

# Dean Village Association

## Committee 2020 - 2021

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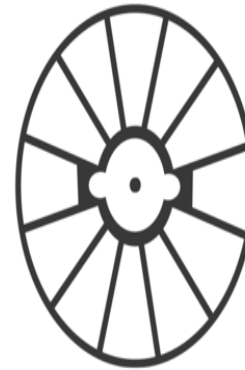
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# Dean Village News

Issue 186 August 2020

[www.deanvillage.org](http://www.deanvillage.org)

## Lockdown in Dean Village

Despite the social restrictions that have been put in place because of the Covid 19 virus pandemic, a lot has been happening in Dean Village.

**The Inscribed Stone:-** Our Secretary, Don Jardine and his gardener were assisting a couple to access their land when they came across a stone buried deep in the undergrowth bearing the following inscription -  
Greater love hath no man than this  
That a man lay down his life for his friends.

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

November 19<sup>th</sup> 2020

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

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This is a quotation from John 15, v 13 - 17 in the King James version of the bible.

The stone could possibly be a gravestone, perhaps associated with the church built at the east end of Belford Road when the schism in the Church of Scotland occurred in 1843. Subsequently a new church was built at the other end of Belford Road and the congregation moved there. The abandoned church became an artist's studio and later a warehouse, burning down in the 1950s to leave the gaping hole still present.

If any member knows of the likely provenance of this stone, please contact the Secretary.

**13 Belford Mews:-** The new owners of the land at this site, which overlooks the river near the footbridge and where the stone was found, have indicated that they would like to incorporate this stone in the woodland garden that they will create around their house. The couple met at Edinburgh University, and are planning to return to Edinburgh. They have three children, and plan to build a family home on the site.

**Trees down in Link land:-** The Link Housing Association owns the little private garden at the old Hawthornbank buildings. All five trees were cut down over two days during the bank holiday weekend. This action has caused some consternation among residents on either side of the river between the road and foot bridge as it left only two mature trees in the village.

The Dean Village Association have approached Link about these actions. The reasons given were that branches of one of the trees were knocking against one of the old riverside houses and there had been many complaints from their residents. Another tree was diseased, one was dead, and the others at the end of their life. But did they have to be cut down precisely then, and all of them? As Tim Steiner points out in his Nature Notes (page 14), a great loss of wild-life and habitat resulted.

## It's a *Braw* Café

### **Braw procedures for Covid 19**

Braw is providing a weekly menu compiled from customer requests. The menu is posted on the window and on Facebook.

To be sure of your first choice, text or Whatsapp your order the day before. Or pop in on spec on the day.

Only one customer will be allowed in Braw at a time. Hand wipes are provided, and towels with antiseptic spray will be on hand to wipe fridge handles.

Braw will be very well ventilated from front to back, and service will be distanced. Feel free to wear a mask if you are more comfortable.

I look forward to seeing you as our community starts to come out of isolation. Please text or Whatsapp any suggestions for the menu. These will be included on the following weeks menus.

Kind regards to all,  
Meg.

## **Dean Village News**

This issue of the Dean Village News has been delivered only to members of the Dean Village Association. If you have enjoyed reading this issue, or found it useful or helpful in any way, you can help by recommending joining the Dean Village Association to others 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.

## Nature Notes by Tim Steiner

Through these remarkable locked-down times, the natural world of the village has been a saviour to so many. For all those neighbours that have been shielding at home, I hope that views of the trees and visits to the feeders from birds have provided some interest and cheer.

For many of us, these last few weeks have been a great opportunity to spend more time in and around the village. We've spent hours watching the otters, learning how they move along the river and where they fish. We've seen tawny owls and bats by the dozen. We've followed the efforts of a pair of carrion crows as they collected twigs to build a huge nest in an ash tree in Belgrave Crescent Gardens, then incubated their eggs and fed the hatchlings. Those young are now starting to exercise their wings; we wish them luck on their maiden flights.

