



LORD MORAY'S PLEASURE GROUNDS

NEWSLETTER – NOVEMBER 2017

Chairman's Comments

Welcome to the Christmas edition of the Moray Feu newsletter.

I am happy to report the continued smooth running of the Gardens due to the herculean labours of the Committee and the harmonious and industrious gardening team. My term of office is now expired but I shall remain in post while we negotiate a smooth transition towards Fiona Young taking over as Chairman.

The Bank gardens were opened this year in connection with the Cockburn Association's Open Doors day. The project was a great success with some hundreds of interested and well behaved visitors attending.

The massive stone arches in the bank gardens are to be assessed by a structural engineer as a ten year exercise. No structural weakening is suspected.

Provoked by the prolonged utilisation of the Doune Terrace access by an individual Feuar, the Committee has ruled that that applications to use this access for extended building work will be more carefully scrutinised, and that portable toilets will not, in future, be allowed in any of the gardens.

The Committee is considering engaging a part time self-employed painter to give continuous attention to our black painted railings, gates and benches.

Please note the Christmas party on Friday 15th December at 11 Forres Street, again thanks to Grace Durham's kind hospitality. Bank Garden honey will be for sale on that occasion, a consequence of the thriving honeybee project, to which new recruits are welcome.

Robert Hay, Chairman

Gardens

We had a full three man strong team working in the gardens until mid-September when Elliot returned to his studies at the Botanics. Our other part time student, Guy Mclean, who had been with us continually since September 2015, sadly had to leave last week to get us back to our normal quota of two men for the winter.

Paul Broda has been the architect behind the new and attractive herb garden in the Doune Terrace area. When these plants become established feuars may help themselves for culinary purposes. There is quite a variety, all marked to make sure you pick the one intended!

The main focus in the last six months has been the Bank Gardens where you may have noticed the cutting back of overgrown laurels and removal of what had become a one sided laurel hedge that hung over the path below the first set of arches. The area behind is now open to view and has been planted with rhododendrons. More plants are still to be decided on.

Another area is the south end of the first lawn which was cleared some time ago but not planted until last month when we introduced rhododendrons, hydrangeas, and various herbaceous plants. The colourful display in the summer was all due to self-seeded flowers. There are various recently cleared banks where the gardeners continue to transfer foxgloves ferns and similar, to fill the spaces, and these seem to be growing well. Three rhododendrons have been put in on the bank above the bonfire but are too small to be noticeable yet.

Until recently leaves were heaped on piles below the bonfire, slowly turning into leaf mould which was quite unusable because it was infiltrated by ground elder and nettles. This area has now been tidied up to accommodate a sturdy structure built by the gardeners to hold three years' worth of leaves so that we can

make our own leaf mould. Leaf mould is excellent for improving soil structure. The gardens sub-committee hope that you have noticed how quiet the new leaf blower is, or perhaps you have not heard it at all.

Finally, you may see a young man climbing in our trees in the next few months. He is a Botany student studying lichens growing in tree canopies and intending to write a thesis on what he finds up there.

Fiona Jarvie

Traffic

I have just returned from the UN Climate Change Conference in Bonn and am pleased to say that the issue of traffic pollution impacts on public health continues to ascend the agenda. The Environment Commissioner for Ontario, Dianne Saxe, also reminded us that it is not just the type of pollution that counts, but where it is emitted that affects people's exposure. Diesel particulate (PM2.5) pollution is a good reason for more use of electric cars, however this doesn't address the 50% of particulate pollution that arise from sources such as suspension, tyres and brakes that are currently not regulated at all! Since cleaner engines are only part of the problem, the displacement of traffic into residential areas will still have health impacts in 2050 and so our Council's waiting game needs to stop.

Following up on existing promises would be a good start:

(i) 24x7x365 passage of HGVs over roads in the Feu signposted as unsuitable for this traffic - the Council promised alternative routes but has not delivered

(ii) Use of Haymarket - Shandwick Place - Princes Street corridor in the evening and overnight. This is allowed by the Tram Traffic Regulation Order in place and would deliver quieter nights in residential streets. Unfortunately the Council has done nothing to advertise this route, with current signage confusing to say the least!

Please bring these points to the attention of our elected representatives at all levels of government - our MPs, MEPs and Councillors

were all advised about adverse health impacts by the Traffic Subcommittee a decade ago, but our Council appears to be moving to extend the Tram before dealing with these issues.

Ashley Lloyd

Social

2017 - A year of happy 'get together' events within the Feu. Two small lunches at Whighams and we plan more of the same next year.

In June our after AGM Party was very well attended. Rachel organised plenty of splendid food and we drank good wine. We were lucky to enjoy a lovely, warm evening in the Moray Place Gardens.

Our August Festival Garden Party had even more glorious sunny weather. Over ninety people met, some wearing very fancy hats and posh gear, but all sporting enthusiastic moods and happy smiles. Our Chairman, Robert Hay, invited guests from other garden groups. It was an excellent way to meet new friends and to discuss old problems. We had wonderful support from many Feuars who brought a variety of snacks.

Our most recent party was for Halloween. An unwelcome guest was the fierce North Wind but we wrapped up warmly and actually enjoyed it.

Next is the Christmas Party. FRIDAY, DECEMBER 15th at 11 Forres St (6.30pm) Tickets £5 payable on the night but please contact Whitelaw Wells to reserve a place. We hope to see you there.

Enid Holman-Arthur

Dogs

A reminder, now that the dark nights are upon us, that anyone walking a dog in the gardens after dusk must carry a torch and be careful to pick up after your dog.

Any new dogs or visiting dogs should be registered with the Secretaries, Whitelaw Wells, and issued with a green tag.

Any dog related matters should be addressed to **Candia Kingston** candiakingston@hotmail.com