



LASSWADE DISTRICT CIVIC SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER - FEBRUARY 2007

NEW YEAR RESOLUTIONS

Each year the Society runs a programme of activities and events aimed at furthering both our civic objectives and our social inclinations. Previous civic-improvement projects have seen the construction of the Jubilee Bridge, the creation of the Community Garden and the restoration of the Baird Smith Memorial all, I believe, have made a worthwhile difference to our local environment.

In 2007, we hope that our main civic project will be based around School Green: the main social event will be our Annual Party, to be held at St Leonards (details below), and we are planning indoor and outdoor meetings, including, a talk, a walk and a local clean-up day. We shall also, again produce and distribute to every member a communication three times during the year. We shall also continue to maintain our website - www.lasswade.free-online.co.uk

One of our main constitutional tasks is to keep a watch on planning issues affecting the amenity of our area. The year 2007 will be important in that regard, because long outstanding major developments at the Old Mill, the Old School and at the Howden and Welton former garage site are likely to come to fruition, making a significant impact on our area. We have made detailed representations on these and

many other local developments aimed at avoiding potentially detrimental effects on our Conservation Areas and their setting. We have also responded to the consultations on the new Edinburgh and Lothians Structure Plan and the new Midlothian Local Plan, which will come into force in 2007.

The work of the Society is organised by your Committee. We also have a team of 19 Local Representatives who deliver the Newsletters or fliers, collect your subscriptions and sell the Annual Party tickets. Everyone has an invaluable part to play and without them all the Society could not operate as it does.

Recently, however, we have noted a falling off of participation by members in Society activities: to rectify this, we would welcome suggestions from members as to activities, projects and events for the future. We hope that the 2007 programme when it is issued meets your expectations, we are keen also that members should feel free to offer help in organising and running them.

Contact details of our Committee are given on page 4, and we would be delighted to hear from any member who would like to help. Finally, if you can offer the Society support with specialist knowledge or skills relevant in any area of our work, do please let us know. T.D.

AGM details
see page 2



The thick, grey river at Polton

The Cause

A massive landslip in Penicuik at Alderbank! At 6.30 am that morning, a loud rumble was heard by houses a distance away and on further investigation this devastated area was discovered. Thousands of tons of clay, coal dust and white sand were swept into the river. The causes of this major slippage are being researched. A new footpath had just been completed which crossed the area and was to have led to a new bridge which was shortly to be built. A horrendous landslide, but a total blessing that no-one was hurt or worse.

Did you see

The 'Grey Soup' River?

On 12th January, a member took the photo on the left, of the river as it passed through Polton Village. It was thick, grey and flowing fast. For eight hours it remained this weird colour and consistency as it passed, under the new Polton Bridge on its way to the sea at Musselburgh.



The River North Esk is seen on right, squeezing past.

Annual PARTY

Friday, 16th March 2007, St. Leonard's Church Hall, Dobbies Road 8 -10 pm

Your Local Representative will call to offer you tickets at £5.00 each
and also to collect your subscriptions £4 for families and £2.50 for Individuals.



Bill Dobson 1934 -2006

Bill, frequently to be seen in his welly boots, tools in hand, fixing a local problem, sadly died in October 2006. He was a Founder Committee Member of our Society when it was set-up in 1971. Bill's commitment to the Society was longstanding and over the years he was a great contributor, culminating in his Chairmanship from 2001 - 2004. During this time the Committee's major undertaking was the building of the new Jubilee Footbridge and the creation of the adjacent Community Garden. This is of huge benefit to our village and Bill was rightly proud of this achievement. His dedication, enthusiasm and willingness to help will be greatly missed. Bill did so much for us all.

The Autumn Walk 2006

The 28th October dawned far from fair and hadn't improved by the time of our walk. Rain and wind had obviously discouraged all but the hardest, and it was a small but dedicated band who set off from Rosewell to tour the Whitehill estate and the area around Capielaw.

Our first stop was at Orchard House, an extensive new building but of convincingly traditional appearance, thanks largely to the use of material reclaimed from the chapel of Whitehill House. Archie and Ann Hunter gave us a tour of the recently completed building, with many anecdotes of their adventures in its construction.

Duncan Hunter, Archie's brother, who farms at Thornton, nearby, then gave us a wide-ranging and fascinating discourse on the history of the local area in general and of Whitehill House in particular.

This visit had been intended as a mere interlude, but, given the interest of the subject matter (not to mention the coffee and

shortbread kindly provided), it turned out to be the main event... a most enjoyable alternative to the unpromising conditions outdoors

Fortunately, however, the weather relented and we were able to complete the section through the Whitehill estate.

Built in the 1840s of local stone and richly ornamented, Whitehill House is a magnificent example of Tudor-Jacobean architecture.

Built for Colonel Wardlaw Ramsay the house remained in the family until the 1914-1918 War, during which it was used as a Red Cross hospital. In 1924 the Sisters of Mercy took it over, named it St Joseph's and took on the care of handicapped and delinquent children, and latterly of old people.

Recently the house was sold and is now a private home, forming a unique architectural backdrop to the golf course newly created in its grounds.



