



Friends of Corstorphine Hill

NEWSLETTER No. 29

June 2007

Editor: Les Hutcheon Tel 334 3832

The New Committee

At the AGM held on 19th April the Chairman reported that three members had resigned from the committee during the year for personal reasons. These were Willma Carroll, Alison MacKintosh and Os Wallace. The Chairman expressed his thanks for the efforts and work that they had all put into helping the cause of the Friends. Although Alison has moved from the district and can no longer participate in committee work she continues to pursue putting together a history of the Hill. Indeed he went on to thank all the volunteers who had helped in the many and various ways throughout the year. Eddie went on to welcome anyone willing to give a little of their time pointing out the satisfaction derived out of feeling an ownership of the Hill.

Two new members were elected to the committee Donald Gorrie and Gordon Swann.

The current team is as follows:-

| | |
|-------------------|------------------|
| Eddie Price | Chairman |
| Donald Gorrie | Secretary |
| Fred Davies | Treasurer |
| Alister Hayes | Minute Secretary |
| Martin Craven | Committee member |
| Les Hutcheon | Committee member |
| Eddie MacLennan | Committee member |
| Cecilia McPherson | Committee member |
| Gordon Swann | Committee member |
| Alan White | Committee member |

The addition of new faces gives the team a useful blend of experience and fresh ideas. It also gives an opportunity to reallocate some of the duties to best suit the skills and interests of the individual members whose common interest is the Hill.

Tower Opening Dates

The stone tower which stands at the top of Corstorphine Hill, and is fittingly our logo, was erected in 1871 by W. MacFie to commemorate the centenary of the birth of Sir Walter Scott. Later it was presented to the City by W. G. Walker in 1932, which marks the centenary of his death. From the top of the tower there are commanding views all round.

Each summer a band of Friends' volunteers open the tower for a couple of hours on alternate Sunday afternoons to enable anyone walking on the Hill at the time to enjoy the views. The schedule for tower opening dates (weather permitting) is shown below.

| | |
|---------------------|----------------|
| Sunday 20 May | 2.00 - 4.00 pm |
| Sunday 3 June | 2.00 - 4.00 pm |
| Sunday 17 June | 2.00 - 4.00 pm |
| Sunday 1 July | 2.00 - 4.00 pm |
| Sunday 15 July | 2.00 - 4.00 pm |
| Sunday 29 July | 2.00 - 4.00 pm |
| Sunday 12 August | 2.00 - 4.00 pm |
| Sunday 26 August | 2.00 - 4.00 pm |
| Sunday 9 September | 2.00 - 4.00 pm |
| Sunday 23 September | 2.00 - 4.00 pm |

Summer Guided Walks Programme

Here is the guided walks programme to point out some of the fascinating detail to be found on the Hill by our regular and extremely knowledgeable guides. Martin has already taken a bird walk.

Mary Robertson will be taking a **Wild Flower** walk on **Sunday 1 July starting in the Walled Garden at 2.00 pm.**

Mary Robertson will lead a **Tree** walk on **Sunday 29 July starting in the Walled Garden at 2.00 pm.**

David Adamson will lead a **Fungi** walk on **Sunday 23 September meeting at Kaimes Road car park at 2.00 pm**

The walks take about two hours and anyone interested should turn up on the day to join in.

I have just taken over organising the Guided Walks programme and if you want to know more about the walks contact me **Gordon Swann on 334 4769.**

Next year I hope to be able to extend the programme to help us further our knowledge of natural history of our valuable nature reserve.

Gordon Swann

Ranger's Report

As the newly appointed Countryside Ranger for Corstorphine Hill I have been given the opportunity in this newsletter to introduce myself. I have been unofficially covering Corstorphine Hill since my predecessor Fiona Devlin moved on in September 2006 but it was only in Mid-April this year that I was told I would be concentrating on Corstorphine Hill permanently.

I have been working with the Council Ranger Service since December 2004 and have previously covered Cammo Estate and the Water of Leith. Along with Corstorphine Hill I am now also covering the River Almond and the Foreshore area from South Queensferry to Portobello.

On Corstorphine Hill over the next few months I will be progressing the "Woodland in and Around Towns" Project. The tree and path works have all been completed now but there is still map and interpretation boards to be installed, waymarkers showing path routes around the hill to be put in as well as picnic benches to be provided on the western side of the hill.

We are having a series of badger walks on the first 3 Thursdays of June this year. Booking for these is essential and places are limited to 10 per walk so those who are interested in coming along should book asap by calling the number below.

I am hoping to have a regular nature/wildlife column in this newsletter giving information on what to look out for during the differing seasons on the Hill.

If you have any concerns regarding any aspect of the hill or see any rare wildlife then please do not hesitate to contact me on the number below.

Hamish Bell
Countryside Ranger
Tel: 447 7145

In the Garden

This spring has been exceptionally dry and very little planting has been done. With rain falling in the last few days it is amazing how the garden recovers and it looks great with the trees coming into leaf, and plants such as bluebells and Ragged Robin in flower. More sensory plants have been put in the bed opposite the animal seat. A low wall on the edge of the meadow was built by BTCV. This wall will eventually be planted up with small alpiners. BTCV have also added ropes to the bridge at the wetland to add a final touch to the project. On the "gardens open day" The Cockburn Association visitors were very impressed by the walled garden.

Alan White

Zoo Boundary

A number of proposals concerning the Zoo Development Master Plan have been reported in the press. No decisions have been finalised yet.

We have formed a sub-committee to keep a watching brief on any new developments and be in a position to respond quickly if we feel that anything contrary to our interests is being progressed.

Eddie Price



Walled Garden Gate

The walled garden is open every day. A team of volunteers open up in the morning and lock up at night in order to minimise any vandalism and generally keep an eye on the garden. The work teams open on a Tuesday and close on a Thursday since they are there anyway. Therefore the garden is open from 11.00 am till 4.00 pm as a core time. In fact it is open for much longer hours especially in the summer, depending on how it fits in for the volunteers.

Ian McGeachy 476 5499 has taken over coordinating the rota for the gate volunteers.

Membership Cards

This year we intend to introduce membership cards. The purpose is to help us with the records of our membership and to make you the member, feel more comfortable in parting with that all important £1-00 subscription. This is a card you can feel proud to own, knowing that it helps support the Hill, and be completely confident that it definitely carries no encrypted information nor does it require memorising a pin number!

Friends of Corstorphine Hill

Registered as a charity No. SCO28842

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