



LORD MORAY'S PLEASURE GROUNDS

NEWSLETTER – NOVEMBER 2014

Chairman's Comments

Welcome to the Christmas edition of the Moray Feu newsletter. I hope you will be able to come to the party on Saturday 6th of December at 11 Forres Street, 6.30pm to 8pm.

At the AGM Professor Paul Broda was elected to the Committee in place of Dr Julie Stirling who has retired with our thanks for services rendered. Professor Broda is a molecular biologist and has important links with the Botanic Gardens.

The Committee recently declined permission for access via the bank garden path for a nine month building project at the rear of 29 Moray Place on the grounds that it would be too disruptive, too protracted, and too contrary to the interests of the feuars.

The keys and locks to the gardens will be changed on the 5th December 2014. New keys will be provided free of charge in return for the existing keys and the **authorisation slip** which accompanies this newsletter. Key exchange will be available in the foyer of Whitelaw Wells at 9 Ainslie Place from 10am to midday then from 2.30pm till 4.45pm on 5th December.

Our application to erect a bicycle shed inside the gates of the bank gardens has been rejected by planning. The decision has been appealed.

The bee keeping project is still alive but, although there is general agreement in favour, a knowledgeable and enthusiastic group of apiarists is awaited. A site in the South East end of the bank Garden secluded from pedestrians and dogs and with good afternoon sun has been identified.

Following the felling of the Wych Elm in Moray Place Gardens the logs have been milled by Ben Dawson (furniture designer-maker) into planks suitable for making furniture and accessories.

The timber is currently being seasoned and some of it will be ready to make into finished pieces. These pieces will form a limited edition collection exclusive to the Moray Feuars which will embody the unique

provenance of this magnificent tree. Pieces will range from smaller items such as cheeseboards; trays; boxes etc. right up to larger ones like tables, chairs and cabinets.

Each piece will include a certificate confirming the timber's provenance signed personally by Ben Dawson. Pieces will be inlaid in brass or bronze to commemorate the tree and can also be personalised with individual words or symbols.

There will obviously be a limit to the number of larger pieces that can be made from the timber so anyone interested in commissioning pieces should reserve planks as soon as possible by contacting Ben Dawson ben.dawson@bendawson.com to discuss their requirements. It is expected that the timber will be ready to use in Spring 2015.

Finally, the Committee takes this opportunity to wish you all a Happy Christmas and a prosperous New Year.

Robert Hay, Chairman

Gardens

Dr David Rae, Head of Horticulture at the Botanic Gardens until his recent retirement, has been approached to give us advice on trees principally, and shrubs in general, on an ad hoc basis, and he has expressed an interest in becoming associated with the gardens. This will provide us with the ongoing professional advice we need in the wake of the conservation management plan and we are most grateful to Dr Rae for agreeing to help us and to Prof Broda for introducing him.

The conservation management plan prepared by LUC landscape architects, is now final and those who are interested in having a copy and/or in attending a presentation to hear its recommendations, are asked to email me on fiona@jarvief.freeserve.co.uk so that something can be arranged when we have an idea of the numbers.

The felling of the wych elm has created a new sunny area, and the neighbouring trees previously suppressed by its shadow are already beginning to develop into better shapes.

Fiona Jarvie

Traffic

For many years concern about increasing traffic in the residential areas of the city has focused on the displacement caused by closing off established main routes: from the 1996 restrictions on Princes Street, to the recent closure of Shandwick Place caused by the Tram. At each stage, closures in the centre have resulted in more traffic passing through the Feu.

This year we have had the approval of pavement widening and new traffic regulations for Charlotte Square that will see fewer vehicles able to take that route. Current experiments with George Street and the impact of traffic growth predicted in the Engineering and Economic Assessment report of the Second Forth Crossing have added to the uncertainty about how much traffic will be displaced into residential areas.

There is no clear answer; however there has been some good news. Shandwick Place is now open overnight to all traffic in both directions. For northbound traffic from Lothian Rd, the Council is opening Hope St in both directions, and in order to avoid adding another 4000 vehicles daily to the Moray Feu the Council has voted to retain the banned left turn from North Charlotte into St Colme St. In a further effort to reduce loading on the Feu, Alistair Macintosh is exploring the possibility of directing some eastbound traffic to use Melville St and Charlotte Square instead of Drumsheugh Gardens and Randolph Crescent. Another positive development has been the setting up of a Transport Working Group by the Council to address the post-tram situation, including city centre traffic displacement. This Group will consider our recent submissions to the Council's Transport & Environment Committee.

Lord Hardie and the move to a Statutory Inquiry

We applaud the move to grant Lord Hardie's inquiry statutory powers and are now collating relevant materials for posting on our traffic website: www.edinburghtramfacts.com - where you can read more about the activities of our subcommittee. We meet regularly and anyone interested in coming

along to our weekend coffee mornings should just email Alistair Laing on emersontcl@tiscali.co.uk

Ashley Lloyd

Fixed Equipment

A wide variety of work was completed in the gardens this summer, including metalwork on Railings and Gates and an extensive refurbishment with much needed insulation on the Gardeners Shed in the Bank.

The commemorative plaque for the Scottish Colourist FCB Cadell is now in place on 6 Ainslie Place. This was one of the initial tranche of 10 instigated by Historic Scotland on the example of London's Blue Plaques. Ours is bronze and economy-sized and could be amplified with the addition of an explanatory board on the garden railings opposite (on the lines of that opposite the RLS house in Heriot Row)

LMF continues to attend, support and is supported by the NT Community Council, its chair Ian Mowat and Cllr Joanna Mowat, on many issues including traffic, waste collection (now Wednesday not Thursday) policing and licensing as well as planning issues in general. Please see the website at www.ntbcc.org.uk for lots of up-to-date details.

The NT Gardens and Squares Conference was attended by Alan Welsh (and Lord Moray). The proceedings with reports on the talks given will be published in due course by the Historic Gardens Society of Scotland.

For those feuars looking for a Christmas present, and who missed out on Connie Byrom's book on NT Gardens, BIRLINN have just published 'Edinburgh-- Mapping the City' in association with Creative Scotland and NLS, highly recommended. www.birlinn.co.uk.

Planned work in the gardens includes erecting a protective fence around the equipment shed in Moray Place, completing the boundary fencing behind the Gardeners Shed in the Bank and carrying out refurbishment and painting on seating and railings. As ever our own website is full of good stuff www.morayfeu.com

Alan Welsh