

Welcome to the Moray Feu,

Looking out of your window and it's more than likely that you see greenery. There are long views over Bank Garden out to the Kingdom of Fife, or looking through the trees in the gardens fronting Randolph, Ainslie and Moray, elegant Georgian architecture is framed by vistas of seasonal beauty.

Living in the feu lets you enjoy all of this. The photo on page five shows the countryside atmosphere of the Bank Garden, with its tree-lined walkways, woodland planting and beehives. But the Bank Garden has something quite unique. Running along the back of the houses is a footpath, halfway along modest stone arches start to support the path, these soon give way to grand arches as you near Dean Bridge and the walker finds themselves elevated into the canopy of the trees reaching up from below. This might just entice you to add the Bank Garden to your membership.

Social media and websites are one of the chief assets for accessing information and staying informed, whether you're on the go or relaxing at home. Page three offers links to all our outlets.

Remember school days, when endless rules governed daily life? You can relax, for our management committee made up of fellow Feuars have kept these to a comfortable level to help all users enjoy the gardens safely and securely, flip to page six for full details.

Our top tip is to keep this handbook nearby, at your fingertips. It's full of helpful information. For example, page four explains what to do if you need an extra garden key. Planning a garden party? Visit page three. There we also have a list of annual LMF social events held, along with the somewhat more sober AGM. Keep an eye on our Facebook group for details about other events.

From climbing frames, table tennis, and garden chairs, to the protocol when walking dogs, all the information you need to enjoy our four gardens is here in the handbook. Oh, and we explain how fees are calculated, too.

We're sure that time spent in the gardens, perhaps reading the history of the Moray Feu (page 10), is the perfect tonic for the stress of modern life.

Yours
Moray Feu Committee.
2021

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CONTACTS:

LMF Secretary & Treasurer (Mr Kevin Cattanach)
Whitelaw Wells
9 Ainslie Place
Edinburgh EH3 6AT

Telephone: 0131 226 5822

Email: info@morayfeu.com

DIGITAL

Website: www.morayfeu.com

Facebook Closed Group

For all paid garden members, you are invited to join our Closed Group Facebook page. This enables easy and regular communication, conversations and news updates (in addition to the twice-yearly printed newsletters), whilst remaining private from anyone outside the Feu.

www.facebook.com/groups/282104212712221/?ref=share

Instagram

Follow our Instagram page for regular photos of the Feu's gardens and architecture as we build a photographic library. From seasonal change to developments in the gardens or simply to remind yourself of parts of the Feu perhaps you haven't been to for a long time.

www.instagram.com/moray-feu-gardens/

AGM

The Annual General Meeting (AGM) is usually held in June each year. Notification of the date, time and place of the AGM together with the agenda, the Committee's Report and the Accounts for the preceding financial year ended 31 March will be issued to Feuars not less than 21 days prior to the meeting.

Whitelaw Wells hold the Minutes of Annual General Meetings, which are available for inspection on request. Personal or sensitive information will be redacted from minutes made available for inspection.

EVENTS

Social events are held throughout the year. You will receive notification of these from time to time by Facebook, email or print. Three annual events are:

Burn's Night, AGM & Summer Drinks, Christmas Drinks

Newsletters are issued twice a year to all feuars. The latest editions can be viewed on the website.

PRIVATE EVENTS AND ACCESS

Holding a private in the gardens? Simply complete the online form and email it back, or print and complete, and post to Sandra Thompson at Whitelaw Wells. There is a separate form for granting access to tradespeople. Again, complete online and submit or print and post to Sandra Thompson at Whitelaw Wells.

KEYS

Keys are for the use of Feuars and Outside Subscribers who have paid their annual assessment only and should not be handed out to other parties. The same key also fits the box in the central roundel containing the croquet set, and the small shed storing tables and chairs. For a deposit, additional keys may be obtained from the Secretaries' office.

RECREATIONAL EQUIPMENT

Moray Gardens has a fixed climbing frame for the use of children aged 5-13 and swings for children up to the age of 5 on a soft play bark surface. There is also a built-in barbeque, table tennis and croquet set. If Feuars whose children use the play equipment become aware of any damage or other issue pertaining to the equipment they should let Sandra Thomson of Whitelaw Wells know as a matter of urgency in order that it can be addressed.

