

Trust Talk

NEWS AND VIEWS FROM THE CORSTORPHINE TRUST

Autumn 2023



Community Stories

With the weather taking a turn and the nights drawing in, it feels that Autumn has certainly arrived. However, we have lots of exciting updates to brighten up your days in this edition of **Trust Talk**. We bring you the final part of the fascinating guide to the stones of Corstorphine Old Parish Church, as well as a selection of insightful letters from **The Corstorphine Trust** archives. From the past to Corstorphine present, we also hear from several organisations and individuals working to make our local community a great place to be.

We hope that you enjoy this Autumn Edition of **Trust Talk**!



Stay in touch

For more updates on our opening times, you can follow us on our Facebook and Instagram pages.



THE CORSTORPHINE TRUST



@THECORSTORPHINETRUST

Chair's Letter

Hello everyone and welcome to the Autumn 2023 edition of **Trust Talk**. I can't believe we're heading towards the end of another year.

We've another packed edition for you: dates for your diary, a chance to meet our new tenants at The Wee Shop, Grant gives us an update about the war memorial and the upcoming remembrance services, the final part of Stephen's article on the Stones of Corstorphine Kirk, chat from Sayana about what's happening with The Dower House Cafe, Frances dips into the archives to give us another fascinating insight into bygone days and much more!

I'm delighted that Tristan Craig has come back to us to take on the role of Events and Social Media Organiser. His remit is to do what it says on the tin and set up new events to make full use of our fabulous buildings and possibly even reprise some of the old favourites! I'm sure you'll be hearing much more from him in the not too distant future.



And before closing, as always, I extend thanks to all our volunteers. We're very lucky to have you and couldn't keep the lights on with you.

It's probably a bit early to be wishing you all a merry christmas and a happy and healthy new year but I am!

Best,

Chair

From the Archives

WEIRTER & SONS

6 November 1912

Dear Madam,

We understand you have been good enough to test for yourself our coffee essence and we trust that the trial convinced you we were justified in stating that our make is superior to all other so called Coffee Essences.

We are desirous to supply you direct as the profits on our high-class article is too small to pay for advertising



and selling through the middleman, and we will not reduce quality. We have a proposition to place before you vis. We can send to you post-paid 2 bottles Coffee Essences and 1/2 lb tin of our Dutch (pure) Cocoa, which like the Coffee Essences, has, equal, the combined order amount to 3/-.

The favour of a recommendation to any of your friends who have tasted our specialities will be esteemed, and thanking you in anticipation of your favours, we beg to be

Yours Faithfully



A DELICATE MATTER

Taken from the late Rena Cowper's Railway Jottings Leaflet

February 1902

The Pinkhill agent writes on the subject of "water closets". At Pinkhill the Ladies 1st Class waiting room door is next to the Gentlemen's W.C. Only a FOUR INCH POST separates them. The agent then asks the

Company- "Do you consider this a very agreeable place? What lady will be seen going into this place when all sorts and conditions of men are coming and going next door?"

Rena noted that the agent's description of the male train users was hardly flattering to Edwardian Pinkhill.



FRIENDLY SOCIETY BAND CONTRACT 1844

Corstorphine 28 May 1844

We hereby agree to furnish twelve official musicians, clean and well dressed in uniform to play at the Corstorphine Friendly Society's General Meeting on Tuesday the 4th instant for the sum of Three Pounds Sterling to be in attendance by 10 o'clock A.M. Any of the party getting himself the worse of drink to forfeit to the Society his pay.

James Mason

Stones Inside Corstorphine Old Parish Church, Pt. 3

Written by Stephen W. Murray

This three-part guide is intended to assist those with an interest in the tombstones and other commemorative stones that can be found inside the Parish Church. It can be read from the comfort of the armchair or used in the Church. If the latter, it is recommended that the reader starts in the North Transept before proceeding clockwise, moving east towards the Chancel Arch, then proceeding westwards. Your sojourn should then finish up in the Porch.

