



Friends of the Meadows and Bruntsfield Links

NEWSLETTER 34

Summer 2013

Convener's Comment

Charitable status

The group Friends of the Meadows and Bruntsfield Links (FoMBL) was founded in 2001, with a comprehensive constitution that has undeniably charitable purposes. However, we have never become a registered charity. Your committee feels that the time has come to seek charitable status, since among other things this will make it much easier to gain funding for our projects (sadly, WREN turned down our request to fund the Barclay Corner). Also, any donations will qualify for Gift Aid, and charities are exempt from VAT. The new Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organization (SCIO) is simpler than the old kind of charity, and very suitable for small organizations such as our own. We hope very much that all members will agree at the AGM that this is the way forward. Do come along and support us.

Another attraction at our AGM is a talk by Lord Fraser of Carmyllie on his scheme for a memorial to General Maczek on the Links, near where he used to live in Marchmont (see p. 3 for a taster to whet your appetite for more). There will also be the traditional croquet prelude to the main meeting.

Barbecues

After our long, cold, wet winter the barbecue season is finally upon us. You may be aware that at our public meeting in March the motion to provide more barbecue slabs was narrowly defeated: in fact the opposition voted to ban barbecues altogether. This might be a step too far, and in any case the slabs remain: but we are pleased to say that MABLAG (The Meadows and Bruntsfield Links Advisory Group) voted to remove all slabs sited around the golf courses and reposition them near to North Meadow Walk, within reach of the new silo bin with its companion barbecue bin. This is obviously an improvement, since golfers and cricketers will no longer be in conflict with barbecuers. A circular has also been sent to all Edinburgh University students to alert them to the Park Rules on the subject. We hope therefore that future barbecues will be held responsibly. We are also promised another Park Ranger to help with enforcement of the Rules.

Membership

Don't forget to renew your membership, which is due at the AGM. Either do this at the meeting, or via the website: www.fombl.org.uk: new members welcome! Our new membership secretary is Alec Mann. Please renew by banker's order if you can.

Heather Goodare (Acting Convener)

The next meeting of FOMBL will be on Thursday 20 June at 7.30 p.m. at the Croquet Club in Leven Terrace. From 6.30 p.m. there will be an opportunity for a croquet 'taster'. Then drinks will precede the meeting. There will be a short Annual General Meeting, followed by a talk by Lord Fraser of Carmyllie about the Polish General Maczek, and his proposal for a memorial to him on the Links. All are welcome.

The Fombls (otherwise known as the volunteers)

Underground, overground, fombling free
The Fombls of Edinburgh's Meadows are we
Finding some friends to go fombling around
We weed and pick litter all over the ground;
We fix up bird boxes, we chat and we rhyme
O do come and join us: we have a great time!
It's not all hard work; we do take a break
To put the world right over coffee and cake.
We gossip, we chatter, we prune and we sing
We'd love you to join us: so Richard you ring.

[The original image is copyright: any offers to draw one for the Fombls?]

If you'd like to join our volunteer work parties, please ring or email Richard Ellis on 0131 447 4124; rellis.consultancy@virgin.net. During the summer, times are variable; during autumn and winter we go back to Saturday mornings once a month. See also p. 4 (Meadows Festival) if you are free on Sunday June 2nd.

Giant Chessboard

A recent venture of the Council has been the installation of a giant chessboard within the play park at the east end of the Meadows. This needs to be booked five days in advance from Mike Shields (mike.shields@edinburgh.gov.uk), giving details of the school, club or group. Giant chess pieces are available for loan, free of charge, but only to organizations, not individuals. There is also a long-standing chessboard on the upper Links, recently repainted by our Treasurer: bring your own pieces.

Outdoor Table Tennis

In similar vein, our member Nick Lilwall is proposing a scheme for funding an outdoor table tennis table, near the existing chessboard, within the playground area at the east end of the Meadows. Outdoor table tennis tables in parks and playgrounds are a common feature in cities like Berlin. Edinburgh already has one in King George V Park, but Nick thinks we need lots more. He writes:

'Young people need to be encouraged to take up this exciting sport, which featured in the London Olympics and will be part of next year's Commonwealth Games. These outdoor tables are made of concrete and cost £1,500 - £2,000, plus an additional £500 for installation. Please send ideas for funding or sponsorship to fombl@fombl.org.uk.'



Good news: recycling

We are glad to report that the site on the corner of Whitehouse Loan and Bruntsfield Crescent to replace that in Warrender Park Road, which was set up without proper local consultation, has now been reinstated, apart from some planting of grass and bulbs, which will be done shortly. There is now more kerbside recycling, and we also have two silo bins on the Meadows and Links, which take *everything*. *Even better, the contents are now not going to landfill but will be sorted and recycled.*

A memorial to General Maczek

On 28th March Lord Fraser of Carmyllie launched a campaign for a memorial to the great Polish General Stanislaw Maczek. Although he was a brilliant General, entrusted by Sir Winston Churchill with the defences of Scotland from Nazi oppression, and he is recognized in the Netherlands for his cool courage and bluff in the Falaise Gap, when the Allied troops were otherwise pinned down by the Nazis, he has never been recognized in Scotland.