ASSESSMENTS

Assessments for gardens' maintenance usually sent out after the annual meeting and cover the year to the following 31st March. They are based on the rateable value of each property as of 31st March 1989. The annual pence-per-pound rate* is approved each year by the Feuars at the AGM, and the assessments are collected 30 days from the issue date by direct debit. Randolph Crescent residents pay an additional assessment fee set each year at the AGM for maintenance of Randolph Crescent garden.

**VAT is inclusive if the MF remains VAT resisted*

ALTERATIONS & CITY OF EDINBURGH COUNCIL

The Feu is within the Old and New Towns of Edinburgh UNESCO World Heritage Site and Edinburgh New Town Conservation Area. The properties within the Feu are all Grade A Listed Buildings. Accordingly, permission is required from the Council for even minor alterations to buildings and for some tree work. Please check with City of Edinburgh Council before commencing works on your property.

RECORDS

Maintaining up-to-date records of current proprietors is difficult but important. When you sell your property, please remind your solicitor to advise the secretaries of the name of the new owner, and to apportion the assessment.

DEDICATIONS & MEMORIALS

We welcome dedications in the form of donations to planting in general but not in the form of individual trees or shrubs. Such donations will be acknowledged in communications such as our newsletter and on our website.

Lord Moray's Feu

Private Gardens of Edinburgh

GARDENS

The four gardens of Randolph Crescent, Ainslie Place, Moray Place, and the Bank are unique islands of tranquillity in Edinburgh's otherwise traffic-busy West End. They are maintained with care and devotion for the enjoyment of feuars, their families, guests, and tenants.

From the woodland feel of the Bank Gardens, alive with the sound of the Water-of-Leith, to the striped lawns and flower beds of Moray, the Georgian, elegant openness of Ainslie, or the elevated lawns of Randolph, where you can watch the world pass by, each of our four gardens boasts unique charms.



Garden Rules

The pleasure grounds of the Moray Feu are the common property of the Feuars and are available for the enjoyment of all of the Feuars who have paid their assessments. In order to preserve and maintain the environment and beauty of the pleasure grounds and their enjoyment by the Feuars it is essential that those entering and using the gardens do so with due respect and consideration both for fellow Feuars and the gardens.

The following rules have been agreed upon for users of the gardens.

Keys

Keys should not be handed out to third parties. The gardens are for the use of Feuars, their families, guests, tenants and outside subscribers only.

Gates

The gates must be securely closed immediately after entering or exiting the gardens as leaving them open will compromise the security of the gardens and allow small children or dogs to run out onto the road.

Care of Gardens

All users of the gardens, including dogs, must take care not to injure the plants and must not enter into the flower beds or shrubberies at any time.

Code of Conduct for Dogs

Only dogs registered with the Secretaries and wearing their specially issued tags are allowed in the gardens. Dogs are only permitted in the gardens in the charge of the key-holder or their appointee who must be able to exercise effective control of the dog at all times. Download registration form from website or request from Whitelaw Wells.

Dogs are to be kept under effective control, in line with the Control of Dogs (Scotland) Act 2010. This means that dogs should either be:

- kept on a lead, or
- kept in sight at all times, with the key-holder or appointee aware of what it's doing and confident it will return promptly on command.

Any dog, regardless of its breed, can cause apprehension, alarm, or even injury if its behaviour is 'out of control'. This does not necessarily involve aggressive behaviour, but could involve running up to, barking at, or jumping at other people or other dogs. What may seem like playful, friendly behaviour to one person, can be alarming to another. Key holders and appointees have a responsibility to ensure that their dog does not impede the enjoyment of the gardens for others.

Faeces of dogs must be picked up immediately by the key-holder or appointee, in line with the Dog Fouling (Scotland) Act 2003. Bags and bins are provided for this purpose. When taking dogs into the gardens after dark, key-holders or appointees must carry a torch.

Dogs must be kept on a lead at all times between the hours of sunset and sunrise.

Dogs allowed in the gardens should be regularly wormed.

Lord Moray's Feu

Private Gardens of Edinburgh

Owners or their appointees must ensure that their dogs do not enter the shrubberies or the flowerbeds and that they do not cause damage to the lawns.

Key-holders will make anyone they appoint to walk their dog in the gardens aware of the relevant parts of this code.

The Committee reserves the right to require dogs to be kept on a lead at all times or restrict use of the gardens by specific dogs if this code is not followed.

