

The Paddock

The Newsletter of Duddingston Village

Spring
2011

YOU'RE NOT STUCK IN TRAFFIC! YOU ARE TRAFFIC!

On your behalf, DVCS is making solid and steady progress on the traffic front.

In November, the Council's Transport and Environment Committee was scheduled to hear a report from officials on the problems of traffic through Duddingston.

DVCS TRAFFIC POLICY is to achieve lower volumes of through traffic in Duddingston Village by making the route through the village and Holyrood Park much less attractive as an arterial route so as to protect and enhance Duddingston Village as part of an Outstanding Conservation Area.

Also during November Fairhurst Transportation Engineers were commissioned by the DVCS to carry out an independent assessment of the traffic problems from which we all suffer. (Copies on our website or by email from lindsay@dodin.idps.co.uk)

In the event the Council officials' report, which we saw just hours before it was due to be presented - and on which, despite the terms of the motion, we had not been consulted - was so full of errors and inaccuracies that it was withdrawn before the Committee could consider it. Lindsay Crofts and Nick Marshall attended the Committee meeting and took the opportunity to address the committee. The Committee was left in no doubt that DVCS thought the report of very poor quality, absolutely lacking in any analysis, and that the lack of community consultation was unacceptable. Officials were asked to bring a fuller and more consultative report to the February Council Committee.



Subsequently Nick and Lindsay had a very positive meeting with the Director of Transportation and his officials, and representatives of Historic Scotland and the police. Unfortunately the terms of that meeting were not followed

through and at the February Council Transportation meeting a further disappointingly unambitious Council report was presented. With Nick and Lindsay in attendance again, and supported by the findings of the Fairhurst report, DVCS was able to highlight to the Committee just how weak their officials' efforts had been. It was heartening to hear Council members - led by our 3 councillors - being so understanding and supportive of our position, and raising a whole series of actions which officials could consider to direct traffic away from the village.

Officials have again been sent away to do more work and have set up a working group, including representatives of DVCS, the police, and Historic Scotland. Issues they will be looking at will be increasing the efficiency of the arterial routes (junctions etc) of Peffermill and Willowbrae so cars are not encouraged to short cut; looking again at speed reduction measures on the Causeway; looking to develop speed reduction measures on the Low Road in Holyrood Park and improving conditions for cyclists through the Low Road. On this latter matter we are hopeful of the campaigning support of SPOKES. The first meeting of the working group took place in March and it will meet again in May.

Taxis in the Park

Enforcement of the commercial vehicles ban has had the unintended consequence of banning some taxis. The intention of the regulations is quite clearly that taxis should be allowed to travel through the Park. We have pointed out to Historic Scotland that they have it in their power to resolve this administratively, easily and quickly. They have undertaken to look at the matter.

'FINES APPLIED'

But all this talk-talk doesn't mean to say that nothing is happening. Also in November, after years of lobbying, and following referral to the Procurator Fiscal's office, and involvement of the Justice Minister we finally have enforcement of the 'no commercial vehicles' ban. In addition to enforcement, the Council has alerted the road hauliers and trades associations, and sat nav companies. And the difference is noticeable. A DVCS volunteer traffic count shows that there are certainly fewer lorries and white vans along Old Church Lane and The Causeway, although in Old Church Lane the number of cars has increased to fill the gap.

DVCS will continue to be closely involved in these discussions on your behalf.

DUDDINGSTON VILLAGE CONSERVATION SOCIETY ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
8pm on Wednesday 25th May 2011 More details overleaf



Dear Member

Another edition of The Paddock is a sign that spring has sprung. I am sure that we will all remember this winter, especially that Monday when all public transport closed down and the roads were impassable. I walked home from Rutland Square and rather than sticking to the main road, I foolishly trudged in 2 feet of snow and a temperature of minus 12 through the Park. It was like being the last person on earth. I saw no-one until I reached the Village when I found a group of our members unsuccessfully trying to push a car off the road on frozen snow. Everyone joined in but we didn't do too well, it went nowhere! But we still seem to have been active over winter. In this edition there are reports on several events. You will also find articles on many subjects and activities which go to prove what a diverse community we all are and how many different activities go on.

As you know the Society covers not just the Village but the whole of the Duddingston Conservation Area and it is a pleasure to note how our friends and neighbours in Cavalry Park Drive and Duddingston House are playing a bigger role in our activities and in the Executive Committee. This wider community helps us to lobby without being seen quite so much as a small group of people only looking at what happens at our own front door.

Our preoccupations continue to be with through traffic, where our Secretary has some solid progress to report. I hope that you will have already noticed the major drop in commercial vehicles using the park, now that they know that they may be fined.

But also we are quite suddenly having a very challenging time with the National Trust for Scotland and ensuring the future of the Community Land. They own the land, not us, and they are telling us that they have some proposals for the land that may benefit us in terms of more certainty over use and our legal ownership of it but may also involve us losing some of it for development. You will see from the letter opposite that we have written to the Trust very strongly rejecting any suggestion that they can misuse the McNiven Bequest. This is quite a new situation and we will keep you informed of progress, I hope that there will be more to say at the AGM.

