

## THE DRUMMOND CIVIC ASSOCIATION

[www.drummondplace.org](http://www.drummondplace.org)

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### ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING AND SOCIAL EVENT Wednesday 23rd January 2013 at 7:30 P.M. at COLUMBA HOUSE, 16 Drummond Place. Speaker NICK BOYES

Residents of Drummond Place, Dundonald Street and other members are cordially invited to this annual meeting at which issues affecting the neighbourhood will be discussed. Please see agenda below. We particularly welcome new residents who we hope will join the association. The second part of the meeting is a social and informal one, at which wine will be served. This year we welcome our speaker Nick Boyes, Conservator-Restorer who will talk on the restoration of St Bernard's Well.



For once the sun shone for our Garden party on 2<sup>nd</sup> June. Chris Collins photographed the assembly in celebration of it, and of HM the Queen's memorable year of the jubilee.



#### AGM - AGENDA

1. **Speaker: Nick Boyes**
2. **Minutes of the previous meeting**
3. **Matters arising**
4. **Summary of the year**
5. **Financial Statement**
6. **Questions**
7. **Election of new Committee members**
8. **AOB**



## Chairman's Report - Trams & Bin/Skips

The team here at "Tram & Bin/Skip Watch" have had a busy year, with the emphasis on the former.

You may - you will - have noticed a sharp increase in traffic in Drummond Place and surrounding streets, displaced from Queen Street, York Place and other main thoroughfares by tram works.

Councillor Mowat and the Community Council took the lead in making representations to mitigate the effects, with street associations echoing and amplifying their lobbying. Councillor Hinds and her officials were successfully persuaded to open a new diversionary route through St Andrew Sq. at the end of last year, although the signing for it remains low key and insufficient and the full mitigating effects have yet to be seen. Further pressure is being brought.

It is our goal to see traffic levels return to where they once were (already too high for most of us). We will monitor progress and where necessary press for measures to that end. This area of the New Town has long been designated a future 20mph zone, a measure delayed solely by the cost of changing signs and road markings. The recent fatality at the top of Dundas Street illustrates the dangers of the present traffic scheme and may well bring the day closer, since a rather brutal calculus is applied to changes of this kind: the more accidents there are in a particular area, the more the council is inclined to spend on road changes.

On bins/skips, officials are holding fire. A map of bin locations was promised more than six months ago, but has never materialised. It has become almost a thing of myth, this map. Some people claim to have seen it, others with equal confidence declare that it doesn't exist. I occupy a middle position: it ought to exist, it will exist, but it does not as yet possess the vital characteristic of actuality. It is a map-in-the-mind. When we have it there should be opportunity for further comment and we will lobby against skips obtruding in any way on our streets and their surroundings.

Chris Collins

## Drummond Place Garden - Access

The fact that the garden in Drummond Place is a private garden to which only key holders have access gives rise to resentment on the part of some nearby residents who are denied access and feel that the garden ought to be a public open space or - at least – that many more local residents should be able to obtain keys. This brief note seeks to inform debate on the issue.

As background, title to the garden was transferred in 1823 from the Council to the owners of all the houses in Drummond Place and some (less than a quarter) of the flats in the corner pavilions which flank the streets leading out of the Place. The transfer was effected by a Charter which is not readily open to amendment. So the current proprietors of the garden are the owners of all the dwellings specified in the Charter, or any part of such a dwelling which has since been divided.

The proprietors are under an inescapable duty to pay for the maintenance of the garden. The Charter permits them to issue additional keys "if it shall be found expedient to raise additional funds". This has long ago ceased to be a motive for issuing additional keys. Doing so is now a recognition that it would be unreasonable to deny access to the garden to all who are not proprietors under the Charter. The crucial and debatable question is how many additional keys should be issued.

To anyone who gives even cursory thought to this question it must be obvious that unrestricted access to the garden would have to lead to radical change in its character and in the way in which it is managed. As to the character of the garden, with some 350 people having access to it at present the problems caused by irresponsible or inconsiderate behaviour on the part of the inevitable minority are just within tolerable bounds. **Continued on next page.**

## **Drummond Place Garden – Access Continued**

If those problems were to be multiplied by greatly increased access the garden would cease to be an amenity for those who live around it and are obliged to maintain it. With regard to management, the voluntary unpaid services of proprietors who are willing to serve on the Committee are sufficient for the present number of key holders, but an increase in that number would eventually make it necessary to employ agents, at great expense.

