



NEWSLETTER

Saltire Society Edinburgh Branch

Dear Member,

We are at the start of a new year and an important one for the Saltire Society. 2016 sees the **80th anniversary of the Society** and this milestone will be marked by a series of special events from April all through to the end of the year. You will shortly receive a full detailed list directly from Head Quarters.

While the Branch will also mark the anniversary with a special event later in November, we are looking forward to the season **last lunch in April** when Aileen Orr will talk about **Wojtek the Bear**, and then a busy month of May with the **Annual Dinner** and Guest of Honour novelist **Allan Massie** who will speak about Eric Linklater **on Friday 6 May** and the **Branch AGM** followed by the **Edinburgh Philosophical Institution Lecture on Friday 20 May**. Last, but not least, our **Summer Outing on 4 June** will take us to Bo'Ness and the Kinneil Railway (for details of this please see the separate yellow information sheet enclosed with this newsletter). We hope to welcome many of you at some of the above events and that you will enjoy the remainder of the Branch Spring/Summer programme.

Laura Scott
Editor

Report from Saltire Council and HQ Update

A new **Saltire Branch** has been founded at the University of Edinburgh by Dr Mairi MacFadyen tutor on Edinburgh's undergraduate degree in Scottish Studies. The programme for **the Society's 80th Anniversary** celebrations will be unveiled at a launch event to be held in Dundee Contemporary Arts (DCA) on 6 April, then in Perth on 23 April there will be a one-day conference with four stimulating and challenging lectures on: *Scotland, the Saltire Society and the Test of Time; Education and Equality of Opportunity in Scotland; Scottish Civic Society – What's like us?; and New Scots – We're a' Jock Tamson's bairns?* June will see the Society launch its first-ever online literary festival, and in August it will be partnering the Edinburgh Art Festival to provide exhibition space for young artists. Two new bursaries in memory of Robert Hurd will be awarded to MSc students at Edinburgh College of Art in one of several initiatives tying in with Scotland's year of innovation, architecture and design.

HQ are offering the Branches a choice of a film screening, a poetry reading or a musical performance for an **80th anniversary event**. The Edinburgh Branch opted for a screening of *Dummy Jim* by artist Matt Hulse, the extraordinary tale of deaf Aberdeenshire man, James Duthie who had cycled 3000 miles from Cairnbulg in Aberdeenshire to the Arctic Circle in 1951 with just a handful of clothes, a map, a simple tent and (of course) his bicycle. This had been a 15 year project in the making that the Society were able to support during its premiere and launch around the world.

Nominations will close 14 March for the 2016 **Saltire Society Housing Design Awards**, with this year's judging panel to be chaired by Kirsty Wark.

John Yellowlees, Branch Representative

Branch AGM Calling Notice

The **Annual General Meeting of the Edinburgh Branch** will be held on **Friday 20 May 2016 at 7pm** at the Royal Over-Seas League, 100 Princes Street, Edinburgh.

The **Agenda** will be as follows:

1. Apologies
2. Minutes of AGM on 15 May 2015
3. Matters arising not on the agenda
4. Reports
 - a) Chairman's Report
 - b) Secretary's Report
 - c) Treasurer's Report
5. Election of Office Bearers and Committee
6. Any Other Competent Business
7. Date of 2017 AGM

Members are invited to give their support to the Branch by attending. Nominations to stand for the Committee are also welcome.

The meeting will be followed by the **Edinburgh Philosophical Institution Lecture** given by Sutherland Forsyth on *The Botanic Cottage* (see page 4 for details)

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News from the Edinburgh Branch

Branch events from the Autumn/Winter

(John Yellowlees, Secretary)

