



Friends of the Meadows and Bruntsfield Links

NEWSLETTER 43

Summer 2016

Convener's Comment

Gardening can halve Alzheimer's risk

It's official! So if you are newly retired, and want to keep a sane mind in a healthy body (*mens sana in corpore sano*), and what's more, lower your risk of Alzheimer's, what more could you possibly do but sign up for FOMBL monthly work parties? Research in America in the *Journal of Alzheimer's Disease* by Cyrus A. Raji et al (featured in *The Times* of 11 March) seems to indicate that activities such as gardening could be really helpful.

What's more, we have made a new link with students in the co-operative housing complex at Wrights Houses (next to the Golf Tavern), who have signed up *en masse* for FOMBL membership (all 106 of them), and have already started helping with the voluntary work. We are absolutely delighted, and hope that they will be able to take over some of the administrative work as well. Many thanks indeed to Joe Boyle for his initiative in getting this scheme going. Joe and Tammy Rudduck will be our new Volunteer Co-ordinators: contact them on volunteer@fombl.org.uk, if you would like to volunteer, and have a look at the poem by Derek, one of the student volunteers, after our session on 2nd April (p. 3).

Noticeboards

Our new double-size noticeboard at the top of Middle Meadow Walk is now in place. Do go and have a look. We are really proud of it, and hope it will enhance the experience of visitors coming into the Meadows. The other noticeboards are also being closely watched and supervised to make sure they don't get too crowded and that interesting and relevant material is displayed.

Annual General Meeting

We are exceptionally lucky to have Ian Murray MP as our speaker at the AGM. Ian lives near the Meadows, and is very supportive of our work. You will know that he is the only Labour MP in the whole of Scotland, so he has a huge responsibility. Of course FOMBL, as a registered charity, cannot take up a party-political position, but I am sure that Ian will be able to give us a really interesting talk, and tell us his ambitions for green issues in Edinburgh and Scotland as a whole.

Heather Goodare (Convener)

The Summer meeting of FOMBL (AGM) will be on Friday 17 June 2016 at the Croquet Club, Leven Terrace, at 7.30 p.m. preceded by an opportunity to try your hand at croquet.

Refreshments start the meeting, and the speaker will be Ian Murray MP, whose constituency borders the Meadows to the south. All are welcome.

The Helen Acqueroff memorial drinking fountain

The article in Newsletter 42 by Margaret Ferguson Burns was most welcome, being very revealing about the subject of this memorial. It did not deal much with the memorial itself, though (which is made of granite, I think, rather than marble), nor with its unusual two-tone composition in grey and pink. The difference is just about apparent in the photograph that accompanied the article.

The memorial used to be entirely pink, a comparatively rare colour for granite when compared with grey, and consequently more expensive. Some Victorian buildings in Aberdeen use small portions of red granite for elements of detailing, but its most spectacular use is to be seen in the aptly named Hill o' Fare Buildings in King Street, which are entirely pink. The Hill o' Fare is situated north of Banchory, up Deeside, and is the most likely source for the granite used in the fountain on the Meadows, which is dated 1889, still in the heyday of the industry.

An attack by vandals

Some time (around three to four decades ago) vandals attacked the memorial, removing the basin from its pedestal and rolling it away. Something of that weight could not have been taken far, but whether it was destroyed beyond repair or lost for good, it was never to return. The Council received a number of complaints about its loss, and eventually, after a considerable time, the pedestal was restored - but in the wrong colour! Presumably the decision to use grey granite was taken on grounds of cost.

Formerly the memorial was guarded by iron railings, forming three sides of a square, with the fourth side, by the walkway, open to the public. After the restoration of the basin, this fourth side was also railed off. It is a shame to see this charming memorial caged like some wild animal in an old-style menagerie, but at least it should now be safe from further attack, and it remains available for close inspection. This allows the inscription to be read, and the initials IOGT (standing for the Independent Order of Good Templars) to be verified as correct.

Graeme Cruickshank

The Prince Albert Sundial

This structure has needed much attention from volunteers since the cobbles surrounding it have needed weeding at intervals recently: perhaps the answer would be to repair the cobbles and renew the mortar: another project for FOMBL? Standing in the west Meadows, it commemorates the opening of the Great International Exhibition of 1886. It is an octagonal pillar with a bronze armillary (skeleton) sphere at the top, which acts as a sundial.