It's been time to realise the diversity of life in the village too. Whilst sitting at my new home office, I've spotted eighteen types of bird so far, and because I don't look towards the river this doesn't include all the species that live only there. I'm enjoying watching the long-tailed tits, the thrushes and woodpeckers. A good day brings a swan or heron flying past, and sightings of sparrowhawks and buzzards show how readily these species will re-populate our cities if given some respite from so many people and traffic noise.

I end these Notes on a sad note, however. As I write, tree surgeons are on the plot of land above the river between Belford Mews and Hawthornbank. Mature trees are being taken down and low-level growth removed. With it goes so much wild-life; blue tit and bullfinch nests with chicks still in them, magpies' roosts, safe havens for foxes and more. This small area will have been home to hundreds of types of plant, animal, insect and fungus; the village will be a poorer place with the loss to this valuable, wild, unkempt space.

Residents and other interested parties have contacted councillors, who will look into these matters. The Dean Village Association has passed on some photographs showing the riverbank before and after the tree removal to assist them. Link also insist that they have all the required permissions.

The Association has held some negotiations with Link and asked that they plant one mature tree (with a minimum of 10 to 15 foot in height) that would grow at a good rate, and three cherry trees. This plan has been agreed.

**The footbridge:-** Residents will be fully aware that the metal footbridge was closed due to a dangerous step. We now learn that investigations by the Council found that the entire decking is no longer fit for purpose. Due to the present situation the planners were unable to access the original plans, resulting in delays. So some time will elapse before the bridge is in use again.

We would very much like and welcome the support of our councillors to champion that the bridge be rebuilt with access ramps for disabled people, those in wheelchairs or buggies and mothers with pushchairs or prams. The litter bin is presently located at the narrowest approach to the bridge, is frequently filled to overflowing and should be relocated elsewhere. Perhaps there should be a notice asking cyclists to dismount. The view from the bridge is exceptionally beautiful and appreciated by residents and visitors alike.

**Dean Path Buildings:-** Congratulations to the residents of these flats using the lockdown time as an opportunity to clear up the washing green area. There has for a long time been weeds and trees growing there. Large swathes of ivy have been cut back which previously were an impediment for those walking along the pavement. Two trees are still present adjacent to Damside, and their continuing growth is causing the retaining wall to bow out. It would be better for these trees to be removed completely.

## Dean Village 1989 - 1992

As far as planning arguments were concerned, this was a quiet period. Smart's were busy building the houses and flats in inner Damside, work was started on the new Hawthornbank buildings, and the Schoolhouse was being converted into apartments. There was one aspect of importance to villagers that was pre-eminent in the News - sewage.

Before the late 1800s the Water of Leith was a main drain and rubbish dump for the whole of the New Town north of George Street and also a large area to the west which joins the river at Coltbridge. The river was a great open sewer. Offensive odours were particularly bad in the summer due to the lower water flow. Such pollution increased with the formation of the Caledonian Distillery at Haymarket. Along the length of the river, this polluted water was diverted into lades to drive the wheels of industry.

Two lades would have caused great concern to local residents. Starting at the upper weir, one ran in a trough along Damside to drive the wheels in West Mills. This lade was described by James Ballantyne in "The Miller of Deanhaugh" (1844) as - *...the water course for supplying the mills, which runs through the centre of the village. It is a startling site...to see a run of water five feet in depth, and about the same in breadth, careering past and close to a long line of dwelling-houses, the only approach to which is by flag-stones laid across the stream, otherwise uncovered throughout its length.*

The other lade started at the lower weir to drive Lindsay's Mill, Mar's Mill and Greenland Mill, and then along the length of river path to Stockbridge (through a now-blocked archway under St. Bernard's Bridge) and on to Canonmills, where it rejoined the river. This lade was a series of wooden troughs, raised on posts, and very leaky.

An Act of Parliament of 1896 authorised the construction of sewers down the length of the valley. These can be seen in and by the river, and there are occasional brick boxes, set in concrete, that allow access



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### Horror in Dean Village.