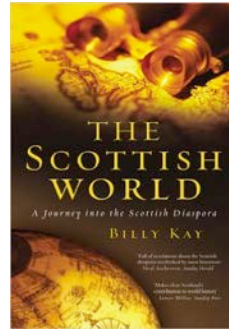


At our **October** lunch Colin Warwick and Alastair Macdonald told us how William Dick, in 1823 founded a veterinary college in Edinburgh with the backing of the Highland Society, teaching on his own until 1844 when he recruited his first staff. He disagreed on aspects of veterinary science with his second professor who set up a rival vet school in 1857 before moving to London and shutting down in 1865. By the time of Dick's death in 1866, the over 900 students he had taught were to be found throughout the world - among them the founders of veterinary schools in Australia, Canada, Ireland and the United States. Upon his death, Dick bequeathed his College in trust to the Burgh Council of Edinburgh. It was officially named Dick's Veterinary College following a request made by his sister, in 1873, in response to a crisis caused by the establishment of another rival - the New Veterinary College set up by alumnus and former Principal William Williams who had taken with him the majority of the students and the library. The two schools existed amicably within 100 metres of one another in Edinburgh's New Town until 1904 when the Williams one moved south, forming the basis of the University of Liverpool Faculty of Veterinary Science. Principal Orlando Charnock Bradley oversaw the Dick School's transfer to Summerhall where the chimney of the old brewery was demolished in 1913. Starting in 1947, the Dick School developed facilities on the home farm at Easter Bush, to which it has now entirely relocated, leaving Summerhall to reinvent itself since 2011 as an arts centre, technology start-up space and conference venue with once again a brewery. The School, once male-dominated, now has an intake that is about 80% female. About 200 students annually embark on a four/five-year veterinary undergraduate training course, and there are a large number of research postgraduate students. Edinburgh Napier University and Edinburgh College co-ordinate the training of veterinary nurses reflecting not only girls' greater maturity at 18 but also a wider and deeper interest in animal care among women.



In **November**, John Fleming, Vice-Chairman, The Cockburn Association recalled that Scottish judge, controversialist and passionate defender of Edinburgh, Henry Thomas Lord Cockburn served as a pain in the neck to all who threatened his beloved city. So the Association that bears his name sometimes makes enemies but does stand up and speak out for what it believes best. The Cockburn

tries not to be anti-development, and although sometimes it becomes difficult to articulate a pro-conservation pro-heritage message in the face of proposals like the hotel at the former Royal High School there should always be resistance to second-rate architecture. Its mission is to safeguard Edinburgh's amenity, protecting and enhancing its landscape, historical and architectural heritage, and fifty years ago it appended Edinburgh Civic Trust to its title. There is nothing wrong with good-quality modern architecture provided it respects the scale of its surroundings, but development creep is about overdeveloping a site. The Cockburn stands to the fore in protecting the Green Belt that keeps Edinburgh as a cohesive city and promotes sustainable forms of transport. The Royal High School is still to play for, and if people don't speak out they will deserve what they get. David Murray envisages 6000 houses beyond Hermiston Gait, but surely the Bypass should remain the city boundary. Community councils forced on neighbourhoods in the 1970s are variable in performance, and with no one size fitting all, amenity associations often work best in the face of perceived threats such as at Dalry over the Haymarket hotel and now at the proposed Cammo development.



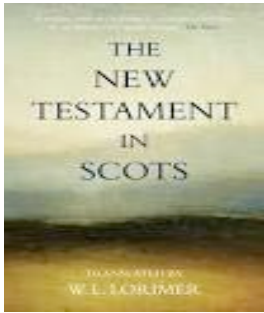
In **December** we heard from Billy Kay that literacy was key to the Scottish diaspora since other travellers didn't have comparable historical records. When Swedish Col John Crafoord paid a visit to the old family home at Crawfordland, he was recognised and invited to a family wedding to be hailed as "our cousin from Sweden 600 years removed". After a war between Sweden and Denmark, the negotiators from the two sides were half-brothers from the East Neuk, and a story had it that when peace negotiations had been conducted between Poland and Turkey in French, the Turk turned to the Pole and asked "weel weel, Geordie, fou's aa yer fowk in Inverurie?" Bergen

and Kristiansand had Jacobite communities, and Edvard Greig's migrant ancestor returned twice a year to take Communion in the church at Cairnbulg. Norway's most famous seventeenth-century author Petter Dass was the son of merchant Peter Dundas who had arrived from Dundee in 1640. The new city of Gothenburg attracted Scots merchants who founded bachelor clubs offering billiards and other entertainments, and Scots took with them not only golf and curling but also football. Poland was a tolerant country that attracted mass migration by Scots from the seventeenth century, with Scots brotherhoods set up in 12 cities. The image of the Scots peddler was such that Polish mothers warned errant children "you wait until the Scots come." James VI was asked in 1612 to prevent further migration lest it might threaten the wellbeing of the Scots already in the country. He had been only too glad to pacify the Anglo-Scottish border by clearing out its warring nobles, and several of the first men on the Moon were descendants of Border reivers, giving unexpected significance to the traditional reiver motto "there'll be moonlight again".