Finally, I would urge you all to come to the AGM which is on 25th May. It is a valuable opportunity for the Executive Committee to tell you what they have done on your behalf and for you to offer them feedback on that. We have an excellent Committee who give up their spare time to work for the Society so please support them and your Society by coming along. Our Councillors usually all join us so it is a great opportunity to meet them too. I must say we have really appreciated their support and help over the last year. I am sure it impresses them too when we have a good turnout.

With best wishes

Malcolm Windsor
Chairman, Duddingston Village Conservation Society

A DATE FOR YOUR DIARY
DUDDINGSTON VILLAGE CONSERVATION SOCIETY
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
8pm on Wednesday 25th May 2011

This is the formal notification of the DVCS 2011 AGM. Please join us for the AGM, and afterwards for a convivial glass of wine, in Duddingston Kirk Hall at 8pm on Wednesday 25th May.

There will be vacancies on the Committee and nominations are welcomed by the Secretary, Lindsay Crofts (6 Old Church Lane; 661 7858). These should be submitted in writing at least 5 days before the AGM, and should include a proposer and seconder.

The agenda for the meeting will be available nearer the time. The annual accounts will be presented at the meeting, and will be available on line. The minutes of the last meeting will be circulated in advance.

The field behind the village - an opportunity for community land?

The field behind the village has been leased by a group of horse-owners for the last 20 years, but the lease has not been renewed. Several people in the village have expressed interest in trying for a community lease. Suggestions for using the land include chickens, gardens, fruit trees, willows and horse grazing. At a recent open meeting, a small steering group was formed to start discussions with the owners (the Council).

Councillor Ewan Aitken very helpfully provided advice and put us in touch with the right people in the council. It will take some time to set this up so that it works, and isn't a drain on village resources, and we are grateful to the council in being flexible over this. We have shown that we can manage and use land to benefit the community in a range of ways, over our several years on the Community Land. The field provides us with an opportunity to do many more things of interest and benefit to more people in the community. If you have ideas or enthusiasms, please contact Nick

Marshall on 07906 129627 or nick@leaf.me.uk. Have a look at pictures on www.duddingston-village.co.uk





CAN WE TRUST THE TRUST?

Many of you will know the long standing relationship which we have with the National Trust for Scotland, given its role as Trustee of the McNiven Bequest, and as owners of the Community Land. The Executive Committee has been in discussion with the NTS over the last few weeks, following their own review and reorganisation. Some early proposals which have come from the NTS over the future of the Community Land have caused us concern. We understand that the new Board of Trustees is to consider this and other property matters at its meeting on Thursday 14th April. In advance of this our Chairman has written in the following terms to Sir Kenneth Calman, the new Chair of the NTS.

“Dear Sir Kenneth

Welcome to your very important role as Chairman of the National Trust for Scotland. The Duddingston Village Conservation Society has had many dealings with the Trust over the years. I have to say the experience has not always been a positive one from our perspective. Your recent interview in the NTS magazine highlighted the importance you placed on listening, and taking heed of what you are told, and on building better relations with communities. Writing on behalf of a community which feels very badly let down by the Trust, I hope that your new approach will improve matters significantly.

Chrissie McNiven was a longstanding resident of Duddingston Village, the indefatigable Secretary of the Duddingston Village Preservation Society (as we were called then) and protector and supporter of the village and its history. She left her house in the village to the care of the National Trust for Scotland so that “by its retention, or in some other means, the NTS could associate with the village of Duddingston and its history”.

For over 30 years, the NTS has been the guardian of this bequest, and has, with a few minor wobbles, upheld its financial guardianship honourably. The house was sold and the subsequent McNiven Bequest funds have grown in its care. The funds have been applied to many village projects over the years - restoring the Caithness paving in the village, contributing to the funding of the ‘conservation-style’ village lighting, and restoration of the Manse, Dr Neil’s Garden and the Thomson Tower. We have much to be thankful to Miss McNiven for – in her lifetime and beyond.

In the year 2000, sadly following the death April Johnson-Marshall who also committed many hours to the work of the Society and the village, the opportunity arose to bring together the beneficence of these two remarkable ladies. In memory of their mother, the Johnson-Marshall family offered an off-market sale of what is now called the Community Land, so that the land might be made available for the amenity of the village (which had long since lost its village green) and to protect the land in perpetuity from development. These conditions were critical for the family to agree to sell the land. The NTS agreed to use a proportion of the McNiven Bequest for this purchase (along with a neighbouring house), and for its future upkeep.

Since then, unfortunately, our relationship with NTS has deteriorated; agreed actions are forgotten or ignored; letters have been unanswered, and opportunities for positive joint working have been disregarded. Now the corporate memory of the NTS is fading. Its financial difficulties are foremost in Trustees’ minds. The Trust views a piece of land in its ownership, in an attractive part of Edinburgh and with little national heritage value, as fair game for increasing its General Income Fund. All this irrespective of the reasons behind the bequest by Miss McNiven, the conditions of the Johnson Marshall family on the

purchase of the land, and the NTS Trustees’ duty as guardians of the bequest.

Recent discussions with your staff have shown that the NTS is prepared to consider reneging on the trust Miss McNiven placed in it, and use her legacy to dig itself out of the financial hole it finds itself in – not just by selling the land, but also by developing it – with an initial proposal shown to us of up to 5 houses on the walled garden which has been restored with immense effort by community volunteers over the last 8 years.

