and provide a green lung for Edinburgh. Indeed, the District Council passed a motion to call on the Planning Committee to consider carefully any future development. But despite plans made by the Dean Village Association to landscape the area, Edinburgh Council once again put the land up for sale in the summer of 1987. The planning brief stated that the site was for residential development, although a small shop, café or restaurant might be included. The layout should be informal and incorporate views of the village. Developers were encouraged to produce imaginative designs and layouts.

The winning developer was New Capital and Scottish Properties. Their proposal was to build forty-three residences and an office. The plans were available to villagers in December 1988 and comments were invited. Many were against any development on the green space of High Green. One villager described the design as an architectural muddle, a silly design, with timbered gables, small-paned windows and modish X balconies. Despite these caveats, this person approved the type of accommodation offered, but with fewer units. Despite many objections by residents and others, planning permission was granted in the Summer of 1988. Construction work was expected to start in the Spring of 1989.

Smart's were considering increasing the housing density by building high blocks of flats on Dean Path, and also filling the central area of inner Damside with garages and houses. The main controversy at this time concerned Burnside's shop in Damside which had closed several years previously. This building was being used as a sales office, but Smart's wished to demolish the building and redevelop the site. Smart's proposals were turned down by the Planning Committee. The new Director of Planning, Graham Duncan, had succeeded in having the shop recognised as being of "listable quality". Smart's then appealed to the Secretary of State. but the appointed Recorder rejected the appeal. He remarked "*the building closes the view along Damside and is a strong visual link between Dean Path Buildings and Well Court; it punctuates the street scene and creates a sense of enclosure..... Were the building to be demolished and replaced with a landscape area of open space (there would be) an uninterrupted view of the recent housing development and cars parked in the courtyard*". The DVA hoped that Smart's would put the property on the market so that someone else could effect suitable renovation.

Smart's were also under obligation to complete the paving of Convening Court. The District Council had made a conservation grant to cover the cost of stone slabs.

A clarification appeared in one issue of the News for the benefit of newcomers of the origin of the street name "Damside". The dam was not the upper weir, but the lade that carried water from the weir to West Mill. The houses the lade ran by were therefore "at the damside". The weir itself was the "damhead",

Work on the riverside footpath from the iron footbridge towards the weir started in October 1988. When the low-level path was complete, heavy equipment would be brought in to erect a ramp to the top of the weir, and thus join the footpath accessed by the steps down from Dean Path. There was a plan to access the path at the top of the weir from the end of Damside. But there was a wall there which prevented access to protect the houses from potential flooding so that the path would not be accessible when flooded, as might happen more frequently..

**Other building works:** James Potter Construction had been given permission for nineteen residential units within the School. These were nearing completion in the autumn of 1986.

A new plan had been put forward for the burnt-out church site in Belford Road to build an office block with access to car parking from Bell's Brae.

Miller Construction began work on a block of twenty-six flats in February 1988 at 48 and 49 Belford Road. There would be a basement car park.

**National Gallery of Modern Art:-** A landscape plan had been prepared by the senior landscape architect at RMJM's. Behind the main building would be a sculpture court and a restaurant terrace. At the rear of the car park was a steep wooded slope. A footpath could be made down the slope leading to a new footbridge which would connect to the walkway just above the Bell's Mills weir. There would be a pleasant access to the Gallery from Dean Village, Roseburn and Wester Coates. The plan was submitted to the District Council for planning consent.

**Cabbie Stewart's House.** Committee member Mrs Betty Boyd had moved into "The House on the Bridge" in 1984. In Autumn 1987 she had opened an antique shop there and could fulfil her desire to let the public have access to Cabbie Stewart's office so that they might see the fine woodwork and stained glass door. Visitors might go in the afternoon, and some remembered the office previously as either an antique or sweetie shop.

A shop had opened in the building on West Mill Lane. The DVA encouraged residents to use this shop, which would sell all basic commodities. This shop would be a welcome addition,

One perennial problem was discussed at the 1986 AGM that is still familiar to us today: that is a one-way system along Ravelston Terrace, from west to east. The proposal was always welcomed by Villagers, but opposed strongly by everyone else.