Eric Melvin told us in **January** that whereas nowadays we are used to carefully stage-managed royal visits, in the early nineteenth century the sovereign's involvement in public life was virtually nil and the Hanoverian monarchs were deeply unpopular, being the subject of frequent savage caricature by London cartoonists. At 5 foot 2 inches in height but with a 51 inch waist and nearly 20 stones in weight, scarcely able to walk through gout, George IV was one of the most detested men in his Kingdom. Fortunately the City could turn to the man who had inspired the visit, lawyer turned poet turned novelist Sir Walter Scott who back in 1815 had invited the then Prince

Regent to visit Edinburgh during a drinking party at publisher John Murray's home in London. Scott moved rapidly to devise a tartan dress code to be worn at the planned functions for the royal visit. He wrote to the Highland chiefs encouraging them to bring their men to Edinburgh. The Sutherland clansmen had to borrow Black Watch tartan outfits from Stirling Castle. The Earl of Errol claimed the right to carry the Sword of State, the Theatre Royal manager William Murray was charged with preparing venues and fiddler Nathaniel Gow, Niall Gow's son was put in charge of the music. Holyrood Palace was unsuitable as the King's residence so Dalkeith Palace was used instead. Having rediscovered the Honours of Scotland mislaid since the Union of the Crowns, Scott had these brought down to Holyrood, three onlookers being killed in a stampede on the Esplanade. During 16-28 August George attended three levees at Holyrood Palace, two balls in the Assembly Rooms, a visit to Edinburgh Castle, a church service and a banquet. Carried into the Castle on a litter, the King who had never before encountered such public adulation was determined to give cheer to the people from the Half Moon Battery in pouring rain. He clapped and cheered during a ball at the Assembly Rooms and turned up at 8 pm for a dinner which had started at 4.30 in the restored Parliament Hall for which Murray had hired chandeliers, staying just an hour and a half during the 17 courses and 33 toasts but finding time to knight the Lord Provost. The next day's Caledonian Hunt ball left him too tired to lay the foundation stone of the National Monument, but a performance of Rob Roy at the Theatre Royal was graced with a new verse also composed by Scott to the National Anthem. The Royal Company of Archers reformed by Scott from a drinking club did their stuff, and at the final breakfast at Hopetoun House the King took only wine but spoke to the ten Hopetoun children before embarking on the Royal Yacht at Port Hopetoun. Wilkie's portrait of the King presenting him as a svelte six-foot tartan-clad figure took seven years to complete - no wonder it earned the painter a knighthood.

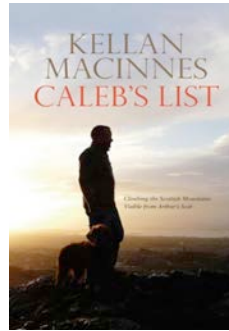


Scots Language Centre

Centre for the Scots Leid

In **February** we heard from former Saltire director Michael Hance that the Scots Language Centre struggled to produce materials of sufficient quality from its Perth base until his predecessor realised that the solution was to go online. Now the SLC has three functions : to curate material about what's happening in Scots language circles ; provide an information point on what is Scots ; and make comparisons between dialects as spoken by people in the street and in great works of literature, promoting interest in such matters as the origins of place-names. Hundreds of thousands of people come to the website looking for playlists at Hogmanay and contributions to speeches at weddings. Before 1999 it was hard to make contact with those in government, but the arrival of the Scottish Parliament brought politics much closer, and a Cross Party Group on Scots had Saltire representation including Moira Stratton and David Stevenson. In 2011 the National Census showed 1.5M people claiming to speak Scots with particular concentrations in the Northern Isles, Aberdeenshire, Angus and Ayrshire but the lowest proportions in the cities and the Western Isles. Now Scots language coordinators based in Shetland, Orkney, Dundee and Falkirk go into schools across Scotland to develop capacity for teaching in Scots, helping embed the work of the SLC which remains the first point of contact.

.....And continuing the theme of the **Scots language** if you have missed last year excellent one woman show **O is for Hoolet** by **Ishbel McFarlane**, she is on tour again this year. First at Platform in Easterhouse in Glasgow on Saturday 23 and Sunday 24 April (to book tickets please phone 0141 2769696) and then at other venues. For a full list of all other dates please go to <https://ishbelmcfarlane.wordpress.com/o-is-for-hoolet>



