

Trust Talk

NEWS AND VIEWS FROM THE CORSTORPHINE TRUST

Autumn 2025



Remember, Remember

The darker nights have rolled in along with the colder weather, but we have plenty to keep you entertained as you stay warm in this latest edition of **Trust Talk**. Inside we have a fascinating piece on WWI naval medical records from the former Clerwood House, as well as a reflection on our recent Remembrance Day service. It's also been a very busy few months at **The Corstorphine Trust**, so read on to find out more about our recent events and other activities from the wider community.



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 2025 edition of **Trust Talk**. I hope everyone had a good summer and got a chance to enjoy the great weather we had. I can't believe we're heading towards the end of another year. It's been a busy one!

The work at the hall has been completed and the money released from Business Energy Scotland. The building's looking very smart with its new windows and weatherboarding and we're hopeful our tenants (and our energy bills!!) notice the difference having the new insulation and lagging installed.

You may have spotted that the house was resplendent in purple in October for two separate charities who asked us to show support - Metastatic Breast Cancer Awareness on the 13th and the Child Brain Injury Trust Gloweek on the 24th. It was also (respectfully) resplendent in red for the whole of Remembrance.

By the time you're reading this Remembrance will have been. My thanks to Grant for all his hard work and organisation behind the scenes in the lead up and on both days. My thanks also go to Frances and David for the Voices Past and Present exhibition which explored the history of those accused of witchcraft. It ran from the end of October to the start of November and was very well received.

Kevin Grunill (the organ restorer) was here in November to tune the organ and while here, he put on a concert for us. What a talent! I hope you made it along.

I'd also encourage you to keep an eye on our website and social media to find out what's coming up in the future.

In time honoured tradition, before closing, 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 wee bit early to be wishing you all a merry christmas and a happy and healthy new year but I'm going to!

Best,



The Dower House went purple in support of two charities in October

Chair

Clerwood House

Insight Into Some Medical Records: WW1 Navy Patients

The following excerpts have been transcribed from a notebook and documents we hold in the archives. They are from the medical staff who treated the patients.

At the beginning of the First World War Ms Margaret Todd was a medical student at the University of Edinburgh. Her father, Thomas, offered to give up part of the house as a naval auxiliary hospital. She was instrumental in converting the family home into a hospital for naval service patients. For the duration of the war and beyond Miss Tod undertook, with help, many naval casualties, mainly orthopaedic cases referred from the parent hospital in South Queensferry.



Transcribing some of the medical records gives a unique insight to some of the injuries endured by the men and how some new techniques came into practice to aid recovery at the time, some of which are still used today. The patients could be there for a few days or weeks but from the records it looks like they could stay no longer than a year and were sometimes transferred to other hospitals for further treatment.

Throughout the book you can practically feel some of the pain endured and how some suffered not just physically but mentally as well. Time and time again there were instances where it seemed the casualties were patched up and sent back for duty as quickly as possible.

Some men were refusing treatment from surgery. It is possible that some of these men could be suffering from the now recognised form of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). This could be due to them seeing so much pain in the line of duty they could take no more. Reading between the lines you can feel for these men, fear, terror, panic of returning to duty, just to find themselves a possible casualty within weeks again.



Reading the medical note of one man it states 'he has bullet wound to face, nasal bones carried away'. Amazingly at that time a form of plastic surgery had pioneering techniques like the "tubed pedical" a technique used for skin grafting. For this person it was unsuccessful and he was provided with an artificial nose. For the father of plastic surgery Sir Harold Gillies, who pioneered methods of facial reconstructive surgery during WW1, these early developments mark the beginnings of plastic surgery and developments we know today.

Conditions like Sciatica, Rheumatism, Neuritis, were treated with "Electric Baths" where the patients were charged with static electricity to help treat the conditions. "Whirlpool baths" were used to treat conditions such as fractures, infected wounds and along with massage, the treatments aided quicker recovery. Salicylic Ionization was also used to treat injuries for example arthritis, inflammation of joints, the ionization used a weak electrical current to alleviate pain.