1. CHANCEL (South). ALEXANDER TOD



If you look behind the large wooden Reader's Chair, you'll find the tombstone of Alexander Tod (*Fig. 1*) who died in 1489 (Jackson, 1991, p. 5). Tod was related to the Forrester family by marriage. Archibald Forrester's second wife was Agnes Tod; and Alexander was her brother. Their father, Sir Thomas, was Provost of Edinburgh in 1448 (Cowper, 1992, p. 46). The Latin inscription on this tomb translates as: "Here lies Alexander Tod, late son of Thomas Tod, knight, who died on the 20th day of September 1489. Pray for his soul." This stone was apparently taken from a vault under the nave, presumably during the 1828 restoration by Burn (Thomson, 1946, p. 24).

Fig 1. Tombstone of Alexander Tod, Chancel (South).

2. SOUTH TRANSEPT (West). WATSON OF SAUGHTON



Situated in the west wall of the South Transept is a splendid heraldic stone with six rings (*Figs. 2 and 3*). This is the tombstone of the Watson family of Saughton. The stone was formerly located between the entrance to the South Transept and the Nave; beneath which is the Watson burial vault (Jackson, 1991, p. 4). The stone is in its current position to fill in the space which was formerly a doorway. The Watsons were influential landowners throughout the parish; and the stone commemorates John Watson, who died in 1620, and his wife Jean Douglas. On *Fig. 10*, the initials "I.M.W." can be found at the top of the heraldic symbol and "I.D" either side; whilst a long inscription from Ezekeil 7 on the resurrection of dry bones is found around the border of the stone (Thomson, 1946, p. 26; Cowper, 1992, p. 47).

Figs. 2 and 3 (Detail). Watson Tombstone (South Transept, West).

3. PORCH. DECORATED CROSS (Date Unknown)

This little stone can be found in the Porch at the top right-hand corner as you exit (*Fig. 4*). Not a great deal is known about it; but like the slab in the south wall of the Chancel, it has an incised, floriated cross. This may indicate that it represented a mediaeval military grave. The stone is smaller than the similar one in



the south wall of the Chancel, at approximately 0.7m from floor level. The grave itself may have actually been inside the church; as a law at one time stated that incised slabs were not supposed to be trod upon (Cowper, 1992, p. 47).

More information on these stones, the Parish Church and Corstorphine in general, is available at The Corstorphine Heritage Museum and Archive Rooms, Dower House (second floor), St. Margaret's Park.

Fig. 4 Incised floriated cross slab stone (Porch).

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Cowper, A.S. (1992) *Historic Corstorphine and Round About, Volume 1, Church and Parish Life* (Second Edition), The Corstorphine Trust, Edinburgh (2003).

Jackson, S.H. (1991) *Corstorphine Old Parish Church, A Short History and Guide* (Second Edition), Macdonald Lindsay Pindar plc, Loanhead.

Selway, Upton G. (1890) *A Mid-Lothian Village, Notes on the Village and Parish of Corstorphine*, Rowll Press, Edinburgh (1984).

Thomson, D.M. (1946) *The Corstorphine Heirloom*, John Blackie Press, Edinburgh.

Corstorphine War Memorial Update

You may have noticed recently that some work has been carried out on the Corstorphine War Memorial in Kirk Loan. One of the responsibilities of The Corstorphine Trust, in addition to organising the annual Remembrance Service, is to maintain the memorial itself.

For a number of years there have been attempts to have the memorial cleaned and refurbished. Several stone masons were approached but for a variety of reasons the work wasn't completed. Earlier this year there was an advert on the back of the "The Corstorphine Grapevine" booklet for a locally based stonemason firm. I approached them on behalf of The Trust and following a meeting and discussion with one of the staff, commissioned them to carry out the work.

During September 2023 the work was completed. This involved removing as much of the dirt as possible without damaging the commemorative panels. At the same time any gaps between the stones in the wall behind the memorial were repointed.

There are a number of black spots still to be seen on the panels and I am hoping that at some point it may be able to have them removed as well. An important point in the cleaning process is that any methods used do not result in the names becoming obscured. As the stone used is a natural product there is the risk that what works on one panel successfully may not work successfully on another.