## **Dean Village Lighting**

Residents will have noticed that the lights on the tree in the Schoolyard were not illuminated over the Christmas period. This problem was reported to the appropriate department of the Council. It transpired that the power source for the lights came from a nearby streetlight, but this light had itself not been working for some time.

The Council will be upgrading all streetlights in the city. Work in Dean Village will occur sometime in February or March. These new lights will use 60% less energy and thus decrease Edinburgh's carbon footprint. The light will be whiter and clearer than the orange light currently seen. There will be less glare and streets will be illuminated more evenly. They are designed to focus light downwards, reducing light pollution, lighting up roads and pavements without shining into private homes or gardens. The new lights will make driving, cycling and walking safer.

Further information may be obtained by calling 0131 529 3623 or on the website [www.edinburgh.gov.uk/streetlighting](http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/streetlighting). The committee will be interested to hear residents' opinions once the lights are in place.

### **The Water of Leith Clean-up**

Each year, volunteers from Dean Village participate in the Water of Leith Clean-up. Usually, debris will be removed from the river and its banks from Belford Bridge to Dean Bridge. But at present the section from the upper weir to the wooden Sunbury footbridge is out of bounds due to the landslip.

A few years ago, the most unusual, and probably largest, item removed from the river by the Sunbury footbridge was a motorcycle. The machine had been stolen from Stockbridge several months previously. Typically between ten and twenty sacks of rubbish are collected each year.

All those wishing to participate should meet on Sunday, 24<sup>th</sup> May, at 2.00pm outside West Mill in the centre of the village. Equipment will be provided. Those with wellingtons or waders will be especially welcome.

## Dean Village Events

**Social Evening** - All interested in Dean Village are invited to this gathering at the Grosvenor Hotel, Haymarket on Friday 3rd April, from 7.00 to 11.00pm. To book your place see page 11.

**Annual General Meeting.** The Dean Village Association AGM will take place on Tuesday, 14th April, in the lounge of Lynedoch House, Belford Road, starting at 7.30pm.

**Village Walks** will take place on Tuesday 2nd May, Tuesday 16th June and Thursday 23rd July. Meet at the top of Bell's Brae by the old house on Dean Bridge at 7.15pm. £5 per person

**Cemetery Walks:-** The National Federation of Cemetery Friends is hosting walks in many cemeteries from 9th to 14th May. (Dean Cemetery on 10th May). Book on their website.

The DVA will be conducting walks on Sundays 28th June, 12th July and 9th August. Meet at the cemetery gate at the top of Dean Path at 2.30p.m. £5 per person.

**St. Bernard's Well** will be open on the first Sunday of the month from April to September, namely 5th April, 3rd May, 7th June, 5th July, 2nd August and 6th September, from noon till 3.00pm. Entry free.

### Round Dean Village Quiz

Where will you find the following inscriptions:-

- 1) In the sweat of thy face thou shalt eat bread  
Gen3 v19 Anno Dom 1619
- 2) God bless the baxters of Edinburgh uho bult this Hous 1675
- 3) Blessit be God for all his giftis
- 4) JRF 1889 SL

Answers on page 13.

## **Drumsheugh Baths in the heart of Dean Village**

Hidden away in your local neighbourhood of Dean Village is one of Edinburgh's best kept secrets. Built in 1882, Drumsheugh Baths, located on Belford Road, is the oldest private swimming club in Edinburgh.

Amongst the many appeals of Drumsheugh Baths is its fantastic location and its convenient costume and towel laundry service. This combination enables members to make use of its facilities and classes before or after work, during lunch, or at any other time of the day if they are in town and the whim takes them. Even if just for a dip in the hot tub top to escape the cold and rain!

For some (particularly the younger members, and young at heart), the most popular features are the Victorian-era rings and trapezes suspended over the seventy-foot traditional pool. For others, it is the hot tub, new sauna and steam room. There is a recently refurbished gym, and a wide range of specialised fitness classes with some exceptional instructors. For a little rest and relaxation there is a treatment room and members' lounge, with dedicated children's corner.

Drumsheugh Baths is more than just a pool. It is a community. If you are passing, have never been in, or haven't been in for over fifty years, please feel free to drop by for a visit to find out more for yourself. There are membership categories for those Under 30, for Singles, Couples, Families and Senior Citizens. Whether members want to push themselves to the utmost or enjoy a few lengths, a short steam and a long blether, the club is for everyone.