Many patients had broken bones, femur, tibia, elbows etc and treating them with a "Thomas Splint" helped stabilise the fracture therefore helping the healing process. Before this splint was used many patients died or limbs were

amputated, with the splint, mortality rates reduced. Before the splint, about 80% of patients with a broken thigh bone died. With its introduction, this number dropped to around 20%. Even today in hospitals this splint is still used.

As the war progresses you start to see patients being admitted for influenza. History tells us about the pandemic of the Spanish flu, and how towards the end of the war it spread rapidly due to conditions in the trenches, overcrowding in hospitals etc.



There does seem to be a bit of a lighter side in the book which is shown in some of the photographs. These may be small plays, skits, put on to help entertain and alleviate some pain as they recovered. Obviously long before television the medical staff would have to think of ways to cheer up the patients. Could it be that the main house had dogs? One photo shows puppies in arms - a good therapy for all. All of this would have helped these men escape the trauma and horrors of war.

In all this book gives a rare glimpse into the past and through the notes an understanding of new treatment methods used, the nurses who took care of the men but also how these men must have suffered in the line of duty.

To end a part of a poem written by two of the patients (J.S.C and A.G.D) sums up their stay there.

*“Dear ‘Clerwood’ on Corstorphine Hill,
In all your glory stand!
May your fame spread o’er dale and hill,
Though all our native land!
There’s treasured there within your walls
What gold can never buy!
The times we’ve spend within your halls
We’ll cherish till we die!”*

Helen Allan
Archive Volunteer

Corstorphine Trust Schools’ Remembrance Service

Since starting the Corstorphine Trust Schools’ Remembrance Service a few years ago it has become established as a regular part of the local schools’ activities in November. Speaking to the school staff who attend with the pupils it is obvious that they feel it is important in the children’s education and they are keen to mark the event on Armistice Day specifically.

As in previous years the Remembrance Service this year took place on 11 November at the War Memorial in Kirk Loan. In a change to previous years, pupils from nine local primary and secondary schools assembled in the grounds and High Street Hall of the Old Parish Church seeking shelter from the rain.

Shortly before 11:00 the pupils were led to the War Memorial by Moira McDonald, Minister of The Old Parish Church, who welcomed them and



a few members of the public to the commemoration. Moira talked about the young men from both world wars whose names are listed on the memorial and the conditions under which they lived, fought and died. Three pupils from East Craigs Primary School were then invited forward to each read a poem.

At 11:00 we held observed the two minutes silence. After this and following a few more words from Moira congratulating and thanking all the participants she invited each of the schools to come forward to lay their wreaths. At the end of the service the different school groups came to the memorial to look at the range of wreaths that had been laid on Remembrance Sunday, a couple of days earlier.

My thanks go to Moira, the school staff and especially to the pupils for attending the Remembrance Service particularly with the weather being so bad.

Grant Donaldson
Corstorphine Trust Remembrance Service Co-ordinator



Show and Tell

During August this year, The Trust received an enquiry from St Anne's Church FAN Club asking if someone could come along and give a talk. The FAN Club (Friends And Neighbours) is a community-based group of retirees from Corstorphine and beyond that has a wide interest in history and many other subjects.

Frances approached me to see if it was something I would be interested in delivering. Consequently, arrangements were made for me to give a presentation in September (I can neither confirm or deny that the allure of free tea and coffee was a motivating factor!).



The talk was broken down into several broad elements: an overview of Corstorphine's beginnings; education, commerce, travel and finally a look at some of the unique buildings in our village.

By all accounts, the talk was well received. It was a pleasure to help out and I must thank John Lyall from the club, for providing the hardware necessary for the presentation as well as arranging for updated images of our Village.

Stephen Murray
Archive Volunteer

Magic Moments from Stage and Screen

Another great night was had by all as Nicola played a great selection of tunes from films through the years.

