

Situations Vacant

Auditor

Alasdair Fergusson for many years has audited our Annual Accounts, but now he would like to stand down. Do any members, with some accountancy knowledge and experience, have a few hours to spare once a year? The Committee will be happy to discuss what's involved.

Please contact Don Jardine on secretary@deanvillage.org

Editor

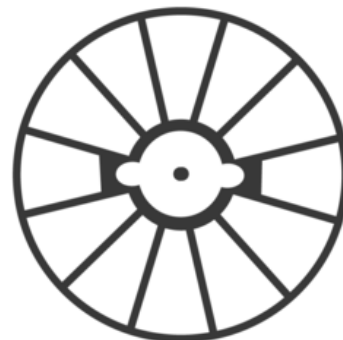
Due to the death of David Perry, we require also a new Editor. The DVN is published three times a year (the Spring issue delivered to all households as well as to our farther-flung members). As an interim measure, Caroline Gerard has stepped in to produce this issue. Regular readers will know that the DVN includes both news and articles.

Please contact Don Jardine on secretary@deanvillage.org

Dean Village Association Committee 2021-2022

Chairman: Barry MacKay	chairman@deanvillage.org
Vice-Chairman: Javier Albert	
Secretary: Don Jardine	secretary@deanvillage.org 22 Hawthornbank Lane, EH4 3BH
Treasurer: Bob Morley	treasurer@deanvillage.org 27/3 Sunbury Street, EH4 3BU
Membership: Caroline Gerard	membership@deanvillage.org
Editor: Vacant	editor@deanvillage.org
Webmaster: Conrad Hughes	
Committee members:	Charlie Hughes, Evelyn Whitfield

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Dean Village News

Issue 188, Spring 2021

www.deanvillage.org

Annual General Meeting 2021

Once again, due to Covid restrictions, we are unable to host a proper meeting.

Enclosed with this issue of the DVN, you will find the following:-

Report presented to the 2020 AGM

Report for the 2021 AGM

Annual Accounts

Appendix to the Annual Accounts

Voting Form

Membership Form

It is our tradition to deliver the Spring DVN to all households, plus to our members outwith the area, but please note that only existing members may vote. We ask that voting forms, and any other comments, be returned to the Secretary by Friday 10th September 2021.

If you are not already a member, please complete the Membership Form!

Hopefully we will be able to see each other in person in 2022.

The Dean Village Association

At 8pm on Sunday 25th April 1971, around 120 people congregated in the Church Hall of Dean Parish Church for the Inaugural Meeting of the Dean Village Association.

Yes, we are 50 years old! We had hoped to stage some celebrations, but of course along came the pandemic.

The original impetus to found the DVA was opposition to the proposed erection of a very large office block in our infamous gap site on Belford Road. In the mid-1840s, after the Disruption and the creation of the Free Church of Scotland, new church buildings were required, quite rapidly. One of “our” architects, David Cousin, had designed a number of them, including one on this site. Later on, around 1889, the congregation moved to the church building still standing at the corner of Belford Road and Douglas Gardens. This had been designed by another of “our” architects, Sydney Mitchell. The Belford Road building became the Dean Studio, part of the Arts & Crafts Movement, as immortalised in one of Thomas Begbie’s historic photographs. But in the 1950s, it succumbed to a devastating fire, and the site has lain empty ever since. Meanwhile, Basil Skinner had discovered that the University of Edinburgh had in the feu charter of one of its own buildings in Drumsheugh Gardens a ban on any building on the site being higher than the drawing-room level, ie 26feet above road-level, so that the view to Dean Bridge would not be obscured. This could be not be amended without very expensive legal action.

A Steering Committee for the future DVA had been set up earlier that year, in February 1971, but now a formal constituted organisation was required.