Drumsheugh Baths is one of Edinburgh's best kept secrets and it's in the heart of Dean Village.



For more information, please contact Paul Dunlop at:-  
manager@drumsheughbaths.com

Website [www.drumsheughbaths.com](http://www.drumsheughbaths.com)

Phone 0131 225 2200

## **Update on the landslip above the upper weir**

- The City of Edinburgh Council (CEC) has raised legal proceedings against a number of parties in respect of the land slip at Dean Path.
- Before steps can be taken to reopen the path, the causes of the slippage require to be identified and measures to prevent further slippage implemented.
- Public safety and future amenity of the area remain paramount.
- CEC has authorised the use of funds to jointly meet the cost of specialist engineers to design and provide costings for the retaining works.

A further update on January 7th states:-

- Technical experts appointed by the CEC and other parties respectively have now identified potential engineering solutions.
- Proceedings remain paused while parties explore resolution.
- Discussions are on-going with a view to agreeing these between CEC and the neighbouring owners.

### **Video of Dean Village**

Eddie Burn has kindly sent the Dean Village Association his latest video entitled “DEAN VILLAGE - Edinburgh’s Secret Place. A glimpse of an old mill village hidden in the very centre of Edinburgh”. It is one of Eddie’s “Ed explores Scotland” series.

The video is available on youtube. Google “Ed explores Scotland” and the Dean video is listed there. It lasts about fifteen minutes.

### **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 138, spanning 1981 to 2004 (with some gaps) may be seen, together with all issues 156 to 183 from 2010 to 2019. 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](http://deanvillage.org/documents).

## **My Friends in the Cemetery XXXVII by David Perry Francis Jeffrey (1773 - 1850)**

Francis Jeffrey was a Scottish Judge and literary critic. He was best known as the editor of *The Edinburgh Review*, a quarterly publication which supported the Whig view of politics, in direct opposition of *Blackwood's Magazine* which reflected Toryism.

Jeffrey was born on 23rd October 1773, the son of George Jeffrey, a Court of Session Clerk, in his house on Charles Street, Potterow, Edinburgh. He was educated firstly at the Royal High School followed by several years each at Glasgow University and Queen's College, Oxford. He became a member of the Speculative Society, where he became involved in debates with Sir Walter Scott and Henry Cockburn. He was brought up as a Tory, but found that his liberal sympathies were more in accord with the Whig Party.

Francis Jeffrey was admitted to the Scottish bar in December 1794, but then found that his political views hindered advancement in his legal career. He went to London in 1794 to pursue a career in journalism without success. He married Catherine Wilson in 1801, but he still had no settled income. Then together with a number of collaborators, including Sydney Smith and Henry (later Lord) Brougham, he started publication of *The Edinburgh Review* in October 1802. After several issues had successfully been circulated, Jeffrey was appointed a fully salaried editor.

At first *The Review* was non-political, being confined to social reforms and literary criticism. Then Jeffrey started to air his Whig views, and the magazine became a fully political organ. So much so that Sir Walter Scott cancelled his subscription! Jeffrey's editorship lasted twenty-six years, ending on the ninety-eighth issue. He contributed over two hundred articles, and some of these were collected into four volumes in 1844 and 1845.

Jeffrey's wife died in 1805, very sadly at the early age of twenty-eight.



Their infant child, George, died in 1802. Both are buried in Greyfriars Kirkyard. Jeffrey became acquainted with Charlotte Wilkes, a New Yorker who was spending some time in Scotland. When she returned to the States, he followed her and they were married in 1813. They spent some time touring American cities, which resulted in Jeffrey becoming more supportive of American independence.

All the time that Jeffrey was editor of *The Review*, he continued to work at the Scottish bar. His reputation as Editor meant that his legal practice extended greatly both in civil and criminal courts. He had a quick brain which identified the weakness in his opponents' arguments. He made eloquent and effective closing speeches which often swayed juries. His career, as did that of his Whig compatriot, Cockburn, took a turn for the better when the Whigs came to power in 1830. He became Lord Advocate and a member of Parliament for the Perth Burghs in the general election of 1831. He introduced the Scottish Reform Bill to Parliament, which was passed and he later became the member for Edinburgh.