Ball Games

Except for croquet, only ball games played by children are allowed, and only on condition that a soft ball (not a regulation rugby, cricket or football) is used so that no damage is caused, and that enjoyment of the gardens by others is not disturbed.

Bicycles

Small bicycles are allowed, but only on the paths. No cycling on full-sized bicycles is permitted.

Fireworks

No fireworks may be set off in any of the gardens.

BBQ

No disposable barbecues should be put directly on the grass, as this kills the grass and leaves an unsightly brown patch. All litter, particularly food, should be carefully gathered up and removed from the gardens. The bins in the gardens are for windblown litter only.

Private Functions

Feuars and outside subscribers wishing to hold a private function involving 20 or more people must first obtain the consent of the garden's committee in accordance with the Private Events Policy. Application forms, which must be submitted to Whitelaw Wells not less than one month in advance of the event, can be found on the website.

Awning Use

You may hire the awning for the charge for feuars of £30, outside subscribers £50. The gardeners will erect and dismantle it. Please contact John Hughes, the Head Gardener, telephone number 07979 763711, during working hours, to discuss the three possible locations. Payment should be made on booking approval. Please make cheques payable to: Lord Moray's Feuars.

Nurseries

Nurseries may allow their children to be in the gardens only between the following times:

- 10.00 am – 12.00 noon
- 2.15 pm – 3.15 pm

Gardeners

Two full-time gardeners, John Hughes and Melvyn Clench, are employed by the Management Committee on behalf of the Feuars and are given directions by and report to the garden's convenor. Outside contractors, such as a tree surgeon, are engaged when required.

CONTRACTOR ACCESS TO BANK GARDENS

Feuars seeking access for tradesmen through the Bank Gardens must complete the Tradesmen's Access Application Form which is available on the website, which can either be completed online and submitted or downloaded, printed and posted to Sandra Thomson at Whitelaw Wells not less than one month prior to the date on which access is requested. Access must not be taken unless and until approval is given.

Access by Tradesmen to the Bank Gardens

Access for tradesmen through the Bank Gardens is only permitted with the prior consent of the Garden's Committee and in accordance with the Policy on Tradesmen Access to the Bank Gardens. Application forms, which must be submitted to Whitelaw Wells not less than one month in advance of access being required, can be found on the website

Feuars and outside subscribers are responsible for ensuring compliance with these rules by those accompanying them, by their own children and dogs and by their tenants, and shall be bound to make good any damage done.

Policy On Tradesmen's Access To The Bank Gardens

Applications for tradesmen's access to deliver materials to the rear of properties backing on to the Bank Gardens must first be approved in writing by the Management Committee. Access is not permitted for daily or regular access from the bank garden for tradespersons to access a worksite. Applications must be made in the prescribed form not less than one calendar month prior to access being first required. Application forms are available on our website (www.morayfeu.com) or from Whitelaw Wells, 9 Ainslie Place, Edinburgh, EH3 6AS.

1. The use of the gardens by tradesmen taking access through the gardens must not interfere with the use and enjoyment of the gardens by Feuars at any time and it will be the responsibility of the Feuars granted such access to ensure all tradesmen using the access comply with this requirement at all times.
2. The access gate at Doune Terrace must not be left open. When opened it must be supervised.
3. Mechanical equipment is not permitted to be used in the gardens at any time.
4. Access will only be permitted to deliver materials to the rear of properties with an access to the Bank Gardens. Applicants must provide specific details of which items of equipment and quantities of materials to be brought through gardens.
5. No plant, equipment or materials will be left unsupervised anywhere in the gardens at any time.
6. Portable toilets must not be placed in the gardens or in the vicinity of the access at Doune Terrace. Any Feuar requiring a portable toilet for their tradesmen must ensure it is located as near as practical to the front of their property and nowhere else in the Feu.

7. Access will not be permitted through the Bank Gardens for removal of downtakings, debris or spoil. For the avoidance of doubt contractors' skips must not be placed within the gardens or in the vicinity of the Doune Terrace access. Feuars requiring a skip for downtakings, debris, spoil or the like must ensure it is located as near as practical to the front of their property and nowhere else in the Feu.
8. Feuars granted access through the gardens for tradesmen will be personally responsible for any damage occasioned to the gardens or any part thereof and the fittings and fixtures therein and will be liable to meet the cost of making good such damage as determined by the Committee of Management.
9. Any Feuar granted access must confirm that their buildings insurance policy duly covers them and their tradesmen employed by them for public liability and for any damage occasioned to the gardens and will inform their insurers of the works being undertaken.
10. Feuars granted access will fully indemnify the proprietors of the Bank Gardens and the Committee of Management for any liability whatsoever and howsoever arising out of the exercise of access granted through the gardens.
11. Any breach of the foregoing rules will result in the withdrawal of consent for access.