The legendary General Stanislaw Maczek was born in Poland in 1892. When he was well over 90 he received due recognition of his abilities in Poland, and HM The Queen made him a Companion of the Order of the Bath. He was admired by Field Marshall Montgomery and revered by Sir Winston Churchill. But in Scotland he lived quietly and humbly with his family in Edinburgh. He died aged 102.

The saga is fascinating. If you'd like to learn more, come to our AGM, when Lord Fraser will be telling the story in more detail, and outlining his plan for a memorial on the Links.

The Pavilion Café

You may have noticed that there has been a huge improvement to the back of the Pavilion, with a good deal of clearing of redundant branches and general tidying up. Amanda, who runs the Pavilion Café, has great schemes for using this ground productively. A wildlife corner, and low raised beds for growing herbs and vegetables, are among the plans. The idea is to demonstrate to local children the different skills and knowledge involved in these processes.

FoMBL volunteers have contributed to this work, which has already improved the area considerably. We wish Amanda well, and hope that we can continue to help.



A birthday party on the Links

Here is just one example of fun on the Links, before the golf season was under way. This was on one of the few sunny days during April 2013.

Reproduced by kind permission of the children's parents, and the photographer, Michelle Novenson.

Forthcoming events

Meadows Festival 1-2 June

FOMBL will be taking a stall on both days: volunteer helpers still needed, especially for Sunday from 11 a.m. If you can help, please ring Heather on 228 6998.

Safety ‘Matters’ 1 June organized by the South Central Neighbourhood Partnership.

In the meantime, please note the following safety rules during darkness (recommended by our Safer Neighbourhood Team): (1) Avoid walking alone; (2) Stick to routes that are well lit or covered by CCTV; (3) Carry a mobile phone, and contact the police if you are concerned by anyone’s behaviour; (4) Consider whether you would like to carry a panic alarm (these can be bought at minimal cost online or from your local police station). See below under **Useful Contacts** for new police number 101.

Edinburgh Arrow 2013 Competition by the Royal Company of Archers: 13 June 1-6 pm.

A great event for children who aspire to Robin Hoodery (bring a picnic, not a barbecue). Linda Hendry writes: ‘Archery has a longer tradition even than golf on the Links, because practice used to be well-nigh compulsory for men in the old days before gunpowder. The Royal Company of Archers meet in an imposing building on Causewayside with wheelchair access, and indoor archery facilities are provided for men and women’

Energize in the Meadows 14 June; Heels on Wheels 22 June

Public meeting and religious service 29 June

Urban Circus (The Ladyboys of Bangkok) 3-25 August; Evans Fun Fair 8-18 August

Lord Provost Cup 13 September (Bruntsfield Links)

Meadows Chamber Orchestra

The next concert of the MCO will be in St Cuthbert’s Parish Church, Lothian Road, Edinburgh, on Saturday 5th October at 7.45 pm. The programme will include a new work by Alfredo Caponetto, Gershwin’s Piano Concerto in F (soloist Svetoslav Todorov), and Sinfonia in B major, an orchestral transcription of Brahms’ Piano Trio Op. 8 by Swensen. The conductor is Peter Evans.

Useful contacts

Mike Shields Community Parks Officer Tel.0131 529 5126; email: mike.shields@edinburgh.gov.uk

Police: Safer Neighbourhood Team. PC 4601 Yocksan Bell 0131 662 5022 or Sgt 4554 Peter Houston (same number). To report a crime: 101 (costing a flat rate of 15p per call); emergency 999; or (anonymously) to Crimestoppers: 0800 555 111.

New Police Service of Scotland website is <http://www.scotland.police.uk>. New police 101 non-emergency number is now in use 24/7. This should reduce pressure on the 999 system, but do still ring 999 in a genuine emergency.

Anti-social behaviour (24/7): 0131 529 7050; **Litter:** 0131 529 3030

Defective lamp-post lighting: note number and ring Clarence – 0800 23 23 23

David Doig Local Environment Manager (responsibility for roads, parks and green spaces): email david.doig@edinburgh.gov.uk Tel. 0131 529 5187

Forestry Service: email forestry.service@edinburgh.gov.uk. Tel. 0131 311 7079

Complaints regarding Council vehicles driving on Links or Meadows:

Taskforce, Craigmillar Depot: 0131 664 8330; or Jim Monaghan on 07786 110 377

Graffiti: report to 0131 200 2000 or email operationdivide@lbp.pnn.police.uk

Kathy Evans: Local Community Safety Manager (tackling anti-social behaviour and joint working with the police) kathy.evans@edinburgh.gov.uk Tel. 0131 529 5106

Environmental Warden team leader: Mohammed Demnati 0131 529 5204

FOMBL Committee members

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