JEAN IS AWARDED THE FIRST SOCIETY HONORARY MEMBERSHIP

Last October, Tom Delaney presented Mrs Jean Abel with her Award in recognition of the 35 years of dedicated service that she has given to the Society. Along with her husband George, Jean was a Founder Member in 1971 and has been Publicity Convenor, Membership Secretary and Local Representative for the Kevoek area. The Chairman and Committee thank Jean for the many years of hard work she has given and are proud to award her our first Honorary Life Membership. She remains, as ever, one of our most interested members.

Fellow Residents!

Even though sometimes they come into our gardens and eat our rose bushes, roedeer are still, perhaps, for most of us, the most impressive and the most delightful examples of our local wildlife.

They can be seen at all times of the year and roam widely in our area, the river valley providing a well wooded corridor, with good cover for their movement, together with browsing and grazing opportunities.

Although they are reputed to favour dawn and dusk, ones and twos can be seen, at almost any time of the day in favourite, undisturbed locations such as the Mavisbank policies.

The photo taken by Neville Crowther shows a female in summer in one of the extensive marshy areas here.



During our last snowy winter, a group of half a dozen congregated every evening at dusk in open fields near Lasswade, lying in the snow, alert to the occasional passer-by, but quite reluctant to get up.

Notice of the Annual General Meeting to be held in Lasswade Park Pavilion.

on Monday, 23rd April 2007 at 7.45 for 8.00 pm.

It is requested that nominations for the Committee (proposed, seconded and with the consent of the nominee) should be given to the Secretary at least two weeks in advance of the AGM.

Away with the old - In with the new

In the last newsletter we reported the sad end of the old iron truss bridge at Polton. Its removal and replacement by a much heavier new bridge took 14 weeks during which time there was no provision for local residents to cross the river. However the operation did provide some interesting scenes and disruption was probably less than anticipated.



Last look



Up and away



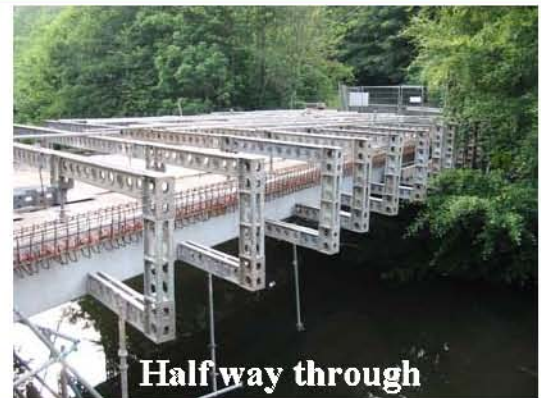
No way across!



A sad end



The new beams



Half way through



Flood Risk?



A neat job?

On the whole, opinion of the new bridge is favourable, but why such a heavy structure on this narrow road? Why the white lines and large sign? And why the "urban" style stonework? But we're pleased the old post survived. Some people like the green railings, some don't. You can't please everyone!



Planning and Associated Matters



Further to the round-up given in the Autumn *Newsletter*,
the following Table gives a summary of the current position on the following sites.

Site	Application No.	Proposed development	No of houses	Approval status	Implementation status	Comment	Update
Old Mill and adjacent former garage	06/00259/ FUL	housing	22	b	a	Objection submitted on amenity and associated grounds	Present application to be determined following submission of traffic report and flood risk assessment
Mavisbank Gardens	06/00487/ OUT		1	b		Outline application for the erection of a dwellinghouse	Planning Committee minded to approve(18/01/07)
Jenny Lasswade	06/00326/ FUL	housing	5/6	b	a	Proposal to increase to 6 houses was rejected by MC and appealed by applicant.	Appeal remains to be determined.
Kevock Nursery	06/00298/ FUL 06/00299/ FUL	remove old bridge abutment, new access road, seven more poly tunnels	n/a	c	a	Objection submitted on amenity and associated grounds	Application granted subject to special conditions
Lasswade School	n/a	housing	6			Site cleared ready for development	Site to be sold in February
Polton House	various	various changes				Representations have been made on various development proposals for the site and on the clutter of signs at the entrance.	Response awaited from MC
King's Acre	n/a					Representations have been made concerning the banner signs recently hung on the walls on Lasswade Road	Response awaited from MC
Wading Burn	04/004937/ FUL	land engineering		b	a	Objection submitted on amenity and associated grounds	MC have consulted SEPA and await their response
			house = house or flat	a submitted b in review c approved d declined	a pending b being built c completed		

Use of the Society's Name

The Committee in pursuance of the Society's constitutional objectives, frequently makes formal representations on planning, traffic and other matters to Midlothian Council and other authorities. Such representations are made in writing and by agreement after study and discussion of the issue.

Should any member of the Society wish representations to be made

in the name of the Society on any issue that falls within the scope of our Constitution, they should raise the matter with a member of the Committee, and it will be reviewed and action decided as considered appropriate.

Members can of course submit personal representations on any issue at any time, and may quite properly declare their affiliation to the Society. However, the Committee would appreciate it if, in doing so, members would take care to avoid giving the impression that they are speaking or writing on behalf of the Society.

Contact Details

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Society Website: www.lasswade.free-online.co.uk

Newsletter Editors: AD & RosM *Photographs:* © 2006—2007 Lasswade District Civic Society & Neville Crowther 4