A passion for climbing and a survivor's story

At our **March** lunch Kellan MacInnes gave us an inspiring talk on his book *Caleb's List* and how he came about writing it. An enthusiast for climbing the mountains of Scotland since an early age and having battled HIV/AIDS for the last twenty five years, it was a chance encounter in Piershill Library with a book, *Guide to Holyrood Park and Arthur's Seat* by Gordon Wright (now long out of print) which inspired him to the challenge that would give purpose to his life again. In it he found a list, *Mountains Visible from Arthur's Seat* by CG Cash FRSGS, similar to the more famous *Munro's Table*, but while the latter has achieved increasing fame, Caleb Cash's list seemed to have been almost forgotten. He was intrigued and wanted to find out more about C.G.Cash. This pioneer mountaineer was born in Birmingham, became a teacher and after a few key jobs in rough areas of England, he came to Scotland in 1886. In 1891 he got a job at the Edinburgh Academy in Hamilton Place as Master of Geography and Music. Thanks to this move and a better salary he and his wife could afford going away and started exploring the North of Scotland and especially Aviemore and the Cairngorms. But Caleb Cash was much more than a mountaineer. He was also a geographer, an antiquarian, and a skilled navigator and put passion in all that he did. In 1898 he stood at the top of Arthur's Seat in Edinburgh and looking at the horizon made a list of 20 mountains visible from its summit, from Ben Lomond in the west to Lochnagar in the east, all meticulously identified in their location in the form of Degrees West of North to their position in relation to famous landmarks on the Edinburgh skyline. And it is this long forgotten list of hills that fascinated Kellan MacInnes and captured his imagination. He dubbed the mountains *The Arthurs* and set out to climb all twenty of them, as a challenge to himself, a very private journey of conquest over personal despair

Branch Membership News

We extend a warm welcome to the following new members: **Peter Burnett, David Campbell, M Cuthbert, Andrew Kerr, Sarah Cameron McBean, Alison Shand.**

What they say about..."The Royal High School of Edinburgh"

... "a school like the Royal High School of Edinburgh is invaluable.... because men of the highest and lowest rank in society send their children to be educated together".

Lord Brougham in a speech in April 1825 (*The Scotsman*, 6 April 1825)

News Digest



A Polish hero in the shadow of Edinburgh Castle

After years of fundraising a permanent memorial to Wojtek the bear has been unveiled on 7 November 2015 in Edinburgh Princes Street Gardens. The statue, which took sculptor Alan Beattie Heriot seven years to complete, will honour the 35 stone brown bear who was adopted by the Polish troops and went into battle with them at Montecassino, in Italy, became a corporal in the Polish Army and, when the company was demobbed in Scotland, ended his days in Edinburgh Zoo where he died in 1963, aged 21. **The fascinating story of Wojtek will be explored by Aileen Orr, our guest speaker at the April Branch lunch (see below)**

The rebirth of the Botanic Cottage



From 1763 to 1823 Edinburgh Botanic Garden was based in the area of Leith Walk and at its entrance stood the Botanic Cottage, a hub for students during the Scottish Enlightenment. After years of neglect and on the verge of demolition, the building was saved by public demand. It has now been transported, piece by piece, to the current Botanic Gardens in Inverleith and restored to its former glory as an Education Centre. Come and hear the full story on **20 May** when **Sutherland Forsyth**, (Botanic Cottage Community Engagement Co-ordinator) will be giving the **Edinburgh Philosophical Institution Lecture after the Branch AGM (see below)**.

The Sound of Music

(.....with a little help from the Edinburgh Branch!)



As reported in our last issue the Branch has donated a $\frac{3}{4}$ cello to the Edinburgh Primary Music School. The instrument is now in the capable hands of Alicia Soares (pictured here on the left) a primary 7 cellist who has already won a place in the National Youth Orchestra of Scotland Juniors and achieved distinction in her grade 5 cello exam in 2015. It is hoped that Alicia will be able to play for members after the Branch AGM on 20 May. The City of Edinburgh Primary Music School is the only specialist music school in the UK that caters for primary children. They have currently 21 children ranging from P3 to P7, who are fully integrated in their primary classes at Flora Stevenson. The Branch has subsequently donated another instrument to the Edinburgh Primary Music School, a $\frac{3}{4}$ size Paco Castillo guitar. This is now being assigned to a P4 pupil, Joseph Coane, (pictured here on the right) who has taken up guitar as a second instrument after auditioning for piano.



Branch Programme Spring/Summer 2016

A reminder to members of the **Spring/Summer events**. Please note that the evening lectures are free but the **Annual Dinner** and the **Summer Outing** must be booked and paid in advance. Separate booking forms for both events are enclosed with this newsletter. **Please also note the revised starting time of the Annual Dinner! Do join us. We hope to see many of you!**

Last lunch of the 2015/2016 series:

Saturday 2 April 2016

12.15 for 12.30pm at the Royal Overseas League

Aileen Orr on *Wojtek the Bear*

Annual Dinner

Friday 6 May 2016

6.30 for 7pm at the Royal Overseas League

Guest of Honour Allan Massie on *Eric Linklater*

Branch AGM

Friday 20 May 2016

7pm at the Royal Overseas League

followed the Edinburgh Philosophical Institution Lecture (7.30pm)
Our speaker will be Sutherland Forsyth on *The Botanic Cottage*

Summer outing

Saturday 4 June 2016

Bo'ness & Kinneil Railway

For details on the excursion please see **separate booking form**

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