PRIVATE EVENTS

Feuars and outside subscribers wishing to hold a Private Event in the gardens for 20 or more people require to obtain permission from the Garden's Committee by completing an application form requesting approval from the Garden's Committee which must be completed online or downloaded, printed and posted to Sandra Thomson at Whitelaw Wells not less than one month prior to the proposed event. Whitelaw Wells will confirm once permission is granted

Private Events Policy

All private events held in the gardens involving 20 or more people must first be approved in writing by the Management Committee. Applications must be made in the prescribed form not less than one month prior to the event. Application forms are available on our website (www.morayfeu.com) or from Whitelaw Wells, 9 Ainslie Place, Edinburgh, EH3 6AS.

1. The Gardens are available at all times to Feuars (and Subscribers) whose use and enjoyment must be respected by those holding and attending authorised private events.
2. Private events organised on behalf of the Feuars by the management committee take precedence over all other events in the garden.
3. The Feuar organising the private event must first check that the barbecue has not been booked on the sheet in the gardens (and must put their name on the barbecue sheet for the date and time of their proposed event) prior to submitting an application to hold their private event.

4. The Feuar hosting the private event must personally be in attendance throughout the event and must ensure that all guests vacate the gardens on conclusion of the event.
5. The gates must be kept locked at all times and the gate being used by guests must be supervised throughout the event.
6. Only one private event is permitted in each garden at any one time.
7. Private events are not permitted in the Bank Garden at any time as it is not suitable for such purpose.
8. Only Feuars are permitted to hold private events in the gardens.
9. Bouncy castles, other inflatables and large play equipment are not permitted.
10. Amplified music is not permitted in the gardens and in any event no music is permitted after 11 pm.
11. All functions in the gardens must cease by midnight and it is the Feuars' responsibility to ensure that all guests have left the gardens by then.
12. Taxis collecting guests from an event must do so from the front door of the Feuar organising the function.
13. The Feuar organising the private event is to be personally responsible for clearing all litter, glass and any other items immediately following the event.
14. No fuel, other than charcoal used in the fixed barbecue, is permitted to be brought into the gardens.
15. No generators will be used at private events without specific prior consent in writing of the Committee of Management.
16. The Feuar organising the private event will be personally responsible for any damage caused to the garden or any part thereof and will pay on demand the cost of making good such damage as determined by the Garden Committee.
17. The Feuar organising the private event will indemnify the gardens proprietors and the Committee of Management for any liability whatsoever and howsoever arising out of the holding of the private event.

Management Committee of the Moray Feu Pleasure Grounds

Management Committee Functions

The Management Committee was formed in the 1820s to care, maintain and improve the pleasure grounds for the enjoyment of all of the members of the Feu. Until 1958, when it became involved in the Randolph Crescent Roundabout Enquiry, the Committee confined itself to matters relating to the gardens. In 1998 the question arose again regarding whether the Management Committee should also act as representatives of the Feuars in objecting to the proposed road closures. It was again felt that such activity was in the best interest of the Feuars.

The dual role of the Management Committee has been revisited from time to time as new members join. The feeling has generally been that unless an issue clearly relates to the feu as a whole, the Management Committee should not take sides by lodging objections, but simply make information available to all Feuars so each was able to make their own decisions. This has been the practice ever since and has applied to planning, licensing, and particularly, traffic matters.

At the 1997 AGM Feuars agreed that a Committee member could serve for a maximum of three terms of three years, and that there should be a maximum of 11 members, including the chairperson.

In addition to the 11 members, the Management Committee can co-opt Feuars onto the committee or a sub-committee if particular expertise is required. Co-opted members should stand for election at the following AGM if they wish to continue on the committee or a sub-committee.

The rules also required that the Management Committee submit proposals for major extraordinary expenditure to a general meeting.