The first Office-Bearers and Committee Members were:-

Mr Basil Skinner – Chairman
Mr Stuart R. Matthew – Vice Chairman
Mr T.H. Sellar – Secretary
Mr Jan Boczarski – Treasurer

Gone fishin'

While the stonemason was working on the footbridge, a metal bar was left unattended for a little while – which then ended up in the Water of Leith. Don Jardine contacted some “magnet fishermen” to try to retrieve it, and at the end of May, while the water level wasn’t too high, they set to work.

Many “historic artefacts” were brought up from the depths! Just not the sought-for metal bar.

Some items are identifiable – but the others?



And in other news

The Footbridge

As many residents will have observed already, the metal footbridge which crosses the Water of Leith between Damside and Hawthornbank has been repaired and re-opened by Cllr Max Mitchell. At first it had been believed that only one of the steps posed a hazard to pedestrians, but more careful surveys demonstrated that the entire decking needed to be replaced. The work has been completed and no longer do we need to take a longer way around to go from one bank to the other.

Walkway update

The Walkway alongside the Water of Leith opposite Sunbury, due to a landslip, was first closed in 2012. Some remedial work was undertaken, but not enough, so that it needed to be closed off again in 2016. Matters have taken some time to complete as legal responsibilities required to be established. We now understand that further works will be undertaken in the autumn and that it is hoped that the Walkway will be opened again, this time permanently, at the end of October 2021. Some trees may need to be felled, but this cannot happen while birds might be nesting. This part of the pathway has been much missed and its "return" will be welcome.

Events

While the pandemic continues, we have been unable to hold our Annual General Meeting in the customary manner, as intimated on the front page. Also we have been unable to offer our usual summer guided tours of the Village and Dean Cemetery, or indeed the specially booked tours, nor to open St Bernard's Well one Sunday a month and on Edinburgh Doors Open Day in late September. This has resulted in a drop in our annual income! But we hope we can start up again in 2022.

Committee Members:

Mrs Christine Broad
Mr George Burns
Mr Wieslaw Franks
Miss Iona Mackenzie
Mr Lawrence Walker

Mr James Bremner
Mr Malcolm Christie
Miss Margaret Lee
Mr Peter Rae
Mrs J.L. Zyw

At the conclusion of the formal business, Mr T.T. Hewitson, the City of Edinburgh's Town Planning Officer, spoke of the question of Conservation and stressed that the newly-born DVA must decide what was the character of the area.

For those interested in comparative prices, the annual subscription, in this first year of decimal currency, was 50p!

Some of these persons stayed on committee for several or many years. Dorothy Forrester became Secretary in 1979, and was an unparalleled driving force for 25 years.

Lawrence Walker, however, had other things on his mind for a while in that first year.

Bell's Mills

At 11.43, Friday 12th March 1971, the Mills blew up, due to a dust explosion. This was the last working milling site in the Village and thus at least 800 years of history ended, suddenly.



As Lawrence later described the situation, “by some miracle” a police car was on Belford Bridge just at that moment, and the officers radioed for immediate assistance before anyone else could reach a telephone.

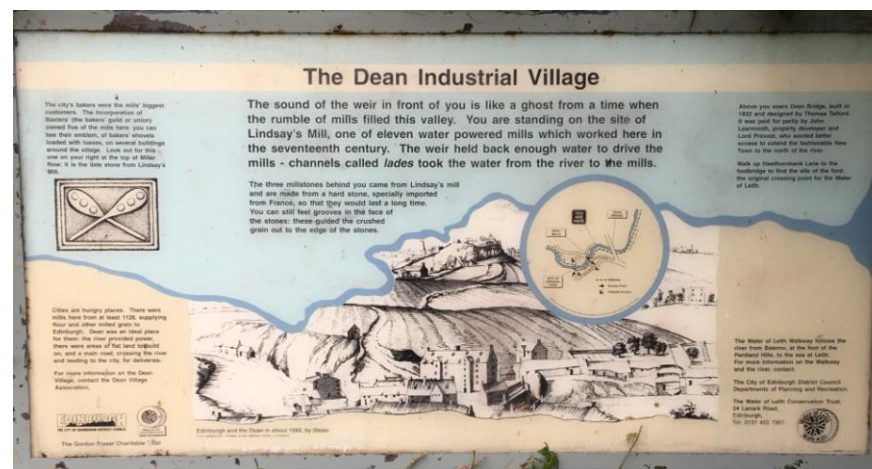
Lawrence and two employees were badly injured, although luckily all survived. One man never worked again, though. Lawrence found himself “on the roof, and the roof was on the ground”. He recalled later that his wife, Meg, thought for a few minutes that she’d just become a widow.

