



Friends of the Meadows and Bruntsfield Links

Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organization (SCIO) SC045955

NEWSLETTER 56

Autumn 2020

Friends of the Meadows and Bruntsfield Links Summary of 2020 AGM minutes (meeting by Zoom)

The meeting was chaired by the convener, Jim Orr, and there were fifteen members present. The usual business was conducted, Minutes of Previous Meeting approved, existing trustees re-elected, including two new trustees, and the Financial Report approved.

In the Annual Report, Bridget Stevens asked about the memorial bench for Robin Morris and Neil Roger confirmed that it is in place on Bruntsfield Links. The plaque will be funded by Merchiston Community Council.

In Any Other Business, Graeme Cruickshank asked for an update about the Jawbones and Neil Roger reported that they have been restored and will be reinstated in the Spring 2021. Jimmy Robertson mentioned that the Short Hole Golf Course has been closed for the first summer since the end of the War; the flags are considered a health risk, and the course is vulnerable to picnickers and BBQs.

Trees of the Meadows and Bruntsfield Links



The photograph shows a fine young **ROWAN** (*Sorbus aucuparia*) at South Links by Muriel Spark Walk.

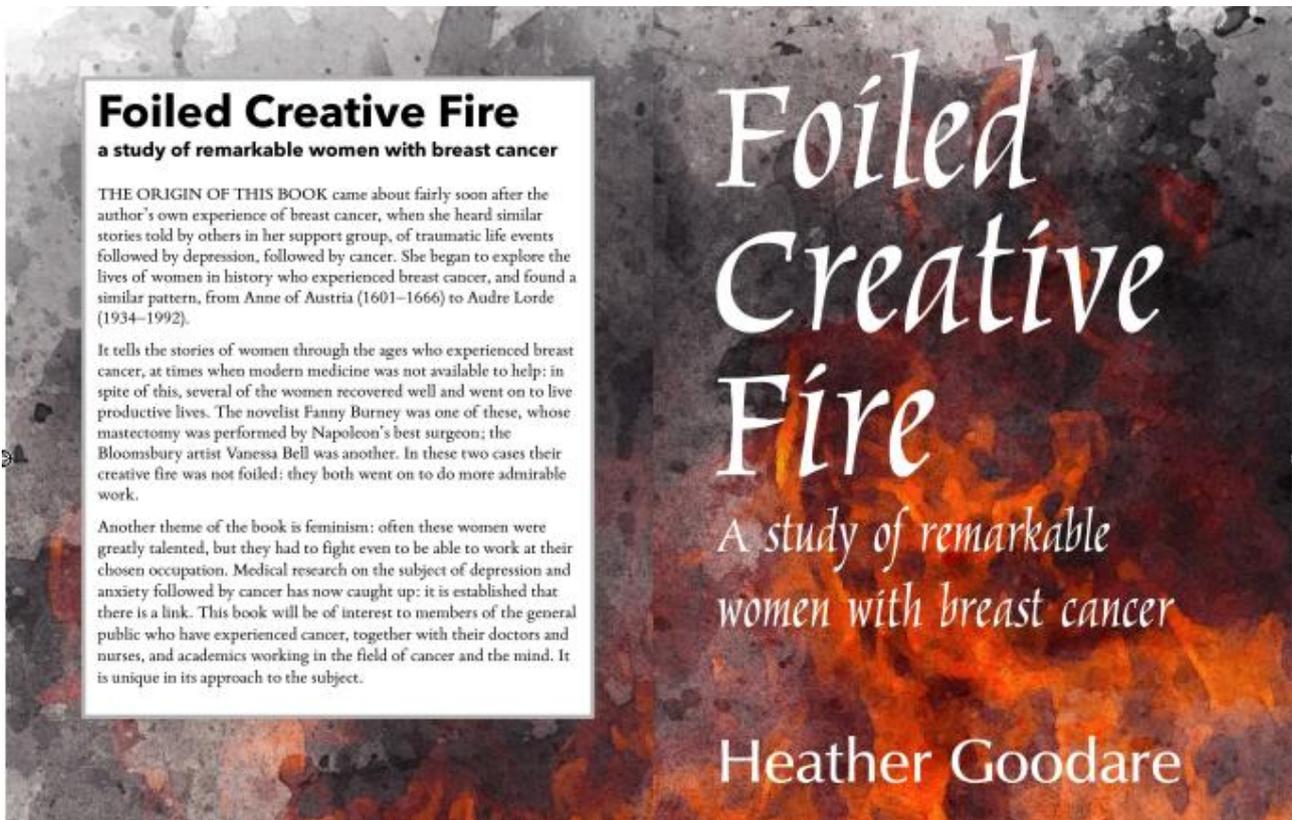
The purchase and planting was organised by FoMBL (Friends of the Meadows and Bruntsfield Links) in honour of Heather Goodare (past convener).

The rowan tree has been considered the bane of witches, diviner of the future and producer of jam. Rowan is an elegant tree with a mystical history. Its leaves and berries are a favourite for wildlife in woods and towns alike.