Time and tide wait for no man

At the top of the pillar are shields, with the coronet of the Prince, the arms of the Marquis of Lothian, the cipher of the Lord Provost, the city Arms and the Scottish Arms, and the advice: 'Tak tent o' time, ere time be tint'. Also notable are quotations etched on the stone below: 'Time and tide wait for no man', 'Well arranged time is the surest sign of a well arranged mind', and 'I mark but the hours of sunshine', which are anonymous, but for the rest we have found sources: 'Light is the shadow of God' - Plato; 'Time is the chrysalis of eternity' - Jean-Paul Richter; 'As a servant earnestly desireth the shadow' - Job 7.2; 'Time as he passes us has a dove's wing unsoiled and swift and of a silken sound' - Cowper; 'Man's days are as a shadow that passeth away' - Psalm 133.4.

The trees planted around the sundial are commemorative trees, planted by members of the Royal family, including HRH Prince Albert Victor of Wales, the grandson to the then reigning monarch, Queen Victoria, to mark the occasion. Originally three sycamores, there are now only two.

(Ed.)

Forthcoming Events

Disability Festival: Community Gala to celebrate the successes and the contributions that individuals with learning disabilities make in Edinburgh. 19 May.

Army in the Park: An event designed to allow the general public to interact with their Armed Forces and particularly Army Reserve units from the local area: 19-21 May.

Meadows Festival: This popular annual event, run by volunteers, runs from 2-6 June. It is a community festival, with music, stalls, games, bars, and hot food 10am - 6pm. All proceeds go to charity - SC017116. FOMBL will be taking a stall. A separate (commercial) Funfair also runs from 30 May to 6 June.

Gung Ho: Fun 5k run with 10 large inflatables: starts at 9.00 a.m. and ends at 4.00 p.m., 11 June.

Meadows Chamber Orchestra: A concert in aid of Marie Curie Cancer Care in the Queen's Hall at 7.45 pm on 17 June, with the following programme: Bartók's Divertimento for String Orchestra, Liszt's Piano Concerto no. 2, Dvorák's Romance in F minor, and his Czech Suite Op. 39. Conductor Peter Evans, Piano Richard Beauchamp, violin Uli Evans. Tickets: 0131 668 2019, or at the door.

Norwegian Marching Band: will play for 45 minutes, probably in the cricket area, on 30 June.

Edinburgh Leisure Join In: Taster sports and activities promoting their Leisure Centres and summer coached activities: 1 July.

Edinburgh Ratha Yatra Festival of Chariots: A free event, involving one large float, gathering in the Meadows before parading through the city, finishing at Holyrood Park, on 23 July.

Underbelly: A Festival circus event, as last year, lasting from 26 July to 25 August; **John Evans Fun Fair:** Open daily, from 9 to 22 August.

Viva Corpset: Norwegian Marching Band: a youth marching band, mainly children aged 10-18: free event 11.30-12.15 a.m. on 10 August.

Great Strides: a family walk from the Meadows to Craigmillar Castle and back via the Innocent Railway path (7 miles): 10.00 a.m. - 2.00 p.m. 4 September: Proceeds to Sick Kids Friends.

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>.

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

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

Road repairs and development: Alan Dunlop, Area Roads Manager: alan.dunlop@edinburgh.gov.uk.
Tel. 0131 529 3719

Complaints regarding Council vehicles driving on Links or Meadows: 0131 529 3030; Task Force Manager (responsible for street cleaning and grounds maintenance) Rab Farquhar

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: Mohamed Demnati 0131 529 5204

People Against Litter (PAL): *please contact* <http://www.peopleagainstlitter.org/>.

FOMBL Committee members

Convener and Newsletter Editor: Heather Goodare, 3 Glengyle Terrace, EH3 9LL Tel. 0131 228 6998.

Email: convener@fombl.org.uk

Secretary: Nina Fedenczuk, 10/2 Glengyle Terrace, EH3 9LN Tel. 229 3035. Email secretary@fombl.org.uk

Treasurer: Ron Carr, email treasurer@fombl.org.uk

Membership Secretary: Alec Mann, 5 West Newington Place, Edinburgh EH9 1QT, Tel. 0131 667 8212.

membership@fombl.org.uk **Volunteer co-ordinators:** Joe Boyle, Tammy Rudduck: volunteer@fombl.org.uk

Committee: Andy Devenport, Linda Hendry, Fernando Miranda, Neil Roger, Peter Upton.

Webmaster: Philip McDowell

Website: www.fombl.org.uk