Grant Donaldson
Remembrance Services Co-ordinator

Two Years of The Dower House Café



How time flies! This 5th of November we will commemorate two years of The Dower House Café. We have survived the most critical period for any start-up business, woohoo! There is so much to celebrate but particularly the fact that The Dower House has become a community space for people to come together throughout the seasons. According to our payments software 85 percent of our customers are regulars but we don't need a computer to tell us that. We know their names, their dogs, their drinks, their routines and we are a key part of their lives. Those mothers who first popped in two years ago while pregnant visit us regularly with their toddlers who are now speaking. We are a key stop for local walking groups, for friends and families who meet weekly, for the parents and dog walkers in desperate need of caffeine, and for the lovely folk from the retirement home across the park.

In addition to this, we have supported a few local causes every year since we first opened, including fundraisers for charities, parent & teacher associations, kids sports clubs, cycling initiatives and community raffles. We are also working with Forrester High School providing apprenticeship opportunities to students interested in a career in hospitality.

Working closely with The Corstorphine Trust and The Trust's volunteers we host different groups who use The Dower House for different purposes. From the Corstorphine Art Group who exhibit their work in the Davies Room to the crafts fairs in the Kilgour Room, the open days, school visits, the community BBQ held this summer and other events which truly make a fantastic use of the space and bring the community together. We hope to continue our work to make The Dower House the heart of Corstorphine.

Euan and Sayana

The Rosebean



The Dower House Café has a new sister cafe located in Roseburn Park. The Rosebean opened its doors on 21st of September and so far it has been enthusiastically welcomed by locals and commuters alike.

The building used to be the old toilet block which was then taken over by the Friends of Roseburn Park who raised funds through a period of 11 years to refurbish the building. We now have the privilege to call this place our second venture and we are working hard to make it a success.

The Rosebean currently opens from Thursdays to Sundays from 8:30am until 4pm. We offer specialty coffee, delicious sweet treats and filled sandwiches. Pop by to say hello!

The Wee Shop



My name is Sarah and I have been selling bespoke celebration cakes, cupcakes, and traybakes for the last couple of years via my website and at fêtes and markets.

Earlier this year I became aware that “The Wee Shop” owned by The Corstorphine Trust was available to rent. I loved the small, quirky size of the shop and thought it would be the perfect premises to sell my baking from, taking the name Sweet Bella’s after my sweet little dog Bella. At the moment, I am open Thursday to Saturday 10am – 4pm selling four different types of tray bakes and six different cupcake flavours every week, along with cookies, tablet, and biscuits.

I have been overwhelmed by how well Sweet Bella’s has been received by the people of Corstorphine and how welcoming everyone has been. I am so grateful for the opportunity I have been given by The Corstorphine Trust and I am looking forward to further building up my business.

Sarah Bald

Caretaker Wanted

After reading the advert below, if you are interested in applying for the position, please email chairman@corstorphinetrust.co.uk providing your name, phone number and a short paragraph telling us why you’re the person we’re looking for.

Closing date for applications is **Wednesday 8 November 2023**.

As caretaker of two buildings in the heart of the Corstorphine village, you will be part of a team helping to ensure the smooth running of The Corstorphine Trust’s growing number of activities.

Providing high standards of customer care, you will:

- ensure a good level of internal and external tidiness and cleanliness
- monitor the external areas around the properties for defects and report on any found
- set out/store equipment required for lets
- open and close for casual lets

Your duties will also include alarm tests, defibrillator checks, ensuring bins are put out in time for pick up, setting heating timers, reading utility meters.

Daytime, evening and weekend work will be essential.

Working on your own initiative, good time management and organisational skills will allow you to manage priorities while on shift. Basic IT skills are essential.

Salary: £10.42 per hour (rotational - five days on/five days off working approximately 1.5 hours per day).

The Scottish Connection



We were delighted to welcome John Kitchen back to The Corstorphine Astoria Centre in October for a very enjoyable afternoon of music with a Scottish connection. He kept everyone entertained with his chat and dexterity on the Ingram.

Several of the tunes were composed/arranged by Mike Thomson. Mike used to play the Ingram when it was in the Astoria cinema in the 1970s and John wrote an interesting article for us about Mike which we published in the summer 2022 edition of Trust Talk.