He was taken firstly to the Infirmary where one procedure was to apply an ECG scan to check for brain damage. He said, “I don’t know how they knew I was the same as before!” Then it was 4 weeks in Bangour Hospital, at that time housing the area’s principal Burns Unit. Lawrence discovered later that his uncle Gideon, a doctor and Great War casualty, had assisted in the development of the ointment applied to his considerable burns. His boots had protected his feet, and the waistband of his trousers had prevented flames from travelling farther up his body. The protection of his feet meant that his toes could wiggle freely and the medical staff found them useful as a location to take blood samples. The skin of his hands was also burnt off, but as the nerve-ends were temporarily damaged, he didn’t feel any pain, which was just as well when the medical team had to scrub them to remove the grit collected as he scrambled to safety. His arms were bandaged from his fingers to his shoulders. His head too was burnt, any remaining hair being removed with a scalpel, but it didn’t require to be bandaged. Aside from the bandages on his arms and over most of his lower body, he wore no clothes for a few weeks. Lawrence, as some will remember well, had an irrepressible sense of humour, and he remarked that this was the nearest he ever got to a nudist colony!

For a fortnight the bandages stayed on, and Lawrence had to drink a pint of water every hour, even during the night, to maintain his body’s levels of hydration. He was therefore leaking fluid through his skin, so the bandages would get soaked and become very smelly. When they were removed, the medical staff was delighted that the ointment had worked so well. He was in the care of Anne Bryson Sutherland (1922-2011) the eminent plastic surgeon and burns specialist.

His children were not permitted to visit, partly as they might have found it upsetting to see their father in such a condition. Also, Lawrence claimed,

The plaque at Lindsay's Mill



As a new member of the Association, recently returned to live nearby, with old memories of this beautiful and historic corner of the Dean, I was very pleased to find it simple with hot water and soap to wash the scribbles from the very fine plaque describing the history of the Mill at the time when the Water of Leith was an important source of power for Edinburgh. It was delightful to note how quickly passers-by crossed the little triangle to read the account, with attention and respect.

It is clear that the two good old benches close to that little wall would be best removed from that corner, where they have simply encouraged young climbers to scramble, breaking the wooden seating spars at their fronts.

Dr Alison M. Kerr

Facebook

Did you know that we now have a Facebook page?
And don't forget to check our website from time to time!

Drumsheugh Baths in the heart of Dean Village

Hidden away in your local neighbourhood is one of Edinburgh's best-kept secrets. Drumsheugh Baths is Edinburgh's oldest private swimming club, welcoming its first members in 1882 and standing the test of time because it offers something unique.

Among the many appeals of Drumsheugh Baths is the fantastic location and its convenient costume and towel laundry service, the combination of which enables members to make use of its facilities and classes before or after work, during lunch hours, or any other time they're in town and the whim takes them – even just for a dip in the hot tub to escape cold or rain!

For some the most popular features are the Victorian-era rings and trapezes suspended over the 70ft traditional pool. For others, it's the hot tub, new sauna and steam room. There is a recently-refurbished gym and a wide range of specialised fitness classes with exceptional instructors. For a little rest and relaxation there is a treatment room and the members' lounge with a dedicated children's corner.