We have already made it clear that we would regard this as legally dubious, and morally reprehensible. It would also surely be reputationally disastrous for NTS which by its very nature is dependent on bequests. The Trust could risk cutting the very rope upon which it must rely to get it out of the financial chasm in which it finds itself.

We are given to understand that this matter is to come before the next meeting of the Board of Trustees, and that it also forms part of the wider property portfolio review of the Trust. I am writing to draw the Trustees’ attention to the damage which has already been done to the Trust by its poor management of affairs here in Duddingston Village, and to ask that you and all of the Trustees take full account of this as you consider the NTS future involvement with the Duddingston Community Land project.

We would very much welcome the opportunity to make a brief presentation to the Board on this matter and our future relationship if this can be arranged. Our aim is to have a fruitful and mutually beneficial relationship.

Yours sincerely

Dr Malcolm Windsor

Chairman
Duddingston Village Conservation Society”





Duddingston and Craigentiny Neighbourhood Partnership

Craigentiny & Duddingston Neighbourhood Partnership covers the local authority multi-member ward of Craigentiny/Duddingston. The convenership rotates on an annual basis. The convener in 2010/2011 is Stefan Tymkewycz. The Partnership's next meeting is on 17 May 18:30 – 20.30 at Lochend Restalrig Hub (for more information contact Mary Dunbar on 0131 529 4415 Email: mary.dunbar@edinburgh.gov.uk)

One of its sub groups most relevant to us at present is the Environment Sub Group or Forum which meets roughly monthly in Northfield Community Centre. Meetings are generally at 10.30 on a Thursday morning. Consequently they are not generally well attended. On behalf of DVCS Roger Mercer, Nick Marshall and Lindsay Crofts take turns to ensure you are represented at these meetings, but we would encourage others to attend if and when they can. Better attendance can only improve the decision making process.

The Environment Forum has access to limited funds to carry out environmental improvements in the Craigentiny & Duddingston area. Projects can be nominated by local residents and decisions on which projects should be approved are agreed by the Environment Forum members (which is why it is important that attendance is improved).

See www.edinburghnp.org.uk/neighbourhood-partnerships/craigentiny-and-duddingston for more information.

News from Holyrood High School

A group of our 1st year pupils have been selected for publication by Young Writers. The National competition set the task of writing a Minisaga with a word limit of 50 words . Eleven of our pupils were successful with their sagas and they will be published this month.



Pupils (L-R): Erin Buckley, Billijo Hainey, Shelby Spence, Shauna Craig, Kayleigh Day, Emma Milligan, Sabah Hanif, Niamh Kelly, Brodie Mackenzie, Dylan Black, Sean Gilhooley.

Neighbourhood Safety

Inspector Nadine Aliane from Portobello Police Station gave a presentation at a recent Craigentiny and Duddingston Neighbourhood Partnership meeting . She explained that more staff have been devoted to community policing. Local Safer Neighbourhood Teams comprise local officers working alongside Council staff and others. They increasingly engage with the community to gather information about issues affecting the area.

She encouraged people to contact the Safer Neighbourhood Team if there was anything of which the police should be aware - even minor incidents, such as recent reports of trespassers in back gardens at odd hours, or people being verbally abused by motorists - or even of cars being damaged.

Here are the necessary contact numbers to report an incident. Our Community Beat Officer is Geri Richardson: Portobello Police Station: 669 0581 ext 4226 geraldine.richardson@lbp.pnn.police.uk Safer Neighbourhood Team: 669 0581 ext 4235 ADivSNTCraigentinyDuddingston@lbp.pnn.police.uk

You may wish to copy any e mail, or phone message to our Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator - Mike Godman; 661 1913; godmanm@hotmail.com

Deck the Halls...and the Doors

Over the last few years in the run-up to Christmas, it seems that wreaths decorating front doors have become almost as popular as Christmas trees. On 12th December last year Dr Neil's Garden ran their second wreath-making workshop, with Claudia Pottier as tutor.

Claudia had cut a wide variety of greenery from the Garden, and for three hours in the Kirk Hall the thirteen students tied and snipped and decorated, barely stopping for tea and the tempting home baking provided. By 5 o'clock there were thirteen magnificent wreaths, each one distinctive and personal to its maker.



The photo shows the group happily posing with their festive creations (or resting on their laurels!) Great fun.



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'The Garden in Winter'

In winter the garden often seems to mirror the melancholy of sun deprived northern Europeans 'when nature is in her desolation and presents us with nothing but barren prospects'. However, it is not always so. If you had been in Duddingston Kirk on Sunday 5th December your spirits would have been lifted by 'The Garden in Winter' an entertainment in aid of Dr Neil's Garden Trust. A large appreciative audience heard in verse, prose and song that winter can reflect different moods.



Jenny Brown engagingly presented an excellent programme which had been carefully assembled by Susan Mercer. Prose readings from Joseph Addison, Katherine Swift, Vita Sackville-West, Charles Dickens and others were juxtaposed with the poems of Thomas Hardy, Walter de la Mare, Robert Burns and Ted Hughes, with Schubert songs and traditional musical settings of Burns and Shakespeare.