Neil Roger

A new book by Heather Goodare, the former convener of FoMBL

Here is a link to a short video she has made with her grandson Tommy Karolyi about this brilliant and interesting book: <https://youtu.be/yNdSqG-hwRM>



Cricket Pavilion

The pavilion has been unused for some time, because of the Pandemic restrictions. Unfortunately the current tenant may have to leave, so this means that we do not know yet if she will be able to renew her lease, or if it will be taken over by another tenant. However, it certainly needs a lot of work to bring it up to standard which will involve a great deal of expenditure, and of course there is the problem of the toilet provision.

The important thing is that the building is put back into use fairly quickly and not allowed to deteriorate any further. The Pavilion is an iconic building, and forms a key part of the character of the Meadows, which in turn forms a key component of the Marchmont, Meadows & Morningside Conservation Area. We will be in contact with the Council representative, and also other conservation agencies, so we will hope to have positive news about its future soon.

FoMBL Secretary Required!

Ideal for someone who cares about maintaining this important green space. The work involves taking minutes at meetings (every two months), updating the online archive, sending Mailchimp notices, helping organise meetings etc. Currently, all our meetings are online.

Three new trees donated by Heather Goodare and planted on 10th December 2020



Top left: *Quercus x turnerii* Pseudoturneri (Turners oak) – this semi evergreen oak is quite rare, normally only being found in specialist arboretums.

Top right: *Magnolia grandiflora* Gallissoniere (Evergreen Southern Magnolia) – this is a very hardy evergreen clone that can achieve a mature height of approx 10m.

Left: *Crataegus x prunifolia* Splendens (Broad-leaved cockspur thorn).

Neil Roger

Edinburgh Swift City - Volunteers needed

If you're interested in getting involved and helping to conserve the Swift population why not volunteer to assist the RSPB with this year's Edinburgh Swift Survey? All the information is in the link below and please circulate to anyone else who you think would be interested.

<https://www.rspb.org.uk/get-involved/volunteering-fundraising/volunteer/volunteer-opportunities/opportunities/9277/>

Volunteer Report

A good number of volunteers helped out at the November session. We scrubbed off a large mess that was on the side of the Cricket Pavilion. We also sprayed green paint onto some horrible swear words under the sheltered area. One volunteer cleared leaves at the croquet area and left six bags at the bins by the General Maczek tubs. Other volunteers just collected litter - a lot of it around benches. Other volunteers said there was a lot of broken glass in the big children's playpark near Summerhall. They did their best but it needs more attention there.

Finally over the last three FoMBL sessions we have tried to sort out the banana-shaped green strip running along one side of Marchmont Crescent. We have cleared an astounding amount of stuff (litter and large dumped stuff). This strip actually needs a team to sort out the overgrown vegetation and remove all the broken large branches as well as a number of pots that have been lying there neglected since possibly 2017 when someone who used to take care of it died. We do make a difference. We do enjoy our sessions too.

Alison Carr

Wildflower Meadow



Buglife and FoMBL have organised this fenced area at South Links (Muriel Spark Walk) so new seeds have a chance of germinating in the Spring.

Neil Roger

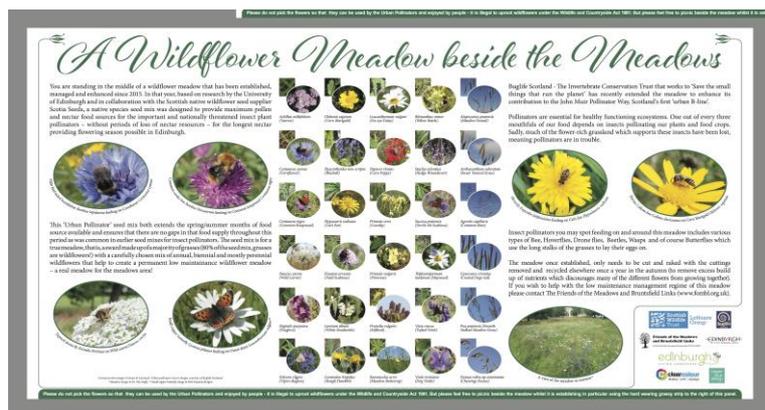
Members of FoMBL raking wildflower meadow cuttings ready for planting in spring

Board for Leamington Walk wildflower meadow

Members of FoMBL have worked on this for ages (including Tim Duffy).

I managed to persuade Mike Shields (Edinburgh City Council) to fund it, as well as providing plugs to be planted in the spring.

Neil Roger



Proposal for a Mural on Bruntsfield Links Toilets

There are two Edinburgh university students who are proposing a mural on Bruntsfield Links toilets to make it an exciting feature in the area and far more appealing to the eye. Toilet management have also been involved and support the plans.

Planning permission will be necessary, and funding will have to be found to pay for this and the artists for their time and materials.

Having spoken to Joan as vice convener, Jim's suggestion (as convener) is that we inform Nathaniel and Fraser (the artists who are part of a network called The Edinburgh Collective) that we (FoMBL) provisionally support their project and look forward to reviewing their proposals and working with them.