Drumsheugh Baths is a family-friendly club. We offer swimming lessons at competitive prices, with small class sizes. The Family Swim Sessions are a hit with younger members, and most Sunday afternoons see children welcome their friends to birthday parties, as the whole pool can be booked privately for one hour.

Drumsheugh Baths is more than just a pool: the club is a community. If you're passing, have never been in or haven't been in for over 50 years, do feel free to drop by for a visit to find out more for yourself. Membership categories are: Under 30s; Singles; Couples; Families and Senior Citizens. Whether members want to push themselves to the utmost or just 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.

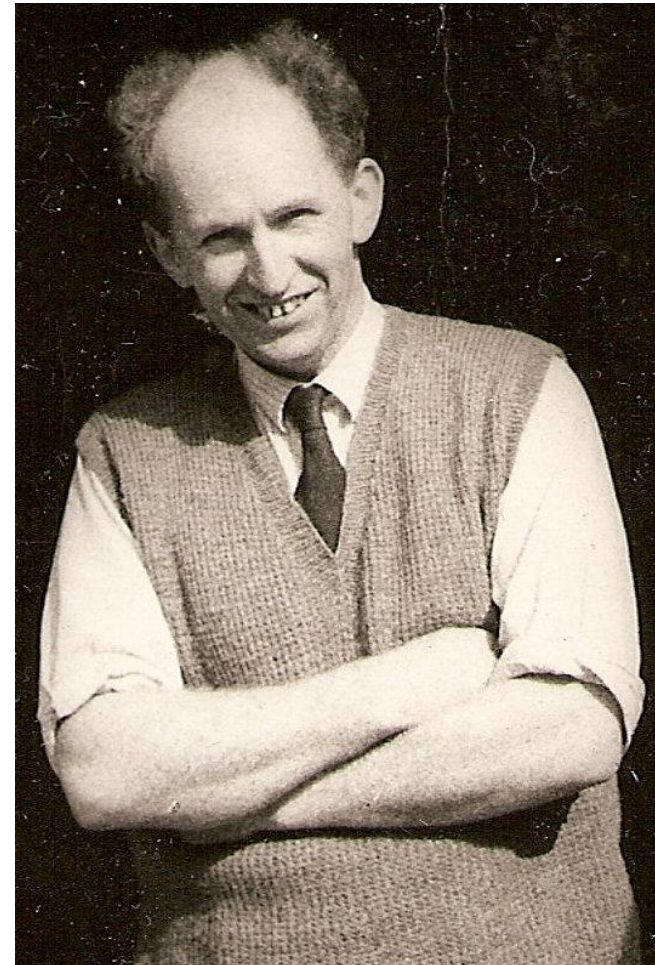


DRUMSHEUGH BATHS CLUB
EDINBURGH

T: 0131 225 2200 W: www.drumsheughbaths.com

Drumsheugh Baths Club Ltd | 5 Belford Road | Edinburgh | EH4 3BL

Bangour was a bit old-school. But when his wife visited, she had to put on protective clothing, as the risk of infection was high.



As we know, Lawrence made an excellent recovery, continued the family business at Redhall Mill, Colinton, and became the DVA's much-loved Chairman. But there were no more mills in Dean Village.

Dr David Perry

We are very sorry indeed to announce the death of David Perry at the beginning of the year.

David was from Somerset originally but after studying aspects of industrial chemistry he and his wife Margaret moved to Clackmannanshire, where David worked on the blending of whiskies and Margaret pursued a career in teaching. They also brought up two daughters and a son.

They bought a second home in Dean Village, partly so that David could enjoy his love of jazz music. But the Village worked its magic on him, and he became much involved in activities here. In time he became a most industrious Secretary and Editor of *Dean Village News*. When his health deteriorated and he felt he could not continue as Secretary as efficiently as he would like, the Committee asked him to remain as Editor, if he felt he could continue.

He was also a very keen guide around the Village and Cemetery, plus he instigated more frequent openings of St Bernard's Well - a most popular move for passers-by! He had been researching the history of the Village, spending many hours in the National Library of Scotland.

