

GreenFerry chair, Joyce Faulkner, and her partner, Jim McIntosh, have a good friend and prize-winning poet, Norman Bissett, who surprised them last year by penning a poem about their musical, fund-raising efforts for the High Street hanging baskets. He delivered this to an audience of over 40 at one of their Priory musical evenings, and has kindly allowed it to be reproduced here.

HANGING BASKETS, SOUTH QUEENSFERRY

(For Joyce and Jim)

Hoseason, Captain of the Covenant of Dysart, Uncle Ebenezer, Davie Balfour and the Burry Man would have been impressed.

So, too, Queen Margaret, and all the pilgrims taking ferry to St Andrews.

The narrow, straggling High Street curves round the shore for half a mile, a cobbled filament linking the bridges, step-gabled houses on the steep south side set back, raised high above the cellars.

There's something ominous about them, bleak, reeking of mystery, derring-do. Black Castle. Plewlands House. Laburnum House. The Tolbooth. A film-set for brigandage and murder, pirates with parrots, ghosts with wooden legs,

shrouded in haar. But you, with poets' eyes, saw otherwise. A touch of Tuscany. A memory of Provence. Lost Gardens, Heligon. Echoes of Eden. The Hesperides. In supermarket carparks you played strathspeys and reels

to raise the cash. You tapped the avenue of shops, the pub, the bookie and the Chinese carry-out. Timmered the Council up. Phoned here and there. Discovered a source of baskets and green fingers, a man who knew a man whose gift was maintenance.

The cobbled, melancholy port, shrouded in mist, is now a Van Gogh sunburst, a rainbow. A cascading cornucopia of pinks, lobelias and anemones, nasturtiums, pansies, trailing convulvulus. South Queensferry has been reborn. It's right up there with ancient Babylon.

Now, we really can't go without saying a huge thank you to **everyone** who contributed in any way to all the environmental projects going on in Queensferry. We have wonderful community spirit here, I'm sure you'll agree. We hope you will continue to support us as you did last year when his newsletter raised a staggering £600 (and with no printing costs thanks to our sponsors.)

Ferry Attractive is kindly sponsored by: **Agilent Technologies**



Ferry Attractive

Issue 3

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GreenFerry delivers!

Well, believe it or not, it's a whole year since we launched GreenFerry, and we can hardly believe the success we've had in such a short time – over **£16,000** in fund-raising, and all for local projects. That means that we've been able to put out tubs and flower-boxes in the High Street all the way from the library to McIvor's Brae (with more to come). We also contributed to the recent Ferry Glen improvements by getting a grant for the paths. (Think of us when you walk there.) We've extended our automatic watering system for the hanging baskets to include the shops around Nippers Nursery, the Ikon Gallery, and the Anchor Inn area. And we started some new and exciting projects. In the last issue, we talked about a possible drama project, and a bag project, and we have been able to deliver both. Read on...

Junk!

Of course, we all know about blue boxes, red boxes, brown composting bins, and local recycling facilities, collecting stamps, recycling mobile phones and ink cartridges – but (be honest now) do we really do everything we can to help the environment? Landfill sites are filling up fast as we put out all those black bags, often without thinking too much about where all that waste ends up. So bravely (some would say foolishly) we applied for a Waste Aware Grant to set up a drama project. The purpose was to encourage us all to recycle more of our rubbish. We hired two drama specialists, Jojo Sutherland and Gowan Calder, and they started working with over 30 children from all the local schools, including the High School. The children created their own play which they called 'Junk' – and set about showing us all how to save the planet.



Meantime, we contacted environmentally-friendly groups such as Bits and Bobs, Master Composter, the Edinburgh Furniture Initiative, Generous City, Waste Aware Recycling, the Real Nappy Project, LEEP, Friends of the Forth, Watersense, Mooncup, and Freecycle. They agreed to set up stalls or send display materials. The whole evening was (re-)scheduled (because of the Unison strike), for 7pm on 25 April and we were very pleased to have been able to put together such an event. In the words of the children, we must 'care and share.'

(With thanks to the Queensferry Gazette for the photograph.)



Jute Bags There are far too many plastic bags in the world, and many of them (alas) find their way onto our paths and streets of Queensferry, so we thought we would do our bit to try to reduce these, AND do something to promote Fair Trade too. We ordered 100 Fair Trade jute bags with the GreenFerry logo. These are useful large shopping bags which you can even put on the compost heap when they become old and tired (like us). £1 from each bag goes towards our Dalmeny Seat Fund (see below).