Although his parliamentary career was not particularly noteworthy, he became a celebrity of the times. His time in the House of Commons came to an end in 1834 when he was elevated to the judicial bench and became Lord Jeffrey. When the disruption of the Scottish Church took place in 1845 he was on the side of the dissenters.

Jeffrey died on 26th January 1850 and was buried in Dean Cemetery. His memorial may be seen on the western wall of the old cemetery, beside the gate that leads into the Gallery of Modern Art.

Lord Cockburn wrote *The Life of Lord Jeffrey* in two volumes in 1852. There is a plaque to Francis Jeffrey at his flat in 18 Buccleugh Place, where *The Edinburgh Review* was born. Jeffrey Street, a planned street of 1868, is named in his memory. A bust of Jeffrey by the sculptor Sir John Steell may be seen on the east wall of Parliament Hall, behind St. Giles Cathedral. (Henry Cockburn, by William Brodie, is nearby).

# 2020 Annual General Meeting

Notice is hereby given of the forty-ninth Annual General Meeting of the Dean Village Association to be held in the lounge of Lynedoch House at 23 Lynedoch Place in Belford Road on Tuesday 14th April at 7.30pm. All residents are welcome

## Agenda

1. Apologies.
2. Minutes of the forty-eightth AGM.
3. Matters Arising.
4. Chairman's Report.
5. Secretary's Report.
- 6 Treasurer's Report.
7. Election of Office Bearers:-
  - a) Chairman - Barry Mackay
  - b) Vice Chairman - Javier Albert
  - c) Secretary - Don Jardine
  - d) Treasurer - Bob Morley
8. Election of Committee Members:-  
Caroline Gerard, Charlie Hughes, Conrad Hughes, Patrick McCole, David Perry, Evelyn Whitfield.
9. Membership Fees.
10. Environmental matters.
- 11 Any other business

After a break of fifteen minutes, the local councillors present will talk about the workings of the Inverleith Local Network.

## Advertise in the Dean Village News

Quarter page £4

Half page £8

Full page £16



## Evening Gathering

Friday 3rd April 7.00 to 11.00 pm at the  
Grosvenor Hotel, Haymarket

**The Dean Village Association invites residents,  
both past and present and those who have an  
interest in Dean Village to attend a social evening**

**Old photos will be on view  
plus past articles**

**A hot finger buffet will be  
provided**

To book your place please email  
patrickmccole@hotmail.com  
so book early to avoid disappointment

**Cost £15.95 per person**

**WWW.DEANVILLAGE.ORG**

## **A memorial to Thomas Telford?**

Thomas Telford, civil engineer, stonemason and architect, was a prolific designer of roads, canals, harbours and bridges, not only in Scotland but throughout Great Britain.

Telford was born in Eskdale, Dumfriesshire on 9th August 1757. At the age of fourteen he was apprenticed to a stonemason, and worked on projects on the Scottish borders. He moved to Edinburgh, and on to London in 1782. Later he became Surveyor of Public Works in Shropshire, where he gained experience in the disciplines of engineering and architecture. He designed many of the roads and bridges in that area.

As his reputation grew, he became involved in many other projects. He constructed the Ellesmere Canal, the Pontcysylite Aqueduct over the river Dee, and the Shrewsbury Canal, among many others.

In 1801, Telford was asked to improve communications in the Highlands of Scotland, a project that lasted twenty years. The plan included the building of the Caledonian Canal along the Great Glen, redesigning sections of the Crinan Canal, building over a thousand new bridges and improving the harbour at Aberdeen, Dundee, and others.

Of course, the particular interest of village residents was the building of Dean Bridge, completed in 1832. This was the realisation of a dream of John Learmonth. He owned lands to the north of the Water of Leith, which had cut a gorge, or dean, through the rock. He looked across the chasm and saw the grand new Georgian buildings going up, and he wanted a piece of the action. He provided most of the money for the project. Telford got involved almost incidentally, to settle an argument on the design between two architects. He ended up building it himself.