The performance was given by well known friends and friends of friends. The readings were fluently handled by Roger Mercer, Claudia Pottier and Lindsay Crofts. Roger's range of regional accents and gifts of mimicry were shown to fine effect. Claudia gave an empathetic reading from Vita Sackville-West and Lindsay's fine Scottish diction was displayed beautifully in *The Snawman* by J.K. Annand. The Mercer family further burnished their laurels with delightful soprano contributions from Katherine, both as a soloist and in duet with the rich baritone of George Ross in *The North Wind doth Blow*. George also gave us a fine rendition of two well loved Schubert songs. The choral group Con Spirito added to the overall enjoyment with Tricia Ball proving an accomplished accompanist throughout.

As the audience filed out into the grounds of the Kirk, over a carpet of unusually early and thick winter snow, there was a general sense of having been uplifted by the experience of a totally charming and captivating 90 minutes which should have emphatically banished any winter melancholy.

Thank you, Susan for a beautifully crafted afternoon.

Scatterbox News

This year Scatterbox is working on several exciting projects. First, a film called *Stealing the Internet*, a science fiction adventure based on the concept of augmented reality (screenplay by Ben More from ideas discussed between Lewis De Melo, Euan Jackson and Ben). Ben will also direct and shoot the film which will be filmed on location in and around Duddingston. (Oh what a versatile place we live in!)

In February Freda entered an online film-making competition called The 48 GoGreen Project. Members of Scatterbox also helped with the film. Over 48 hours a film had to be written, filmed, edited and the soundtrack created. Called, *The Water Thieves*, the film told the story of a grandmother and her grandson going off to sign up for voluntary work in a beautiful walled garden. However unbeknown to our volunteers and the head gardener, evil beings were about to steal the land! The film tells how our heroes rout the baddies and rescue the garden. See it at <http://vimeo.com/20182101>

Scatterbox will be entering two more competitions this year. The first takes place over the first weekend in April and is linked to the London Science Fiction Festival. The second, in May, and a highlight in our calendar, is the Edinburgh 48 Hour Project, which is organised locally in partnership with the Cameo Cinema.

This year Scatterbox will enter the Edinburgh competition as a youth group and its members will write, direct, film and edit the film themselves. To help them prepare for this they will enter the April Science Fiction competition in the same roles. The exciting difference between the two competitions is that for the Edinburgh weekend the finished film will be screened at the Cameo Cinema.

The group would like attract new members with a specific interest in technical aspects of film making, especially composing music using computer software and lighting or sound. You should be at least 14 years old and able to attend Scatterbox meetings one Saturday a month and to take part in the 48 hour competitions.





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“Frae Furrow tae Firmament in Four Lowps” Four sculptures by Tim Chalk for the New Burns Museum

I've spent the past eighteen months up to my neck in Burns' poetry. The reason? - a commission for four linked sculptures for the new Burns Birthplace Museum in Alloway. Already having a strong interest in sculptural sundials, my thoughts turned immediately in this direction, and I discovered that Burns' poetry was bursting with imagery relating to the cycles of the Sun.

It's not often a sculptor gets the chance to make four linked works on this scale, so I was keen to make the most of the opportunity. What emerged was a word puzzle in a combination of steel, bronze and cast concrete, concealing two well known Burns poems, unfolding progressively through the building and culminating in a Sundial Sculpture in the Garden where the poems are revealed.



As Burns drew inspiration for his poetry from the land, Scots words are ploughed from the earth. On the approach to the Museum a bronze crow picks through steel words as they emerge from the furrows, while another seizes a word and flies off towards the next work mounted on the wall by the main entrance. On a path that takes the visitor into the building and through the main



concourse, a series of words hanging in the air continue the trail, and for those that haven't guessed, the poems are revealed in the garden where Burns' shadow meets his lover "On the Lea Rig" at four o'clock every day.



For a fuller picture of the work see http://www.chalkworks.com/contents/section_gallery.html

Malcolm and Robbie's Grand Day Out!



Standing up to your waist in ice cold water all day in the middle of November – not everybody's idea of fun, but to Sarah Chalk's brother Robbie, total bliss.

The opportunity for the ultimate experience – salmon fishing in the Tweed – finally came his way thanks to Malcolm Borthwick's pledge at the Village Fair Auction; a day's Salmon Fishing under his expert guidance. And to crown it all - a catch!

A Happy Village Wedding

Harriet Orr and Tim Blackstock were married in Edinburgh on 26 February. The reception was held at Harriet's parents house in Old Church Lane, followed by a dinner at Vintners' Rooms. After a honeymoon in Buttermere the couple returned to their home in Anglesey.





Plucky Pensioner's Knife-point Kidnap Ordeal

The guidebook says "... Managua is one of the safest cities in Latin America, but you should still take sensible precautions." which included "...never walk at night unless you are in a good area." "Fine," I thought, "I've no particular reason to stay overnight in Managua anyway."

My plan was to arrive in the Nicaraguan capital at about 1600, to take a city bus to a different bus terminal, and from there move on to Masaya, about 30kms from Managua, a smaller town described as "... the folkloric and crafts centre of Nicaragua." "What could possibly go wrong?" I asked myself.

