



Winter 2008  
Issue No.18



# The Valley Voice

## Newsletter of The Friends of Braidburn Valley Park

### Afternoon Tea in the Park, 2008

Howling wind and driving rain were not the best start for the Friends of Braidburn Valley Park annual Fun Day in September. The weather was so extreme that it was an easy decision to move most of the event inside Greenbank Church halls. The Friends are hugely grateful to the minister and Church for making all the halls available at short notice.

Willow weaving, bird feeder making with RSPB, highland dancing and piping, story telling with the Rev Margaret Forrester, raft building, face painting and all the usual favourites went ahead. As the wind dropped slightly, everyone crossed to the park to see Te Pooka circus theatre perform their fire show on the stage. To round off events, we were delighted that the Duck Race could go ahead. All speed records were broken as the ducks raced



along the burn in flood conditions.

### ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Grass Cutting - New Bridge - Litter -  
Green Flag Award  
- have your say for 2009!

Followed by a presentation on The Braid Burn Flood Defence Works and their impact on the park and nearby areas by Stuart Mackay, Carillion plc

**Monday 2nd February 2009 at  
7.30pm**

Greenbank Church Halls  
Braidburn Terrace

Refreshments provided

All welcome!

The Friends are extremely grateful to the event organisers - Rona Ferguson, Lesley Trew and their committee - and to all the volunteers who demonstrated such flexibility to switch venue at the last minute. The Friends are also grateful to local businesses that donated prizes or sponsored the event. In particular, we would like to thank the Braid Hills Hotel, Dorothy Morrison, City Nursery, Hermitage Golf Course, Margiotta in Comiston Road, Marks and Spencer, Midlothian Snow Sport Centre, Sarah Menzies Florist, Swim Easy, Tusitala Restaurant, Toys Galore and Waitrose.

Fingers crossed for a dry year in 2009 when the event is scheduled to take place on Saturday 5th September.



## Infrastructure Improvements in the Park

The Park has been successful in attracting capital money from the Council Parks Department to improve some of its infrastructure. As a result, the path on the east side of the burn between the middle and Oxgangs bridges has been upgraded from a loose gravel surface to a fully road metalled path.

A new pedestrian bridge is planned for the north end of the park, crossing the burn just before the culvert under Comiston Road. The bridge should reduce the need for people to scramble around the culvert. It will offer an additional connection to the informal

paths in the north east of the park, although there are no plans for improving these at present.

The Friends have raised concerns about the poor standards of grass cutting in the park in the 2007 and 2008 seasons. Tyre marks gouged into soft earth, scalped sections of grass and muddy ruts are a result of very heavy machinery being driven too fast in conditions when the ground is too soft. Edinburgh Council is aware of the concern and are promising better results for 2009.

## Awards Galore!

Earlier this year, Karen Young, the Friends of Braidburn Valley Park Chairperson for the last four years received an Edinburgh Council "Inspiring Volunteering" Achievement Award from Lord Provost George Grubb. Shortly after, Karen also received a South Edinburgh Local Hero Award from Nigel Griffiths MP. Karen pointed out that all of the Committee should receive these awards because everyone gives so much time and effort to make the park a better place for us all.

Also on awards, the park was part of the judges' tour for Edinburgh's entry to the Beautiful

Scotland award. In a quick visit, the judges admired the Green Flag, interpretation panel, bulb and tree planting and took away information about community events and education projects. Edinburgh won a Silver Gilt Award in the Beautiful Scotland City Category 2008, and was overall champion for the first time ever.

These awards cap a great year for Braidburn Valley Park which is one of five parks in Scotland to receive the prestigious Green Flag Award which is now flying on the newly greased flagpole.

## News from the Treasurer

At the AGM, it was agreed that our financial year would end on 31st October, so that audited figures could be presented at each AGM. Despite the Fun Day returning a deficit, due mainly to bad weather, the period to 31st October ended in a 'break even'. We are very grateful to our continuing members and several sponsors, who have made this possible.

It was decided that we would offer members the opportunity to pay their subscription by Standing Order, which cuts down on the administration for future years. By now all members have been notified and I am pleased to report that

the subs are rolling in and that about a third of members (so far) have opted for a Standing Order. If you haven't already renewed your subscription, please do so before 31st January 2009.

Application has been made to The Office of the Charity Regulator for Scotland for The Friends to be awarded Charitable Status. There are tax advantages in doing this, the prime one being that members will be able to "gift aid" their subscriptions. If successful, members will be asked to sign a declaration that they pay UK Tax.

## *Friends of Braidburn Valley Executive Members*

Chair: Karen Young, tel: 0131 446 9795

Secretary: Peter Weeks, tel: 0131 447 1874

Treasurer/Membership: Lindsay Walls, tel: 0131 445 5415

Honorary Tree Wardens: Keith Knight, tel: 0131 447 2138 & Louise Maguire, tel: 0131 445 3126