Andrew O'Neill has written a book called "The Devil Upstairs", which is set in Dean Village. Andrew describes the book as a horror story, along the lines of "Rosemary's Baby".

The hardback is now available, and a paperback edition will be available from September. The film rights have been sold to Sony Pictures.

### Stabilising the landslip

The DVA understands that the Policy and Sustainability Committee of the Council has authorised a contractor to stabilise the riverbank that had suffered a landslip. Once completed, the pathway will be reinstated. We do not know when the work will be started or how long it will take, but the end may be in sight.

## Village Phone Box

Historic England has carried out research into what might be the top priorities for urgent preservation. Top of the list came telephone boxes and pubs. The two types of listing are URGENT- due to plans being made to make a major alteration or imminent demolition of the site, or NORMAL - preservation of historic buildings. Half of the urgent requests for listing telephone boxes came from Devon. Historic England have revealed that more than three thousand of the iconic K6 type telephone boxes have been protected, but that it was unlikely that any more would be listed.

In 1992 there was a threat to replace our telephone box with a modern one, but the DVA successfully intervened. The box was repainted instead.

We do have a Victorian public letter box. It is let into the wall on Dean Path, above where the Convening Court steps come up from Damside.

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## The Dean Valley Regeneration Ltd.

This group was formed to promote the regeneration of the Dean Valley between Stockbridge and the footbridge in Dean Village. Several important documents were produced, with photos of old and present views along the river, highlighting areas that needed improvement. A working committee was set up with Council representatives with the object of applying for a Heritage Lottery Grant to fund the necessary work.

The Dean Valley Regeneration Ltd. has now been wound up. The committee felt it could do no more, and had to leave it to the Council to carry out the necessary work that had been clearly defined

DVRL has asked the Association to host its website, so that all its valuable documentation may be consulted by those who show an interest.

to the pipes. A new sewer was laid from the site of the new Hawthornbank apartments to join with the main river sewer.

The sewers enabled the Water of Leith to regain its purity, such that a stock of trout is introduced each year. The Water of Leith Conservation Trust tests the water each year, particularly looking for the invertebrates such as caddis fly larva, that is food for many other organisms.

On Thursday, 21st of July 1988 eleven residents took the opportunity to sail on the "Gardyloo" as guests of the Lothian Regional Council's Water and Drainage Department. The voyage started at 7.45a.m. from Leith for the cruise on the Mer du Nord. Meals were served, and passengers were able to learn about the disposal of sewage sludge (hopefully not at the same time). The passengers were also taken into the engine control room and the steering gear compartment, and inspected charts, radar, radio and the Mayday alarm system. On the voyage, views were available of the Isle of May, the Fife coast, and, in the distance, Bass Rock. The original article (DVN issue 92) states that when the dumping ground was reached near the Bell Rock Lighthouse (out from Arbroath) the weather was so dreich that the Cairngorms couldn't be seen. (*So was this vessel actually dumping sewage at sea?*) The Gardyloo returned through loch gates into the dock at 1800 hours.

Enough of sewage. There were many historical references in the Dean Village News over this period. Here follows a couple...

**St, Bernard's Well:-** It is said that the Well was first discovered by a monk in poor health who lived in a cave near Dean Bridge and recovered after drinking the healing waters of the spring. (Said to be St. Bernard of Clairvaux.) The Well was apparently rediscovered by three Heriot's boys who were fishing in the river in 1760. They pointed the well out to the owner who built a small well-house. Analysis showed the water to be like that found in the sulphurous springs of Harrogate, the flavour likened to "the washings of a foul gun-barrel". Frances Garden, later Lord Gardenstone, bought the Well in 1788 and

commissioned Alexander Nasmyth to build a well-house, which he did as a copy of the temple at Tivoli to Hygeia, a goddess of Health and Well-being. In 1888 the Well was bought by Thomas Nelson who restored it, employed Thomas Bonnar to do internal decoration in a Greco-Roman style, replaced the vandalised statue with one by D. W. Stevenson and created the walkways around it. On his death, the whole area was given to the City of Edinburgh. Up until 1940, a glass of water could be had for a penny.