It's incredible to think that some of the music we know and love today has been around for hundreds of years.

Haste ye back John.

A Spooky Double Bill...

...is coming to The Corstorphine Astoria Centre on Saturday 11 November!

We will be showing two frightening classics, beginning with *The Fall of the House of Usher* (1928) and followed by our main feature, *Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* (1920). Both films will be accompanied with a fully improvised score by renowned organist Donald MacKenzie.

Tickets, priced at £15.00, includes refreshments. Doors open at 6.45 pm for a 7.00 pm start.

You can book tickets online at <https://www.corstorphinetrust.co.uk/concerts/> or you can contact the office on 0131-316 4246. Your name will be placed on a list and we would ask that you send a cheque (or come in person) within one week of your booking. Your ticket will then be confirmed.

Tinsel and Tunes



We have another date for your diary this time with a distinctly christmassy theme (apologies for using the ‘c’ word in October!)

Aaron Hawthorne and Kirsty Duncan will be performing at The Corstorphine Astoria Centre on Saturday 16 December. The concert promises to be all things christmas!

Tickets, priced at £15.00, includes refreshments. Doors open at 6.45 pm for a 7.00 pm start.

You can book tickets online at <https://www.corstorphinetrust.co.uk/concerts/> or you can contact the office on 0131-316 4246. Your name will be placed on a list and we would ask that you send a cheque (or come in person) within one week of your booking. Your ticket will then be confirmed.

Santa’s Grotto is Back!



Did you know The Dower House is Santa Claus’ Edinburgh Residence? Well of course it is.

Santa’s grotto was a huge success last year with most tickets sold out every day. We are hoping to replicate that success this December as it is a key event to attract visitors to The Dower House and to the café once the cold winter days begin.

The set up in the Kilgour Room allows for a very private visit without stress, ideal for babies, toddlers and those who are a bit shy when it comes to meeting

Santa. Some of the feedback received last year includes:

“Visited today. Absolutely brilliant experience. So warm and cosy and intimate. Brilliant Santa and elf. Thank you”

“Visited Santa’s grotto today.. Lovely wee visit . Grandson enjoyed it ..Santa and his elf were delightful... Topped with lovely visit to the cafe.. Thank you all”

In addition to this, proceeds from Santa’s Grotto generated a donation to the Royal British Legion Scotland of £400. We hope to support their cause this year too.

Tickets are available online from Eventbrite:

Visit www.eventbrite.co.uk and search for “Santa’s Grotto at The Dower House 2023”

Corstorphine Christmas Support Project (CCSP) 2023

INTRODUCTION

The CCSP offer support to local families who would benefit from support to help meet the costs incurred at Christmas. The current cost of living situation has increased the number of households that require support.

The project is being run in collaboration between several local organisations, businesses and primary schools. Families that the project supports will primarily be identified through local primary schools although referrals are also accepted from other avenues, including self referrals.

The type of support we offer is:

- Basic food package - provided during the weeks beginning 11th & 18th Dec
- Christmas Treats Bag
- Providing takeaway meals
- Individual Gifts for Children
- Additional Support

Project Organisation

The Project is organised by West Edinburgh Community Support Group: “The WECSG is grateful for all the support we receive from other local organisations and businesses.”

Seven local Primary Schools and two Early Years Centres refer families to the project.

Outline of each Project Element:

- **Basic Food Package** - The package will be supplied by CCSP from donations provided by local businesses, organisations, churches and individuals.
- **Christmas Treats Bag** - This will be particularly aimed at Children and each child will receive a bag suitable for their age. Items suitable for adults are also welcome. This will be provided through our donation appeal.
- **Individual Christmas Gifts for Children** – At the current time we do not have sufficient resources to supply gifts to families from all schools. This is currently being done on the basis of an organisation or business partnering up with a specific school
- **Additional Support** – This is dependant on what in kind support is offered by businesses and organisation. Edinburgh Zoo have confirmed that they will again provide family visit vouchers.

Please discuss with us any ideas you have for additional support you could offer. Examples of help offered so far include, free haircuts.