Rules for Membership of Committee of the Moray Feu Pleasure Grounds

Members of Committee

The Committee of Management of the Pleasure Grounds ("the Committee") shall consist of a minimum of 6 and a maximum of 11 elected members.

Chairperson

The Committee shall elect a chairperson ("the chair") who shall serve for a period of 5 years.

Election of Members

The Members of the Committee shall be elected at an annual general meeting. Members so elected shall serve for a period of 3 years following which they will be eligible to be re-elected provided always that the chair shall not fall to be re-elected during his / her term of office. No members shall serve for a period in excess of 9 years other than the chair who will not be required to demit office until completion of his / her term as chair.

Nominations of Members

Nominations for re-elections and elections shall be made in writing to the Secretaries not more than 28 days and not less than 14 clear days before the date of the AGM at which the election is to take place. Nominees must be Feuars (or a nominated representative of Feuars) and must be nominated and seconded by two Feuars. Only one nominee, one proposer and one seconder permitted for each separately eligible property. Nominees should set out their particular interest in the management of the Pleasure Grounds and of the particular attributes which they can bring to the Committee. Download nomination form from website or request from Whitelaw Wells.

Co-option of Members

The Committee shall have power to (a) co-opt a member to replace any member who demits office during the year and (b) to co-opt an individual who has particular expertise which the Committee considers will be of assistance in the performance of its functions. Such co-opted individuals may serve until the next following annual general meeting.

Committee of Management Meetings

The members of the Committee shall meet together regularly throughout the year to address the management of the Pleasure Grounds and may adjourn and otherwise regulate their meetings as they see fit. Five members shall constitute a quorum at any such properly convened meeting. Questions arising at any meetings shall be determined by a simple majority of votes. Co-opted members will not have a vote. In case of equality of votes the chair shall have a second or casting vote.

Attendance of Meetings

It is acknowledged that the members may be unable to attend every Committee meeting but there is a minimum attendance that is reasonably expected. Termination of membership of the committee may be considered if a member is absent, without a good reason in the opinion of the Committee, for more than three consecutive meetings, but only if the Committee of Management resolves to remove them.

Notice of Committee Meetings

Notice of Committee meetings shall be given to all serving members and shall be deemed to be duly given if given to him / her personally or by word of mouth or sent in writing by letter or by electronic communication.

A properly convened meeting at which a quorum is present shall be competent to exercise all or any of the authority, powers and discretions of the Committee.

Resolution in Writing

A resolution in writing signed by all of the members entitled to receive notice of a meeting shall be as effective for all purposes as a resolution of the members passed at a meeting duly convened and held and may consist of several documents which may be on either paper or in electronic format and in similar form, each signed by one or more members.

Convenors and Committees

Each Committee member will be appointed as a convener with specific responsibilities. The Committee may delegate any of its powers to committees consisting of such member or members of the body as they see fit.

Exercise of Responsibilities

All conveners and committees shall in the exercise of the powers delegated to them conform to any mode of proceedings and regulations which may be prescribed by the Committee.

Minutes of Proceedings

The Committee shall cause minutes to be made of the following matters, namely:-

1. of all appointments of conveners and of committees made;
2. of the names of members present at every meeting of the Committee and all business transacted at such meetings; and
3. of all orders, resolutions and proceedings of all meetings of the Committee.

Any such minute purporting to be signed by the chair of the meeting at which the proceedings were held or by the chair of the next succeeding meeting shall be prima facie evidence of the matter stated in such minutes without any further proof.

Defective Appointment of Members not to Invalidate the Acts

All acts done by a meeting of the Committee or by any person acting as a member shall notwithstanding that it be afterwards discovered that there was some defect in the appointment of any person or persons acting as aforesaid or that they or any of them were or was disqualified from holding office or not entitled to vote be as valid as if every such person had been duly appointed, duly qualified and had continued to be a member.

Sub-Committees

Sub-committees are set up as and when the committee considers it appropriate. Sub-committees currently in existence are Traffic and Gardens. Feuars may be invited by the main committee to join a sub-committee for their particular expertise.

Meetings of the Feuars

Annual General Meeting

The Committee shall convene an Annual General Meeting ("AGM") each year, if practical in June, at such time and place as may be determined by the Committee.

General Meetings of the Feuars

All meetings of the Feuars other than the AGM shall be called an Extraordinary General Meeting ("EGM").

