

# Friends of Inverleith Park

OUR update on YOUR Park - Issue 28 Spring/Summer 2017



Photo: Jill Holmes

## **Forthcoming events for your diary**

### **Foodies Festival 4th – 6th August**

Feast in the Street Food Avenue; learn to bake in the Cake and Bake Theatre; enjoy yoga in the park with Lululemon; indulge in afternoon tea in the Vintage Tea Tent; taste wine, champagne and craft beer in the Drinks Theatre; buy from local producers in the Artisan Market; kids enjoy the Children's Cookery Theatre; live music on the Brighton Unsigned Music Stage; enter the Chilli Eating Competition; refreshing cocktails from the Bar Bus and Pimms Teapot and have a fun day out in the VIP area styled by Anthropologie. Organiser: Sue Hitchen [sue.hitchen@foodiesfestival.com](mailto:sue.hitchen@foodiesfestival.com))

### **Petanque (Boules) Taster Session 5th August 2pm**

The Petanque (Boules) Club in Inverleith Park has offered the Friends of Inverleith Park a taster session on Saturday 5th August starting at 2pm - keep the date free! Hopefully it will be a sunny day and we can all enjoy the game and the weather.

### **Festival Fireworks Concert 28th August 2017, 9.30-10.15pm**

With its great views of the castle Inverleith Park is a good place to enjoy the fireworks without the crowds. Unfortunately the video link and speakers were dropped due to budget cuts, but you can bring your own radio. Get there earlyish - proceedings start at 7pm - to bag a good spot.

### **Inverleith on Foot or by Bike – Walking and Cycling Festival**

**Sunday 24th September from 2-4pm 2017**

Family friendly festival of walking, cycling and other physical activity with a marquee in case of poor weather. Stalls, information, activities in the marquee and 'have a go' walking and cycling activities around the park and beyond. No charge for entry. All ages and abilities are encouraged to come along. There will be a nature walk at 3pm. Event organised by City of Edinburgh Council.

## Pond dipping (with nets for pond-life)

**Saturday, 15th July 11am**

**Sunday, 20th August 11am**

Our pond-dipping events have proved very popular in recent years, so we have decided to have two this summer. They are suitable for anyone over 3. All children must be accompanied by adults. Equipment will be provided, but if you have your own net and a white basin or tray, do bring it. No need to book.



## The sundial

The sundial, the central feature of The Sundial Garden, is to be re-furbished and restored to its Victorian glory as when it was presented to The Park by Joseph Kinloch Anderson in 1890. It is a significant item in the cultural heritage of the City of Edinburgh and has fallen into disrepair over the years. Kinloch Anderson were then a vibrant young company of Tailors and Kiltmakers. They are proudly celebrating their 150th Anniversary in 2018 and to celebrate this they are most generously paying for the full restoration of the sundial. The work is being carried out by Graciela Ainsworth Sculpture Conservation and Restoration, with technical guidance from Alastair Hunter of Macmillan Hunter Sundials. The Friends of The Park are helping to coordinate the restoration, and particularly with the upgrading of the garden itself, work already started by Pam Barnes and her team. Although the work on the sundial itself is being paid for by Kinloch Anderson there will be a lot of other expenses that the Friends will have to meet, including plants for the garden and organisation of the day itself. Saturday 16th June 4pm 2018 will be the big day, with the Lord Provost and members of all branches of the community of Inverleith and Stockbridge. Please note it down in your diary. *Tony Cook*

## **Report from our Convener - Pam Barnes**

**Fitness Equipment:** The new fitness equipment continues to be very popular both with 'mature movers' and also with older children, so much so that the grass around the new equipment is becoming worn down. Special matting which allows grass to grow through it is to be installed soon with the Parks Department and the Friends sharing the cost. We hope this will make a difference especially when it rains and the ground gets muddy.