Dalmeny Seat Fund

Last summer, a resident of Dalmeny commented how nice it would be to see a seat on the green at Dalmeny. GreenFerry members had already helped to get three new presentation benches into Queensferry. It had to be Dalmeny's turn. We contacted Ian Slee and the Dalmeny Art Group for help, and after their AGM, they generously donated £50 to start off this new project. We have since arranged a tea dance at Dalmeny Church, and we are planning another grant application. Fear not, people of Dalmeny, you will have your bench (or possibly a circular seat around one of the trees) -- if not this year, then definitely next.

Eco schools

St Margaret's Primary has now signed up to the eco-schools programme, and this brings ALL Queensferry schools on board. Dalmeny Primary is very close to gaining green flag status. Queensferry High School is working to improve their Atrium garden, and is looking into the possibility of adding planters similar to the ones we arranged for Scotmid and the Health Centre. Mrs McIntosh has kindly taken over the eco-schools projects at QHS, but all the schools are doing well.

Saughton Planters

You will have noticed, in November, the appearance of the lovely, hexagonal planters at Scotmid – three of them had little Christmas trees. Um... that was our spring project arriving a little early. We ordered only one, but five came by mistake, so we decided to take them anyway. Scotmid paid for three, and we are currently collecting at the Health Centre to pay for the other two. So where did these some from? Would you believe -- Saughton Prison. We pay only for the materials, and inmates at Saughton are able to develop some new skills in learning to construct them. The Christmas trees were supplied for fun (and for free) by Ballantyne's of Gorebridge, and we filled the planters as best we could with whatever plants we had left in the autumn. But the real planting is yet to take place. Watch that space.

Tubs and flowerboxes

For those who actually know about flowers, the plants in the winter tubs have a mixture of phormium tenax, blue forget-me-nots, primroses, violas, snowdrops, tulips and daffodils. In the summer, look out for some interesting tubs with zebra grass, heuchera, festuca glauca, argyranthemum, lobelia, begonia, ivy and helichrysum. Queensferry Sportsman's Events continue to support these.

Friends of the Ferry Glen was formally constituted, and the new committee formed, in February. Thanks to all those who attended. Work continues in the glen with the new paths, bridges and forestry work being undertaken according to the management plan. We work closely with the Edinburgh Green Belt Trust and are indebted to them for managing the initial works. Enrichment planting of native trees and shrubs will now follow, and the glen will be cleared of litter and rubbish once the main work is complete. Planned community events will involve local schools, and we intend to hold a celebration event to formally open the woodland at the end of May. We hope that a local celebrity will join us. It is so encouraging to see the transformation taking place at last. Of course, it will take time for nature to fully heal the effects of the initial works, and the participation and support of the whole community will be needed to restore the Ferry Glen to a place of peace and beauty once more. *Jim Steele. Friends of Ferry Glen.*



CleanFerry had another enjoyable winter. We scheduled a series of clean-up events starting with the entrance to the Ferry Glen (just before all the work started there), then did Lovers' Lane, Piper's Cave, and the Varney swing park which was swept (literally) from end to end. Many new people turned out to help, including Diane Brown, our community police officer. One resident said afterwards that it

had been a really enjoyable community event. Two other events had to be cancelled due to snow but we may squeeze these in yet. And Tom Thumb nursery hope to organise their own sponsored clean-up. *Joyce Faulkner. CleanFerry*

Queensferry in Bloom is presently working on a proposal to improve the derelict playpark at Hawthorn Bank. The aim is to transform this open space into a wildlife garden called 'The Kidnapped Garden', and plans are now well developed for this. We are also liaising with Scotrail and Agilent to upgrade Dalmeny Station platform and surrounding area. The children from St Margaret's School are involved in the design and planting of this. Finally QIB planted 20,000 crocuses on Bo'ness Road, with the help of schoolchildren from Echline Primary. *Brenda Wilkinson. Queensferry in Bloom*

Local heroes. You will forgive us, we hope, if we nominate our newest member, Jeana Gorman, as this month's local hero. Jeana contacted GreenFerry to offer her services after the Ferry Fair parade last year. She was completing the Neighbourhood Gardener Certificate at Oatridge College (at last –someone who really knows about plants) and she immediately took charge of the winter planting of our tubs and flowerboxes (see opposite). She also designed a spiral daffodil maze for the grounds of St Margaret's Primary, while we acquired 3,000 bulbs from the Edinburgh Greenbelt Trust, and we called out a small team in November to dig the spiral shape and help the children plant the bulbs. The daffodils are now beginning to show, and the children are looking forward to playing in their new yellow maze. *(The photograph, by the way, shows Jeana attempting to put back the turf after digging it out. For reasons we can never explain, there are always some bits left over...)*