As I was walking to the bus stop a woman of about 40 fell into step with me. "How do you like Nicaragua?" "Where have you come from?" "Is this your first time in Managua?" "Where are you going?" Anyone who has travelled independently in the developing world will know these questions.

The woman (whom I shall call Marta) said that she too was going to the Masaya bus station and it would be better if we shared a taxi as the city buses were unsafe. I had read that taxi-sharing was quite normal in Nicaragua and so was happy to go along with her suggestion and similarly was unconcerned when two other men joined us.

Progress was slow as the main roads were clogged with vehicles. Our driver began to search out an alternative route down quiet residential back streets. Perhaps I fell asleep for a moment or two, for the next thing I was aware of was being in a crushing headlock, my sunglasses pushed violently into my face, my hat wedged into my mouth as a gag and something thrown over my head. At the same time I was thrust down in the seat until my legs were splayed as far apart as possible with Marta on one side and Senor Headlock on the other. They threw their legs over mine, and trapped an arm each underneath an ample thigh. Just to make the hopelessness of my position absolutely clear, the front passenger held a knife to my stomach while the back seat duo, having taken the lace from one of my boots, tied my wrists together.

Their next task was to find what of value they could steal. Apart from the electronic gizmos with which we all travel these days, I had one £10 note and fewer

than 100 cordobas - the local currency and worth about £2.50, and, the thing I grieve for most, my wedding ring. They also found two of my three plastic cards which discovery provoked a lot of frightening screaming and shouting, and further knife waving as they failed to agree amongst themselves upon the accurate 4-digit number I was trying to give them.

With my head covered I was able to deduce that two stops were made, and my cards were tried at a couple of ATMs. Nonetheless my abductors remained convinced that it was impossible for a gringo to travel with so little cash and that I must have more hidden about me. This led to an intimate investigation of all parts of my body and clothing. In the search for a secret hiding place, my belt was taken from me, split and peeled apart like skinning a snake.

While this was going on Marta's phone rang and to my surprise she answered it. After a few seconds listening she declined to do something requested by her caller "...because I'm working." A repeated request got the reply "I've told you already, I'm still working."

By now darkness was coming on and my captors, who, I guess, had decided that they could get no more from me, began to debate where to get rid of me. After one farcical attempt with Senor Headlock pulling on my right arm to get me out of the car and Marta pulling more forcefully on my left to keep me in, we drove around for another 15-20 minutes before they found a place which was judged sufficiently secluded to jettison me unobserved.

As we stopped I heard my two bags hit the ground and felt two plastic cards and a crumpled piece of paper thrust into my hand. I was bundled out of the car which immediately sped into the darkness. After about 90 minutes I was free and made my way to the small hotel across the road. There I gathered my wits and assessed my losses.

And the crumpled piece of paper? It was a 100 cordoba note. I finished the experience with more Nicaraguan money than I had to start with.

Iain Jackson





The Community Garden Survives the Winter - just!

Now that winter is finally behind us and we can start the spring tidying and sowing. Most things survived the harsh December weather and the chickens went on laying in their winter abode in the vegetable garden. They have done a fine job clearing two of the rotational beds. Thanks to Nick for his design and build of the chicken house which has kept the chickens safe. The brassicas struggled as the snow brought the netting down (see picture) and, as a result, we have some very well fed pigeons in the village. We have now reinstated the netting and the kale, Brussels sprouts and purple sprouting broccoli are there for the picking.

We have plentiful manure from the horses courtesy of Mrs McDougall and used along with our own compost we should have even better crops this year. It has already been spread on the fruit and vegetable plots and will be dug in when we prepare the ground for sowing. If you are curious about what will be grown, and where, look at the information on the notice board up the vennel past Dairy Cottage.

We have bought additional fruit plants. Autumn raspberries and red gooseberries are planted in the fruit cage. Black currants and two damson trees have been planted in the top garden, and the fruit trees have been espaliered under the expert tuition of Dr John.



The herb plot is being reorganised by our two local herbal specialists Joe and Emma. So there will be plenty of interesting culinary and medicinal herbs later in the year. The top garden has been transformed while the chickens have been away, largely by Claudia. The digging has revealed old brick paths. The ground has now been seeded with grass ready for the chickens to return. A new compost bin has been made. The excellent planter boxes constructed by Claudia out of old roof joists are coming to life with autumn sown vegetables.

Do join us on the work days (see the dates in the box) or come on a Thursday when Claudia is in the garden. There is always something to be done and in the next few weeks this includes the following tasks:

1. Seed sowing according to schedule inside and outside
2. Emptying bottom compost bin; put onto vegetable plots
3. Build two pergolas in kitchen garden.

Work days for your diary

30th April or 1st May, 28th or 29th May.

Watch the notices on the vennel gate for the day depending on the weather.



Dr Neil's Garden

Dr Neil's Garden says spring is nearly here...the hamamelis is nearly finished, along with Viburnum bodnantense, Hepatica transylvanica, Iris unguicularis, snowdrops, cyclamen coum and winter aconites.

And the first narcissi are flowering, small early Tête à Tête along with the first rhododendrons, hellebores, the earliest spring cherry (supposed to be the winter one, but always flowering now) and there are buds on the Erythroniums – my favourite!

