

## **Chairman's Report AGM 2012 presented at the Fotheringay Centre 24th April 2013**

I'm pleased to report that it has been a productive year for Pollokshields Heritage

**Pollokshields Heritage trails.** Further what I reported last year, it was bit of an uphill struggle, but we have now published the three heritage trails for the garden suburb. The first two trails, amongst grand villas of the Avenues and the elegant tenements of East Pollokshields, were informally launched at the Doors Open Day weekend of 2012 on Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> and Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> September. We organised both a bus tour and a two part walking tour for the two days. The tours took in all the key highlights from the trail leaflets. The tours were well attended and we got some very nice feedback about their quality.

We had wanted to get all three leaflets out for Doors Open Day 2012 but the third leaflet, on the Crafting of the Suburb, which describes how the landowners, masterplanners, architects, builders, craftsmen and artisans collaborated to build Pollokshields, took longer to produce. This was largely down to the amount of interesting material uncovered by our researcher, Paul O'Cuinn. Frankly, thanks to Paul, we have now enough material for a book and at one point the committee did seriously consider this as an option. But in the end we had to satisfy the conditions of our £10,000 grant from the National Lottery's 'Your Heritage' Fund which came with a March 2013 deadline and this did not give us sufficient flexibility to do this. So in the end we opted for the same format as the other two trails. Nevertheless the information we have produced has not been wasted. We will instead post this on the Pollokshields Heritage website.

The three trails were officially launched on Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2013 at an event held in Pollokshields Burgh Hall. The event included a guided walk through the Avenues and afterwards we held a small celebration in the Burgh Hall loggia. Hard copies of the leaflets are now available from Pollokshields Library, the Mitchell Library, Glasgow City Heritage Trust offices on Bell Street and the Visit Scotland Information Centre on Buchanan Street. We hope you like the design, layout and content of them.

The information from the trails has also been uploaded onto the Pollokshields Heritage website, and here, rather than simply opt for a downloadable PDF that will be difficult to print to scale and therefore difficult to read, we have instead prepared a series of separate pages supplying information about each of the buildings on the trails.

As part of the conditions for our grant we had to conduct outreach and education so we organised a competition for local Primary Schools with the aim of making children more aware of the riches in our built heritage and environment. The results of the competition will be available for all to see in the form of a series of posters that will be put up in Maxwell Park, Pollokshields West and Pollokshields East stations.

We have also arranged further walking and bus tours of Pollokshields for this year's Doors Open Day weekend and are also discussing possibly holding a talk on the evolution of the garden suburb as part of the Doors Open Day 2013 programme of events.

**Maxwell Park Station.** The former booking office was the venue for our 160<sup>th</sup> anniversary exhibitions and continues to act as a meeting HQ for a number of local amenity groups – it is available on request!

The subgroup have continued to be in communication with the Railway Heritage Trust and the relevant officers at ScotRail and Network Rail. We are currently pursuing the installation of a standpipe at the station so we can readily get access to a source of water for watering the plants in the platform planters. This will make life easier our Head Gardener, Ann Laing, who otherwise has to lug water from her home which is obviously not ideal. We have also been involved in discussions organised by the local Fotheringay Road residents' group, and attended by Nicola Sturgeon MSP and our three Councillors to encourage Network Rail to better maintain the embankments and pick up the litter. Though people have volunteered to do this Network Rail will not provide access for health and safety reasons due to the slope of the embankment, overhead power cables and trains running past. Network Rail have agreed to looking into doing a clean up so it will be interesting to see if this is progressed.