And in all of Scotland there is no statue of Thomas Telford. The Dean Village Association wishes to promote a campaign to erect such a memorial, complete with plaque describing the history of the bridge. Perhaps he should be positioned on Miller Row, looking up at his magnificent constriction. Or perhaps by Kirkbrae House at the side of the bridge itself. If you have any ideas, please contact the Secretary,



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### **Answers to Round Dean Village Quiz**

- 1) This bible quotation is on the date stone of Jericho - the granary that was originally on the site of the new houses in Miller Row (ex RMJM). Cabbie Stewart obtained this stone and built it into the extension of his house at the top of Bell's Brae, designed by J Graham Fairley in 1892. The stone may be seen on the north-facing wall and incorporates many of the features necessary for the production of flour.
- 2) This quotation may be seen in the date stone of the great granary - the ochre building at the bottom of Bell's Brae. The stone is directly above the covered-in original doorway.
- 3) Originally from Lindsay's Mill, the stone showing this quotation may be seen within the wall by the bench adjacent to the old bridge. There is also a date stone showing crossed peels and the date 1643.
- 4). These are the initials of John Ritchie Findlay and his wife Susan Leslie. They may be seen above one of the windows of the Great Hall of Well Court.

## Nature Notes by Tim Steiner

A Saturday morning stroll to Stockbridge for a coffee and a newspaper and Nature Notes almost writes itself.

The first buds of spring are slowly starting to open, taking the risk that our late February storms won't be too severe, and the dawn chorus continued late enough for us to enjoy it without getting up too early. We watched a kestrel being harried by a gull high over St. Bernard's Bridge; the kestrel will be trying to identify where there might be tasty gull chicks in a few weeks' time, and the adult gull already warning it away. Later, by the Sunbury footbridge, we could get up close to long-tailed tits. They must feel safe there in the bushes next to the railings, despite being just feet away from everyone passing. Above, a goldcrest was searching among the tree branches, looking for insects that might have been tempted out by a little morning sunshine.

Nearly home, by Damside, the dippers were down in the fast-flowing water. How strong must their claws be for them to hold on to the stones of the riverbed when their bodies are completely under the water? The dippers nest very close to the water-line along the river, so I worry for them when the river is in spate at this time of year. They typically have two broods per year, each of 4-5 eggs, but they take a huge risk to do so. The parents will often start the second brood as soon as ten days after the chicks of the first have fledged, leaving those first-brood chicks to fend for themselves. Sounds exhausting for the parents, too.

I am writing this at the end of February, and I wonder if we are going to have a winter this year. We've had a few storms rattling through in the last month but no cold weather of note. The snowdrops were out by the river on January 10<sup>th</sup>. At the risk of promoting another beast from the east, is this an example of the milder, wetter winters that the climate models predict for us?

## **It's a *Braw* Café**

After eight years we continue to supply Dean Village with a great selection of goodies. From our new customer service fridge we will help you select from milk, eggs, cheese, desserts, sandwiches, quiche, pies, salad boxes and much much more. As always, you can order whatever you need us to prepare for you 48 hours in advance. We are a small operation and so we are able to cater specifically for you.

At the beginning of June we will be open 7 days a week until 20.00hrs so that our outside seating can be enjoyed while the sun shines. Braw will take a short Easter break this year on the 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> April.

We look forward to seeing you.

Kind regards to all, Meg.

### **Dean Village News**

This issue of the Dean Village News has been delivered to all households in Dean Village. If you are not a member and have enjoyed reading this issue, or found it useful or helpful in any way, you can help by joining the Dean Village Association and so assist in looking after our village.

Yearly membership is £7 (£10 per couple) or life membership is £50 (£75 per couple). There is a concessionary annual rate of £3 single and £5 couple.

# Dean Village Association

## Committee 2019 - 2020

**Chairman:** Barry Mackay, [chair@deanvillage.org](mailto:chair@deanvillage.org)

**Vice-Chairman:** Javier Albert

**Secretary:** Don Jardine, [secretary@deanvillage.org](mailto:secretary@deanvillage.org)

**Treasurer:** Bob Morley, [treasurer@deanvillage.org](mailto:treasurer@deanvillage.org)

**Membership Secretary:** Caroline Gerard

e-mail:- [membership@deanvillage.org](mailto:membership@deanvillage.org)

**Committee members:** Charlie Hughes, Conrad Hughes,  
Patrick McCole, Evelyn Whitfield

**News Editor:** - David Perry, [editor@deanvillage.org](mailto:editor@deanvillage.org)

The deadline for articles for the next edition of  
the News is

19<sup>th</sup> July 2020

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

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