If you walk into the garden you may notice a lot of gaps where we have sustained snow damage over the winter. Unfortunately the weight of snow was too much for some of the more mature conifers and so they have had to be cut and cleared...but where there is a gap there must also be an opportunity.....Roll on Spring. Come in and see...the Garden is lovely.



Fruit Growing Tips

Now that spring is almost here, most of the winter tasks in the fruit garden, such as pruning should be complete. There is still time to mulch fruit trees and bushes with good garden compost, and now is the ideal opportunity to tidy the strawberry bed. Remove old straw and dead leaves, plant in the runners, and mulch. Enjoy the coming season!



Bawsinch Nature Reserve

Scottish Wildlife Trust owns and manages Bawsinch reserve and takes an interest in the Duddingston Loch SSSI area.

On the Loch last year there was again one pair of Great Crested Grebe which had one young which survived into the autumn. The heronry at the west end of Duddingston Loch had 36 nesting pairs, a slight reduction on the previous year but whether this was due to the harsh winter weather or the effects of tree clearance in the reed bed is not known. Jay and Kingfisher were occasionally seen but Green Woodpecker was not recorded.

The snow late last year helped prove the continuing presence of Otter - tracks of at least two Otters were seen - along with Roe Deer. A survey of dragonflies showed the presence of four species of damselflies in the Bawsinch ponds but only a casual record of a Common Darter dragonfly. Eight species of butterflies were recorded including Comma which has moved north into Scotland in the last few years. A decision was taken this year to start to convert the

Helping Garden Birds

What should you do to attract birds to your garden? The melodious blackbird, the wren, the bright green and yellow siskins, the return of the blue tits to nest in nooks and crannies. With continuing cold spells fat balls are very good nutrition for the parents to make sure they have the strength to nurture their young. As the young hatch out, they need additional food, so do provide lots of small seeds in bags and in feeders. Enjoy your garden birds this year.



majority of the existing Goose Green in Bawsinch, currently a mown grass area no longer used by nesting Greylag Geese, into a flower meadow. This should greatly benefit insect life in the reserve particularly bee and bumblebee species. A major part of our work on the reserve is controlling invasive species of plants and this year a major effort has started to try to eliminate snowberry which has taken over substantial areas.

Open Days:

Sunday 29 May and Sunday 23 Oct, 11am to 4pm. Access to bird hide and guided walks. Meet at wicker gate on Duddingston Road West south of Duddingston Loch. Donations welcome.

Would you like a guided visit to Bawsinch?

SWT is happy to arrange guided walks on request for groups and have offered to arrange such a visit for Duddingston locals. If you are interested in joining such a visit e mail lindsay@dodin.idps.co.uk



Thomson Tower Opening Times 2011

If you have not already visited The Tower you should take advantage of this unique building during the summer while visiting Dr Neils Garden at the same time.

Opening hours for the summer of 2011 are every Sunday 2pm – 5pm during June, July and August. Entry is £2 for adults, children under 16 free.

Dr Neil's Garden Special Open Weekends

Our special Open Weekends in 2011 will be held on the following dates between 2pm and 5pm. There will be plants for sale and teas with home baking available in the Kirk Hall.

1st & 22nd May – In aid of Multiple Sclerosis
25th & 26th June – In aid of Dr Neil's Garden Fund
30th & 31st July – Scotland's Gardens Scheme



Messages from our Elected Representatives

Councillor Gary Peacock

As I write, I am hopeful that the worst of the winter weather is over and Spring is on the way. Certainly, the crocuses are now out and that is always a sign of better times ahead. The winter has not been an idle time in the affairs of Duddingston Village however. Far from it! Before Christmas, I was fortunate enough to be able to attend a dinner at the Sheep Heid Inn in the Village to mark its 650th anniversary. The occasion was one attended by the Lord Provost and many local people in the village and was an opportunity to celebrate an important institution and a vital part of Duddingston life. Credit must go to D J Johnston-Smith, the manager, for all the work he put into organizing and publicising an enjoyable evening.

On the traffic front, February marked the beginning of a programme of education and enforcement by the Police of the ban on commercial vehicles using the low road through Holyrood Park. The matter was considered by the Transport Committee on 8th February and it has been agreed to set up an elected member / officer working group to discuss proposals to reduce traffic problems in Duddingston Village. This group will have input from the Conservation Society, Historic Scotland and the Police as well as Councillors and Council officers. I hope that we shall be able to assess what the effect of the renewed emphasis on the ban on commercial vehicles has been and whether there are other measures which we can take which would ease the situation. The aim is to report back to the Transport Committee in 6 months time.

There is no magic solution to this problem but I know that all the local Councillors and the Conservation Society are determined to do what we can to improve the situation for all.

I should like to wish you all a very happy Easter.

Kenny MacAskill MSP

Hopefully that's the winter behind us. Its been a harsh one but its a chance now to enjoy spring even more. Whether in Holyrood Park or Dr Neils Garden there are great walks and views to be had on our doorstep. Those who work and volunteer to maintain those sites deserve our thanks as they need to be cherished. The park is a great asset known throughout the city and Dr Neils garden is a hidden gem for locals and others who come across it. Its care is a great credit to a dedicated band and a great legacy from the well respected doctors.

