



Friends of Corstorphine Hill

NEWSLETTER No.42

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GREEN FLAG COMMUNITY AWARD WINNERS

Once again the walled garden comes up trumps, winning the Green Flag Community Award 2011, the only one in Scotland with Corstorphine Hill Local Nature Reserve also getting a Green Flag.

We marked the occasion with a flag raising ceremony at the walled garden and, despite the weather being damp it was attended by between 50 and 60 people. After a few words from Councillor Paul Eadie, school children from Fox Covert School, which is an ECO School, raised the flag. Then, to the accompaniment of a piper, we filed into the garden for refreshments.

A big thank you to all who assisted in erecting the gazebos and serving the refreshments.

Winning the Green Flag Community Award is a great way for the hard work of the volunteers who tend the garden to be recognised. The garden's popularity seems to grow year on year.

We had a visit from a nursery class from St George's School who said they loved coming to the garden as it was such a safe and fun environment for the children and a community group from Leith who enjoyed strolling round on a lovely sunny day. Autumn is a time of great beauty and colour in the garden, so why not come along and wander round.

The Hill continues to be popular with walkers and visitors to Edinburgh and we are looking at providing waymarkers for the main paths, as there have been the occasion where people have lost their way, especially in summer when the trees are in full leaf. Our Ian McGeachy and the ranger David Kyles, are working on finding the best type of marker.



Lastly, spare a thought for our feathered friends as we approach Autumn and the coming Winter months. In the walled garden we keep our bird feeders stocked so we encourage as wide a range of bird species as possible. See how many you can spot.

Payment of annual subscriptions and any donations can be made using our boxes placed in Corstorphine Library, Blackhall Library, Balgreen Library and the Dower House.



Summer Guided Walks

These informal walks are suitable for all ages and are designed to introduce the varied plant and animal life of the Hill to local people.

Summer Events.

The Wildflower Plant walk led by Brian Moffat on 29th May was very enjoyable, and the weather was good. You may have missed this event as it took place before the last newsletter was delivered- so please come along next time.

Kirsty Straughan's Stoytelling in the Walled Garden on July 3rd was well attended by children and parents, also on a fine Sunday afternoon.

Gordon's Bee and Butterfly Hunt was on a wet afternoon, August 7th and one brave family turned up along with some hardy bumblebees.

Autumn Events :

Sunday October 2nd . 'Fungus Foray'

David Adamson will lead another of his very popular searches for interesting fungi on the Hill.

Meet at the Kaimes/Cairnmuir Road car park at 2pm.



Evening Talks at the Capital Hotel all at 7.30 pm

THE UNION CANAL, PAST AND PRESENT.

by a member of the Linlithgow Union Canal Society.

Wednesday 9th November

EDINBURGH OLD AND NEW

by Andrew Broom, Corstorphine Trust.

Tuesday 28th February 2012

CORSTORPHINE HILL TOWER

Edinburgh Open Doors Days, Sat 24th and Sun 25th September.

The Tower will be open both days 2-4 pm, and we expect lots of visitors !

Visitor numbers to the Tower continue to increase with 50 people coming on a few afternoons. There have also been some wet Sundays where only a dozen brave walkers turned up. On June 26th for the first time in years we had to close because of dangerously high winds. As we all know it has not been a great summer!

Thanks to all the volunteers for another successful year.

Zoo News

Eddie Price and Donald Gorrie recently had a very encouraging meeting with the new top people at the Zoo – Hugh Roberts, the Chief Executive Officer and Manus Fullerton, the Chairman. Eddie and Donald reported to the Friends' Committee that they were most encouraged by the friendly, constructive and understanding tone of the meeting.

Hugh and Manus explained how they were getting to grips with the Zoo's problems and future plans. So far, they had no specific issues to raise, but, as they developed their ideas in detail, points might emerge on which the Zoo and the Friends would disagree. Our discussions convinced us that we would find many issues for the Friends to support what the Zoo was trying to achieve and, where there was any disagreement, it would be dealt with in a friendly and co-operative spirit. Once the Zoo has more detailed proposals to consult about, the Friends and the Zoo will discuss these. The change in atmosphere from previous meetings with the Zoo's top brass was very marked and gave the Friends hopes for a co-operative future to benefit Corstorphine Hill, and the local community and the Zoo. Donald Gorrie.

Clerwood House

Clerwood House planning application:

The planning application for three houses in the walled garden and paddock site of the General Teaching Council at Clerwood House has been refused. We will keep you updated on any further news in due course.

LOCAL INTEREST.....

A New Book by Bill Scott:

The Buttercup: The Remarkable Story of Andrew Ewing and the Buttercup Dairy Company. is now available for purchase for £9.95 post free, either by **MAIL ORDER** from Leghorn Books Ltd, P O Box 114, Alnwick Northumberland NE88 9DS. or On Line from their web site.

The Buttercup is beautifully produced and illustrated, with over ninety colour and black and white photographs, many of which come from the private collections of the book's contributors

Reminiscences.....

Do you have any stories or personal recollections of events in the Corstorphine Hill area or Corstorphine in general?

If you do, we would like to hear them and publish them in our Newsletter. There are many books published but personal memories and experiences are always interesting. We can help with editing if required.

So dig out those old scrap books and see what you can find.

Newsletter Delivery.

We are looking for more people to deliver our Newsletter, if you think you could deliver a few please contact Martin Craven on 334 1247

RANGER REPORT September 2011

The summer has been relatively quiet with few incidents noted during the Countryside Ranger Services regular patrols of the Hill. The usual partying hotspot by the Tower hasn't been used to the extent it has been in previous years although a large amount of broken glass was cleared at the beginning of August. We will continue to liaise with the Community Safety Teams and local Police and engage with local schools in reducing any incidents of anti-social behaviour encountered on the Hill.

Several different groups used Corstorphine Hill over the lead up to and during the summer period. Dalry Primary School undertook their regular Forest School sessions which were very successful. Big World's holiday club used the Hill in a sustainable manner to learn forest craft skills, for a week during August. Several volunteer groups have been assisting us with our efforts in controlling the non-native species Himalayan balsam and salmonberry – this will continue into the autumn season so please look out for posters onsite advertising such activities to get involved in.

The Ranger Service ran two very successful badger watches and encounters with foxes and owls were thrown in for added value!! We have also undertaken a programme of painting all furniture, barriers, gates and signage which will continue across the winter season. The long overdue installation (due to some technical difficulties) of our interpretation panel at Rest and Be Thankful will also occur over the next period.

The heavy rains of July and indeed August have caused some damage to some of the path network on the Hill. In line with the Maintenance Plan, path scraping, replenishment and ditch and culvert clearance will be undertaken over the coming weeks.

As a result of continued improvements, general upkeep and promotion of Corstorphine Hill LNR, we have retained our Green Flag Award. This demonstrates year on year improvements and confirms the commitment and partnership working with other Council departments and the local community that has grown over the years. This is compounded by the Friends winning the Green Flag Community Award which I believe is still the only one in Scotland. I would like to congratulate the Friends on this award and look forward to continuing and developing our relationship for the benefit of Corstorphine Hill LNR in the future.

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