If it is accepted that there must be a restriction on the number of keys issued, the next question is how to determine the ceiling. In the light of experience with other methods, the proprietors have now decided on a catchment approach. In future, eligibility for a key will be restricted to those who live in the immediate vicinity of the garden, meaning no further away than flats reached by the first common stair on either side of each street leading out of Drummond Place, or in the same tenement as such flats. While this must disappoint many who would be glad to have access to the garden as it now stands, they may care to reflect that if access were unrestricted it would be a very different garden and one to which they would perhaps not wish to have a key.

Bill Giles

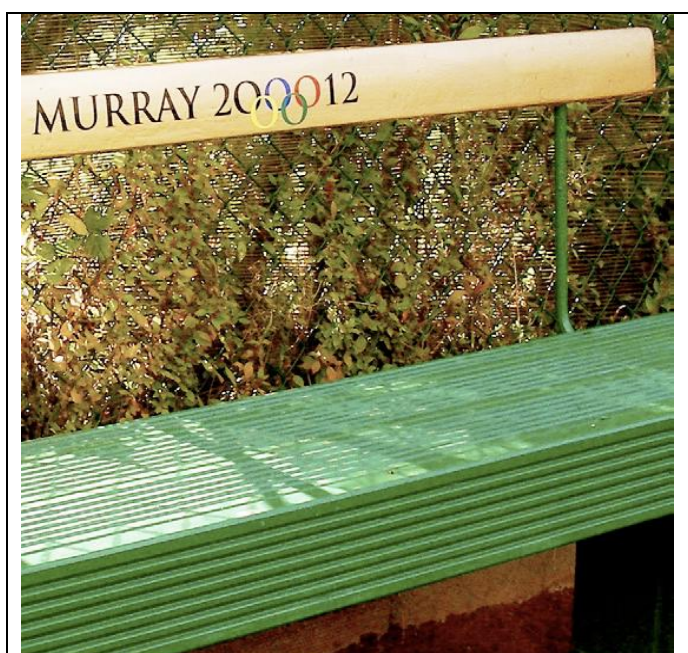
## **Drummond Place Garden**

The dismal weather this summer rather dampened enthusiasm for gardening and little progress was made toward our long-term aim of reviving the hedge and the borders. One step forward, however, was the commissioning of a development plan for the garden. An immediate outcome of this was the formative pruning of a number of trees, which will be more shapely, healthier or longer lasting as a result. At the same time, the clump of rhododendrons in the northeast corner was given a thorough makeover and should re-grow into a more attractive feature of the garden. A very small oak tree was purchased from the Sandringham estate and has been planted in a prominent position to commemorate the Diamond Jubilee. Although the bird population seems to be in continuing decline, both woodpecker and tree creeper have been seen and we hope these infrequent visitors will be back. Another long-term aim is to provide both habitat and food for the birds. At least one hedgehog has also been seen, and a box built to RSPB specifications has been put in a relatively secluded part of the border to tempt this valuable beastie to remain. We still have much to do, and will be praying for a better summer in 2013 to let us get on with it.

Bill Giles

## **Celebrating Tennis Gold**

Drummond Lawn Tennis Club – an oasis of sporting activity on East Scotland Street Lane unveiled its own tribute to Andy Murray's Olympic glory with a gold-topped court bench. David Faithfull, one of the Club's members and artist, designed the celebratory logo, and a fantastic tribute it is to one of our Olympic heroes. The bench was on show on the club finals day in September, where 5 finals were played before an enthusiastic audience on what was a splendidly dry [meteorologically speaking] occasion. Pétanque, floodlit table tennis, dancing and ... bad dancing kept everyone going until the wee hours. Drummond has enjoyed a great season despite the weather, and play continued as usual till the first frost of winter.