It was a pleasure to attend Parsons Green Primary Schools event to celebrate its 50th year on the current site. A lot of hard work was put in by Willie French and his staff to what was a great day for parents, and both past and present pupils and staff. It was fascinating to hear the history of the school including the fire that destroyed the old site on Lilyhill Terrace. It was also good of some illustrious old boys who went on to play football for Scotland to come along. Some travelled a long way but take a bow John Robertson, Davy Bowman and Jackie McNamara. Both former teachers and current pupils enjoyed meeting you. So did I !! Its a credit to them but testimony to the opportunities given and the ethos instilled by the school.

Cllr Stefan Tymkewycz

Cllr Stefan Tymkewycz is calling all local youth groups and uniformed organisations, in Craigentenny/ Duddingston Ward, such as the Boys Brigade, Scouts and Girl Guides who are looking for some additional funding! Local MSP Kenny MacAskill recently announced a significant expansion of the CashBack for Communities programme: £1.5 million injection of cash in a scheme that benefits the following six organisations: The Scout Association, Girlguiding, Boys Brigade, Girls Brigade, Clubs for young people and Youth Scotland. The latest CashBack programme was established to support local volunteer-led groups to enhance their programmes for young people and get positive projects off the ground. The scheme will fund: the start up costs of a youth group (up to £1,000); the costs (or part of the costs) of a particular programme of activity (up to £2,000) and this can include equipment.

CashBack for Communities funding comes from money and goods seized from organised crime under the Scottish Government's Proceeds of Crime initiative. Kenny MacAskill said: *"The Scottish Government is rightly proud of its CashBack for Communities programme that siezes the ill-gotten gains of criminals and hands it to the young people of Edinburgh and Scotland through a growing series of activities. We have now committed nearly £24 million pounds of crooks' money to CashBack, helping in excess of 300,000 youngsters"*.

If you think your group or organisation qualifies for a grant from CashBack for Communities you can find more information and how to apply at: www.youthscotland.org.uk or by contacting me at the City Chambers on 529 3277.

Councillor Ewan Aitken

It has been good to see some small progress on engagement between the Council and DVCS on traffic issues with the setting up of a working group following my motion to the City Council. This working group involved Council officers, Historic Scotland, DVCS and the police. What was key in its creation was that each sit at that table with "parity of esteem". The challenge now is for that opportunity to be grasped by all involved. I know that DVCS is determined to make that happen and I remain committed to support them in this endeavour.

I was delighted to have been able to also support in a small way the group looking at the local field that may be available for some kind of community activity though what form that might take is yet to be determined.

In both cases, what has been key is that the community itself has led the activity. Community is a much used word and it has many meanings but for me it's that idea of common task, whether from a negative challenge or a positive opportunity, that builds and nurtures human relationships, (and even, potentially helps to heals them when they are broken). The common task is important, but what we gain as people beyond the task itself, is invaluable.

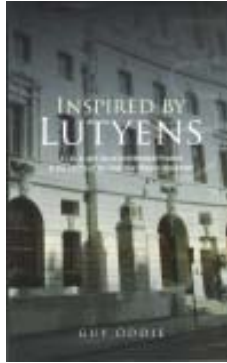


Book Review

Inspired by Lutyens - A Life in and Out of Architectural Practice at the Centre of the Post-War Modern Movement by Professor Guy Oddie. £17.99 Book Guild Publishing ISBN: 9781846243066. Available from all good bookshops.

Professor Guy Oddie, one of Duddingston's older and more colourful residents, has recently published his autobiography, in time for his 89th birthday.

The book is a series of convincing portraits of a childhood of indifferent health spent on Tyne & Wearside in the 1930s, the drabness of the war years, and then the extraordinary opportunities and the bizarre way in which they were dispensed, in the late 1940s and early 50s. Guy moved from Local Authority employment, via Coventry and Birmingham, to London and the Central Government-funded Building Research Station, and thence at the onset of 1950 to academe, a lectureship in the Birmingham School of Architecture



where he met his beloved wife Mabel. By the end of 1952 he had moved on to the Architects Department of the Ministry of Education where he was charged with the assessment and adjustment of plans for all post-war school building.

In 1960 Guy moved to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) - a truly international organisation based in Paris, and while there he acquired a thorough familiarity with many European countries, S and N America and Australia. And thence in 1969 to the Chair in Architecture (despite his long-held objection to the capital A!) at the University of Edinburgh. He retired in 1982.

All this richness of variety is narrated with a robust frankness, an aversion to political correctness, and in well-composed English that gives pleasure and much information.

An appendix offers a selection of Guy's very witty poetry.

Kirk Times

Services for April

Sunday 10 10am & 11.30am (*incl Baptism at 10am*)

Sunday 17 10am & 11.30am (*Palm Sunday*)

18-22 April 7pm each day Easter Week Services

Sunday 24 7am Service in Dr Neil's Garden
followed by breakfast in the church hall

11am Easter Service

followed by egg rolling in the Manse Garden

Service of Remembrance for the Bereaved.

Over many years we have held a service of remembrance for the bereaved. These services are open to all who have been bereaved and involve an act of remembrance by the Minister reading out the names of those we have come to remember. The next service will be held at the Kirk on Sunday 1st May at 3pm to which anyone can come.