**The skinnery:-** The Legget family have been operating skinneries, or tanneries, in Edinburgh since the late 1700. They moved to what then was called the Village of the Water of Leith in 1836, and had been there until closure in 1973. Dr. Robert Legget, of Ottawa, (aged 84). gave an account of his memories of his uncle's tenure as owners:-

*The Works, as they were always called in the family, were situated around the old water mill. And on the front doorway of the old stone building there was a rather battered brass sign saying "Robert Legget & Sons" .. still there in the 50s and 60s. (Uncle Robert) was a real expert on sheep and wool ...once brought a full sheepskin home ... and proceeded to show my dear wife how wool grows etc., etc., much to the disgust of his wife* He went on to describe a leather boutique selling items made out of scrap leather, much appreciated by his wife.

Finally, plans for an amusement arcade at 18 Shandwick Place were causing consternation among residents. Dorothy Forrester writes that we don't want the sort of establishment seen in Lothian Road to invade the West End area.

### **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).

candidates for membership of the committee, the proposed future membership fees and the proposed amendment to the constitution (to accommodate our current operating methods) in accompanying documents. You are asked to signify your approval, or otherwise, on the enclosed voting slip, and return it by post as directed. The committee would be very much obliged if you could complete the voting forms as soon as possible. We can then collate the results and send them on to OSCR, describing our method of consultation.

For the foreseeable future, the committee will continue to have virtual meetings by Zoom. To make matters easier, the Association can pay for its own Zoom account, and then meetings may be held whenever and for how long we please.

Let us hope that by April of next year we will all meet again normally, and not two metres apart. The committee look forward to a face-to-face meeting with all members then.

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### **Forthcoming Events**

Unfortunately, just after the last issue of the Dean Village News was printed, events overtook it. Consequently the advertised social event, village and cemetery walks, and openings of St. Bernard's Well become impossible.

What of the future? We very much hope that all will be back to normal by next year. Therefore events where people gather together, such as the walks, St. Bernard's Well, and the Annual General Meeting could take place.

Next year, the present Association will celebrate 50 years of existence. Therefore we could expand our planned social event into an evening dinner for all members, past and present. We could also try and organise an afternoon fayre, possibly in the Belgrave Crescent Gardens if permission could be obtained.

For the moment, consult our website to keep up-to date on possible future events.

## 2020 Annual General Meeting

The 49th Annual General Meeting of the Dean Village Association should have taken place on the evening of 14th April, but was postponed due to the pandemic situation. The constitution of the Association states that there must be an AGM each year, either in April or May. Both these months have passed and we are now in uncharted waters. To deal with this problem an adjustment to the constitution may be required, which requires the approval of members.

The AGM is essential in order to describe to members the events of the past year and to present the annual accounts, both for approval, or disapproval, of the members. The make-up of the committee for the next year, and the amount to be paid for membership, are also decided by members. Any member then may raise a point of concern for discussion.

We are also registered as a Scottish Charity with OSCR (Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator). OSCR requires the Association to present annual reports and an audited set of accounts for the past year. The Office may then assess whether the Association is fulfilling its charitable role. OSCR has advised registered charities that it recognises the difficulties organisations are facing, and that usual arrangements may not be possible at present. The Office requests that governance documents (in our case the DVA Constitution) and any other requirements, wherever possible, be adjusted to reflect any change of practice.

In order to try and resolve these problems, the committee met on Zoom for a virtual meeting on the evening of Wednesday, 3rd June. This was the first time this method had been successfully attempted. Matters were complicated because Zoom would only allow forty minutes for a meeting. Consequently two successive meetings were arranged, and, ultimately, all went well.