## **DESMOND HODGES OBE**

**Architect and director of the Edinburgh New Town Conservation Committee (ENTCC). Born: 25<sup>th</sup> September, 1928 in Dublin. Died: 26 November, 2012 in Haddington, aged 84.**



Mr Hodges was appointed as the first full time Director of the ENTCC in 1972. That Edinburgh's New Town is the best preserved example of Georgian town planning in the UK is due in no small part to Desmond's vision and inspirational practicality. His maintenance manual 'Care and Conservation of Georgian Houses' became a model for others to follow, in meeting a community's need for practical down-to-earth information in order to make suitable repair decisions. Convincing ordinary people to invest their own money in saving Georgian houses was crucial in the success of the ENTCC's projects and here Desmond's personality and sheer charm proved a winning factor. As a direct result of the success of the ENTCC and the conservation of the Old Town, the Old and New Towns were awarded World Heritage Site status in 1995. When Desmond retired as Director in July 1994, three receptions were held in his honour, by the ENTCC, the Street associations including our DCA, and the City Council. His foresight, enthusiasm and wisdom had been instrumental in saving the Georgian New Town for future generations, and the subsequent award of an OBE was richly deserved.

## **NOCTURNE**

Unlikely anyone else views you as I do  
from a window overlooking our garden  
when unravelling this book of haiku,

and I'm pretty sure no-one imagines  
you their secret geisha about to serve  
sushi, sashimi and other delicacies

with ivory chopsticks, the evening  
sky a parasol of shot silk. Certainly  
not our neighbours any more than

I'd presume on their privacy,  
though catching them squinting at  
the crescent moon, I hope they take in

the comeliness of our cherry tree. Nor  
are they naïve enough to share my vision  
of you in a kimono or believe that blackbird

is chirping Bashō, which as darkness  
thickens has begun tchinking in distinctly  
Scottish mode, and is no longer to be seen.

**Stewart Conn**

Taken, with permission from Stewart's beautiful collection of poems - Estuary, published by MARISCAT PRESS 2012 (ISBN 978 0 946588 633).

## **NEIGHBOURS MOURN LOCAL MAN**

The sudden death on 13 July of Fazal Mohammad, proprietor of the General Store at 76 Dublin Street, shocked and saddened many in the area. Mr Mohammad ran the popular shop at No. 76 for 27 years. He was a genial and charming gentleman, and friend to many. He was serving the community by personally delivering early morning newspapers when he suffered a fatal heart-attack. He is greatly missed. We extend our sympathy to his widespread family and friends in Edinburgh and furth of the capital.



## **Mrs Charles Dickens of 2 Nelson Street – connection**



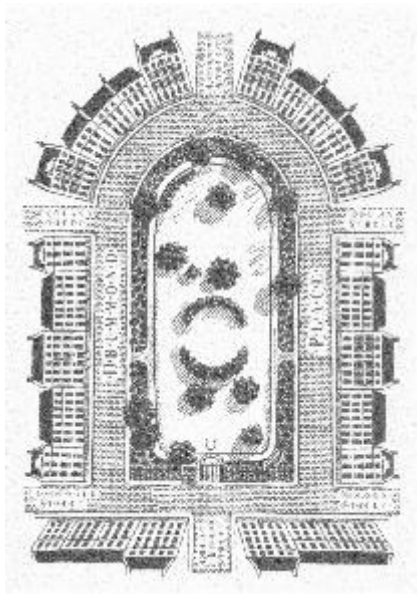
Mrs Charles Dickens (1815–79) was born Catherine Hogarth at 8 Hart Street, the eldest child of George Hogarth WS. The family (eventually including 10 children), moved to 2 Nelson Street in 1820, then again to 19 Albany Street in 1828 where they remained until heading south in 1831. They were comfortable and cultured, the sisters educated at home by their parents in the 3Rs, geography, and music, and in dance by a French master. In London, Catherine's father established himself as a musicologist, and as editor of the Evening Chronicle effectively became Dickens's employer. Through him, Charles and Catherine met. They married in 1836 (the year Dickens's first novel was serialised). Catherine's sisters Mary and Georgina were highly significant members of the Bloomsbury ménage, Georgina remaining as housekeeper, adviser and friend from 1842 until Dickens's death in 1870. Mary died prematurely and was immortalised as Nell in *The Old Curiosity Shop*. Catherine's marriage started happily. She accompanied Dickens to America in 1842, and had a minor role in his *Every Man in his Humour* in 1845. But Dickens grew disenchanted with her, finding Catherine 'an incompetent mother', blaming her for their 10 children and financial worries. He was hardly blameless. In 1857,