Stillness Services

Every Wednesday morning from 10 to 10.30, the Kirk is open for those who seek a time of quiet. This thirty minute service starts with a short piece of music and concludes with a prayer. It is open to all who want to take time in the midst of busy lives to be with God.

Garage Sale Saturday 23 April 2-4pm 42 The Causeway

Books/Bric-a-Brac/Clothes/Home Baking

In June my team-mates and I will be attempting the Moonwalk, 26 miles walking around Edinburgh at night in support of breast cancer charities. To boost our fundraising efforts, please come by in the afternoon of Easter Saturday as we hold a garage sale with books, bric-a-brac, toys, clothes, home baking – and a very exclusive raffle! Donations of items very welcome – give me a ring if you'd like me to pick them up in advance (mobile 0797 1099402). All proceeds will go to the WalktheWalk charity which supports lots of great causes in Scotland, including the Maggie's Centres.

If you aren't able to come but would like to support the fundraising then please visit http://www.walkthewalkfundraising.org/jenny_brown.
Jenny Brown, jenny-brown@blueyonder.co.uk

Brownies

The Brownie Pack here at Duddingston is urgently looking for 2 people to help run the pack each week. We meet on Wednesday between 6.30 and 8pm. If you are interested please contact Jillian Paulin on 657 2285.

EWAN AITKEN

Labour Councillor for Craigentiny/Duddingston Ward

Surgeries (no appointment needed, all during school terms)

1st Wed Piershill Library 7.15pm

2nd Wed Craigentiny Community Centre 7.15pm

3rd Wed Duddingston Primary School 7.15pm

Last Sat Lochend and Restalrig Community Hub 12 noon

Or call me on 529 3261 to make a separate appointment

This advertisement is paid for by Councillor Aitken



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Joe and Emma - Medical Herbalists and Massage Therapist

Joe and Emma have lived in The Causeway for about a year and are currently volunteering their time to replant and redesign the Community Herb Garden.



What one thing would improve your life?

Both of our families living closer. We don't see either family more than twice a year. We both come from close families. If they visited once a week with a gold bar under each arm our lives would be immensely improved.

What would you do if you ruled the world?

Replace warfare with bake-offs. Joe is especially fond of Scandinavian and eastern European patisserie; Denmark, Hungary,

your time is nigh! Emma is a connoisseur of baklava, so Gaddafi had better get out the nuts and honey.

Who is your fantasy date?

Ehem. Emma and Joe. Moving swiftly on...

What is your earliest memory?

J – I remember when I was learning to talk. I'd just learned "fat" and proudly greeted my grandmother with, "are you fat?" I quickly learned it wasn't the done thing.

E – Riding on my Dad's shoulders and suddenly realising I'd lost one of my red wellies. It was tragic.

What song is the theme tune to your life?

J – "Last One Goes the Hope" - Golgol Bordello - A Gypsy-punk tune about adversity and survival, from an immigrant point of view. I grew up in a predominantly Albanian and Italian neighbourhood, and the Balkan music also reminds me of

home. Plus, you can dance to it.

E – "Le Reel du Mouton Noir" – Gadj Gadjo. An odd little reel, irresistible and irrepressibly cheerful, and the rolling hills and sunshine you can hear in it evoke my childhood in Wales. And you can dance to it too.

Who would play you in the movie of your life?

J- Emma says Johnny Depp, which I'm hardly going to argue with.

Em – Joe picked Kate Winslett, which I can see. She has a great range and plays complex characters.

What is your most treasured possession?

J – My grandmother's cookbook. It's the 1943 edition with the wartime supplement, and all her notes written and stuck into the pages.

E – I don't really get attached to possessions, but I'd kill for my houseplants.

The Paddock is published by Duddingston Village Conservation Society. Editors: Lindsay Crofts and Nick Marshall. Layout: Nick Marshall. Contributors: Ewan Aitken, Barbara Anderson, Jenny Brown, Sarah Chalk, Tim Chalk, Lindsay Crofts, Roger Crofts, John Drever, Brendan Gill, Mike Godman, Jim Jack, Iain Jackson, Kenny MacAskill, Nick Marshall, Roger Mercer, Susan Mercer, Joe Nolan, Freda O'Byrne, Gary Peacock, Claudia Pottier, Emma Roe, Stefan Tymkewycz, Malcolm Windsor, Photos: Tim Chalk, Roger Crofts, Brendan Gill, Nick Marshall, Graeme Murdoch, Stephen Turner, Janette Wilson Contact DVCS: Secretary, 6 Old Church Lane. Email: secretary@duddingston-village.co.uk Website: www.duddingston-village.co.uk



There are currently a limited number of five and seven day membership packages available at **Duddingston Golf Club.**

Our full range of subscriptions and fees can be viewed on our website www.duddingstongolfclub.co.uk

Special low cost deals are available for youth members up to the age of 29 and the option to spread the annual subscription over an 8 month period is also available.

With regular dinner nights, social functions and a friendly atmosphere, it's a venue for all occasions.

This offer won't be available for long, so contact our Secretary:

Duncan Ireland on 661 7688 to book your membership now!