**Lecture Series.** Now into its 4<sup>th</sup> season the Lecture Series has continued through the winter and spring months of 2012 -2013 with lectures from Gordon Barr Director of Heritage Development Officer for the Maryhill Burgh Halls Trust on 'The Crown Jewels of Maryhill' all about Stephen Adam's superb stained glass panels in the newly refurbished Burgh Halls; Colin MacKay, BBC Presenter on Aye Gaun' Roon' in Circles – the permanent way of the Weegies' a witty talk on Glasgow underground and circular railways; Elizabeth Moignard Professor of Classical Art and Archaeology at the University of Glasgow on 'How to be a Hero' about Homer's Iliad and Greek Thomson's interior decoration scheme in the dining room of Holmwood House; Fergus Sutherland of Icosse Heritage Consultants on 'Gartnavel Royal Hospital and its chapel' – three lectures for the price of one being on the history of mental illness, the development of Glasgow's asylums and the regeneration of Sir JJ Burnet's charming and diminutive chapel into the new Calman Cancer Support Centre; and David Baird on 'Palm Beach – European style in Florida', a revealing glimpse into the winter palaces and stupendous wealth of America's Gilded Age and the craftsmanship it generated.

The talks have all been well received and speakers were uniformly excellent. Audience numbers have settled around the 40 mark and the talks are still being run at a loss. The committee is now discussing whether or not to continue with the lecture series or whether we focus on other educational ventures including offering more frequent guided walking tours on the back of the heritage trail leaflets.

**Newsletter – editor wanted.** Sadly Helen, who did a superb, and much appreciated, job with the redesign of the newsletter, has had to resign from the Pollokshields Heritage committee. Helen's last news letter was in November of last year which touched on subjects such as growing the archive for the Great War, the cafes and shops around Nithsdale Road, Local Arts activities, local artist Norman Gilbert and the launch of the heritage trails. Helen has left big shoes to fill so if anyone feels up to the task they are more than welcome to give it a go! Please speak to a committee member if this appeals to you.

**Planning and Conservation Matters.** With the continuing recession there has been a notable slowed down in planning applications. This year we have dealt with a variety of small scale applications some ranging from very high quality such as a homeowner who wanted to reinstate all the cast iron cresting on their villa to others including removing the designation of the former bowling club at 4 St. John's Road as greenspace – a major departure from both City Plan 2 and the Glasgow Open Space Map. Fortunately this application was refused. We also successfully argued against an application to simplify the new Sainsbury's store on Darnley Road by removing a conditioned corbelled brick detailing. This feature was designed to reflect the simple but robust detailing of the neighbouring Edwardian tenements. Though the application was refused sadly the applicant only built a watered down version of the detail – a disappointing outcome.

**City Plan 3** Further to the publication of the Main Issues Public consultations in late 2011 consultations on the proposed plan are scheduled to begin currently in advance of the proposed plan and environmental report being published during the summer months. We will continue to monitor this in order to understand any implications for the three conservation areas.

**The Committee.** I also want to take this opportunity to thank the other committee members for their support in particular Iain Dyer as deputy chair, Hilary Stanger our treasurer who also had to deal with grant issues on the Heritage trails, Janet Brand our secretary, John Thomson as minute secretary, Helen McNamara our newsletter editor, John Thomson for his work at Maxwell Park Station, Ann Laing for all her hard work dealing with the Heritage Lottery Fund on the trails and for being our head gardener at the station, Evelyn Lennie for organizing the competition for local Primary Schools as part of our conditions of grant for the heritage trails, both Hilary Stanger and Evelyn Lennie for organizing newsletters deliveries, David Hart for his work on the website including uploading all the heritage trails information onto the website – a major undertaking, Roger Millar for helping orchestrate the lecture series as well as his work on the design and production of the Heritage trail leaflets, Alison Taylor for her work as events co-ordinator and Helen Barnard our planning convener, and finally all the committee members who have helped out with the Doors Open day tours and the formal launch of the heritage trails last month.

**Finally, as many of you will already know I am saddened to report on the death of Sheila Ogilvie,** one of the original founders of Pollokshields Heritage. Sheila was our local historian and one of the more well known residents of Pollokshields. Sadly Sheila passed away in early December 2012 and wisdom and stories of Pollokshields will be much missed. We made a point of running the first two heritage trails past Sheila before going into publication so it is sad to think that she was not around to comment on the final one or see the formal launch of all three trails as I know that was something she would have enjoyed. Sheila will be much missed.

*Niall Murphy 24th April 2013*