When EGM to be called

The Committee may convene an EGM at any time. Any 50 Feuars shall be entitled to require the Committee to call an EGM. Such requisition shall be made by written notice by them to include their names, signatures and addresses and delivered to the Secretary specifying the resolution or resolutions proposed to be put to the meeting. Only one signatory per eligible property may validly sign such requisition.

Notice of Meetings

The AGM and any EGM shall be called by not less than 21 days' notice in writing. The notice shall be exclusive of the day on which it is served or deemed to be served and of the day of which the meeting shall specify the place, the day and purpose of meeting and in case of special business the general nature of such business. The notice shall be given to all of the Feuars.

Omission to Send Notice

The accidental omission to send notice to or the non-receipt of any notice by any Feuair shall not invalidate the proceedings at any general meeting.

Proxy

A Feuair entitled to attend and to vote at any meeting may appoint a proxy to attend and, on a poll, vote in his / her place. A proxy is not entitled to speak at any such meeting and need not be a Feuair. A Feuair appointing a proxy must do so in writing to be lodged with the secretaries not less than 48 hours before the start of the meeting.

Business of an Annual General Meeting

The Business of an AGM shall be to receive and consider the accounts, balance sheet and reports from the Management Committee, to re-elect any members who has completed three years' service, to elect members in place of those retiring, and to consider any extraordinary expenditure proposed to be incurred.

Proposal of Resolution

Any Feuair may propose a resolution for consideration at the AGM by giving notice to the Secretaries not less than 14 days before the date of the meeting.

Notice of Candidates and Resolutions

A list of candidates, if any, for re-election or election as members of the Committee, plus any resolutions proposed shall be displayed on the notice board at Moray Place Gardens seven days prior to the date of the meeting.

Quorum

The Quorum for a general meeting shall be 10 or more Feuairs present in person or by proxy and entitled to vote.

How Questions to be Decided at a Meeting

At any general meeting a resolution put to the vote of the meeting shall be decided by a show of hands unless (before, or upon the declaration of the result of, the show of hands) a poll be duly demanded by the chair or by a member or members present in person or by proxy representing not less than one tenth of the Feuairs in attendance at the Meeting and unless a poll be so demanded a declaration by the chair that the resolution has been carried or lost and an entry to that effect in the book containing the minutes of proceedings of the AGM shall be conclusive evidence of the fact without proof of the number or proportion of the votes recorded in favour or against such resolution.

Votes of Feuars

Persons entitled to vote at general meetings shall be Feuars or their authorised representatives.

Joint Owners

If two or more persons are joint proprietors of an eligible property having a right to vote, any one of such persons may vote at any meeting, either personally or by proxy as if he / she were solely entitled thereto and if more than one of such joint holders be present at any meeting either personally or by proxy the Feuar whose name stands first on the Register of Feuars as one of the proprietors of such property, and no other, shall be entitled to vote in respect of the same.

Committee Members

Martha Vail Barker, Chair	<u>chair@morayfeu.com</u>
Mike Baynham, Vice Chair, Gardens Convenor	<u>vicechair@morayfeu.com</u>
To be Filed, Dogs Convenor	<u>dogs@morayfeu.com</u>
Paul Broda, Gardens Sub-Committee Member	<u>gardens2@morayfeu.com</u>
Blair Finlay, Website and Social Media Convenor	<u>digital@morayfeu.com</u>
Gregor Henderson, Fixtures Convenor (arches, paths, benches, railings)	<u>infrastructure@morayfeu.com</u>
Andrew Dixon, Events Convenor (Moray Feu Bicentennial Convenor)	<u>events@morayfeu.com</u>
Ewan Jeffrey, Finance Convenor (Finance Management)	<u>finance@morayfeu.com</u>
To be filled, Environment and Fundraising Convenor (Recycling, waste collection, litter etc. Parking, Public transport, cycling, Traffic flow)	<u>environment@morayfeu.com</u> <u>fundraising@morayfeu.com</u>

Secretaries and Treasurers

Whitelaw Wells, 9 Ainslie Place,
Edinburgh EH3 6AT

Sandra Thomson, WW, General enquiries	<u>info@morayfeu.com</u>
Kevin Cattanach, WW, Secretary	<u>secretary@morayfeu.com</u>

History

The four elegant gardens that grace Edinburgh's West End—and attract the attention of many admiring visitors, despite being private—began life as delightful accessories to the Earl of Moray's Estate of Drumsheugh. This originally included a mansion house, policies and parks bounded by Randolph Cliff, Randolph Lane, Glenfinlas Street, Saint Colme Street, Gloucester Lane, Doune Terrace, and a mill lade along the south side of the Water of Leith.