**Sundial Garden;** There are now 6 regular volunteers on Wednesday morning (Trish, Joan, Elizabeth, Isobel, Andrea and Pam). We also get a lot of help from the Community Payback Team organised by Graeme Laird and Stuart Ritchie. Jennifer Johnson and the other park rangers have also helped. I would like to thank all of them for their hard work - it has made a huge difference. We are now tackling the west side of the area where the shrubs are old and have been very neglected. Unfortunately the shrubs are mostly broom which cannot be pruned as it doesn't break from old wood so some broom has been removed. This allows us to put in new shrubs and perennials and we will gradually replace all the broom with new shrubs. Unfortunately shrubs take a long time to reach any substantial size and we don't want to make the area look bare so we will not do this work all at once. We aim to get the Sundial Garden looking good everywhere by next June when we will celebrate the repair of the sundial itself. Thanks also to Kathleen who weeds the roses when she goes through to her allotment.

And a big thank you to dog owners for keeping their dogs on leads in the Sundial Garden. Things are much better for us as now we rarely find dog poo in the flower beds - a frequent hazard when we first started. We do sometimes find areas of planting damaged when we come in on Wednesday so it is important dogs are on lead. However well-controlled a dog is, we have to have one rule for all.

We would welcome anyone who would like to join us. Come along any Wednesday morning from 10am if you want to see what we do. If you are interested - just come along or ring Pam - 332 4765 or 07786 186 698 - no gardening knowledge necessary.

**Green Flag:** The Green Flag assessor criticised the grass cutting in the Sundial Garden last year. However Gary Hook the new Grounds Maintenance Manager has arranged for the Fine Turf Squad to come and check it weekly and cut it when necessary. This is a very recent change and already we can see the difference. Thanks to Ross and Lloyd for their work on this. Ross was one of the Council gardeners that helped us plant up the north bed about 3 years ago and he told me he was really pleased to see the plants were still there and had grown so well.

**Cafe:** We are very sad to report that the 'Box in the Park' cafe is no longer operating. The owners, Ben and Gemma, had the opportunity to go and live in France with their small baby and have left Edinburgh. The council will re-advertise to see if anyone wants to rent a spot in the park for a mobile cafe. We do hope someone will take it up again as it was very popular with park users.

**Facebook:** The Facebook page with lots of beautiful photos by Anne Rushbrook is a good place to leave comments and communicate with Friends  
[www.facebook.com/Save-Inverleith-Park-18092658601438/](http://www.facebook.com/Save-Inverleith-Park-18092658601438/) . *Pam Barnes*

**Comments from members:** The bin-men are doing sterling work this year and the Park is much cleaner. Thank you! (JC) Shame about the graffiti on the lower wall of the sundial garden. (MC)

## Wildlife

As I write this , about the lack of rain for six plus weeks – I feel I am tempting the rain gods. The Botanics and the allotments are having to water judiciously – to keep the essentials alive. If only the weather would just rain at night with sun by day. Meanwhile the hard working Sundial gardening team are having to fill watering cans in the pond and carry them up to the needy and new plants in the flower beds. The allotments and many corners of the Park have lots of wee birds nesting – ie robins, wrens, goldfinches, tree creepers, crows, blackbirds, thrushes, all the 4 tits, magpies, pigeons etc. 5 magnificent cygnets have hatched (see front photo), now hopefully all big enough to survive. We were worried when the female was sitting on her eggs because the male swan went awol for a few days. The female did well to fend off the heron nearby waiting for a chance of one of her eggs.

Tufted ducks, Canada geese, mallards, and moorhens plus coots are around on the pond and the water rail was here some of the winter again. Of a summer's evening, the allotments get visits from the heron and mallards looking for frogs, tadpoles, and insects in the grass pathways. Kestrel and sparrowhawk hunt here and there are reports of a tawny owl being heard in the later evening calling from trees. A fox is around but not being much help with the regiment of rabbits. Please email our website with any interesting sightings you have in the park. *Cathy Bell*

**Interesting sighting:** The Siberian Chiffchaff was seen in the Park last February and March. This lovely little bird differs from the normal chiffchaff by its pale greyish /brown and cream appearance and by a unique 'unhappy' sounding monotone 'peep' call. Thank you for Carolyn Hargest and Stuart Maxwell for informing us of the sighting.

## To join us

Go to the webpage of the Friends of Inverleith Park [www.friendsofinverleithpark.co.uk](http://www.friendsofinverleithpark.co.uk) and click on membership.

**Your Opinions:** Do let us know if you have any ideas for the park. You can send us a message on Facebook, or ring Pam. 0131 332 4765, *mobile:07786186698*