Nicola showcased the versatility of the Ingram spectacularly. After the break, the second half gave us a chance to tap our toes and have a sing-a-long.

Thank you to Nicola and you, the audience, for making it a thoroughly enjoyable evening.



Doors Open Day 2025

In time honoured tradition, Edinburgh's Doors Open Day was held on the last weekend in September.

The museum and archive rooms at The Dower House were open all day on the Saturday and proved to be very popular with around 60 visitors. Thanks to Frances for organising and all who helped her on the day.

The Corstorphine Astoria Centre was open on the Sunday afternoon and, as ever, the organ proved to be popular draw. Thanks to Heather for organising and Nicola for ably demonstrating the Ingram

An Update from the Park

Friends of St Margaret's Park continue to make improvements to the park. New flowers have been planted and existing beds adopted. We will be adding pin controlled secure storage to allow gardening volunteers to garden at a time convenient to themselves. We plan to allow people to adopt a patch of flowerbed, a bench or something small and then they micro-volunteer 30 minutes at a time of their choosing keeping that area well kept. Why not donate a few minutes of your time and get in touch?



We will be holding a lantern festival to celebrate the lunar (Chinese) New year, new goal posts have been approved and installed, and the cycleway is still in the works. A Halloween pumpkin trail and display was held in October. Everyone is good at something so why not get in touch and tell us what that is - we welcome all park users.

Sabrina and Andy (co-chairs)
<https://friendsofstmargaretspark.wordpress.com>

Although the following letter states a closing date of 31st January, the committee will consider relevant applications throughout the year.



The Corstorphine Trust Benevolent Fund

www.corstorphinetrust.co.uk

THE DOWER HOUSE
ST. MARGARET'S PARK
EDINBURGH
EH12 7SX
0131 316 4246

Corstorphine Trust Benevolent Fund

Founded in 1902, The Corstorphine Trust Benevolent Fund aims to assist individuals or associations/clubs within the Corstorphine area by way of providing grants to enable them to further their activities. Many people have benefitted from this fund over the years by way of small grants, and continue to do so to this day.

The Corstorphine Trust is currently inviting applications to the Fund. The closing date for each financial period is the 31st of January each year. All applicants will be informed of their progress by March the 31st immediately following the closure date.

Applications should be sent to secretary@corstorphinetrust.co.uk or by letter to:

The Secretary
The Corstorphine Trust Benevolent Fund
The Dower House
St. Margaret's Park
1A Orchardfield Avenue
EDINBURGH
EH12 7SX

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

09:45-11:45	The Sensory Sessions
18:30-19:30	Clubbercise

TUESDAY

13:30-15:30	Line Dancing
15:50-16:30	Tutti Tots: Pre-school
16:30-17:10	Tutti Tots: P1-P3
18:30-19:30	Clubbercise

WEDNESDAY

09:30-11:30	Christine Mills - Pilates Scotland
12:30-13:30	Realistic Pilates
16:00-18:00	Taekwon-Do
18:45-19:45	Clubbercise

THURSDAY

09:45-10:15	Tanya's Dance-Fit: Hip Hop Tots (2-5 years)
10:30-11:00	Tanya's Dance Fit: Hip Hop Babies & Movers (Newborn-2 years)
11:15-12:00	Tanya's Dance-Fit: Mum's Fitness Class
13:00-14:00	Easy Exercise
17:00-21:00	Taekwon-Do

FRIDAY

09:05-10:05	Realistic Pilates
16:00-18:45	Capital Allstars

SATURDAY

09:30-11:00	Inspire Theatre Workshop
11:15-12:45	Inspire Theatre Workshop
13:45-15:30	Corstorphine Connect Sight Loss Group (<i>third Saturday of the month</i>)
13:45-16:15	Corstorphine Community Centre Tea Dance (<i>fourth Saturday of the month</i>)

SUNDAY

09:30-12:30	Hong Kong Christian Church (<i>first/third/fifth Sunday of the month</i>)
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 look forward to welcoming you 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.