By 1822, when the estate was being defined on three sides by new buildings, Lord Moray decided to complete the picture by demolishing Drumsheugh House itself, on the south-east of what is now Randolph Crescent, and opening the whole area for homes. His architect, James Gillespie Graham, produced a grand layout plan for proposed houses, streets (named after the Moray family), private gardens and communal gardens.

Today these classical shapes remain almost exactly as they were built, though some older facilities have passed with time. Stables, for instance, came along with the 152 stances for homes being sold for an annual feu duty. Each street carried a fixed rate, from 16 to 21 shillings a foot (and 5 shillings a foot for stables). So, the average annual feu duty payable to Lord Moray was about £30. The cost of building one such house was between £2000 and £3000. These days they fetch something closer to one million pounds!

Until the Dean Bridge was completed in 1832, the stone to build the handsome Georgian houses had to be carted over the Water of Leith at the Dean Village, and heaved up Bell's Brae.

A dozen stances were bought at a "roup" (auction) in August 1822, and by 1827 over half had sold. Though sales then slowed, and there were gaps until about 1858, the New Town's spirit of aesthetic development eventually took strong root here, not least in the presentation of the gardens—Moray Place, Ainslie Place, Randolph Crescent and the Bank—with feuars being happily obliged "to lay them down in shrubbery and walks, as shown by the plan."

At first, the only tree was a single existing willow, and the new planting consisted solely of shrubs. Growth was the name of the game.

While Graham's plan for Moray Place Garden (3.48 acres) might have impressed many, some feuars remained unconvinced. One was James Hope WS, who in 1832 offered "suggestions" for its improvement along with regrets "that more attention had not been bestowed in laying out the pleasure ground ...it is conceived that it may be very considerably improved, not only in appearance, but also in utility."

The gist of their scheme was to plant trees "here and there," and to level the whole garden, "the advantages of which will doubtless be supported by all the younger inhabitants, and by such of the elder as have not forgot the pleasures of level play-ground."

Points noted, and today its many trees, shrubs and level grass areas complement each other beautifully, while being woven through with interconnecting paths.

Lord Moray's Feu

Private Gardens of Edinburgh

The existing connecting paths within and around the interior perimeter of Ainslie Place Garden represent a pleasing adjustment of the original plan, which showed a circular path in the centre and an oblong path near the outside. Randolph Crescent Garden, a stone's throw away to the west, is unique among the group, standing high above the traffic that streams around it, while maintaining the others' high standards.

Was the garden designed and built as a mound, or was the mound there first, possibly as a result of soil being dumped when the houses' foundations were dug out? That was the intriguing question asked in 1958, at a public enquiry into an Edinburgh Corporation proposal to convert the garden into a roundabout. The scheme was dropped in the face of the feuars' unanimous resistance, but the question was never answered. Nevertheless, that garden has had a colourful history, notably when a large air raid shelter was built in its centre—further raising its profile, as it were—and all the gardens' railings were removed by the Ministry of Supply for the war effort.

Even Moray Place Garden, the most admired jewel in this necklace of gardens, was not exempt from playing its part in the war effort, though the present holly hedge was planted round its perimeter to make up for the railings' absence. After the war, new railings were designed and erected. Until they were completed, wardens were employed to patrol the gardens.

Today, the garden is respectfully patrolled again—at least on the outside—by international tour coaches, whose passengers see it as the heart of a grand circle of Georgian architecture that takes the breath away in many languages.

The Bank Garden (4.1 acres) with its rugged 45-degree angles and well-wooded areas tumbling down to the Water of Leith, is nearer to nature than the others, revelling in the absence of close-cut manicuring. Though it got off to a shaky start—and was closed for much of its first 15 years after a landslide behind Ainslie Place in June 1825—its ground was stabilised by a picturesque row of 27 arches, with a walkway created above. More recently, in 1991, its walkways and paths were repaired and improved to enhance this stimulating little walk on the wild side.

Although all four gardens are managed by one management committee, and looked after by the same skilled gardeners, each has its own special qualities. These add immeasurably to Edinburgh's unique offering of city-centre tranquillity.

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