His other interests were wide and varied. He was a member of his local Bridge Club; he enjoyed fossil-hunting on the south coast of England; he went to cricket events annually. He and Margaret liked to travel, not only to Australia to visit a daughter and grandchildren, but frequently to Venice.

Due to the pandemic restrictions, his funeral at Stirling Crematorium had a limit on attendees, but as the service was streamed, the Committee could attend on-line, pay respects – and enjoy the jazz music played.

David at Melbourne Cricket Ground



Parking

Our Secretary, Don Jardine, was invited to attend the City of Edinburgh Council's consultation meeting in November 2019 about controlled parking zones. This project was to rebalance the demand for zoned parking spaces. Dean Village currently has few resident parking spaces.

Don presented the case for Dean Village to be given a better allocation of spaces on Belford Road in its first stretch to the junction with Douglas Gardens. This would make sense as most of these spaces are empty because this road cannot be accessed easily from Zone 1. There is a large boundary wall for most of the entire length of this section, and it's open to traffic at only one end. The under-use of this resident parking is certainly lost revenue for the Council.

The Council admitted there should possibly be some redress by changing some of the spaces on this part of Belford Road from Zone 1 to Zone 5. Don was also able to provide details of available unmarked space and the missing location of car club spaces.

We are now happy to report that in April 2021 Belford Rd was re-zoned as Zone 5 for this stretch to the Edinburgh School of Musicians, Drumsheugh Toll. The number of spaces has also been increased. Belford Road has been moved from the Central Zone to the Peripheral Zone which will also remove pressure from the surrounding streets.

Don also raised concerns with the lack of protection at major junctions in the city. For example at 6:30pm you are able to park at the traffic lights at one of the two lane junctions at Palmerston Place/ West Maitland Street. Not protecting a busy junction at the lights and allowing the blockage of one lane reduces traffic flow, causes congestion and increases city centre pollution. St Leonards Street is a good example of where the Council have used street marking to control traffic. The council also agreed that they would look at this issue.

We would like to thank the City of Edinburgh Council for listening to the Dean Village Association's concerns and for its actions to resolve them for our community.

Don Jardine

He left a number of bequests to charitable institutions in Edinburgh, including £1000, a grand sum in those days, to the Royal Infirmary and £1000 to the Sick Children's Hospital. He also remembered many personal friends and all his household servants.

Charles Jenner had many interests including poetry and philosophy and, particularly, geology and botany. He explored Scotland from the Pentland Hills to the north-west Highlands, tramping around extensively, sometimes accompanied by his wife, and he was remembered by many local people, shepherds and villagers along his travels for the keen interest he showed during his conversations with them. For two years he was president of the Botanical Society and he maintained a beautiful garden at Duddingston, renowned for its Japanese irises and rock garden plants.



His gravestone can be found by walking directly up the path from the keeper's house to the second set of steps that lead to the lower terrace. His stone is the horizontal one on the right with raised letters in Gothic-type script.

Evelyn Whitfield

Café Braw

Now re-opened, with (limited) outdoor seating and the usual yummy menu.

A very welcome return of a Village amenity.

cafebraw@hotmail.co.uk

Nature Notes

In our last edition, I wrote about otters – thereby jinxing my otter-spotting, as they've totally eluded me for weeks now! Some of their commonly-used holts look to be blocked with sticks and other river detritus, so I fear they're not active on our part of the river at the moment. I hope I'm wrong and that they are about, or will return soon.

But dawn on the late winter's mornings was a good time to get to know the owls. With no leaves on the trees, and sunrise not being too antisocially early, getting out to see them was easy. There's a pair of tawnies that roost above the river between Damside and Sunbury. They usually sit out on branches near their home tree for a while around first light, before going home for the day. Some mornings they're quite chatty, but on others they are quite quiet. Maybe they sometimes have interesting news of the night's hunting to share.

