



Blacket Association Newsletter

May 2015

BLACKET WEBSITE

Many thanks to all contributors who helped refresh the Blacket website at www.blacketedin.org. We hope you will find the website easier to navigate and locate the things you are looking for. As well as updating the design, one of the aims of the refresh has been to highlight more of the work that goes on behind the scenes within the Blacket Association, as well as making contact details more prominent. The 'News & Events' page now contains a noticeboard section as well details of all forthcoming events. If you have any suggestions for future enhancements do please contact any committee member.

BLACKET OPEN GARDENS EVENING

Blacket residents are invited to the annual Blacket Gardens visit evening, which will be held on Friday 19 June. Gardens to be visited from 6.30pm are:

- 40 Blacket Place
- 7 Alfred Place
- finishing with drinks at 34/36 Mayfield Terrace

CHEESE AND WINE

Thursday 26 March saw sixty residents past and present gather at the Parkside Bowling Club for an evening of wine, cheese and chat. A most agreeable evening was had by one and all. The venue proved very successful, and we are likely to use it again, possibly for the next AGM.

Also attending were our long-standing postman John O'Malley and his wife Ella. Lel Blair presented our cheque to him on his retirement. The donations which residents very generously made totalled nearly £1,000. Everyone had some recollection of John and was able to share them with him on the night.

FUTURE SOCIAL EVENTS

Possible outing to Jupiter Artland

Many of you will be aware of the amazing sculpture garden Jupiter Artland, which is on the outskirts of Edinburgh (jupiterartland.org). It reopens on 16 May, and there is a suggestion that we should organise an outing there. Jupiter Artland is open from Thursday to Sunday during May, June and September, and every day during July and August. The opening hours are 10am until 5pm. If you would be interested in signing up for this, please get in touch with Hazel Dunn (hazel@poststreet.net; 667 4790).

BLACKET CARDS

It is with great pleasure that we can announce that the second edition of the 'Blacket cards' are now available for purchase. There are two cards and they were first produced some years ago and sold out very quickly.

- The first Blacket card is a pen-and-ink sketch of the pillars at the north end of Blacket Place at its junction with Dalkeith Road and the view beyond to Arthur's Seat. This was done by Catherine Gerrard, a previous resident of Mayfield Terrace and past Chair of the Association.
- The second depicts an orchid found growing in The Shrubbery of Blacket Avenue by members of the Blacket Gardens Working Group. The orchid was sketched *in situ* by Dame Elizabeth Blackadder and later produced as a painting. Dame Elizabeth kindly allowed the painting to be copied and the cards produced.

Both Blacket cards are blank on the inside for your own message. All proceeds from the sale of the cards goes towards the funds for The Blacket Gardens Working Group.

- individual cards cost £1.25 each;
- 5 cards cost £5;
- 100 cards cost £90.

Orders can be placed via the website or with any committee member.

BLACKET SHRUBBERY WORKING PARTY

When it was formed in the 19th century and when restored more than a decade ago, the Shrubbery demanded many volunteers and much work. Now in its mature form only a few of us are involved. If anyone else would like to participate regularly, though, feel free to contact Hugh Mackay. New ideas are always of interest and we like to make improvements. The Thrums Hotel has recently contributed £50 towards shrubbery work. All residents are encouraged to pick up litter.

There was a question raised at the AGM about whether we could have some daffodils as we did in the past. We originally planted more than 10,000 but few remain because daffodils dislike growing under leafmould, overgrown by shrubs, etc. One of the stronger varieties of 'miniature' Narcissi is 'Jetfire' which was planted on the corner of Blacket Place / Blacket Avenue. This variety survives quite well and is not decimated by the wind. For maximum visual effect, we have now planted 2,000 more 'Jetfire' in the fenced area by Thrums on Blacket Avenue and on the north side gardens between Blacket Place and Minto Street.

WOOD-BURNING STOVES

Wood-burning stoves are a fashionable home improvement so here are some things to be aware of if you are considering installation:

- All Edinburgh is a Smokeless Zone, to protect residents from the air pollution of yesteryear. You can be fined £1,000 under the Clean Air Act for burning a non-approved fuel; Edinburgh Council issued fines in 2010 after an upsurge in complaints.

Wood is not an approved fuel unless used in an 'exempt appliance' – basically a stove that has been authorised as meeting strict emission requirements.

- The rules are on the Council website: <http://edinburgh.gov.uk/info/20237/pollution/312/smoke-control>. This also gives a link to the DEFRA site, which lists the makes of stove (wood-only or multi-fuel) that qualify as exempt appliances in Scotland.
- There are rules about ventilation which restrict you to a small stove (max 5KW) unless you have separate external ventilation in the room i.e. drill a hole through the wall, which may well make a large stove impractical.
- Your sweep should carry out a smoke test to check if your chimney is sufficiently airtight or needs a liner to be installed – depending on the height of the chimney, this can cost more than the stove itself.
- Reputable stove installers should be HETAS qualified and able to advise on these issues. DIY installation of a stove bought off the Internet is not recommended!

HOME SECURITY

On behalf of the Blacket Association Hugh Mackay attended a home security seminar at Mayfield Salisbury church on Wednesday 29 April. There is a spike in home burglaries at present on the Southside. What emerged from the meeting was as follows:

- bolts should be put on traditional windows etc;
- residents need to be generally alert;
- do not make it obvious that your house is empty. This ideally means that shutters and curtains should not be closed during the day. At night if the front rooms are used, one tip is to ask a neighbour to go in each evening to close them. This may be rather a lot to request, so mostly shutters and curtains should remain open;
- monitored burglar alarms will mostly produce a non-urgent police visit. Non-monitored calls will be ignored unless a police car happens to be in the vicinity and the alarm is noticed;
- if an intruder is heard in the house do not investigate – phone the police instead. This should be treated as a priority;
- many current burglars are under sixteen and are controlled by mature criminals who identify targets;
- if residents own a valuable car, one target will be to steal the keys. Do not leave them in an obvious place;
- tell neighbours when you are going on holiday;
- try to form informal groups of residents who will look out for each other's properties;
- some houses have been burgled after the owners have gone off on holiday. Thieves read luggage labels at the airport and know who is going away. Do not therefore put your home address on an external luggage label. Identification inside the luggage is preferable, to aid recovery if the luggage is lost.

OFFICE BEARERS AND COMMITTEE 2015

CHAIR	Hazel Fletcher	MINUTES	Fiona Courtney]
TREASURER	Becky Colegrave	NEIGHBOURHOOD	Ian Chisholm
MEMBERSHIP	Sheila McLeish	WATCH/NEWSLETTER	
PLANNING	Richard Seligman	WORKING PARTY	Hugh Mackay
PLANNING	Richard Scothorne	WEBSITE	Johnny Kruuk