he began a lifelong liaison with actress Ellen Ternan, which Catherine discovered on accidentally intercepting his gift to her of a bracelet. In 1858, Catherine and Charles formally separated. She received a house and the company of her eldest son, but only restricted access to her other children. Catherine never fully recovered. On her deathbed, she instructed her letters to be given '... to the British Museum, that the world may know he loved me once'. She is interred in Highgate Cemetery with a baby daughter who had died in 1851. JRM

## **NEW EDINBURGH'S WORLD HERITAGE ('EWH') CHAIR APPOINTED**



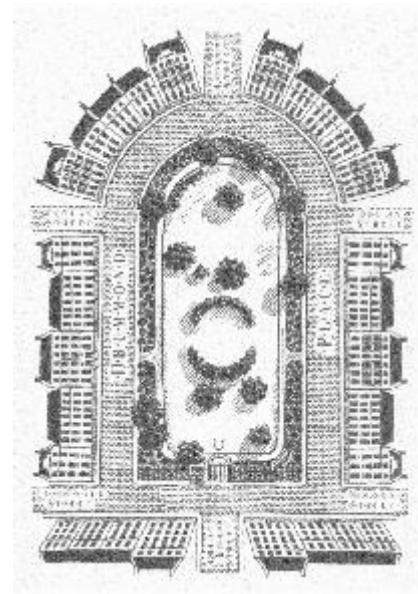
Willy Roe CBE has succeeded Professor Charles McKean as Chairman of EWH's Board of Trustees. He was previously Chair of Highlands and Islands Enterprise and of the UK Commission for Employment and skills Audit Committee. He has an intimate knowledge of the World Heritage Site having lived and worked within it for 40 years. Of his important new role he has stated, 'As Chair my role will be to help provide strategic leadership, to be the leading ambassador and communicator for EWH and to ensure the skills of the Board of Trustees are used effectively. Becoming the Chair of EWH is an exciting prospect and I hope to add further distinctive value to the organisation that already has a track record of success'. [Mr Roe received his CBE in recognition of his public service.]



### **MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE 2011-2012**

Hon. Sec. Christopher Collins  
2, London Street, Tel. 466 5837  
Assistant Sec. Maidie Cahill  
2, Drummond Place Tel. 558 3096  
Hon. Tresurer Stephen Nisbet  
15 Drummond Place

Anna Girling, Gaby Holden, Alan  
Sutherland, John Ross Maclean



### **SUBSCRIPTIONS**

Subscriptions will be collected at the AGM - £5 per household.  
Your support is invaluable for the work we do on behalf of our community, and of our precious oasis in the New Town's eastern quarter.

### **MERCHANDISE**

The DCA has a selection of notecards, with various images of Drummond Place (including some of those within these pages), along with Lettice Milne Rae's 'The Story of Drummond Place'. These items will be on sale at the AGM, or contact any committee member for details.

### **DRUMMOND CIVIC ASSOCIATION WEBSITE**

Please take the time to visit our website. You can find out about the history of Drummond Place, purchase beautiful photographs and cards and be kept up-to-date with the bulletin board.  
[www.drummondplace.org](http://www.drummondplace.org)

### **E-MAIL ADDRESSES**

To save printing costs and to reduce the amount of paper posted through your letterbox, it would be helpful if you could send your e-mail address to the Secretary, Chris Collins, at [crc123@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:crc123@blueyonder.co.uk).  
If we have your e-mail address, we can also alert you to developments throughout the year.

### **THE DRUMMOND CIVIC ASSOCIATION (DCA)**

DCA has several meetings each year and serves the interests of Drummond Place and immediate environs. Major subjects include planning, traffic, environmental issues and The World Heritage Trust.

Local residents are most welcome to join the DCA and report concerns or voice opinions which the Committee will make plain to the powers- that-be. DCA celebrates an annual midsummer garden party and also holds social events to which all members and friends are warmly invited.

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with thanks to Maidie Cahill and Bill Giles