Now in the springtime, though, the leaves are opening on the trees and the dawn getting so early that seeing the owls is harder. I guess it may be the autumn before I spot them again, though they are strongly territorial so we know they won't be far away. Listen out for them hooting at dusk or just after on quieter nights.

Springtime is also ideal for the dawn chorus. The UK is said to have one of the most varied dawn choruses in the world, and we have a marvellous variety of songbirds around the village. It's inspiring to hear how much energy and effort they put into to marking their territories and keeping in touch with others. Getting out to hear it makes a great start to the day, though most of us need to do nothing more than crack open our windows to enjoy all their song. If you're not such an early bird yourself try searching for 'Soundstage dawn chorus' on BBC Sounds; it'll all come to you at whatever time of day you choose.

Meantime, spring is here, so much to enjoy. The bats are out from their hibernation, the house martins have returned from their winter African adventures, and there's wild garlic waiting to be made into pesto. There's always something new to see around the village.

Tim Steiner, 5 April 2021

Our Friends in the Cemetery: Charles Jenner

Charles Jenner was born on 1st September 1810 in Chatham, Kent and, having moved to Edinburgh, he worked for a drapery store in Leith Walk, alongside his colleague Charles Kennington. One day the two young men asked for a day off to attend the Musselburgh Races, having been given a hot tip. They were refused permission but decided to go anyway, resulting in dismissal. Fortunately, the tip paid off, their horse won the race and they made a very good return on their bet.

They decided to go into partnership with their winnings and founded their own drapery business – Kennington & Jenner - in Princes Street in 1838. As it flourished, it became renowned for providing the well-to-do folks of Edinburgh with fine silks and linens and keeping them up-to-date with London fashions. It came to be considered the Harrods of the North and “the jewel in the crown of Edinburgh”.

Jenner took full control of the business in 1861 when Kennington retired and continued running the store himself until 1881. The shop changed its name to Charles Jenner & Co and had expanded to accommodate adjoining buildings, becoming one of the biggest stores in Scotland. Disaster struck in 1892 when a raging fire swept through the beautiful department store.

In ambitious plans for its restoration, backed by the local council, architect William Hamilton Beattie (also buried in Dean) was brought in to redesign it. Said to be modelled on the Bodleian Library at Oxford, the design incorporated many elegant features, including several pairs of caryatids, statues of female figures depicted as supporting the structure. Apparently Charles Jenner had particularly requested these as they represented the women who were the driving force behind his business. Also incorporated in the building were stringent fire precautions, as well as electric lighting throughout, air conditioning and hydraulic lifts, all innovations for their time. Jenner himself financed the restoration but, sadly, did not live to see its completion. He died in 1893 and the store was ready to reopen in 1895. In 1911 it was given a Royal Warrant. Though hugely popular in its heyday, the store has had mixed fortunes in recent years, as shopping trends have changed. It lost its independent status and now seems to have closed its doors permanently. We wait to see the building's future.

Jenner was married twice, to Louisa Ashford and then to Chrissie Jane Baker, but had no children. At the age of 73 he died of pneumonia at his home, Easter Duddingston Lodge, on 27 October 1893.

His funeral service was held in the drawing room of his house with a quite considerable number of mourners present. A *Scotsman* article reporting his funeral describes the very many floral tributes, including one which was “especially fine” from the assistants of his department store, consisting of “a harp composed of lilies of the valley,

chrysanthemums, maiden fern &c. and measuring about three feet in length.” The hearse was drawn by four horses, followed by twelve carriages of mourners. As it set off on its journey from Joppa through Portobello, along Princes Street and Queensferry Street to the Dean Cemetery, a touching incident is reported to have taken place. About forty of the children from the St Andrew's Episcopal Home in Duddingston, in which Charles Jenner took a special interest, were gathered at the gate. As the cortege was leaving the grounds of his house, they “sang very sweetly” the hymns ‘Brother, now thy Toils are O'er’ and ‘Rock of Ages’.