General Information

How many families are supported?

Although we may be limited by the resources we have available we hope to be able to help all the families identified as requiring support. In 2022, 130 families were given support .

Collection of Donations

Most of the items given to families are collected from the local community. To operate, the project CCSP are also looking for financial support and donations of food, household and other items to add to the general community donations.

What donations are required?

- Non perishable foods
- Basic toiletries (including toilet paper)
- Household Items (cleaning materials, washing powder etc.)
- Sanitary products

Cash donations are also very useful as this allows us to supplement the food and other items donated. The project always tries to provide bread, fruit, vegetables and eggs. Most of these have to be purchased on the day of distribution as we do not have suitable storage facilities for fresh foods.

Timescale

The Project will provide packages and other support to families in the weeks beginning 11th and 18th December. Food and other donations will be collected from 1st November. Pre work on setting out the premises and stock control will start early December.

Volunteers

For the project to be successful there is a need to recruit sufficient volunteers. Tasks to be covered by volunteers:

- Collecting Donations (from 1st November)
- Packing Food Parcels and Christmas Treat Boxes
- Preparing Gift Bags
- Wrapping Christmas Presents.
- Staffing Pick up Points
- Deliveries of Parcels/Boxes

Tommy McLean

Corstorphine Christmas Support Project Coordinator

07851 116939

Small Business Saturday



What is Small Business Saturday?

It is a UK wide grassroots, non-commercial campaign, which highlights small business success and encourages consumers to 'shop local' and support small businesses in their communities.

The day itself takes place on the first Saturday in December each year, but the campaign aims to have a lasting impact on small businesses.

On Small Business Saturday, customers across the UK go out and support all types of small businesses, online, in offices and in stores. Many small businesses take part in the day by hosting events and offering discounts.

The next Small Business Saturday takes place on **2nd December 2023**.

The Corstorphine Business Community group is hoping to encourage as many businesses in the locale to sign up.



The Astoria Centre

The Astoria Centre continues to flourish, with a number of adult and children's activities running throughout the week. If you're interested in booking the hall, please send an email to contact@corstorphineastoriacentre.co.uk for more information.



MONDAY

10:00-11:00 The Sensory Sessions Ltd.
18:30-19:30 Clubbercise

TUESDAY

10:00-12:45 Music Bugs
13:30-15:30 Line Dancing
16:00-17:00 Tutti Footy FC
18:30-19:30 Clubbercise

WEDNESDAY

09:30-11.30 Christine Mills - Pilates Scotland
12:30-13:30 Realistic Pilates
14:00-16:00 Versus Arthritis (*second Wednesday of the month*)
16:00-18:00 Taekwon-Do
18:45-19:45 Clubbercise

THURSDAY

09:45-10:15 Tanya's Dance-Fit Hip Hop: 2-5 years
10:30-11:00 Tanya's Dance-Fit Hip Hop: 0-2 years
11:15-12:00 Tanya's Dance-Fit: Mum's Fitness Class
13:00-14:00 Easy Exercise
14:30-16:30 SWI (*second Thursday of the month*)
17:00-21:00 Taekwon-Do

FRIDAY

09:05-10:05 Realistic Pilates
10:30-11:30 Realistic Pilates
13:00-15:00 Tutti Footy FC
16:00-19:00 Capital Allstars

SATURDAY

09:30-12:45 Inspire Theatre Workshop
13:45-16:15 Corstorphine Community Centre Tea Dance (*fourth Saturday of the month*)
14:00-15:30 Corstorphine Connect Sight Loss Grop (*third Saturday of the month*)

SUNDAY

09:30-12:30 Hong Kong Christian Church
13:30-15:00 Organ Practice

Get in touch

Corstorphine Heritage Centre
The Dower House, St Margaret's Park
Edinburgh, EH12 7SX

☎ 0131 316 4246

✉ info@corstorphinetrust.co.uk

We hope that you've enjoyed this Autumn edition of **Trust Talk** and we are delighted to be able to welcome you back to The Dower House.

You can continue to contact **The Corstorphine Trust** via email, telephone and post, as well as following us on social media for updates on our hours.