



LORD MORAY'S FEU SUMMER 2014

AGM Wednesday, 4th June 2014

The French Institute, 13 Randolph Crescent

Notice is hereby given that the Annual General Meeting of Feuars responsible for the upkeep of Lord Moray's Pleasure Grounds will be held on Wednesday 4th June 2014, at 13 Randolph Crescent, starting at 6.00pm. The accounts for the year to 31 March 2014 are annexed.

Nominations for election to the committee, and any resolutions for consideration at the meeting, should be lodged with the secretaries at least two weeks before the meeting when they will be posted on the notice board in Moray Place Gardens. Anyone wishing to vote on behalf of a feuar should provide written authority to the secretaries at the start of the meeting. Whitelaw Wells, Secretaries, 9 Ainslie Place. Tel 226 5822

AGENDA

1. Apologies
2. Approval of the minutes of the previous meeting. Copies of the draft minutes of the annual meeting held on Wednesday 5th June 2013 are available at 9 Ainslie Place.
3. Treasurers' report and approval of the accounts for the year to 31 March 2014.
4. Assessments for the current year (set out in the secretaries' report)
5. Reports by convenors of sub-committees.
6. Elections to the Committee of Management.
7. Appointment of secretaries and treasurers.
The Committee recommends the re-appointment of Whitelaw Wells, Chartered Accountants.
8. Any other competent business.

Following the AGM there will be a **drinks party in Moray Place Gardens**. A charge of £5 will be made for this event which will be collected from you when you arrive in the garden.

REPORTS

Chairman

I look back on an interesting and productive first year as Chairman of the Management Committee. My duties so far have been to look with awe and admiration on the expertise and industry of the committee members. My most important contribution by far was to persuade Sue Jarvie, on her retirement from Whitelaw Wells, to join the committee bringing to it her profound knowledge of Feu matters and to assume Vice-Chairmanship. We have welcomed Kevin Cattanach of Whitelaw Wells as Sue's successor as Secretary and Treasurer. The appointment of David Wood as head gardener has proved a great success. We move forward on the installation of bees in the bank gardens, the provision of a bicycle shed in the bank garden and have completed the provision of a durable awning for outdoor events. Otherwise my duties have been a sort of benign paternalism interspersed with smoothing a ruffled feather here and there.

Our thanks also go to all feuars who have volunteered their time. The various convenors' reports are set out below, and I would like to thank these convenors and the other members of the Feuars' Committee for their support and hard work during the year.

Robert Hay, 10 Moray Place

Treasurers and Secretaries

Results are similar to the previous year with a small overall surplus. The Committee's decision last year to reduce the Bank rate has, as planned, resulted in a deficit of £3,000 reducing the closing reserves to £61,000. Despite a £4,000 surplus the Front Gardens Fund remains somewhat depleted at £16,000. The committee therefore suggest a small increase in the Front assessment rate and a similar reduction in the Bank rate. Randolph Crescent and Outside Subscribers rates remain unchanged.

Front Gardens: 5.9p per £ of 1989 rateable value (previously 5.8p).

Bank Garden: 3.7p per £ of 1989 rateable value (previously 3.8p).

Randolph Crescent: £25 per property (previously £25)

Outside subscribers: £140 per property (previously £140)

These rates include VAT.

Whitelaw Wells,
Secretaries and Treasurers

Gardens & Machinery

It has been an eventful year in the gardens.

Firstly Alex Watson retired as head gardener in July last year to be succeeded in December by David Wood. David has already made an impact by bringing back to life the lower east end of the Bank Gardens, a hitherto little visited area. The gardeners have built a sturdy handrail along the path cutting the steep slope above St Bernard's Well, to make it safer, and cleared the ground on each side. This has now been planted with vinca, solomon's seal, aucuba and skimmia. Some of the undergrowth has been cleared to allow light to filter through to the new plants and in time, these will establish themselves to make the whole area much more attractive.

The gardeners have also cleared part of the central roundel in Moray Place and planted it with various shade tolerant flowers as a welcome contrast to the evergreen shrubs. Further planting is planned to provide more colour for each season of the year.

Conservation Management Plan

The first and second drafts have been the subject of some discussion with LUC, the landscape architects engaged to provide a plan, as it did not include all that we expected: we hope that a final version will be available soon.

Tree work

Tree surveys were carried out by LUC in November, covering almost all the trees in the upper gardens and the larger trees in the Bank Gardens. Recommendations were made to remove deadwood which was hanging over paths and to remove some dying hawthorns. This work was carried out in February. Much more deadwood needs to be removed for the health and appearance of the trees, but this will be done in stages as the work is difficult and therefore expensive.

The tree surveyor has given his opinion that the limes forming the avenue in the Bank Garden are expected to live for another hundred years, and so there is no need to consider any replacement of the avenue for some time yet.

The big wych elm in the south quadrant of Moray Place, which had a large limb removed last summer because of Dutch elm disease, started to show cracks lined with rot in the main trunk below and above the severed section, at the end of April. A tree surveyor's report recommended felling, and sadly this will now take place on 29th and 30th May.

The Committee is pursuing the possibility of enabling feuars to commission bespoke items of furniture or smaller artefacts, to be made out of the wood as a way of remembering this fine tree, as well as arranging that some of the wood will be used to replank some of our benches. Details will become available on our new website in due course.

The garden sub-committee were delighted to welcome back Mrs Clutterbuck, who has so much knowledge of these gardens and gardening in general, to the sub-committee.

Fiona Jarvie, 2 Ainslie Place
Gardens Convener

TRAFFIC

The trams have now been running to schedule for nearly a month, but residents should not expect any early relief in the volume of traffic diverted through the Feu. The promised alternative route via Charlotte Square has still not been signposted as such, and the January Public Hearing has still not reported: so all eastbound traffic continues to use the Feu, no doubt to the satisfaction of the Charlotte Square developers at who's request the Council has been backtracking on this, the solitary concession promised to Feuars.

One restriction of great importance to residents is the ban, introduced in 1996 and temporarily suspended during the tram works, on the left turn from North Charlotte Street into St Colme Street. If this were to be lifted then a whole new stream of west and northbound traffic would be added to the Feu, due of course to the removal of the direct connection between Lothian Road and Queensferry Street, and the new restriction on traffic exiting Charlotte Square via Hope Street.

The consequences of the Council's current policies on Charlotte Square are therefore of considerable concern to the Feu and beyond, and we now await the conclusions of the Hearing and thank those who contributed by letter or attendance.

Further to our Aarhus submission, DEFRA recently attempted to get the Compliance Committee's recommendation in favour of the Moray Feu (requiring timely provision of traffic pollution data) withdrawn, but abandoned the attempt following the committee's invitation to Ashley Lloyd to speak on an open telephone link to the crucial Geneva meeting. The recommendation will now go for ratification at the highest level of Aarhus in July.

Feuars wishing to be kept informed of developments on the traffic front may provide their email address to Traffic Sub-committee member Alistair Laing at emersonstcl@tiscali.co.uk .

Alistair MacIntosh, 16 Great Stuart Street

FESTIVAL GARDEN PARTY

Sunday, 17 August at 12 noon in Moray Place Garden.

Those who are able are asked to bring a tray of canapés. There will be a charge of £5 for this event.

WEBSITE

We are delighted to inform Feuar's that your Management Committee have authorised the creation of a Moray Feu web site which you can now access at www.Morayfeu.com .