The meeting decided to hold a consultation of members in lieu of an AGM using this issue of the Dean Village News as a method of delivery. You will find the relevant reports, the annual accounts, the

## 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](mailto:manager@drumsheughbaths.com).

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

Phone 0131 225 2200

## **My Friends in the Cemetery XXXVIII by David Perry Chesborough Grant Falconar (1781 - 1860)**

Lieutenant-General Sir Chesborough Grant Falconer KH was born on the 4th of October 1781 in Dores in the Highlands. He was the youngest of five, having one brother Alexander, and three sisters - Elizabeth, Lydia and Jessie. He had an illustrious military career, having spent sixty-four years of his life in the army, entering service in September, 1795 when one month short of his fourteenth birthday. He joined the 61<sup>st</sup> Regiment early in 1801 which was ordered to Egypt to join General Sir David Baird's army. This was the Egyptian Campaign in which British troops successfully defeated the army of Napoleon who had invaded Egypt in the 1790s. He stayed in Egypt for two years. In 1804/5 he was assigned to Italy, where the battles against Napoleonic forces continued. He had a horse shot from under him at the battle of Maida when acting aide-de-camp to General Acland. He was also in the seige of Scylla, and the capture of Catrone and others. He returned to Egypt in 1807, and took part in the campaign which attacked the fortified heights and forts of Alexandria, the affair of Lake Elcho and Ethamet, and the seige of Rosetta. In 1814/15 he was in campaigns in Holland and Flanders, commanding the 78<sup>th</sup> Light Infantry at actions in Merxem, the attack on the French at Brescat, and the bombardment of Antwerp. In later years he was commander of the 22<sup>nd</sup> Regiment and the 73<sup>rd</sup> Foot, He was nominated as a Knight of the Royal Hanoverian Guelphic Order and became Lieutenant-General in 1858.

He did take time off to marry Mary Randoll Jane Kennedy in 1810 at Aresier in Inverness-shire. Mary was born in Inverness, the daughter of Dr. William Kennedy and Mary Randoll Scott. Latterly they lived at their Edinburgh house - Falconberg House, Greenhill Park, Edinburgh. There were no children. Descendants from other branches of the Falconar line may be found in Australia.

His memorial may be seen on the lower level of the cemetery. Turn left after entering the main gate, and go down the steps on the left. Walk about sixty yards to his impressive memorial. Note the flags and swords of the various regiments under his command.

The inscription reads:-

Sacred to the memory of CHESBOROUGH GRANT FALCONAR, Knight of the Guelphic Order, Lieutenant-General of H.M. Forces and Colonel of the 73<sup>rd</sup> Regiment.

Born 4<sup>th</sup> October 1781, died 10<sup>th</sup> January 1860.

Having received his first commission at the age of thirteen, he served with reputation and honor for sixty-four years in the Campaigns First and Second in Egypt - Cabala- The Netherlands At Maida - Rosetta - El Hamet - and the siege of Anterp.

His Gallantry was conspicuous

By the prayerful study of God's word and the teaching of the Holy Spirit. He was led to rest upon the Finished work of Christ and thus his end was peace. Isaiah XII 2

This monument is a tribute of love to the memory of a devoted husband by the wife of fifty years.

And his deeply attached and now sorrowing widow

Mary Randoll Jane Falconar.

The said MARY RANDOLL JANE FALCONAR died 4th July, 1871 age 79.

### **THE HANOVIAN GUELPHIC ORDER**

This order of chivalry, also referred to as the Royal Guelphic Order, was introduced by the Prince Regent in 1815. There were three classes - Knight (KH), Knight Commander (KCH) and Knight Grand Cross (KGC). Originally the Kingdom of Hanover instituted this order of chivalry, named after the House of Gueph to which Hanoverians belonged. Following the dissolution of the Kingdom of Hanover, the order continued as a house order. Queen Victoria discontinued this order on her accession in 1837 and instituted the Order of the Garter, Thistle, Bath etc., i.e. a method of rewarding gallantry without actually paying money. Another Guelphic Knight was Sir John Franklin, who died when trying to find the North-west Passage in 1845.

The Order still exists, but is regarded now as a foreign order, and has not been awarded since 1837. The present chancellor is Ernst August, Prince of Hanover.