If this mural is to last and be respected it has to be 'owned' by the people round about, and one way to get that ownership is to allow people to put in their ideas. Another way is to let them help with the painting, but that comes later. So if you have any bright ideas for what should be included in the murals please let us know.

Of course if any FoMBL members wish to object to the plan, or request that we tread more carefully, then please make yourself known.

from various FoMBL members

Edinburgh Biodiversity Partnership

Edinburgh City Council have produced a document about biodiversity in parks and green spaces. Here is a short extract, with contact details at the end. I am sorry, the whole document is not available online.

'Introduction

Parks and greenspaces have many functions. They provide amenity, recreation and places to play. They benefit our physical and mental wellbeing. They generate clean air and can store greenhouse gasses. Many of us go to parks to experience nature. Parks can also benefit biodiversity by providing places for plants and animals to live, feed and reproduce.

The purpose of this guide is to help park managers and others look at the features that make up their parks and make them better for biodiversity. For each park feature there is a 'pick list' of options that may benefit biodiversity. These biodiversity options can easily be added to management plans and carried out on the ground.

The guide aims to put as much knowledge as possible in the hands of the park managers. But not all options are suitable for all parks. For example it may be impossible to create a new pond and wetland in your park, or you may have good reasons not to plant any more trees. This is a guide, not a set of instructions!

The guide has the following sections:

Section 2 lists some general principles for the benefit of biodiversity which can be applied to all parks and greenspaces.

Section 3 looks at typical park features and gives you a pick list of options to improve them for biodiversity.

Section 4 looks at creating new habitats or features for priority habitats and species.

The appendices are lists of useful native and non-native plants that will benefit biodiversity. There is also a list of further reading.'

This guide was written by Malcolm Fraser and amended by Susan Falconer in May 2017, Biodiversity Officer for City of Edinburgh Council. Contact: biodiversity@edinburgh.gov.uk

Best Wishes for Christmas and New Year to all Members

Forthcoming Events

Volunteers are always needed for work in the Meadows and Bruntsfield Links on the last Saturday of the month - the nature of the work depending on the season. We meet at the Cricket Pavilion at 10.00am, and any necessary tools can be provided. (December session date to be arranged.)

Two virtual workshops may be perfect for those of you with an interest in all things Biodiversity! The fascinating workshops courtesy of Buglife and featuring Ashleigh Whiffin are of course made even better with the pun-tastic title.

Carri-on Recording! An Introduction to Carrion Beetles on 17th December

:<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/carri-on-recording-introduction-to-carrion-beetles-with-ashleigh-whiffin-tickets-128112005457>

Introduction to Beetles on the 18th Feb: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/introduction-to-beetles-with-ashleigh-whiffin-tickets-130395188519>

From Sarah Murphy, Edinburgh City Council

Useful Contacts

Mike Shields, Parks and Greenspace Officer South East Tel. 0131 529 5126; email: mike.shields@edinburgh.gov.uk.

Police: To report a crime: 101 (costing a flat rate of 15p per call); emergency 999; or (anonymously) to Crimestoppers: 0800 555 111.

Police Service of Scotland website is <http://www.scotland.police.uk>. **Anti-social behaviour (Edinburgh Council):** Tel. 0131 529 7050;

Environmental services 0131 200 2000;

South Office: 0131 529 5051 **Litter:** 0131 608 1100

Defective lamp-post lighting: note number and notify on the City of Edinburgh Council website

Forestry Service: email: forestry.service@edinburgh.gov.uk. Tel. 0131 311 7079

Road repairs and development: Alan Dunlop, Senior Transport Team Leader: Tel. 0131 529 3719; email: alan.dunlop@edinburgh.gov.uk

Task Force Manager (responsible for street cleaning and grounds maintenance) Rab Farquhar: email: rab.farquhar@edinburgh.gov.uk. Tel. 0131 664 8330 for recycling.

Graffiti: report to 0131 200 2000 or Police 101 if persistent

Family and household support service manager (tackling anti-social behaviour and joint working with the police) email: kathy.evans@edinburgh.gov.uk, Tel. 0131 529 5106

Environmental Warden team leader: Paul Baxter Tel. 0131 529 5204; or 608 1100

People Against Litter (PAL): *please contact* <http://www.peopleagainstlitter.org/>

FoMBL Trustees

Convener: Jim Orr, email: convener@fombl.org.uk

Secretary: email: secretary@fombl.org.uk.

Treasurer: email: fombltreas@fombl.org.uk

Membership Secretary: Alec Mann, email: membership@fombl.org.uk.

Project Manager: Neil Roger

Newsletter Editor: Maureen Parnell, email: newsletter@fombl.org.uk

Tollcross Community Council: Iain Black, **Southside CC:** Joan Carter, Kaaren Haughton, **Merchiston CC:** Bridget Stevens, **Marchmont and**

Sciennes CC: Alison Service

Other FoMBL Contacts:

Webmaster: Philip McDowell. **Website:** www.fombl.org.uk

Volunteer Co-ordinator: Alison Carr. email: volunteer@fombl.org.uk

